



CALIFORNIA'S NEW E-BIKE LAW:

GUIDANCE FOR MANUFACTURERS

Q&A / **ELECTRIC BICYCLE**

AB 1096 defines various classes of electric bicycles and establishes parameters for their operation in California.

For reference, the federal government distinguishes bicycles with low-power electric motors capable of reaching speeds of 20 mph or less (e-bikes), from motorcycles, mopeds, and motor vehicle. This is considered the **Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) standard**.

Some states, mostly those with electric bicycle legislation enacted after the CPSC standard, regulate low-speed electric bicycles as bicycles and do not require special registration or licensing, removing significant barriers to their use. For the purposes of federal law, electric bicycles are consumer products that are regulated identically to traditional bicycles. AB 1096 brings California's e-bike law in line with the federal law.



» **WHERE CAN PEOPLE RIDE AN ELECTRIC BICYCLE?**

Before 2015, it was illegal to ride an electric bicycle almost anywhere in California but on public streets and roads. Thanks to the passage of a recent California bill, AB 1096, Type 1 and Type 2 electric bicycles have access to Class I, II, III, and IV California bikeways, and Type 3 electric bicycles have access to bike lanes and designated bike routes (see the graphic on page 2 for more information).

» **WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT CLASSES OF ELECTRIC BICYCLES?**

AB 1096 clarifies the definition of electric motor-assisted bicycles by defining three specific classes of e-bikes:

- » **TYPE 1** Bikes with a top assisted speed of 20 mph that must be pedaled to operate.
- » **TYPE 2** Bikes with a top assisted speed of 20 mph that can be operated without pedaling by using a handlebar-mounted throttle.
- » **TYPE 3** Bikes with a top assisted speed of 28 mph that must be pedaled to operate.

» **HOW DOES THIS AFFECT MANUFACTURERS?**

Starting January 1, 2017, AB 1096 requires that all electric bicycling manufacturers apply a label to each e-bike specifying the class and wattage of the bike. This applies only to California, although the industry is seeking to have other states adopt the class system and associated sticker requirement as well. Manufacturers are free to apply this sticker to e-bikes distributed throughout the U.S., but this sticker is only relevant in California and manufacturers are only required to apply this sticker to e-bikes distributed in California.



CALIFORNIA'S NEW E-BIKE LAW: *GUIDANCE FOR MANUFACTURERS*

» THE BILL LANGUAGE IS AS FOLLOWS:

“On and after January 1, 2017, manufacturers and distributors of electric bicycles shall apply a label that is permanently affixed, in a prominent location, to each electric bicycle. The label shall contain the classification number, top assisted speed, and motor wattage of the electric bicycle, and shall be printed in Arial font in at least 9-point type.”



» HOW DOES THE DECAL AFFECT CONVERSION KITS?

The sticker should match the e-bike's capability. All finished goods should display the sticker.

CLASS 1 350W // 20MPH	CLASS 2 500W // 20MPH	CLASS 3 350W // 28MPH
CLASS 1 350W // 20MPH	CLASS 2 500W // 20MPH	CLASS 3 350W // 28MPH
CLASS 1 350W 20MPH	CLASS 2 500W 20MPH	CLASS 3 350W 28MPH
CLASS 1 350W 20MPH	CLASS 2 500W 20MPH	CLASS 3 350W 28MPH



VEHICLE TYPE	VEHICLE		USER				BIKEWAY ACCESS			
	PEDAL OPERATED	MAXIMUM MOTOR-ASSISTED SPEED (MPH)	MINIMUM AGE (YEARS)	DRIVER'S LICENSE	LICENSE PLATE	HELMET	CLASS I BIKE PATH	CLASS II BIKE LANE	CLASS III BIKE ROUTE	CLASS IV PROTECTED LANE
BICYCLE 	YES	N/A	N/A	NO	NO	17 AND UNDER	YES	YES	YES	YES
TYPE 1 E-BIKE 	YES	20	N/A	NO	NO	17 AND UNDER	YES	YES	YES	YES
TYPE 2 E-BIKE 	NO	20	N/A	NO	NO	17 AND UNDER	YES	YES	YES	YES
TYPE 3 E-BIKE 	YES	28	16	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO
MOPED 	NO	N/A	16	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO