

Motorized Bicycles, Scooters And Mini-Motorcycles Advertised As Toys Require Legal Operation

The St Joseph Police Department would like to remind parents it is illegal to operate motorized bicycles on public streets and highways unless the operator has a driver's license. This applies to the newly popular mini-motorcycles also. 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. Missouri law states that motorized bicycles, commonly referred to as scooters, can be

operated on public streets and highways if the driver holds a valid license. If your child can't legally drive a car, he can't drive a motorized bicycle on the road.

The motorized scooter is being marketed as a toy, and sold to the youth of our communities. Anytime one of these devices is operated on a Missouri roadway (city street, county road, or state highway), they must abide by the same laws governing a motor vehicle (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). This makes the case that the motorized scooter and mini-motorcycle truly is not a toy.

Allowing a young person to travel via motorized bicycle or mini-motorcycle may seem convenient to some parents. Or, perhaps parents see it as something "fun" for their child to own. Law enforcement officers who respond to traffic crashes involving

these "vehicles" have a different viewpoint. These types of vehicles are hard to see and offer no crash protection. Law enforcement takes the safety of the motoring public very seriously. Drivers of mini-motorcycles and motorized bicycles are encouraged to wear an approved helmet.

Motorized bicycles and mini-motorcycles that have a motor with a cylinder capacity of more than 50cc **and/or** the ability to travel faster than 30 mph on level ground are by law defined as motorcycles. As such, these types of vehicles must abide by all of the state laws pertaining to motorcycles. Parents: Allowing your child under the age 16 to operate a motorized bicycle or mini-motorcycle on a roadway is prohibited by law. Help keep your children safe, obey the law.

