

RCW 46.61.725 Neighborhood electric vehicles. (1) Absent prohibition by local authorities authorized under this section and except as prohibited elsewhere in this section, a person may operate a neighborhood electric vehicle upon a highway of this state having a speed limit of thirty-five miles per hour or less, or forty-five miles per hour or less as provided in subsection (4) of this section, if:

(a) The person does not operate a neighborhood electric vehicle upon state highways that are listed in chapter 47.17 RCW along segments where the posted speed limit exceeds thirty miles per hour;

(b) The person does not operate a neighborhood electric vehicle upon a highway of this state without first having obtained and having in full force and effect a current and proper vehicle registration and display vehicle license plates in compliance with chapter 46.16A RCW. The department must track neighborhood electric vehicles in a separate registration category for reporting purposes;

(c) The person does not operate a neighborhood electric vehicle upon a highway of this state without first obtaining a valid driver's license issued to Washington residents in compliance with chapter 46.20 RCW;

(d) The person does not operate a neighborhood electric vehicle subject to registration under chapter 46.16A RCW on a highway of this state unless the person is insured under a motor vehicle liability policy in compliance with chapter 46.30 RCW; and

(e) The person operating a neighborhood electric vehicle does not cross a roadway with a speed limit in excess of thirty-five miles per hour, or forty-five miles per hour as provided in subsection (4) of this section, unless the crossing begins and ends on a roadway with a speed limit of thirty-five miles per hour or less, or forty-five miles per hour or less as provided in subsection (4) of this section, and occurs at an intersection of approximately ninety degrees, except that the operator of a neighborhood electric vehicle must not cross an uncontrolled intersection of streets and highways that are part of the state highway system subject to Title 47 RCW unless that intersection has been authorized by local authorities provided elsewhere in this section.

(2) Any person who violates this section commits a traffic infraction.

(3) This section does not prevent local authorities, with respect to streets and highways under their jurisdiction and within the reasonable exercise of their police power, from regulating the operation of neighborhood electric vehicles on streets and highways under their jurisdiction by resolution or ordinance of the governing body, if the regulation is consistent with the provisions of this title, except that:

(a) Local authorities may not authorize the operation of neighborhood electric vehicles on streets and highways that are part of the state highway system subject to the provisions of Title 47 RCW along segments where the posted speed limit exceeds thirty miles per hour;

(b) Local authorities may not prohibit the operation of neighborhood electric vehicles upon highways of this state having a speed limit of twenty-five miles per hour or less; and

(c) Local authorities are prohibited from establishing any requirements for the registration of neighborhood electric vehicles.

(4) In counties consisting of islands whose only connection to the mainland are ferry routes, a person may operate a neighborhood electric vehicle upon a highway of this state having a speed limit of

forty-five miles per hour or less. A person operating a neighborhood electric vehicle as authorized under this subsection must not cross a roadway with a speed limit in excess of forty-five miles per hour, unless the crossing begins and ends on a roadway with a speed limit of forty-five miles per hour or less and occurs at an intersection of approximately ninety degrees, except that the operator of a neighborhood electric vehicle must not cross an uncontrolled intersection of streets and highways that are part of the state highway system subject to Title 47 RCW unless that intersection has been authorized by local authorities under subsection (3) of this section.

(5) Accidents must be recorded and tracked in compliance with chapter 46.52 RCW. An accident report must indicate and be tracked separately when any of the vehicles involved are a neighborhood electric vehicle. [2016 c 17 s 2; 2011 c 171 s 83; 2010 c 144 s 3; 2003 c 353 s 3.]

Effective date—2016 c 17: See note following RCW 46.61.723.

Intent—Effective date—2011 c 171: See notes following RCW 4.24.210.

Effective date—2003 c 353: See note following RCW 46.04.320.