

MOTORISED WHEELCHAIRS (SCOOTERS)

Information Fact Sheet



The National Road Rules defines motorised wheelchairs (commonly referred to as a scooter) as any powered three or four wheel mobility aid which weigh less than 110kgs and are not capable of travelling more than 10km/h.

NRMA answers some of the frequently asked questions about scooters.

WHERE CAN THEY BE USED?

Motorised wheelchairs/scooters are able to go anywhere a pedestrian is able eg. footpaths, shopping malls, nature strips and roads - since these mobility aids can travel faster than walking pace, users need to slow down in congested areas. Roads can be used when no other option is practical.

CAN MOTORISED WHEELCHAIR/SCOOTERS BE USED INDOORS?

Yes, but they may be difficult to manoeuvre in tight locations – a compact electric wheelchair is more manoeuvrable than the larger powered scooter for these locations.

DO YOU NEED A LICENCE OR MEDICAL EXAMINATION TO OPERATE?

No. However, you should speak to your GP or local community occupational therapist before buying one. It's important that you can judge speed and distance and react quickly.

WHAT MODELS ARE AVAILABLE?

There are a variety of types on the market including three and four wheel models. We suggest that you test drive several in your local environment to ensure you purchase the right one for your needs.

DO YOU NEED TO ATTEND A TRAINING COURSE TO LEARN HOW TO USE?

No. But it's important to know how to operate it safely. Some retailers do offer support, but not all. Approach your local council to see if they offer any training courses.

HOW TO PLAN A SAFE ROUTE?

Whenever practicable use footpaths or nature strips. The road should be a last option as scooters aren't designed for roads or mixing with traffic. Try to plan a route that allows you remain on the footpath for all or most of your journey and keep to the left. When on the road keep as close as possible to the side of the road. If you use the road regularly, consider wearing a helmet.

SAFETY TIPS:

- Display a safety flag to improve visibility
- Use rear view mirrors to check what's happening around you
- Belt up to improve your safety
- Install lights and reflectors especially if the scooter is to be used at night
- Travel over bumps at an angle rather than head-on, for better stability
- Use your horn to get attention

WHAT IF MY MOTORISED WHEELCHAIR/SCOOTER BREAKS DOWN?

NRMA Road Service can assist with minor repairs to get you moving. For more major repairs, contact the manufacturer or retailer. (ph 13 11 11)

INSURANCE - ARE YOU COVERED?

Yes cover is available, but you need to know all the facts. There are two types of cover you need to consider:

Firstly, property cover against your motorised wheelchair/scooter being stolen or damaged. Secondly, public liability cover should you injure or damage the property of others.

Motorised wheelchair users are covered by the Nominal Defendant Scheme in NSW against injury they may cause others on road and road related areas. For more information about the scheme, contact the Motor Accident Authority (MAA).

NRMA research indicates that public liability cover provided through your home contents insurance is likely to be your best option, but not all insurers offer this extended cover. Ask the following questions of your insurer.

- Will your policy cover my motorised wheelchair/scooter if it is damaged or stolen?
- Will your policy also provide cover for damage my motorised wheelchair/scooter may cause others including personal and property damage?
- Does the cover extend 'outside the site (my home) and within Australia' and what is the value of this cover? (typically it should be \$10m)
- Are there any exemptions?

USEFUL CONTACTS

NRMA Motoring & Services (NRMA)

General Enquires 132 132
Road Service 13 11 11
Web: www.mynrma.com.au

Motor Accidents Authority

Tel: 1300 137 131
Web: www.maa.nsw.gov.au

Council on the Ageing

NSW: (02) 9286 3860 ACT: (02) 6282 3777
Web: www.cota.org.au

Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA)

Tel: 1300 137 302
Web: www.rta.nsw.gov.au

Standards Australia

Tel: (02) 8206 6000
Web: www.standards.com.au

Department of Veterans' Affairs

Tel: 133 254
Web: www.dva.gov.au

Independent Living Centre

NSW: 1300 885 886 ACT: (02) 6205 1900
Web: www.ilcnsw.com.au

Scooter Australia

Tel: 1300622633
Web: www.scootersaus.com.au

NRMA Insurance

Tel: 132 132
Web: www.nrma.com.au

visit www.mynrma.com.au



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