

SAFETY BRIEF

THE MONTHLY FOR PARENTS OF YOUNG RIDERS

The bike you bought is not always the bike your child is riding.

A speed setting hidden in a menu, and why the class on the box may not be the class on the road.

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FROM THE FOUNDER

We built RidePermit because the paperwork was never the point. The kid on the bike is.

Every month this brief will give you a few short pieces on keeping kids safe on e-bikes and scooters, written plainly, with no product pitches. If we mention a bike or a feature, it is because it illustrates something worth knowing, not because anyone paid for the space.

This first issue starts with the thing that surprises parents most: the class printed on the box is often a software setting. It ends with a piece on what actually happens when a student goes down and a stranger is the first one there. Read that one with your rider.

Tony Bright

Founder and CEO, RidePermit

01

SPEED AND CLASS

The speed setting most parents never check

Most e-bikes sold to families are Class 2. Many of them can become Class 3 through the display menu. The bike you bought is not necessarily the bike your child is riding.

Most e-bikes sold to families are Class 2, which means the motor stops assisting at 20 mph. Class 3 bikes assist to 28 mph.

The difference matters more than it sounds: at 28 mph a rider covers ground faster than most drivers expect a bicycle to move, and stopping distances roughly double.

Here is what catches parents off guard. On many bikes the class is a software setting, not a physical limit. A rider can change a Class 2 bike to Class 3 through the display menu in under a minute, and there are step-by-step videos showing exactly how.

A switch that takes a minute can put a legal bike, ridden by an underage rider, in a place it is not allowed to be.

Changing that setting is generally legal to do. The problem is what it does to everything downstream.

In many states Class 3 carries a minimum rider age, a helmet requirement, and restrictions on where the bike may be ridden, including bike paths and multi-use trails where Class 3 is often prohibited. Rules vary by state and sometimes by city, so check your own.

WHAT TO DO THIS WEEK

- Check the current setting on the display yourself, rather than assuming it matches the box.
- Ask whether your bike's speed setting can be locked, and whether that lock needs a code.
- Confirm the class rules for your state, and for the paths your child actually rides.

A real lock should meet a few conditions: it requires a PIN or credential the rider does not have, it lives on the bike rather than in an app the rider can reinstall, and it survives a reset.

20

mph. Where Class 2 motor assist stops.

28

mph. Where Class 3 assist stops. Stopping distance roughly doubles.

<1

minute. How long the menu change takes on many bikes.



Built with a parent in mind. The Juiced Bikes Scrambler ships as Class 2 and carries a Parent Mode that locks the top speed behind a four-digit PIN. The parent sets the ceiling; the rider cannot quietly raise it.

Juiced Bikes is one example of a manufacturer that has built this in. Their Scrambler has the moto styling teenagers want, and a Parent Mode that locks top speed behind a four-digit PIN, so the parent decides the ceiling and the rider cannot quietly raise it. We mention it because it is a useful illustration of the feature, not as an endorsement of any purchase.

Whatever bike is in your garage, the check is the same. Turn it on, open the display menu, and read the class or top assist speed for yourself. If the number is higher than the label on the frame, the bike has been changed. If the setting can be changed without a code, assume that at some point it will be.

HOW PARENT MODE WORKS ON THE SCRAMBLER

- Set from the bike's own display, in an advanced settings menu, not from a phone app.
- The parent picks a top speed anywhere from 1 to 28 mph, or a class mode: Class 1, 2, or 3, plus a California Class 3 mode that turns the throttle off.
- A four-digit PIN locks it. Without the PIN the rider cannot raise the speed or change the class.
- Raise the ceiling later, as the rider earns it.

THE QUESTION TO ASK AT THE SHOP

"Can my kid change the class on this bike, and can I lock it?" If the answer to the first is yes and the second is no, that is the bike's real spec, whatever the sticker says.

02

THE DECAL

What the decal does when something goes wrong

A student goes down on the way home. A staff member or an officer arrives first. The phone is locked. Who is this kid, and how do we reach a parent right now?

Picture the moment nobody plans for. The rider is shaken, maybe hurt, maybe not old enough to explain much. The phone is locked or in a backpack. That is the problem the RidePermit decal is built for.

It is a small sticker on the frame with a QR code. Any phone camera scans it, no app, no login, and the screen answers three questions in about a second: is this permit valid, which school is this rider registered with, and what class of device is this supposed to be.

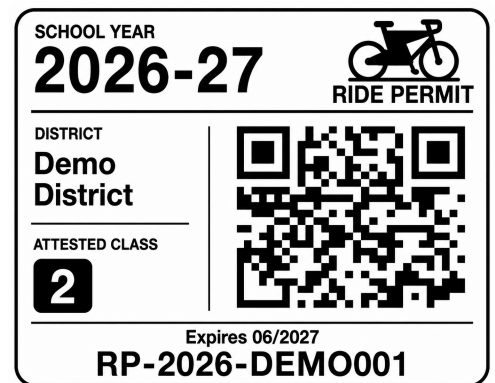
The number printed on a bike in a public rack tells the public nothing personal.

WHAT A STRANGER SEES

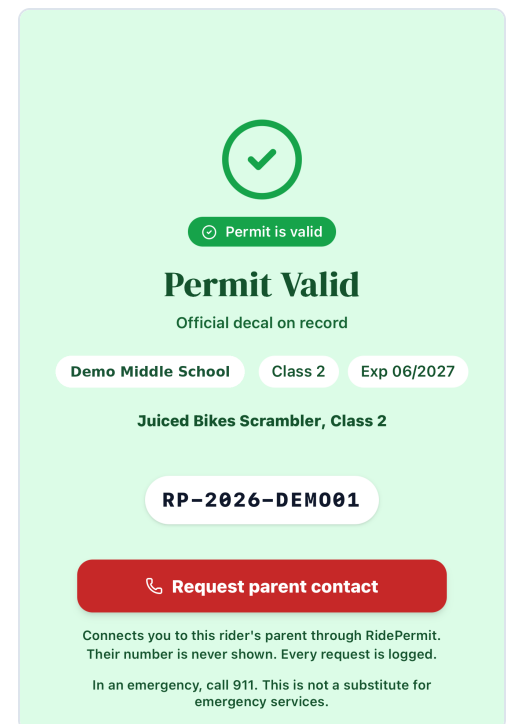
The public scan is deliberately thin. It carries no student name, no address, no photo, no phone number. A curious passerby learns that the bike belongs to a registered rider at a named school and nothing else. School staff and verified officers can see more on their own screens, but the decal itself gives nothing away.

SAY THIS TO YOUR RIDER

"If you ever get hurt or stopped, show them the sticker. They can reach me in a minute, and they will not need your phone." Kids are far more willing to carry the decal when they know what it does for them.



The decal. School year, district, attested class, permit number, and a QR code any phone can read.



The scan. Valid or not, school, class, expiry, and one button: request parent contact. No number is ever shown.

Reach the parent in seconds. Nobody gets anybody's number.

When you enroll, you can choose to add an emergency contact number and verify it with a one-time code. That number is stored on our servers only. It is never printed on the decal, never shown on the scan screen, and never sent to a phone. The scan shows a single line: emergency contact available.

1

Scan

Staff or an officer scans the decal at the scene and taps "Request parent contact."

2

Relay

Their phone dials a RidePermit relay line with a single-use code, not your number.

3

Connect

The relay rings you. You see the relay line, not the officer's personal phone.

4

Done

The code expires. No recording, no stored numbers, and a limit on repeat attempts.

A PUBLIC SCAN SHOWS

- Permit valid, expired, or not authorized
- School and district
- Device class and make
- Emergency contact available (yes or no)
- Reported stolen, if it has been

A PUBLIC SCAN NEVER SHOWS

- Student name or photo
- Home address
- Parent name or phone number
- Grade, age, or date of birth
- Anything about warnings or incidents

Why it is built this way. Officers told us they usually want to talk to a parent by phone on a juvenile stop, and many use their personal phones to do it. Parents do not want their number floating around, and neither do officers. The relay protects both sides: the person at the scene reaches you in seconds, and nobody ends up with anybody's number. If the code is wrong or reused, nothing connects.

If the bike is stolen. You report it from your account and the permit is marked. Anyone who scans that decal afterward, including a buyer looking at a used bike, sees that it is reported stolen, along with the make and model the permit was issued for. A decal moved onto a different bike does not match, and that mismatch is visible.

THREE THINGS WORTH DOING THIS WEEK

- Add and verify an emergency contact on your RidePermit account if you skipped it at signup.
- Put the decal on the frame, not the helmet or the battery cover, so it stays with the bike.
- Tell your student what the decal is for: if they are ever hurt or stopped, the adult can reach you without going through their phone.

Where you charge matters more than when

Lithium-ion battery fires are the most serious risk in e-bike ownership, and they are also the most preventable.

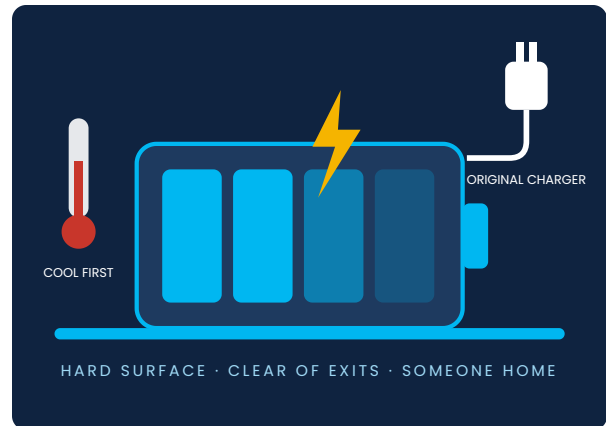
These fires start fast, burn extremely hot, and are difficult to put out with a household extinguisher. Most incidents trace back to a damaged battery, a counterfeit or mismatched charger, or a battery left charging unattended.

Heat is the accelerant. Charging a battery that is still hot from a ride, or charging in a closed garage on a hot afternoon, puts stress on cells that are already stressed. Let it cool to room temperature first.

Decide the charging spot now, as a house rule, and the school morning takes care of itself.

HOUSE RULES WORTH SETTING

- Charge on a hard, non-combustible surface, never on carpet, a bed, or a sofa.
- Never charge in a bedroom, in a hallway, or anywhere that blocks the path to an exit.
- Do not charge overnight or while nobody is home. Unplug when the charge completes.
- Use only the charger that came with the bike, from the manufacturer.
- Let a hot battery cool before plugging it in, and keep it out of direct sun.
- Do not cover a charging battery or box it in.
- Look for UL certification on the bike and the battery when buying.
- Make sure there is a working smoke alarm wherever charging happens.



The safe setup. Cool battery, the charger that came with the bike, a hard surface away from exits and bedrooms, and someone home until it is unplugged.

STOP USING THE BATTERY IMMEDIATELY IF YOU NOTICE

Swelling or a change in shape, unusual heat, an odd smell, leaking, discoloration, or popping and hissing sounds. Do not put it back on the charger. Move it away from anything flammable if it is safe to do so, and contact the manufacturer. Damaged lithium batteries go to household hazardous waste collection, never in the regular trash or a curbside recycling bin.

04

ON THE ROAD

The four situations where kids actually get hit

Crash patterns for young riders are remarkably consistent. Teaching four specific situations does more good than a general reminder to be careful.

1

Driveways and parking lot exits

Drivers pulling out watch for cars at car speed. A rider at 20 mph arrives before the driver looks twice. Slow down and cover the brakes at every driveway, and never assume eye contact means you were seen.

2

The right hook

A car passes, then turns right across the rider's path. Never pass a slowing or stopped car on the right at an intersection. Hang back where the driver can see you.

3

Riding against traffic

Riding facing cars feels safer and is far more dangerous, because drivers entering the road are not looking that direction. Always ride with traffic.

4

Headphones and phones

Hearing is how riders detect a car they cannot see. One earbud out is not a compromise worth making, and no phone in hand while moving.

ONE MORE, ABOUT THE HELMET

A helmet that is unbuckled, pushed back on the head, or two sizes too big does very little. Check the fit, not just that it is being worn. Two fingers above the eyebrows, straps in a V under each ear, and one finger between the strap and the chin.

NEXT MONTH

ISSUE TWO

Helmets that actually fit,
and the ones that do not

ALSO

What a school sees when it
scans, and what it does with
it

ASK US

Send a question to
subscribe@ridepermit.com

Get the Safety Brief every month.

One email a month. Short, practical, no product pitches. Share it with
your school's parent group, and unsubscribe any time.

ridepermit.com/newsletter



RIDE PERMIT

RidePermit helps schools and districts run e-bike and micromobility permit and safety programs. This brief is general safety information for parents, not legal advice. E-bike laws vary by state and city, so confirm the rules where you live and ride.

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