



JEFFERSON COUNTY, COLORADO

SHERIFF

200 JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKWAY • GOLDEN, CO 80401 • (303) 277-0211

The Truth about Scooters by Sheriff Ted Mink

Scooters. We see them advertised every Sunday in the newspaper. They're fun to ride, every kid on the block wants them, and they provide a cheap and easy way to get down the road. Right?

Well, not quite.

The Sheriff's Office has noted a wave of community questions, concerns and confusion since electric and gas-powered scooters became popular among children and teens. Sometimes they're called "go-peds" or "razor scooters," but the newest ones look more like small motorcycles than simple scooters.

The scooters are legal to own, but there are lots of illegal ways to use them. I hope that the following information will clear up some of the misconceptions.

First, understand what kind of vehicle you have:

- 1) According to Colorado Revised Statutes (CRS), a "motorized bicycle" has two or three wheels, an engine not exceeding 50cc, and an automatic transmission producing a maximum speed of 30 miles per hour. It also has a headlamp on the front, a red reflector or lamp on the rear, a bell or audible warning device, and a permanent and attached seat. If your scooter has all of these features, then it's most likely considered a motorized bicycle.
- 2) Most of the other scooters you see for sale are considered "toy vehicles" due to their lack of a fixed seat, headlamp, etc.
- 3) A "neighborhood electric vehicle" is a self-propelled, electrically powered motor vehicle with a top speed of 25 miles per hour. Depending on their equipment, they can be either motorized bicycles or toy vehicles.

Colorado law (CRS 42-2-103) says that to operate a motorized bicycle, you must have a driver's license. *Driving a motorized bicycle is no different than driving any regular vehicle on the road*, and normal traffic laws must be followed, including registering the vehicle (CRS 42-4-109). Failure to obey traffic laws or register the vehicle may result in an \$18 ticket.

"Toy vehicles" can only be legally operated on private property, with the owner's permission. Operating them on public streets or roadways can result in an \$18 ticket. Plus, a parent or guardian who knowingly lets his or her children operate a toy vehicle on public streets runs the risk of receiving an additional \$18 ticket.

It is certainly disappointing for children and parents to find that they can't ride their new scooter on the sidewalk, the cul-de-sac or on the path in a local park. Further, it may seem silly to ticket children for riding a scooter on a sidewalk. As you can imagine, crimes against people and property take precedence over adolescent scooter-law violators, and deputies give out scooter-related tickets infrequently. However, deputies do respond to citizens' complaints about any traffic issues, including scooters, and frequently issue warnings. The most important thing to consider is that there are serious safety issues that come into play when children operate motorized vehicles around other traffic.

Operating toy vehicles on private property is just fine. If you're seeking an alternative, ask permission of private property owners, such as churches or businesses with empty lots.

If you have any other questions or concerns about motorized bicycles or toy vehicles, please contact the Sheriff's Office at (303) 271-5363 or 720-377-2002.

Please be alert for any suspicious activity, and report any unusual incidents, vehicles, or persons to the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office at **(303) 277-0211**. In the event of an emergency, please call **911** and be prepared to provide the location of the emergency.

Understanding Motorized Bicycles and Toy Vehicles

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- Most of the other scooters you see for sale are considered "toy vehicles" due to their lack of a fixed seat, headlamp, etc.
- A "neighborhood electric vehicle" is a self-propelled, electrically powered motor vehicle with a top speed of 25 miles per hour. Depending on their equipment, they can be either motorized bicycles or toy vehicles.

Motorized Bicycles:



"Toy vehicles" whether they are gas or electric can only be legally operated on private property, with the owner's permission. Operating them on public streets, roadways, or sidewalks can result in a ticket/fine. Plus, a parent or guardian who knowingly lets his or her children operate a toy vehicle on public streets runs the risk of receiving an additional ticket/fine.

Toy Vehicles:



Operating toy vehicles on private property is just fine. If you're seeking an alternative, ask permission of private property owners, such as churches or businesses with empty lots.

If you have any other questions or concerns about motorized bicycles or toy vehicles, please contact the Sheriff's Office Crime Prevention Unit at:

North/Mountains – 303-271-5363
South – 720-377-2002

Please be alert for any suspicious activity, and report any unusual incidents, vehicles, or persons to the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office at **(303) 277-0211**. In the event of an emergency, please call **911** and be prepared to provide the location of the emergency.