

September 2021

KNBC E-bike policy and guidance for use of e-bikes on KNBC rides

Policy: KNBC welcomes the use of e-bikes by club members.

Guidance: Given the possible ramifications in group riding scenarios, all KNBC members and e-bike riders, in particular, need to be aware of the following safety considerations:

Weight and impact on manoeuvrability and braking:

E-bikes are often heavier than conventional bikes. They also attain higher speeds quicker. This can make manoeuvring obstacles, corners, climbing and descending (especially in a group) a little more dangerous. Even with the lowest gear assistance, an e-bike will add about 50 watts of power to your pedalling stroke. Brakes will therefore need to be applied earlier, especially when approaching turns, and intersections. When riding in the rain, the braking distance will also need to be extended. Get to know your brakes and their relative power, so you can better assess the safest time and/or distance required to start slowing down (imperative when riding in a group).

Speed:

New e-bike users often make the mistake of using the fastest pedal-assist setting immediately as they set out. It is far safer to take it slow, especially in group riding scenarios. It is easier to learn how to enjoy your new ride with lower speeds before switching to the 'turbo mode' settings.

Mounting and dismounting:

With an extra 20-plus pounds of weight compared to conventional bikes, e-bikes are prone to topple over during dismounts, leading to injuries. Just like clipping in for the first time - it would be wise to practice in a safe area, where falling will have kinder results.

Tour leader Action: Tour leaders should use the ride pre-briefing to advise all riders of the presence of e-bike(s) on a KNBC ride. This ensures other riders will be aware of the presence of an e-bike, so they can respond accordingly (i.e. keep a bigger distance).

Advice to e-bike riders: Use your e-bike in such a way as you appear to be on a regular bicycle as far as other members of the ride are concerned. For example:

- Do not accelerate suddenly, or faster than a regular cyclist would.
- Climb hills at a pace similar to other riders in your group
- Be careful not to push the pace of your riding group

E-bikes defined and the Highway Traffic Act

Effective October 3, 2009, conventional style and scooter-style e-bikes that meet the definition of a power-assisted bicycle (*please see below), are permitted on roads and highways where conventional bicycles are currently allowed. They must follow the same rules of the road as set out in the Highway Traffic Act (HTA) that currently applies to cyclists.

Any municipal by-law prohibiting bicycles from highways under their jurisdiction also apply to e-bikes. E-bikes, like bicycles, are not allowed on controlled-access highways such as 400 series highways, the Queen Elizabeth Way, the Queensway in Ottawa or on municipal roads, including sidewalks where bicycles are banned under municipal by-laws.

***For the Province of Ontario, a power-assisted bicycle, or e-bike, is a bicycle that:**

- Has a maximum weight of 120 kg (includes the weight of bike and battery)
- Has wheels with a diameter of at least 350 mm and tires with a width of at least 35 mm
- Meets the federal definition of a power-assisted bicycle:
- Has steering handlebars and is equipped with pedals
 - Is designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground;
 - Is capable of being propelled by muscular power; and
 - Has one or more electric motors that have, singly or in combination, the following characteristics:
 - It has a total continuous power output rating, measured at the shaft of each motor, of 500 W or less;
 - If it is engaged by the use of muscular power, power assistance immediately ceases when the muscular power ceases;
 - If it is engaged by the use of an accelerator controller, power assistance immediately ceases when the brakes are applied;
 - It is incapable of providing further assistance when the bicycle attains a speed of 32 km/h on level ground;
 - Bears a label that is permanently affixed by the manufacturer and appears in a conspicuous location stating, in both official languages, that the vehicle is a power-assisted bicycle as defined federally; and
 - Has one of the following safety features:
 - An enabling mechanism to turn the electric motor on and off that is separate from the accelerator controller and fitted in such a manner that it is operable by the driver;
 - Or a mechanism that prevents the motor from being engaged before the bicycle attains 3 km/hr.

Please visit the Ontario Ministry of Transportation website for more information.

<http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/driver/electric-bicycles-faq.shtml>