

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Recently some Clinton residents have asked about driving golf carts on city streets. We hope this little "Q and A" will provide the information you need.

Q. Can I drive my Golf Cart on the streets of Clinton?

A. Yes if It meets all the requirements in Tennessee Law TCA 55-8-101, TCA 55-8-191 and the standards contained in 49 CFR 571.500. A traditional golf cart as defined by Tennessee Law TCA 55-1-123 can not be driven on a public roadway, street alleys or sidewalks. Only after the golf cart meets the standards it can be classified as a low or medium speed vehicle as defined in Tennessee Law.

Q. What is a "Low or Medium Speed Vehicle"?

A. Tennessee Law TCA 55-8-101 defines a low speed vehicle as a four-wheeled electric powered vehicle whose top speed is greater than 20 MPH but less than 25 MPH and has met all the safety standards listed in 49 CFR 571.500. A medium speed vehicle is described as a four-wheeled electric or gas powered vehicle whose top speed is greater than 30 MPH but less than 35 MPH and has met all the safety standards listed in 49 CFR 571.500.

Q. What are the standards that will make my golf cart street legal?

A. Federal Regulation requires all low and medium speed vehicles to have basic safety equipment, including head lamps, stop lamps, front and rear turn signals, tail lamps, reflectors (one red on each side near the rear and one red on the back), parking brake, exterior mirror, a windshield meeting the standards outlined in 49 CFR 571.205, seatbelts (type 1 or 2) located at each designated seating position, and a vehicle identification number (VIN). Only after the golf cart meets the basic safety standards listed above it can be considered a low or medium speed vehicles. Always refer to www.nhtsa.gov.

Q. Who can drive a modified golf cart (low or medium speed vehicles) on a public road or street?

A. The operator must have a valid class D Drivers License in their possession while operating the vehicle and subject to the requirements outlined by law regarding the proper and safe operation of the vehicle. The operator must have proof of valid insurance.

Q. Does my modified golf cart (low and medium speed vehicles) need to be registered before driving on the street?

A. Yes, to register a low or medium speed vehicle, designed and manufactured for on road use, applicants should provide to their local county clerk's office a copy of the vehicle's MSO (manufacturer's statement of origin), as proof that the vehicle meets all statutory requirements and safety standards, along with the traditional documentation required for vehicle registration. Applicants must submit the low speed vehicle affidavit form (RV-F1314301) with their registration application when there is no MSO indicating the vehicle is a low speed vehicle. The low speed affidavit form is available on the Web site, www.tn.gov/revenue.

Q. Where can I drive my modified golf cart (low and medium speed vehicles)?

A. You may only operate your modified golf cart (low and medium speed vehicles) on streets where the posted speed limit is 35 MPH or less. You may cross a road or street that has a speed limit more than 35 MPH but only at an intersection. You can not operate your vehicle on sidewalks or private property without the owner's permission. The owner of a modified golf cart will be responsible for damages that his/her cart causes.