



OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
TODD SPITZER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE

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MEDIA ADVISORY

Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer to Hold “Buy Back Safety” Press Conference with the Orange County E-Bike Injury Prevention Collaborative, California Office of Traffic Safety, Victims, and First Responders, Trauma Surgeons, County Supervisors, and Educators in Effort to Reduce E-Bike and E-Moto Injuries and Save Lives

Press Conference Will Kick off Orange County District Attorney’s First E-Bike and E-Moto Buy Back Event Sunday, September 13 at Angel Stadium

Santa Ana – A 20-year-old man who spent three months on life support after suffering a life-altering traumatic brain injury while riding an E-Bike in Huntington Beach will be the first participant at the Orange County District Attorney’s Office Buy Back Safety: E-Bike and E-Moto Buy Back Program on Sunday, September 13, 2026, surrendering the E-Bike he was riding when he was critically injured to send a strong message of the increasingly dangerous and deadly consequences of improperly riding E-Bikes and E-Motos.

Jesse Hayes and his mother, Kasey, have become ardent safety advocates in the wake of Jesse’s October 2024 crash and will speak at a press conference along with Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer, members of the Orange County E-Bike Injury Prevention Collaborative, the California Office of Traffic Safety, first responders, trauma surgeons, county supervisors, and educators in a statewide effort to reduce E-Bike and E-Moto injuries and save lives.

“After our 18-year-old son survived a tragic E-Bike accident that left him with a severe traumatic brain injury, our family committed to advocating for rider safety and new legislation,” said Kasey Hayes. “We are taking part in this event to raise vital awareness about E-Bike dangers and to help protect other families from going through this devastating experience.”

The Orange County District Attorney’s Office is hosting the first E-Bike and E-Moto Buy Back Program on Sunday, September 13, 2026, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Angel Stadium, offering up to \$1,000 in gift cards and tickets to a Los Angeles Angels baseball game in exchange for E-Bikes, pocket bikes, E-Scooters, mopeds, and E-Motos in an effort to reduce injuries and deaths. E-Bikes and E-Motos have become the number one reason Orange County children are admitted to the emergency room, with injuries increasing 430% in just the last four years across Southern California.

**Orange County District Attorney's Office
E-Bike and E-Moto Buy Back Program**

Sunday, September 13, 2026

PRESS CONFERENCE – 9:15 a.m. to 10 a.m.

BUY BACK PROGRAM - 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Angel Stadium

2000 E. Gene Autry Way, Anaheim, CA 92806

(Enter off Orangewood Avenue at Bus Gate next to the George Apartment Homes)

BUY BACK SAFETY PRESS CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer

Kasey Hayes and her son Jesse Hayes, who was critically injured while riding an E-Bike in Huntington Beach and continues to live with a severe traumatic brain injury.

Orange County Board of Supervisors Vice Chair Katrina Foley

Third District Supervisor Don Wagner, Orange County Board of Supervisors

Dr. Almaas Shaikh – OC Health Care Agency Deputy Health Officer, Interim EMS Medical Director, trauma surgeon, and Chair of the Orange County E-Bike Injury Prevention Collaborative

California Office of Traffic Safety Director Stephanie Dougherty

Chief Brandon Shipwash, commander of the California Highway Patrol's Border Division

Orange County Department of Education Superintendent Dr. Stefan Bean

Dennis Kuhl, the Chairman of the Los Angeles Angels and President of the Angels Baseball Foundation

Huntington Beach Police Department Sgt. Mike Thomas

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Patterned after law enforcement gun buyback programs, the Orange County District Attorney's Office's BUY BACK SAFETY: E-Bike and E-Moto Buy Back Program will offer gift cards from Target, Walmart, Dick's Sporting Goods, and Best Buy in exchange for E-Bikes, pocket bikes, E-Scooters, and E-Motos ranging from \$200 to \$1,000 depending on the classification of the vehicle as determined by law enforcement on site. Store bought pocket bikes as well as homemade miniature bikes equipped with electric or gas-powered motors will also be accepted. The District Attorney's Office is utilizing federal asset forfeiture monies which are funds seized from criminal enterprises to pay for the gift cards. Orange County Board of Supervisors Vice Chair Katrina Foley has also contributed \$5,000 in discretionary funding to buy gift cards for the buy back event.

“These vehicles are not child’s play, and the consequences are incredibly dangerous and increasingly deadly,” said Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer. “This event is sparking conversations about E-Bike and E-Moto safety like never before, and those conversations will hopefully lead to increased rider responsibility, education, and accountability. I’m proud of the efforts we have made collectively as a community, from first responders to medical professionals to educators, community advocates, parents, and prosecutors to address this issue from all different angles with a singular goal: to reduce injuries and save lives.”

“High powered E-Bikes and E-Motos can cause catastrophic injuries in seconds, especially when children ride vehicles built for speeds they cannot safely handle,” said Orange County Board of Supervisors Katrina Foley. “I led the County of Orange’s efforts to strengthen E-Bike safety rules, expanded enforcement resources, and supported stronger state laws. This buy back event gives parents a practical way to get dangerous vehicles out of their homes before another preventable crash causes a life-changing injury or death.”

**Orange County District Attorney’s Office
E-Bike and E-Moto Buy Back Program Trade in Values**

Pocket bikes/Homemade miniature bikes - \$200 in gift cards

Class 1 E-Bike/E-Scooter/Moped - \$300 in gift cards

Class 2 E-Bike - \$400 in gift cards

Class 3 E-Bike - \$600 in gift cards

E-Moto - \$1,000 in gift cards

The first 75 people to turn in their E-Bike, E-Moto, pocket bike, or E-Scooter will also receive two tickets to a Los Angeles Angels baseball game, generously donated by the Angels. In addition to the buyback packages, the September 13 event will also feature free giveaways and E-Bike safety information from local law enforcement, fire departments, healthcare, and community partners.

Gift card quantities are limited and will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. E-vehicles can be surrendered anonymously. Working and non-working vehicles will be accepted, and no questions will be asked.

Among the agencies participating in the Buy Back Safety: E-Bike and E-Moto Buy Back Program are the police departments of Anaheim, Brea, California State University, Fullerton (CSUF), Cypress, Fullerton, Fountain Valley, Garden Grove, Huntington Beach, Irvine, La Habra, Laguna Beach, La Palma, Los Alamitos, Orange, Placentia, Seal Beach, and Westminster, along with the California Highway Patrol, the California Office of Traffic Safety, Anaheim Fire & Rescue, and the Orange County Fire Authority. Providence Mission Hospital, Riverside University Health System, Rady Children’s Health, Orange County Global Medical Center, UCI, the Automobile Club of Southern California, Memorial Care, and OC Health Care Agency are also participating.

In May 2026, Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer announced the creation of a new E-Bike/E-Moto unit – RIDE SAFELY (Smart Accountability for E-Bikes and E-Motos and Law Enforcement for Youth) to review all potential criminal charges against juveniles and adults, including parents who knowingly allow their children to illegally ride E-Motos and E-Bikes. The unit is part of the District Attorney’s multi-pronged approach to reducing E-Bike and E-Moto injuries and saving lives along with increased education, prosecution of riders and their parents, pursuing additional legislation, and holding manufacturers and retailers accountable.

Since January, the Orange County District Attorney's Office has filed child endangerment charges against four parents for allowing their children to illegally ride E-Motos, including filing involuntary manslaughter charges against a mother after her 14-year-old son hit and killed an 81-year-old Vietnam veteran in Lake Forest after she had been repeatedly warned that the E-Moto he was riding was illegal and that she could be held criminally liable. She faces a maximum sentence of seven years and eight months in state prison if convicted.

The Orange County District Attorney's Office has also filed felony charges against a Yorba Linda father whose 12-year-old son was critically injured after he ran a red light and was hit by a car while riding an E-Moto which had been modified to go up to 60 miles per hour, after the boy and his father had been warned about the dangers of children riding E-Moto illegally. He faces a maximum sentence of six years in state prison if convicted on all counts.

Last month, District Attorney Spitzer issued formal warning letters to more than 80 Orange County retailers reiterating their legal duties in connection with selling E-Bike and E-Motos and the potential criminal and civil penalties they could face if they fail to fulfill those duties. California strictly prohibits the sale of products or devices that can modify the speed capability of an electric bicycle so that it no longer meets the definition of an electric bicycle. Retailers will be subject to periodic inspections by Orange County District Attorney investigators to ensure they are following the law.

More than 100 deaths have been attributed to E-Bikes and E-Motos in the United States, including a 15-year-old boy who was riding on the back of an E-Motos in La Habra, a 13-year-old boy who was killed while riding an E-Moto in Garden Grove, and a 21-year-old who died five days after crashing an E-Bike in Huntington Beach. Children between the ages of 11 and 14 account for 61.7% of E-Moto crashes even though children under the age of 16 are legally prohibited from riding E-Moto, according to the California Statewide Integrated Traffic Record System (SWITRS).

"E-bikes offer a different experience than the traditional bikes many of us learned to ride on," California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) Director Stephanie Dougherty said. "They are faster, heavier, and, like learning to drive, require training and practice to operate safely. With the continued surge in popularity of E-Bikes as a convenient and sustainable mobility option, we encourage drivers and riders to make safety part of their everyday travel routine."

To help riders better understand how to operate E-Bikes safely and responsibly, the California Highway Patrol developed a [free online e-bike safety and training program](#) available to riders of all ages and skill levels. The program provides practical information on E-Bike laws, rules of the road, safety equipment, roadway hazards, and safe-riding practices.

"Education is one of our most powerful tools for preventing crashes before they happen," said CHP Chief Brandon Shipwash. "As E-Bikes become an increasingly popular way to travel, we want riders, especially young riders, to understand the rules, recognize the risks, and develop safe habits every time they ride. Through education, community outreach, and enforcement, the CHP is working to make California's roads safer for everyone."

California law distinguishes between E-Bikes and E-Motos based on three main features: the power limit of its motor, its maximum speed limit, and whether it is equipped with operable pedals. Electric bicycles with Class 1 or Class 2 designations do not have rider age or licensing restrictions; E-Bikes with Class 3 designations require riders to be aged 16 or older.

To help the public understand the different rules for E-Bike use, the OTS has launched a new “Know Your Bike, Know the Rules” statewide social media campaign. Messages will run through Sept. 20 that emphasize the differences between E-Bikes and E-Motos, the E-Bike classes and helmet requirements, and tips for drivers and riders on safe road interactions. Visit the Go Safely, California website to download the social media toolkit.

Generally, an electric bike that does not qualify as Class 1, 2 or 3, will be classified as an electric motorcycle. That means either that the bike has an electric motor that exceeds 750 watts of power or can reach speeds higher than 20-mph on motor power alone. Additionally, if the bike is not equipped with fully operable pedals, or if it has been modified to reach speeds higher than 20-mph or to attain power higher than 750 watts, the bike cannot be designated an electric bike and instead would be considered an E-Moto.

E-Motos must be registered with the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) as an off-highway use vehicle (OHV), have current insurance, and can only be ridden off public highways by a rider over the age of 16 with a valid motorcycle license and a DOT-approved helmet. Riders who do not fit the legally required criteria can be cited and have their vehicle impounded at a cost in excess of \$2,600 a month.

“Between the work we’ve done in Huntington Beach and the training I’ve been involved with across California, one thing is clear: if we want kids to be safer on E-Bikes, we have to give them the right skills, make sure parents understand what they’re buying, and hold riders accountable when they make dangerous choices,” said Huntington Beach Police Sgt. Mike Thomas.

State leaders have developed an e-bike guide with an inventory of best practices and resources from local agencies, such as school-based trainings, policies, safety pledges, and other educational materials. To learn more, visit gosafelyca.org. The CHP has also developed a ready reference guide for law enforcement officers and issued an [Information Bulletin for Allied Agencies](#) with applicable California Vehicle Code definitions and requirements.

To help keep all road users safe, local, and state leaders offer the following tips for drivers and riders:

Drivers

- Follow the posted speed limit.
- Slow down at intersections as E-Bikes can move faster than traditional bikes and enter your blind spot quickly.
- When possible, change lanes to allow a minimum of three feet when passing bicyclists

E-Bike Riders

- Ride in the same direction as traffic.
- Stop at stop signs and signals. The same rules of the road for vehicles apply to E-Bikes.
- Always wear a properly fitted bicycle helmet, regardless of your age or the type of bike you're riding.
- Get familiar with the different E-Bike classes, top speed and motor assist features, and rules for E-Bike use. Some counties, cities, and local authorities may have specific ordinances and/or resolutions.

For a summary of updated E-Bike laws and ordinances in Orange County, visit the [Orange County Transportation Authority \(OCTA\) website.](#)

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