



# NAVAL SAFETY COMMAND

## SAFETY AWARENESS DISPATCH



SA 25-08

### *E-Scooter Mishaps*

#### **Episode VII – “The E-Scooter Awakens”**

##### Bottom Line Up-Front:

E-scooter wrecks hurt. We don't want them to hurt you.<sup>1</sup>

The good news is: Navy and Marine Corps numbers from last year seem to be better. Nationally, e-scooter injuries keep going up, just as they have every year, but Navy and Marine e-scooter injuries went DOWN last year. By our own, unofficial Safety Awareness Division count, there were 13 reported mishaps in 2024; down nearly 50% from 24 in 2023. The SA division can't *officially* claim credit for the improvement, but *un-officially*, we're believing that six years of dispatches on this topic are getting through.

We want to keep the trend going and keep you from being one of next year's numbers. If you're going to ride one and think you won't wreck, read about these folks who didn't think it'd happen to them either. If you haven't heard us say it before, *“It's better to read and learn than to bleed and learn.”*

- The Duchess of Hazzard (*old folks may get the reference*). Around midnight (*here we go again*), a Sailor was riding an electric scooter around the city. She headed down a street on a steep hill. The scooter “began to pick up speed” and the road had a speed bump ahead. She was unable to slow down before she made contact with the speed bump (*Yeeee-Haaaa!*). As she “got air” off the speed bump—*unsurprisingly*—she lost control of the scooter. Her crash awarded her cuts and scrapes all over her legs, a chipped bone in one ankle, and (*it hurts even to write this*) lost both toenails on her big toes. The report says she “was able to walk and went home after incident” (*probably numb from shock*), but in the morning she “was in severe pain” (*yep; a chipped bone and ripped off toenails will get your attention*) and went to the Emergency Room (ER). Two days Sick in Quarters (SIQ) and an unknown number of days light duty. —*Eesh! What kind of footwear did she have? Learning points: 1. Wear a helmet. 2. Slow down in the dark. 3. Use the brakes early on a hill. 4. Dude (or dude-ette)...wear real shoes.*
- “Hugging the Curd.” One early evening, a Sailor was headed to grab a fast-food burger off base. After he departed the base, he rented a e-scooter for the trip. The report tells us that he was “riding on the road hugging the curd” (*they mean curb, but the report repeatedly said “curd”, so we're rolling with it*). When the Sailor looked back at the vehicles behind him, “he hit the curd” with the scooter's front wheel which, as you can imagine, wrecked him. As he fell, he braced himself with his hand. He got up, shook it off, and pressed on for cheeseburger goodness. The next day, however, his hand swelled up and hurt a lot. A trip to medical revealed his hand was broken and required surgery. Unnecessary pain, 14 days SIQ and another 14 days light duty. Almost as a sidenote, the report added that the Sailor “was wearing slip on shoes and no helmet,” so he's lucky to have escaped with only a broken hand. —*Scooter wheels are tiny and unforgiving. A curd, curb, pothole, or even small rock can take you out. After six years of SA dispatches on e-scooters, you might guess our divison's opinion on riding these things (Don't); but if you're gonna ride, wear a helmet...and real shoes.*
- The Gorge (*young folks may get the reference*). Seemingly the scenario is ideal: Mid-day. Good weather. Rider isn't fatigued. He's wearing a helmet. *“Everything is awesome,”* until it isn't. A Sailor was driving his personal e-scooter to the shipyard. He hit a hole in the street and—as happens with e-



<sup>1</sup> Also the Navy and Marine Corps want to keep you healthy and un-broken, so you can do your job protecting the country; they're “selfish that way.”

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scooters—was thrown off it. He sustained multiple severe injuries. He didn't know how severe yet, so he pressed on to the ship and reported to ship's medical for evaluation. Ship's medical took him to the naval station. The injured Sailor then drove himself to the hospital (*hopefully not on the e-scooter—why didn't someone drive him?!*). *He had broken ribs and a dislocated shoulder. One night in the hospital, 20 days SIQ, and another 20 days light duty. The report's single causal factor wasn't very deep: "Sailor hit a pot hole in the street." —We praise this Sailor for wearing a helmet! (and shoes) Well done! Even when "everything is awesome", e-scooter crashes will happen. If you ride, copy this Sailor and wear a helmet.*

- Close Your Eyes and Imagine What This Sounded Like. A Sailor was riding an electric scooter down the road...alongside parked cars. As he sped merrily along, a driver of a parked car suddenly opened their door. **BAM!** The scooting Sailor hit the door at about 15 mph and then hit the ground like a sack of potatoes. The Sailor didn't go to medical, because "he thought his injuries would heal quickly." Evidently they didn't, because two days later, he went to the ER for what the report only states are "multiple injuries" followed by 14 days restricted duty. Was he wearing any PPE? No, he was not. —*Whirrrrrrrr...Creeak...BAM! We would prefer you don't scooter, but if you do, wear a helmet. If you're zipping past parked cars, maybe stay "a car door length" away so you don't wind up as an instagram meme. And, we shouldn't have to say this, but if you do crash into something at 15 mph, go to medical.*
- SUI (Scooting Under the Influence). The reports opens with, "Sailor drove an electric scooter while intoxicated," so you know it doesn't end well. So, a junior officer attended an off-duty event with others. The report notes, he "was drinking prior to the accident." He consumed "about six" alcoholic beverages before getting on an e-scooter (*why, oh why?*). So, he boarded the scooter and "attempted" to drive down the sidewalk downtown. As he came to a stop, his scooter "veered off to the right" (*it usually only veers if you steer it that way*), and—since he was inebriated—he didn't veer with it. He fell forward off the scooter and hit his head on a low sign that was a couple feet off the ground. His head began to bleed, so he covered it with his sweater. In his first somewhat-wise decision of the day, he called a ride-share company to get back to base (*an ambulance or a lift to the hospital might have been even wiser choices*). In the car, he called his chain of command, who—being sober and thus clear-thinking—ordered him to go directly to medical. The docs treated his head wound and evaluated him for a concussion. —*Don't drink and scooter. Sober people wipe out on them all the time. If you've "had a couple," (or 6) that scooter is going to hurt you. Heads up that some states treat e-scooters as vehicles just like a car or motorcycle. You could actually be charged with DUI, just like with an automobile. It just isn't worth the risk. Walk or call a ride-share.*

### **Key Takeaways**

After reading the painful, real-life lessons, we'll let you answer these familiar questions to make your own Key Takeaways to remember.

- 1. Is the scooter really going to be the fastest way to get me where I'm going?**  
*-Don't forget to factor in the waiting time in the emergency room and on limited duty to heal.*
- 2. Should I drink and scooter?**  
*-If the answer isn't clear, call us because we need to talk.*
- 3. Hmm. It's midnight and really dark out. Shall I ride-share, walk, or scooter home?**  
*-We're figuring you know the correct answer. The question is, will you make the right choice in the moment? We really hope you will.*
- 4. Am I going to wear a helmet? Or am I NOT going to scooter?**  
*-Choose wisely, young Jedi.*

**Remember, as Yoda would say - "Be careful out there, let us be"**