

# WASHINGTON D.C.'S ELECTRIC BICYCLE LAW



## WASHINGTON D.C.'S ELECTRIC BICYCLE LAW FOR THE ROAD

- » In D.C., an e-bike is defined as a "motorized bicycle" so long as the electric bicycle has operable pedals, can be operated under combined human and motor power and has a maximum speed of 20 mph.
- » The same rules of the road apply to both electric bicycles and human-powered bicycles. E-bikes may be operated on any sidewalk, off-street path, or bicycle route in the District.

- » Electric bicycles are not subject to the registration, licensing or insurance requirements that apply to motor vehicles.
- » You must be 16 years or older to operate an electric bicycle.

The following D.C. laws are referenced: D.C. Code § 18-99-01; § 50-1501.01-03; D.C. Act 19-658

## eMTB GUIDELINES

- » On federal, state, country and local trails, electric mountain bike (eMTB) access varies significantly.
- » Generally, any natural surface trail that is designated as open to both motorized and non-motorized uses is also open to eMTBs.
- » eMTBs may not be allowed on trails managed for non-motorized activities.
- » Do not ride your eMTB in areas where the local rules are unclear. Ride legally and only on authorized trails to show that mountain bikers are responsible trail users.
- » When in doubt, ask your local land manager about access to specific trails. Local land rules change frequently.

## WASHINGTON D.C.'S ELECTRIC BICYCLE LAW FOR TRAILS

- » D.C. is surrounded by public recreation lands, including National Park Service (NPS) trails. Secretarial Order #3376 directed the NPS to incorporate electric bicycle policies into each Superintendent's Park Compendium. Class 1 and 3 electric bicycles are currently permitted wherever bikes are allowed at Rock Creek Park and the National Mall near D.C. PeopleForBikes will update this document as needed. Always check with your local park before riding.

## CHECK OUT

- » A map of great eMTB rides at [peopleforbikes.org/emtb](http://peopleforbikes.org/emtb)
- » eMTB "Adventures" at [peopleforbikes.org/electric-bikes](http://peopleforbikes.org/electric-bikes)

## GREAT eMTB RIDES NEAR WASHINGTON D.C.

- » **Capitol Crescent Trail**  
D.C. | 1.1 miles

- » **Four Mile Trail**  
Arlington | 6.8 miles

## With an electric bicycle, bicyclists can ride more often, farther, and for more trips.

Electric bicycles are designed to be as safe as traditional bicycles, do not compromise consumer safety, and benefit bicyclists who may be discouraged from riding a traditional bicycle due to limited physical fitness, age, disability or convenience.

In many states, electric bicycles are regulated under antiquated laws primarily aimed at combustion engine vehicles such as mopeds or scooters. PeopleForBikes is clarifying state laws governing the use of electric bicycles in the U.S. Every state's law is different, but the objective is to ensure that low-speed electric bicycles are regulated similarly to traditional, human-powered bicycles.



## Learn more at [PeopleForBikes.org/electric-bikes](http://PeopleForBikes.org/electric-bikes)

- » Blogs and webinars
- » Electric bicycle laws around the country
- » Electric bicycle statistics and research
- » Buying guide
- » Retailer materials
- » eMTB management resources