



**City
of
Milwaukee**

*INTERDEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE
LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU
RESEARCH & ANALYSIS SECTION*

M E M O

To: Ald. Tony Zielinski
From: Mary Turk, Fiscal Review Analyst - Senior
Date: 1/7/08
Subject: Electric Vehicles on City Streets

The following is in response to your request for information about the use of electric vehicles similar to golf carts being driven on city streets:

State statutes only allow for up to one mile of highway to be designated for golf carts and that must be “to and from a golf course” (s. 349.18 (1) (c), Wis. Stats.). A highway is by definition “all public ways and thoroughfares and bridges on same” (s. 340.01 (22), Wis. Stats.).

However, there are what are referred to as “Neighborhood Electric Vehicles” (NEVs) that are designed for drivers traveling short distances and are compact, low-speed vehicles powered by rechargeable batteries and electric motors. Some NEVs are similar in size to golf carts but often include additional features. Enacted in 2005, Wisconsin Act 329 authorizes local units of government by ordinance to allow NEVs to operate on roads under their jurisdiction “on a roadway that has a speed limit of 35 miles per hour or less.” According to s. 340.01 (36r), Wis. Stats, a “neighborhood electric vehicle” means a self-propelled motor vehicle that has successfully completed the neighborhood electric vehicle America test program conducted by the federal department of energy, and that conforms to the definition and requirements for low-speed vehicles as adopted in the federal motor vehicle safety standards” and does not include a golf cart. However, there is a special title and license plate application that must be applied for before they are able to do so. (See attached form.) The Wisconsin Department of Transportation has issued a special report on NEVs that I have attached for your review. Note, however, it is dated November 9, 2006 and therefore is somewhat outdated.

I hope this information will prove useful to you. Please feel free to contact me at x8680 with any questions or for further data.

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