

On May 22 the Governor signed SB449 which created a new definition for an autocycle in Texas. The bill became effective immediately. Below are some common questions regarding the new autocycle registration, licensing and operation in Texas. In addition the Motorcycle Safety Unit in ETR regulates and sets rules for motorcycle training in Texas and publishes information on motorcycle, autocycle and ATV definitions and requirements chart for your review and dissemination.

What is the definition of an autocycle?

The definition of an autocycle is: "autocycle" means a motor vehicle, other than a tractor, that is:

- (1) designed to have when propelled not more than three wheels on the ground;
- (2) equipped with a steering wheel;
- (3) equipped with seating that does not require the operator to straddle or sit astride the seat; and
- (4) manufactured and certified to comply with federal safety requirements for a motorcycle.

What type of driver license is required for an autocycle?

SB449 amends TRC Chapter 521 where an autocycle can be operated on a Class C license. This is because an autocycle is stable, has a steering wheel, and uses traditional throttle and brakes like a motor vehicle does.

What type of license plate is on an autocycle?

For purposes of titling, registration, and inspection an autocycle will be considered a motorcycle. This is because the autocycle cannot meet the definition of a motor vehicle as required by federal statutes (airbag, crash ratings, enclosed, etc). The autocycle can meet the federal definition of a motorcycle as built so that is why the manufacturer can issue a certificate for a motorcycle.

Do riders of an autocycle need to wear a helmet?

Yes, SB449 amends the helmet section requiring a helmet. The standard exemption from the helmet requirement of having sufficient insurance also applies to an autocycle. Peace officers cannot stop a motorcycle or autocycle for the sole purpose of determining if a rider is in compliance with this section.

The autocycle is equipped with a safety restraint system, are riders required to wear the safety restraint system?

State law does not require riders to put on the restraint system, but riders should comply with the manufacturer's suggestions for safe operation.

Does an autocycle have to have footrests and handholds like a motorcycle?

No, SB449 exempts the autocycle from the footrest and handhold requirement.

Can a child ride in an autocycle?

SB449 amends section TRC 545.416 to state that passengers may only ride in the seat of an autocycle, and an operator may not carry another person in an autocycle unless that person is at least 5 years old.

What are the rules of the road for a motorcycle such as speed limit and lane operation?

The autocycle must be operated in the same manner as a regular motor vehicle for purposes of TRC Subtitle C Rules of The Road.

What does an autocycle look like?

Here is one example of a vehicle that meets the current definition:



Additional information on the Motorcycle Safety Program can be found at <http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/msb/documents/VDRchart.pdf>