

# ILLINOIS' ELECTRIC BICYCLE LAW



## ILLINOIS' ELECTRIC BICYCLE LAW FOR THE ROAD

- » Electric bicycles are regulated like bicycles. The same rules of the road apply to both electric bicycles and human-powered bicycles.
- » Electric bicycles are not subject to the registration, licensing, or insurance requirements that apply to motor vehicles.
- » Illinois designates three classes of electric bicycles:
  - Class 1: Bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, and that ceases to provide assistance when the electric bicycle reaches 20 mph.
  - Class 2: Bicycle equipped with a throttle-actuated motor, that ceases to provide assistance when the electric bicycle reaches 20 mph.
  - Class 3: Bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, and that ceases to provide assistance when the electric bicycle reaches 28 mph.
- » Persons under 16 years of age may not operate a Class 3 electric bicycle.
- » Electric bicycles may not be ridden on sidewalks.
- » Electric bicycles are allowed on bike paths. However, local governments have the authority to restrict the use of electric bicycles on bike paths. When in doubt, check with your town, city or county for local rules and regulations.

\* The following Illinois laws are referenced: 625 ILCS 5/1-140.10; 625 ILCS 5/11-208; 625 ILCS 5/11-1517

## 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.

## ILLINOIS' ELECTRIC BICYCLE LAW FOR TRAILS

- » LOCAL: Consult your local land management agency.
- » STATE: The Illinois Department of Natural Resources Parks and Recreation considers electric bicycles to be motorized bicycles and does not allow them on trails. Contact the department for the most up to date information. PeopleForBikes is monitoring this policy and will update this document as needed.
- » FEDERAL: The majority of public lands managed for recreation in Illinois are under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Forest Service, where eMTBs are considered motorized vehicles and have access to motorized trails. Contact the U.S. Forest Service Eastern Regional Office for more information.

## 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 IN ILLINOIS

- » **Homer Lake Gravel Ride**  
Champaign County | 44 miles
- » **DeKalb County Gravel Metric**  
DeKalb County | 70 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