



Chatham-Kent Accessibility Advisory Committee

Important Road Safety Tips for Motorized Personal Mobility Device Users

Safe choices begin with your choice of power pedestrian mobility device

Before buying a power pedestrian mobility device, be sure to check with an occupational therapist or physiotherapist to ensure that the model you select best meets your needs. Most suppliers will bring different power pedestrian mobility devices to you so that you can try them before making your purchase.

Three-wheeled power pedestrian mobility devices are designed for maximum maneuverability and are mainly used indoors. Four-wheeled models are recommended for outdoor use where you are likely to encounter uneven terrain.

Considerations when purchasing your power pedestrian mobility device

Before you purchase a power pedestrian mobility device, consider the following elements:

- Size: Consider ease of operation, turning ability, suitability of the wheel size for the terrain you will be travelling on (i.e., indoors, outdoors or both), and the size of elevator doors and the width of hallways and doorways at the places you travel frequently.
- Power: How far can you travel before the battery needs re-charging?
- Braking System: How long does it take to stop the power pedestrian mobility device?
- Parking/Storage: Where will the power pedestrian mobility device be stored? Is there an electrical outlet available in the storage area for charging your power pedestrian mobility device?
- Transport: see the "Transporting your power pedestrian mobility device" section for more details.

Learn to use your power pedestrian mobility device

It is essential that you know how to operate your power pedestrian mobility device properly before venturing out into the public. When you first purchase your power pedestrian mobility device, find a quiet parking lot and practice there. Once you feel comfortable that you can safely operate your power pedestrian mobility device, find a friend who will travel with you on foot or power pedestrian mobility device for your first few trips.

In addition, make sure you read the manual and any other safety information that may be supplied with your mobility device.

Think safe! Obey traffic rules for pedestrians

By law, a person using a motorized power pedestrian mobility device is classified as a pedestrian. Therefore, when you are operating your power pedestrian mobility device on a roadway, you must obey all the rules for pedestrians such as:

- Use sidewalks wherever possible. If there are no sidewalks or if sidewalks do not have accessible curb cuts, travel on the far left side of the road facing traffic.
- Cross at pedestrian crosswalks. Check for traffic before crossing.
- If there is no crosswalk available, stop, look both ways, and proceed only when all approaching vehicles have come to a full stop
- Make “eye contact” with motorists or pedestrians before crossing their path to confirm their intention to stop
- Obey all traffic control signs and
- Devices
- Use caution when travelling in parking
- Lots look for back-up lights.

Operation of scooters/power chairs in bicycle lanes is prohibited when a sidewalk is available.

Be a courteous pedestrian

- Slow down when traveling around pedestrians and avoid traveling too closely behind or obstructing them
- Keep to the right on sidewalks and avoid honking your horn. Ask people to let you pass.
- If you meet a friend, pull to the side to let other pedestrians pass more easily
- Use caution when traveling close to store fronts. If you are too close to a building, someone could walk into you as they are leaving the building.

Transporting your power pedestrian mobility device

It is important to choose a power pedestrian mobility device that can be carried easily by car, van or transit. Ask the vendor the following:

- Can it be transported by car, van or taxi?
- Does it require disassembling in order to be transported in the trunk of a vehicle?
- Is it transportable by CKtransit buses? The maximum outside dimensions recommended by CKtransit are:
- Length: 122 cm (48 in)
- Width: 61 cm (24 in)
- Weight: 364 kg (800 lbs) (combined weight including driver, assistant & mobility aid)
- Does it have tie-downs so it can be secured down in a taxi, CKtransit bus?

Safe maneuvering of curb cuts

Take curb cuts, driveways and ramps “head on” and always drive on the most level area of the curb cut, even if it means moving outside of the crosswalk lines. If you drive sideways on a curb cut, you could tip over.

Know your area

Get familiar with the most navigable routes in your neighbourhood. Be aware of the locations of curbs that do not have curb cuts or streets that do not have sidewalks so you can avoid these routes if possible by planning ahead. Allow yourself plenty of time as you may need to take an alternative route if unforeseeable circumstances arise, such as construction. You may need to cross the street, take another route or even backtrack.

Be visible

Be aware that when you are traveling by power pedestrian mobility device you are at a height disadvantage to the other users of the road and sidewalk. Make sure you and your power pedestrian mobility device have the following safety features:

- Brightly coloured and/or reflective clothing
- Reflective strips on front, sides and back of power pedestrian mobility device
- Light on front of power pedestrian mobility device
- Light on back of power pedestrian mobility device
- Fluorescent orange bike flag attached to the back seat of the power pedestrian mobility device – **“It’s the law”**.

Be prepared for unexpected circumstances

Carry a cellular phone or enough change to make a phone call from a pay phone and carry phone numbers in case you encounter unexpected circumstances. You may want to tape emergency phone numbers onto your power pedestrian mobility device.

Know where the Free Wheel Lever is on your Personal Mobility Device and how to use it.

In an emergency situation, attract the attention of passers-by and ask them to phone for help. In Chatham-Kent, you can dial “911” for emergency assistance.

Keep your valuables safe—take keys with you, keep valuables out of reach of casual “snatch” thefts, store purse, wallet and purchases safely.

For more information contact:

Municipality of Chatham-Kent
315 King St. W., Chatham ON N7M 5K9

Transportation Division.....519-360-1998
CKtransit Service519-436-3233

Special thanks to the City of Richmond for allowing use of their document to create this brochure.

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