

The Camarillo Police Department, Traffic Bureau would like to take a moment and provide some important information on juveniles and bicycles. We have seen an uptick in vehicle collisions involving the youth in our community. Often times, parents are shocked when they learn their child was actually deemed at fault in the collision.

Anytime pedestrians or bicyclists are mixed with motorists, there is inherently an increased risk. We are hoping through education, we can help avoid the risk of serious injury to your most precious belonging, your children.

First allow us to address bicyclists. The vehicle code requires they follow the rules of the road and are actually considered a "Motorist" in the event of a traffic collision. So the kids who ride on the wrong side of the road, run stop signs or cut across lanes will most likely actually be at fault if they were to be struck by a vehicle.

Growing in popularity is the e bike. A bicycle that can be pedaled with minimal work and travel up to 20 mph, what can go wrong? It goes without saying, once speed is increased, the likelihood of injuries increases as well. Lets discuss electric bicycles.

There are three classes of electric bicycles:

Electric Bicycles

An electric bicycle is a bicycle equipped with fully operable pedals and an electric motor of less than 750 watts. Three classes of electric bicycles have been established:

- Class 1: A low speed pedal-assisted electric bicycle equipped with a motor which provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to provide assistance when a speed of 20 mph is reached.
- Class 2: A low speed throttle-assisted electric bicycle equipped with a motor used exclusively to propel the bicycle and NOT capable of providing assistance when a speed of 20 mph is reached.
- Class 3: A low speed pedal-assisted electric bicycle equipped with a speedometer, and a motor which provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to provide assistance when a speed of 28 mph is reached.

The operator of a Class 3 electric bicycle:

- **Must** be 16 years old or older.
- **Must** wear a bicycle safety helmet.
- **Must** not transport passengers.
- **May** ride an electric bicycle in a bicycle lane **if** authorized by local authority or ordinance.

All electric bicycle classes are exempt from the motor vehicle financial responsibility, DL, and license plate requirements (CVC §24016).

You can find this information at the following website-

<https://www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/handbook/motorcycle-handbook/two-wheel-vehicle-operation/>

There is one more electric style “Bicycle” we want to address, commonly known as “Surrón” pictured below



This vehicle does not fit into any of the three classifications of electric bicycles described above. This means it is not considered an electric bike, instead it is considered a motorcycle. This vehicle is not allowed to be operated on the roads without being registered at DMV. I know to many of our kids it may look cool and top the list of wants on their holiday or birthday wish lists. Did you know this vehicle is capable of reaching speeds up to 70 mph. Here is some food for thought, for an experienced driver, the total stopping distance at 70 mph is 388 feet! This means by the time a dangerous situation is recognized, that vehicle will travel 388 feet before completely stopping.

So how do we keep our children safe? Education. Please take the time to educate them on the dangers of the road. Technology has been both our best friend and worst enemy. Inattention by motorists is real, and although we conduct enforcement for cell phone use, we cannot catch everyone. Please educate your children to not assume they are being seen by motorists, observe right of ways, slow down, ride on the right side of the road, and be diligent with protecting themselves by wearing their helmets.

The Camarillo Police Department hopes this was educational for all parents in the community we serve. We are hoping through education and good partnership, we can avoid collisions and keep our children safe. If you have any questions, please reach out to our traffic unit at (805) 388-5100.