

TRANSPORTATION CODE

TITLE 7. VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC

SUBTITLE C. RULES OF THE ROAD

CHAPTER 551. OPERATION OF BICYCLES, MOPEDS, AND PLAY VEHICLES

SUBCHAPTER D. NEIGHBORHOOD ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Sec. 551.301. DEFINITION. In this subchapter, "neighborhood electric vehicle" means a vehicle that can attain a maximum speed of 35 miles per hour on a paved level surface and otherwise complies with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 500 (49 C.F.R. Section 571.500).

Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1320, Sec. 7, eff. Sept. 1, 2003; Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1325, Sec. 19.07, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 281 (H.B. 2702), Sec. 2.86, eff. June 14, 2005.

Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1242 (H.B. 1596), Sec. 2, eff. June 18, 2005.

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 722 (S.B. 129), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2009.

Reenacted by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 91 (S.B. 1303), Sec. 24.014, eff. September 1, 2011.

Sec. 551.302. REGISTRATION. The Texas Department of Motor Vehicles may adopt rules relating to the registration and issuance of license plates to neighborhood electric vehicles.

Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1320, Sec. 7, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 933 (H.B. 3097), Sec. 21.01, eff. September 1, 2009.

Sec. 551.303. OPERATION ON ROADWAYS.

(a) A neighborhood electric vehicle may be operated only on a street or highway for which the posted speed limit is 45 miles per hour or less. A neighborhood electric vehicle may cross a road or street at an intersection where the road or street has a posted speed limit of more than 45 miles per hour. A neighborhood electric vehicle may not be operated on a street or highway at a speed that exceeds the lesser of:

- (1) the posted speed limit; or
- (2) 35 miles per hour.

(b) A county or municipality may prohibit the operation of a neighborhood electric vehicle on a street or highway if the governing body of the county or municipality determines that the prohibition is necessary in the interest of safety.

(c) The Texas Department of Transportation may prohibit the operation of a neighborhood electric vehicle on a highway if that department determines that the prohibition is necessary in the interest of safety.

Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1320, Sec. 7, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 722 (S.B. 129), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2009.

Sec. 551.304. LIMITED OPERATION.

(a) An operator may operate a neighborhood electric vehicle:

- (1) in a master planned community:
 - (A) that has in place a uniform set of restrictive covenants; and
 - (B) for which a county or municipality has approved a plat;
- (2) on a public or private beach; or
- (3) on a public highway for which the posted speed limit is not more than 35 miles per hour, if the neighborhood electric vehicle is operated:
 - (A) during the daytime; and
 - (B) not more than two miles from the location where the neighborhood electric vehicle is usually parked and for transportation to or from a golf course.

(b) A person is not required to register a neighborhood electric vehicle operated in compliance with this section.

Added by Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1135 (H.B. 2741), Sec. 94, eff. September 1, 2013.

SUBCHAPTER F. GOLF CARTS AND UTILITY VEHICLES

Sec. 551.401. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

- (1) "Golf cart" and "public highway" have the meanings assigned by Section 502.001 ((18) "Golf cart" means a motor vehicle designed by the manufacturer primarily for use on a golf course.).
- (2) "Utility vehicle" means a motor vehicle that is not a golf cart or lawn mower and is:
 - (A) equipped with side-by-side seating for the use of the operator and a passenger;

- (B) designed to propel itself with at least four tires in contact with the ground;
- (C) designed by the manufacturer for off-highway use only; and
- (D) designed by the manufacturer primarily for utility work and not for recreational purposes.

Added by Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 1136 (H.B. 2553), Sec. 10, eff. September 1, 2009.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1296 (H.B. 2357), Sec. 239, eff. January 1, 2012.

Sec. 551.402. REGISTRATION NOT AUTHORIZED.

(a) The Texas Department of Motor Vehicles may not register a golf cart for operation on a public highway regardless of whether any alteration has been made to the golf cart.

(b) The Texas Department of Motor Vehicles may issue license plates for a golf cart as authorized by Subsection (c).

(c) The Texas Department of Motor Vehicles shall by rule establish a procedure to issue the license plates to be used for operation in accordance with Sections 551.403 and 551.404.

(d) The Texas Department of Motor Vehicles may charge a fee not to exceed \$10 for the cost of the license plate.

Added by Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 1136 (H.B. 2553), Sec. 10, eff. September 1, 2009.

Amended by:

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 877 (H.B. 719), Sec. 1, eff. June 14, 2013.

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1135 (H.B. 2741), Sec. 95, eff. September 1, 2013.

Sec. 551.403. LIMITED OPERATION.

(a) An operator may operate a golf cart:

(1) in a master planned community:

(A) that has in place a uniform set of restrictive covenants; and

(B) for which a county or municipality has approved a plat;

(2) on a public or private beach; or

(3) on a public highway for which the posted speed limit is not more than 35 miles per hour, if the golf cart is operated:

(A) during the daytime; and

(B) not more than two miles from the location where the golf cart is usually parked and for transportation to or from a golf course.

(b) The Texas Department of Transportation or a county or municipality may prohibit the operation of a golf cart on a public highway if the department or the governing body of the county or municipality determines that the prohibition is necessary in the interest of safety.

Added by Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 1136 (H.B. 2553), Sec. 10, eff. September 1, 2009.

Sec. 551.404. OPERATION IN MUNICIPALITIES AND CERTAIN COUNTIES.

(a) In addition to the operation authorized by Section 551.403, the governing body of a municipality may allow an operator to operate a golf cart on all or part of a public highway that:

- (1) is in the corporate boundaries of the municipality; and
- (2) has a posted speed limit of not more than 35 miles per hour.

(a-1) In addition to the operation authorized by Section 551.403, the commissioners court of a county described by Subsection (a-2) may allow an operator to operate a golf cart or utility vehicle on all or part of a public highway that:

- (1) is located in the unincorporated area of the county; and
- (2) has a speed limit of not more than 35 miles per hour.

(a-2) Subsection (a-1) applies only to a county that:

- (1) borders or contains a portion of the Red River;
- (2) borders or contains a portion of the Guadalupe River and contains a part of a barrier island that borders the Gulf of Mexico; or
- (3) is adjacent to a county described by Subdivision (2) and:
 - (A) has a population of less than 30,000; and
 - (B) contains a part of a barrier island that borders the Gulf of Mexico.

(b) A golf cart or utility vehicle operated under this section must have the following equipment:

- (1) headlamps;
- (2) taillamps;
- (3) reflectors;
- (4) parking brake; and
- (5) mirrors.

Added by Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 1136 (H.B. 2553), Sec. 10, eff. September 1, 2009.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1296 (H.B. 2357), Sec. 240, eff. January 1, 2012.

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1296 (H.B. 2357), Sec. 241, eff. January 1, 2012.

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 877 (H.B. 719), Sec. 2, eff. June 14, 2013.

Sec. 551.405. CROSSING CERTAIN ROADWAYS. A golf cart may cross intersections, including a road or street that has a posted speed limit of more than 35 miles per hour.

Added by Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 1136 (H.B. 2553), Sec. 10, eff. September 1, 2009.