

## CURRENT MICROMOBILITY SAFETY ISSUES AND PUBLIC IMPACT



FEBRUARY 2019

Title/Topic: **Cities wising up to disruptive dockless transportation tech: 'Why should they use our public right of way to become billionaires?'** (Geekwire)

- "They're contributing to congestion, they're using public facilities, streets, curbs everything else, and we get nothing for it. We want to incur a fee on rides."
- "The legal hook we have to regulate these is either traffic safety or public safety," Bradway said. "That's all we've got."
- "The key takeaway from the discussion: cities are getting savvier, looking ahead more strategically and acting faster when it comes to the companies building businesses on their streets."

<https://www.geekwire.com/2019/cities-wising-disruptive-transportation-tech-use-public-right-way-become-billionaires/>

Title/Topic: **City of San Diego sees Sharp increase in scooter-related citations in 2018 (ABC 10News)**

- "San Diego Police gave out nearly 3,200 electric scooter-related citations in 2018, a dramatic increase over previous years. 2018 marked the first full year of operation for numbers dockless bike companies, including Lime and Bird. "
- "10News obtained records compiled by the San Diego Police Department with revealing information about the proliferation of the scooters. The most commonly ticketed infraction was riding without a helmet, which induced more than 2,300 citations. "
- "The increase in citations coincides with an increase of injuries in scooter-related accidents. "Scooter injuries are very common," Sharp Rees-Stealy Urgent Care Doctor Shahed Samadi told 10News. "I see them on a daily basis."

<https://www.10news.com/news/local-news/san-diego-news/sharp-increase-in-scooter-related-citations-in-2018>

Title/Topic: **1,545 cases of emergency rooms visits, deaths, head injuries and hospitalizations in 2018 from dockless scooter injuries - 23 Hospitals surveyed by Consumer Reports responding (Consumer Reports/Business Insider)**

- "An investigation by Consumer Reports has revealed that there have been at least 1,545 accidents in the US involving electric scooters over the past year. A large concern has been safety. "
- "Lime and Bird both emphasize safety on their websites, and advise riders to wear helmets — which are not provided with the scooters themselves. At the same, Bird was also a major proponent of a California law, passed in September 2018, which removed the legal requirement for scooter riders to wear helmets. "
- "As no national data on scooter crashes currently exists, CR sent requests for information off to medical facilities. 60 facilities responded, of which 23 were able to provide information. They reported treating 1,545 patients for scooter-related injuries over the past year. "
- "The other 37 hospitals were unable to provide CR with information either because they don't track scooter injuries, lack the capability to do so, or they had no reports of injuries on file."

<https://www.businessinsider.com/minimum-of-1500-us-e-scooter-injuries-in-2018-2019-2>

Title/Topic: **1,000 Lime e-scooters removed from streets because of violations (NBC Austin)**

- "As of Monday, 1,000 fewer e-scooters will be on the streets of Austin. The city ordered Lime to remove 20 percent of its fleet for 30 days."
- "Austin said Lime had too many scooters in the downtown area on five different times between Nov. 14 and Nov. 20. Part of the city code prohibits it from having more than 500 scooters in that area because it can be a safety issue. "
- "As many as 624 units more than their authorized allowance were documented," Austin Transportation Department Director Rob Spillar wrote in a memo. He added that Lime was told it had too many scooters, but didn't do anything about it."

<https://www.kxan.com/news/local/austin/1-000-lime-e-scooters-removed-from-streets-because-of-violation/1627224871>

Title/Topic: **Reports of Lime scooters catching fire leads to company pulling them off the streets (CBS)**

- “Concerns over safety forced Lime, the company who produces Limebikes, to pull some of its electric scooters off the street. There are reports that some are catching on fire.”
- “Lime says batteries made by the company behind the Segway scooters can smolder, and in some cases, catch fire.”

<https://wsbt.com/news/local/reports-of-lime-scooters-catching-fire-leads-to-company-pulling-them-off-the-streets>

Title/Topic: **Lime is Recalling Scooters Because They Might Fall Apart Mid-Use**

- “The electric scooter fiasco has been, uh, quite the entertaining one to watch. Whether it be Lime, Bird, or any of the other e-scooter situations that have resulted in mass annoyance, banning, and destruction, there have been plenty of storylines to follow. Now, there’s a new one. Namely, Lime scooters might be falling apart under their users.”
- “Lime is recalling a specific model from each of its cities because the damn things could collapse right underneath you. And yes, for the record, that’s the same exact Lime whose scooters are already prone to battery fires. Yikes!”

<https://jalopnik.com/lime-is-recalling-scooters-because-they-might-fall-apar-1830394408>

Title/Topic: **Fort Lauderdale boy killed riding an electric scooter during first month of scooter operations in the city**

- Paramedics said the boy was riding a Lime electric scooter. Last month, several electric scooters companies began offering services in Fort Lauderdale.

<https://www.local10.com/news/local/fort-lauderdale/boy-riding-electric-scooter-critically-injured-in-hit-and-run-crash>

Title/Topic: **Injuries are the untold part of the scooter trend, doctors and victims say (San Francisco Chronicle)**

- “Injuries are the part of the electric scooter story that hasn’t yet been fully told. No one has an official count, but doctors in many cities are sharing anecdotes about people being sideswiped, brakes failing and riders colliding with cars or hitting pedestrians when they illegally scoot on sidewalks. As the incidents pile up, companies and lawmakers are fiercely debating who should be held liable.”
- “The accident trend emerged almost as soon as the motorized scooters dropped onto city streets this spring, said Christopher Colwell, chief of emergency medicine at San Francisco General Hospital. Riders have come in with wounds ranging from broken wrists to potentially fatal cranial bleeding after smashups with cars, he said. Working the night shift on a recent Friday, Colwell saw three injured e-scooter riders. Two had concussions. None had worn a helmet.”
- “The crash happened in a split second, when a Lime scooter zipped down a busy sidewalk in Oakland’s Uptown neighborhood and slammed into 2-year-old Carter Sarmiento. He went hurtling backward, landing on the cement near Valley Street and Grand Avenue. “We were just walking out of the lobby of our apartment building, and we didn’t think to look both ways, crossing the sidewalk,” Sarmiento said.”

[https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/Injuries-are-the-untold-part-of-the-scooter-13219335.php?utm\\_source=email&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=newsletter&utm\\_campaign=sfc\\_morningreport](https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/Injuries-are-the-untold-part-of-the-scooter-13219335.php?utm_source=email&utm_medium=email&utm_content=newsletter&utm_campaign=sfc_morningreport)

Title/Topic: **Lime scooters retreat from Tempe AZ after city enacts ordinances to protect public and monetize public ROW usage by private companies (USA Today/AZ Central)**

- “The Tempe City Council unanimously approved last month new licensing fees and staging regulations that, among other requirements, would require companies operating in the city to pay an annual right-of-way use license fee of \$7,888 in addition to paying \$1.06 per scooter or bike per day to stage the vehicles in the right-of-way.”

- “The agreement also included an indemnity clause that freed Tempe from any liability related to an accident or injury even if the city was found to be negligent. Tempe said while it's unfortunate Lime felt the regulations forced the company out, the city believes the requirements are appropriate for the continued operation of shared vehicles in the city. “
- "The city does believe the insurance, fees and other requirements are fair and necessary to ensure the scooter companies operate in a way that ensures community safety and equal access," the city said in an emailed statement.
- **“An indemnity provision in Tempe’s license states that riding a scooter is “inherently hazardous.” If the companies were to sign off on the agreement, the companies would be required to admit riding a scooter is dangerous, causing them to be held strictly liable for any injuries.”**
- “The companies would also have to agree to fully indemnify the city against any and all claims that may be made against Tempe as a result of an accident, even if the city is found to be negligent. That means if there was an accident and the city was partially at fault because it didn’t maintain safe sidewalk or road conditions, the city would not be held liable, Allen said. The responsibility would lay solely on the scooter companies, she said.”
- “Lime is pulling its electric scooters and dockless bicycles from Tempe after the city approved new regulations the company felt were too stringent. The scooters and bikes will be removed Tuesday, a company spokeswoman confirmed.”

<https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/tempe/2019/02/11/lime-pulls-electric-scooters-tempe-citing-fees-liability-burden/2842707002/>

Title/Topic: **To avoid scooter hell, Orlando needs to learn from other cities (Orlando Sentinel)**

- “In scooter hell, terrified pedestrians pin themselves against buildings to avoid being run down by uncaring millennial hordes, like a scene from a Mad Max movie but without the noisy engines.”
- “When they’re done, riders carelessly discard their scooters in doorways and on sidewalks, mindless of the hazards they’re creating. That doesn’t mean scooters should be a fait accompli in Orlando. They’ve been a disaster in other places.”
- “Fort Lauderdale embraced them in November, with several companies setting up shop. But the city is suffering from serious buyer’s remorse and might ban them from beaches ahead of college students’ annual spring break pilgrimage. Next week, officials are expected to debate whether to get rid of the scooters altogether. Residents complain of scooters weaving through pedestrians and riders leaving the two-wheelers scattered about.”
- “They appear on the urban landscape as mysteriously as crop circles on farms, leaving cities to deal with the consequences. Most city sidewalks are designed with pedestrians in mind. People walk at about 2 or 3 mph. Electric scooters typically operate at up to 15 mph. The two are not compatible. Orlando also needs to minimize clutter.”
- “The city’s bike-sharing agreement with Lime gives the company two hours to remove a bicycle that’s creating a safety hazard. Same should go for scooters. And two hours seems overly generous.”

<https://www.orlandosentinel.com/opinion/editorials/os-op-electric-scooters-orlando-problems-20190201-story.html>

Title/Topic: **City of Little Rock to end deal with Lime scooters citing lack of attention to safety by the company (Arkansas Online)**

- “Little Rock city leaders are planning to end the city's relationship with scooter company Lime, citing "disappointment" with the company's handling of rider safety since the dockless devices arrived less than a month ago, according to a letter obtained by the Democrat-Gazette on Wednesday.”
- “The City has been disappointed in Lime's lack of attention to the safety of its riders and pedestrians," read the letter, which was signed by Mayor Frank Scott Jr., city board members and other city officials.”
- “The letter sent to the CEO of Neutron Holdings, Inc., which operates Lime scooters, said the city plans to end its agreement with the company on May 15, 2019, and "forego the pursuit of a superseding contract". The scooters were introduced as part of a six-month trial arranged by previous Mayor Mark Stodola. “

<https://www.arkansasonline.com/news/2019/jan/30/little-rock-end-deal-lime-scooters-leaders-cite-sa/>

Title/Topic: **Lime scooter rider died in Washington DC, marking second fatality this month (TechCrunch)**

- “a Lime rider was killed today by an SUV while tooling around Washington D.C.’s DuPont neighborhood. The local fire department shared video of the rescue, which shows that the victim, an adult male, had to be pulled from the undercarriage of the vehicle.”
- “It’s the second known fatality for the company following a death earlier this month in Dallas, when a 24-year-old Texas man fell off the scooter he was riding and died from blunt force injuries to his head.”
- “On the one hand, the developments, while unfortunate, can hardly come as a surprise to anyone given how vulnerable riders or e-scooters are.”

<https://techcrunch.com/2018/09/21/a-lime-scooter-rider-died-this-morning-in-washington-d-c-marking-the-second-fatality-this-month/>

Title/Topic: **Woman dies riding electric scooter in Cleveland**

- “A 21-year-old woman died late Saturday after she was hit by a car while riding an electric scooter in downtown Cleveland.”
- “The crash happened about 10 p.m. on East 9<sup>th</sup> Street near St. Clair Avenue, Cleveland police spokeswoman Sgt. Jennifer Ciaccia said. A Chevy Cruz driven by a 19-year-old man was driving south on East 9<sup>th</sup> Street when he struck the woman on the scooter from behind.”
- “The woman was thrown from the scooter and fell onto the road, Ciaccia said. She was taken to MetroHealth, where she died.”

[https://www.cleveland.com/metro/index.ssf/2018/08/woman\\_riding\\_electric\\_scooter.html](https://www.cleveland.com/metro/index.ssf/2018/08/woman_riding_electric_scooter.html)

Title/Topic: **Man dies after apparent electric scooter accident (Washington Post)**

- “Victim — identified as Jacoby Stoneking — was riding an electric scooter on his way home after work when he fell and injured his foot. Kenneth Moore, the friend, told the station that a frustrated Stoneking called him and asked him to order him a Lyft, which Moore did. When the Lyft driver arrived, he would later tell police, he found Stoneking unresponsive, prompting him to alert authorities around 4 a.m. Saturday.”
- “Responding officers observed scrapes and bruising to the injured person’s hands and lower extremities,” police said in a statement, noting that officers “found a Lime Scooter that was broken in half up against the curb” ...medical experts say that hitting one’s head at those speeds is more than enough to cause brain damage or death.”
- “An electric scooter is pretty much a moped, just a little slower,” said Sam Torbati, medical director of the Ruth and Harry Roman Emergency Department at Cedars-Sinai in Los Angeles. “People seem to feel safe since it looks like a recreational tool, but it comes with potential for serious injury.”
- “Any most of the people I see on these scooters are not wearing protective gear, such as helmets or knee pads,” he added.

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2018/09/04/police-man-dies-after-apparent-electric-scooter-accident/?utm\\_term=.bef3bcfb4481](https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2018/09/04/police-man-dies-after-apparent-electric-scooter-accident/?utm_term=.bef3bcfb4481)

Title/Topic: **George Mason University declares “No Scooter” zone**

- “Ever since Bird became the first company to bring the dockless scooters to Arlington this June, the county’s sidewalks and yards have increasingly been littered with the vehicles.”
- “The new program bans riders from using the scooters on sidewalks and trails, and will also require any company to move an improperly parked vehicle within one hour of receiving a complaint”

<https://www.arlnow.com/2018/10/02/gmu-declares-a-no-scooter-zone-at-its-virginia-square-campus/>

Title/Topic: **Lime fighting back against Seattle's resistance to scooters, uses crowdsourcing and prewritten templates for potential patrons to complain publicly and criticize city’s decision to ban scooters**

- "“I’ve talked to a lot of mayors around the country who have the scooters, a number of them are trying to back away because there are a significant number of injuries that happen on the scooters and the cities are potentially liable for those injuries,” Mayor Durkan said.”

<http://mynorthwest.com/1134905/seattle-scooter-lime-email-campaign/>

Title/Topic: **Electric scooters need to toughen up — and stay out of lakes — if they are going to survive 2019, Assessing the long-term survivability of the latest transportation fad** (Verge)

- "In September 2017, a company called “Bird Rides” dumped several hundred electric scooters on the streets of Santa Monica, California, kicking off the scooter-sharing trend in the US. Fourteen months later, people are vandalizing those scooters and dumping them into lakes, and investors are losing interest.”
- “The explosive growth of dockless scooters and their contentious reputation was the surprise transportation story of the year. But as they head into year two, investors are losing interest while the business is growing increasingly expensive to operate, according to reports in The Wall Street Journal and The Information.”
- “Vandalism and depreciation costs are also taking their toll as scooter companies struggle to get their newer, more rugged models on the streets. The Information got a hold of Bird’s pitch book in October, and while the numbers may be a little out of date, they suggest the companies are struggling to turn a profit.”
- "A more systemic problem is the daily wear and tear associated with heavy fleet use of scooters. According to The Information, Bird said its electric scooters tend to last one to two months before they need to be replaced. Lime’s scooters have a similar lifespan. That makes the scooter startups’ efforts to build a more rugged version with longer battery life more urgent.”

<https://www.theverge.com/2018/12/16/18141418/scooter-vandalism-rugged-bird-lime-spin-acton>

Title/Topic: **Lime scooter rider dead after crashing into tree in St. Louis (Fox News)**

- The rider struck a tree while riding the scooter and was taken to an area hospital. Officers told News 4 that no vehicles were involved in the accident. Authorities said the man died from his injuries.

[https://www.fox5vegas.com/lime-scooter-rider-dead-after-crashing-into-tree-in-north/article\\_17373aed-6d70-510b-8398-cd6f8f6bc58e.html](https://www.fox5vegas.com/lime-scooter-rider-dead-after-crashing-into-tree-in-north/article_17373aed-6d70-510b-8398-cd6f8f6bc58e.html)

Title/Topic: **Harrisonburg VA city attorney addresses motorized scooter concerns**

- "The complaints are coming in pretty quickly," said Harrisonburg Councilman George Hirschmann. "Riding on sidewalks, blocking sidewalks, going against the traffic flow, not wearing helmets, too many people on the scooters. I mean, it's a big thing."
- “Hirschmann said at a council meeting Tuesday night that the scooters were "getting out of hand."
- “In response to the concerns, Harrisonburg City Attorney Chris Brown says he will present ordinances to council next month to regulate the usage of scooters.”

<https://www.whsv.com/content/news/City-Attorney-addresses-motorized-scooter-concerns--501474771.html>

Title/Topic: **Denver's e-scooters could be banished to bike lanes**

- “City leaders want to change where scooters can scoot around in Denver. “

- “It is primarily a safety issue to get them off the sidewalks. You have to rethink your rules. Some of the old rules don’t work well,” says Councilwoman Mary Beth Susman.

<https://www.9news.com/video/news/local/denvers-e-scooters-could-be-banished-to-bike-lanes/73-8362415>

Title/Topic: **As electric scooter use increases, so do trips to the ER** (Salt Lake Tribune)

- “They have been pouring into emergency rooms around the nation all summer, their bodies bearing a blend of injuries that doctors normally associate with victims of car wrecks — **broken noses, wrists and shoulders, facial lacerations and fractures, as well as the kind of blunt head trauma that can leave brains permanently damaged.**”
- “When doctors began asking patients to explain their injuries, many were **surprised to learn that the surge of broken body parts stemmed from the latest urban transportation trend: shared electric scooters.**”
- “In Santa Monica, California — where one of the biggest electric-scooter companies is based — the city’s fire department has responded to 34 serious accidents involving the devices this summer. The director of an emergency department there said his team treated 18 patients who were seriously injured in electric-scooter accidents during the final two weeks of July. And in San Francisco, the **doctor who runs the emergency room at a major hospital said he is seeing as many as 10 severe injuries a week.**”
- **"Injuries are coming in fast and furious," said Michael Sise, chief of medical staff at Scripps Mercy Hospital in San Diego,** noting that his team saw four severe scooter injuries last week. "It's just a matter of time before someone is killed. I'm absolutely certain of it."
- “The Washington Post interviewed emergency-room physicians in seven cities, including Austin, Atlanta and Nashville, with **doctors in each place reporting a spike in severe accidents after the devices launched on their streets.** No national data on scooter injuries exist yet.”
- “A growing number of critics — including doctors, former riders, scooter mechanics and personal injury lawyers — say **the devices may look like toys but inflict the same degree of harm as any other motorized vehicle on the road, only without having to comply with safety regulations.** These critics add that some electric-scooter **fleets are poorly maintained by a loose-knit flock of amateur mechanics, making them prone to dangerous mechanical failures.**”
- **Scooter companies are “also lobbying against legislation in California that would require users to wear helmets.”**
- “Once injured, many **riders might discover from the vehicles' user agreements that they cannot file lawsuits because of clauses requiring that disputes be resolved by arbitration.**”
- “Some **former mechanics and riders say a core problem is that the companies are doing a poor job of maintaining the scooters.**”
- “Posts on Craigslist feature dozens of ads for scooter mechanics. Though some job ads ask for previous electronic repair experience, others, like those posted by Bird, say **applicants need only a vehicle and a smartphone to qualify for a position.**”
- “Fahin Kamrany, a former Bird mechanic in Santa Monica who plans to sue the company, says mechanics are pressured to repair at least three scooters a night or risk being fired, even when **spare parts from China are in short supply.** Text messages between Kamrany and a Bird supervisor that she provided to The Post appear to **show delays and difficulties in ordering and acquiring spare parts for broken scooters.**”
- “The 57-year-old [scooter mechanic] says she was performing a required diagnostic test when she fell off a scooter with defective brakes, sustaining a severe head injury, a broken clavicle and \$15,000 worth of medical bills.”

- "I encountered **many scooters that had bad brakes or a sticky accelerator**," she said in an interview. **"If you pressed the accelerator, it would become stuck in that position, and you'd be unable to stop the scooter from racing forward at full speed."**
- "At his Santa Monica emergency room, Wally Ghurabi — director of the Nethercutt Emergency Center at UCLA Medical Center... blames the scooters — left all over the city to be rented by anybody with a smartphone — for **giving customers a false sense of security.**"
- "When I see people using the scooters, they're smiling and having fun," said **Ghurabi, whose team treated the 18 patients seriously injured in electric-scooter accidents during the final two weeks of July.** **"But if you lose control and get ejected into the air at 15 miles per hour and land on your head in the street, that's enough force to kill you** — and almost nobody on these scooters is wearing a helmet."
- "When it comes to scooters, the manufacturer's guidelines say the devices should not be left out overnight, but often, in Santa Monica, "they're left on parkways, hit by sprinklers and saltwater and subject to tremendous abuse by the public," said Catherine Lerer, **a Santa Monica personal injury lawyer who has received around 100 calls from people injured by scooters in recent months.**"
- "One of those who may join the wave of lawsuits against the scooter companies is John Montgomery. The 47-year-old says he had been riding his Bird for only a few blocks in July when **the accelerator became stuck in place as he approached a Los Angeles intersection, causing the scooter to "buck forward" and launch his body past the handle bars.**"
- "Montgomery awoke to the sight of a stranger standing over him and calling an ambulance. He **had landed on his face, he said, breaking his jaw in two places and causing blood to pour from his ears.** **"They took me to the emergency room crying and screaming," he said. "I had never been in so much pain in my life."** Montgomery, who plans to sue Bird, spent nearly a week in the hospital. He remains on painkillers and continues to consume meals through a straw."
- **"These companies are just getting these scooters out there as fast as they can, but they're not servicing them and checking them for safety,"** he said. "I honestly don't think they give a damn if I lived or died." He hasn't heard from Bird but recently noticed that the company charged him for the period of time he lay on the street, bloodied and unconscious."

<https://www.satrib.com/news/nation-world/2018/09/07/electric-scooter-use/>

#### Title/Topic: **Miscellaneous Electric Scooter Accidents & Deaths (Ranker)**

- Child pedestrian (7-year old boy) hit by rider of Lime scooter – suffers 8 broken/loose teeth and lip lacerations (Santa Monica)
- Man Suffers Broken Bones And Lung Collapse Following A Scooter Accident - Six broken ribs, a broken clavicle, a broken scapula, and a collapsed lung (San Diego)
- Broken Lime scooter stem causes one man more than \$9,000 in dental bills - While riding a Lime scooter, a 25 year old male suffered an expensive injury. As he was riding on a downhill slope, the handlebar stem of the scooter collapsed. He hit his face on the pavement, leading to a broken tooth and dental bills of \$9,300 (Westwood, CA)
- Ineffective Scooter Brakes Lead to a Broken Ankle Treated with Plates And Screws- a 32 year old man was riding a Bird scooter, he applied the brakes when he saw an upcoming bump in the road. Rather than stopping the vehicle, the brakes simply slowed its momentum, causing the rider to crash. The scooter ran over his right ankle. The rider had two plates and 21 screws inserted into his injured leg. (San Diego)



- Woman Collided With A Brick Wall After Being Thrown Off Her Scooter - A 26 year old woman was riding a Bird scooter on the sidewalk of Beverly Boulevard. After seeing a seven-inch offset on the sidewalk in front of her, she applied the scooter's brakes. This proved ineffective, however, as the vehicle barely reduced its speed. When she collided with the defect, not only was she thrown off the scooter, her face was slammed against a nearby brick wall. She temporarily lost consciousness in the incident and later sought treatment for numerous injuries. (Los Angeles)
- 30-year old woman riding Bird scooter hits another Bird scooter rider that fell in the bike lane – suffers torn ACL and torn meniscus in her knee (Santa Monica)
- Bird Mechanic required staples in her scalp after her scooter's brakes failed – suffers head injury, scalp lacerations, fractured clavicle, and cervical strain (Santa Monica)
- Bird Mechanic/Charger was flung off a scooter during testing and required surgery - The scooter's brakes were nonfunctional and the employee was launched off the scooter, which resulted in substantial injuries. He needed surgery to have a plate and eight screws inserted into his leg. Suffers fracture dislocation of left ankle and tibia and fibula fractures in left leg. (Southern CA)
- Scooter rider collided with car and needed emergency treatment – suffers traumatic brain injury; scooter riders' physical vulnerability and the lack of proper education about the integration of scooters into traffic also contributes to these accidents. (Atlanta)

<https://www.ranker.com/list/worst-electric-scooter-accidents-and-deaths/sarah-blumert>