E-Bikes, E-Scooters & E-Motos Community Forum

November 17, 2026



Agenda

- Device Definitions & Regulations
- Safety Concerns
- Mitigating Risk



E-Bikes

E-bikes are bicycles that are assisted by an electric motor (max 750W). There are three classes of e-bikes, distinguished by their maximum assisted speed and the way assistance is provided.

Class	Max Assisted Speed	Assistance Type
Class 1	20mph	Pedal Assist
Class 2	20mph	Throttle
Class 3	28mph	Pedal Assist



E-Bikes

- All classes of e-bikes have a maximum power output of 750W.
- Class 1 and Class 2 e-bikes are allowed anywhere traditional bikes can go (including mixed-use trails, bike lanes, and roads) unless designated as non-motorized.
- Class 3 e-bikes have a minimum rider age of 16 and cannot be ridden on sidewalks, soft surface trails, or shared-use paths.



E-Bikes

- The City is currently examining its e-bike regulations and will likely adopt additional regulations for e-bikes in Spring 2027.
- Additional regulations could include prohibiting e-bikes from certain areas, instituting a helmet requirement or speed limits, and limiting their use on sidewalks.



E-Scooters

E-scooters are defined under state law as “motorized foot scooters”— they are two- or three-wheeled devices with handlebars and a floorboard, that are powered by an electric motor.

These devices:

- Have a top speed of 20mph.
- Have a minimum rider age of 16.
- Cannot be ridden on sidewalks or soft-surface trails.



E-Motos

E-motos are distinct from e-bikes. These vehicles are powered by an electric motor, and…

- Often lack operable pedals. Foot pegs or brackets do not count as pedals.
- The power output from the motor exceeds 750 watts.
- Can reach speeds of 40-50mph, far exceeding the maximum to be considered an e-bike.

E-Motos



Talaria Sting Electric Dirt Bike
6,000W motor; top speed 47mph.



EK X21 Off Road E-Bike
3,000W motor; top speed of 45mph.

E-Motos

The City adopted regulations for e-motos in September 2025, including:

- Any person operating an e-moto must have a valid driver's license with a motorcycle endorsement and display a valid license plate.
- Operation of e-motos is prohibited on any sidewalk, pedestrian path, and within public parks.
- Any person operating an e-moto must wear a motorcycle helmet.





E-Motos

- The Mercer Island Police Department has the ability to impound e-motos operated unlawfully.
- Violations of the regulations are civil infractions, subject to penalties:
  - First offense: $250
  - Second offense: $500
  - Third and subsequent offenses: $750 and possible referral to King County

WA State Work on E-Motos

- ESSB 6110 was adopted during the 2026 Legislative Session.
- Unfortunately, ESSB 6110 did **not** adopt a definition or regulations for e-motos in the state law.
- In short, the bill did three things:
  - Updated the definition of e-bikes so that vehicles only using a throttle exceeding 20mph are not considered e-bikes.
  - Clarified that e-bikes modified to exceed 20 or 28 mph, or the 750W power output, are not considered e-bikes.
  - Established a workgroup to develop an e-moto definition initial set of safety and registration requirements.

WA State Work on E-Motos

- The Workgroup was formed to recommend revisions to the statutory framework for e-motos and other micromobility devices.
- The Workgroup approach is two-fold:
  - Phase 1 (December 2026): Definitions categorized by speed
  - Phase 2 (October 2027): Broader regulatory framework, including licensing and equipment requirements, and violations and penalties, as well as the retailer/manufacturer aspect of this issue.

Safety Concerns



Safety Concerns

JAMA
The Journal of the American Medical Association

- Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) published an article on November 2, 2026, titled **Injuries From Electric Bicycles and Scooters Managed in Pediatric Health Systems**.
- The article examined a subset of medical data across the US of kids involved in accidents on e-bikes, e-scooters, skateboards, compared to traditional bikes and scooters.
- The article drew on data from 2023 to 2026 and looked at roughly 13,300 cases.

Safety Concerns

JAMA
The Journal of the American Medical Association

- Injuries from e-bikes showed a roughly 400% increase during the study period (2023-2026), and e-scooter injuries rose almost 200%.
- Severe injuries—the kind that need surgery or time in the intensive care unit—were about twice as likely when an e-bike or e-scooter was involved, compared to regular bikes and scooters.
- E-bike injuries had higher rates of high-severity injuries than traditional bicycle injuries, with 10% of e-bike patients being diagnosed with a brain injury.

Safety Concerns

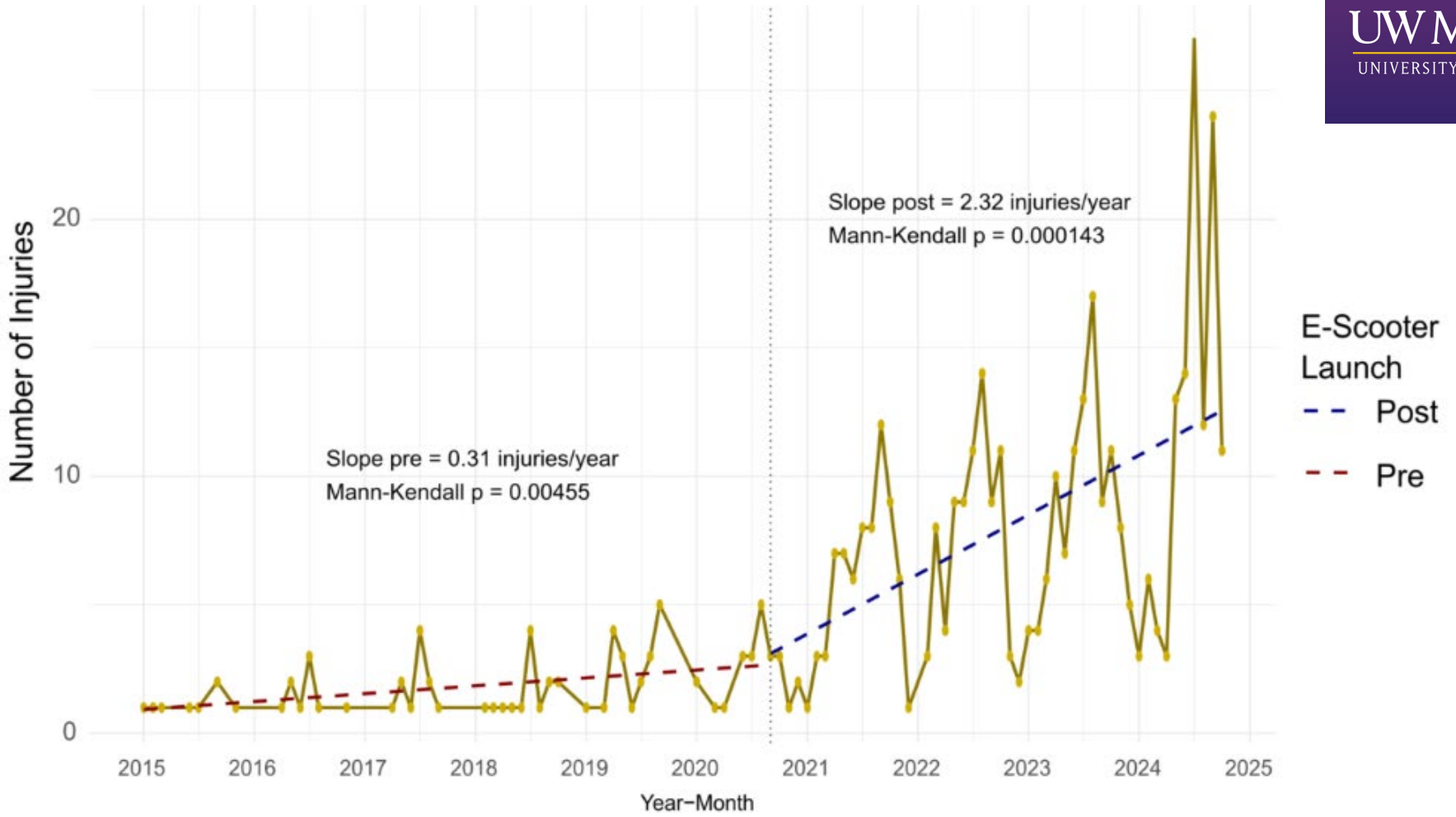
JAMA
The Journal of the American Medical Association

- **Age:** 24% of e-bicycle injuries and 44% of e-scooter injuries occurred in children younger than 12 years of age.
- **Weight:** E-bikes can weigh upwards of 60lbs. Youth often lack the strength and coordination to operate these vehicles safely.
- **Speed:** The amount of time required to stop an e-bike, e-scooter, or e-moto is much longer than what's required to stop a regular bike or scooter, so any experience children have on regular bikes and scooters is unlikely to translate to the electric versions.

Local Safety Concerns

2,734 visits to Harborview Emergency Department related to e-scooter accidents over 10 years (2015-2025).

- 305 with symptoms of traumatic brain injury.
- 118 with CT scans showing brain bleeding.
- 17 required emergency brain surgery.
- 5 died from their injuries.



Number of Patients with E-Scooter-Related Injuries at Harborview
(2015-2025)

Mitigating Risk



The Mercer Island School District, Mercer Island Police Department, Eastside Fire & Rescue, and the City of Mercer Island **strongly recommend wearing a proper helmet** when riding any bike, scooter, or similar wheeled transportation.

Safety Tips



- Slow down ahead of intersections and hazards.
- Be visible with lights and reflectors.
- Use warning devices like bells.
- Keep tires properly inflated.
- Practice safe mounting and dismounting due to the weight of e-bikes.
- Educate yourself on road rules and use bike paths or bike lanes whenever possible.

Rules of the Road

E-bike operators must follow all road rules and avoid riding in ways that endanger people or property or obstructs travel. All riders must:

- Yield to pedestrians on sidewalks and in crosswalks.
- Obey posted speed limits. Exceeding the posted speed limit is a traffic violation.
- Only ride e-bikes and e-scooters where allowed.
- Be at least 16 years old if riding a Class 3 e-bike in Washington state.
- Remember, if your e-bike goes faster than 28 mph it is NOT an e-bike. It is an e-moto and different rules apply.

Enforcement

The Mercer Island Police Department supports responsible riding of e-bikes and e-scooters.

When behavior or equipment creates a public safety risk, MIPD will look to enforcement.



Enforcement

For e-motos, all riders must be licensed, endorsed, and have a valid license plate.

MIPD enforcement will:

- Prioritize dangerous riding and risk.
- Seek to educate riders and parents.
- Cite / impound when legally justified.
    - *Consistent enforcement requires clear classifications.*



The community is asked to call 9-1-1 to report unsafe or unlawful use of e-bikes, e-scooters and e-motos.

Questions?

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