



MAFES Dawg Tracks

February 25, 2013



Utility/Golf
Cart Safety



Utility and golf carts are a common sight and have become a necessity in all of our research and departmental areas on and off the main campus. We do not have, at this time, a written policy to cover utility/golf cart use. These vehicles have a definite and positive use in the research areas, but like all rolling equipment, vehicle abuse can cause potential harm to the machine and the operator.

Although we don't have a formal policy in place, I would like to list some safety tips on daily maintenance, general safe operating procedures, and rules for drivers and riders. If these could be copied and a copy given to each potential driver and/or operator, potential accidents to the vehicle and personnel could be saved. Evidence of this can be observed at various locations where these vehicles have needed repairs and maintenance and are left to appear as monuments of abuse.

DAILY INSPECTIONS-

Like our personal vehicles, utility/golf carts are no better than the care and maintenance that we give to them.

**Daily checks should include:

- Tire inflation
- Head lights
- Horn
- Hazard light (if equipped)
- Fire extinguisher – (mounted and charged)
- Report deficiencies and repairs to your supervisor.
- A SUV should be attached to the rear of the vehicle.
- Brakes
- Tail and stop lights
- Mirror
- Battery

SAFE OPERATING PROCEDURES-

- ✓ Observe and obey the recommended load limits.
- ✓ Always keep your feet and hands inside the vehicle at all times. It is very easy to get bumped, scraped or crushed with either of these limbs hanging outside the cart.
- ✓ Sound your horn at blind curves.

- ✓ Always drive at a safety speed.
- ✓ When starting, press the accelerator gently, avoiding jerky starts and stops as well.
- ✓ Avoid eating food or drinking while you are driving.
- ✓ Stay focused on your business at hand - operating the vehicle.
- ✓ Always keep both hands on the steering wheel when driving.
- ✓ Always “double check” in all directions of your travel, whether it is going forward or backward.
- ✓ If you are driving with other carts in front of you, keep a safe distance between you and that cart.
- ✓ Exercise extreme caution when ascending or descending ramps or hills.
- ✓ Refrain from tampering or attempting to modify the governor.
- ✓ Refrain from cell phone use, e-mailing or texting while driving the vehicle.
- ✓ Before starting on a work mission or task, look for other vehicles, pedestrians, or animals in your pathway.
- ✓ Pay attention to your surroundings and avoid distractions.
- ✓ Anytime that you leave the vehicle, the key should be in your pocket, for obvious reasons.

RULES FOR RIDERS-

- Do not carry more passengers than the cart was designed to carry.
- Manufacturers recommend that the bed should not be used for extra passengers.
- The passenger or passengers (if designed for more than one) must remain seated until the cart comes to a complete stop. The driver and occupant or occupants must keep their bodies inside the line of the cart.
- Avoid carrying any more than the recommended load limit.
- If the load extends more than 3 feet out of the bed, there must be a flag attached to the load.

**SAFE ACTIONS BRING
LASTING SATISFACTION!!**

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Ted Gordon-Risk Mgmt./Loss Control Mgr.
MAFES/MSU-ES (566-2201)
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