

Is it a “Scooter” (Motorized Bicycle) or a Motorcycle?

“Scooter” is a commonly used term referring to a Motorized Bicycle or MOPED. A motorized bicycle is defined as any two-wheeled or three-wheeled device having an automatic transmission and a motor with cylinder capacity of not more than 50 cubic centimeters, which produces less than three gross brake horsepower, and is capable of propelling the device at a maximum speed of not more than 30 mph on level ground; it must meet VESC-17 standards (pedals are no longer required). City Ordinance states that motorized bicycles can be operated on public streets only if the driver holds a valid operator’s license. If you or your child can’t legally drive a car, then operating a motorized bicycle on the road is prohibited.

Anytime one of these devices is operated on a roadway in the City of St. Joseph, the operator must

abide by the same laws governing all motor vehicles (i.e.: stopping at posted STOP signs, driving on the right-side of the roadway, yielding to approaching traffic when turning left, and not exceeding the posted speed limit). There are also laws pertaining to scooters that do not apply to all motor vehicles. This makes the case that motorized scooters truly are not toys.

When preparing to buy a Scooter ask the dealer and yourself these questions:

Does the scooter have less than a 50cc motor?

Does the scooter create less than 3 gross brake horsepower?

Is the scooter capable of traveling over 30 mph on level ground?

The main question that is often missed is related to the speed it will travel. If it is capable of traveling over 30 mph on level ground, then it is a **MOTORCYCLE**, and must follow

all ordinances as such. Even if it is only 49cc, but travels over 30 mph, it is still a **MOTORCYCLE**.

When in doubt, if it is a Scooter or a Motorcycle, you should always refer to the manufacturer’s website or contact your local police department to get the correct clarification on whether or not it is a Motorized Bicycle. Within the city limits of St. Joseph, scooters are governed by ordinance. As the operator you are responsible for knowing the regulations before you ride.

What is required to operate a Motorized Bicycle in St. Joseph?

Do I have to have a license to ride a scooter?

Yes, in order to operate a scooter (a motorized bicycle) you must have a valid driver's license. A driver's permit does not allow you to operate a scooter.

Do I have to wear a helmet to ride a scooter?

Yes, the operator and passenger (if manufactured to carry a passenger) must wear a DOT approved helmet just like a motorcycle. Passengers may only ride on scooters manufactured with passenger foot pegs.

Is insurance required to operate a scooter?

Yes, the same insurance requirement as all other motor vehicle including proof of insurance must be met.

Where can I ride a scooter?

Scooters are restricted from operation on all parts of the Interstate Highway System and any roadway with a posted limit over 35 MPH in the City of St. Joseph. Business loop 29 is part of the interstate system and includes some city streets; they are marked with green signs indicating Business Loop 29.



**St Joseph Police Department
501 Faraon Street
St. Joseph, MO 64501**

816-271-4701

**Traffic Unit
816-271-5359**

stjoepd.info

What do I need to know about Scooters?



**A quick reference
for operating
Motorized
Bicycles in the
City Of St. Joseph**