

MAFES Dawg Tracks



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Responsible Use of
ATVs



All-Terrain-Vehicles (ATVs) are becoming more and more prevalent all over the country for occupational, as well as recreational use. ATVs and UTVs alike are great for use in some areas of agriculture and ranching. However, they can be your worst enemy if you abuse the machine or get reckless in their operation. They are only as good as the operator. Good, sound training and respect for the machine will allow one to enjoy many hours of work and play. Neglect and abuse will cut short the longevity of the machine and potentially can jeopardize your safety as well.

Through 2011, there were 327 reported deaths from ATVs, both 3 and 4 wheel models. During this same time period, there were 107,500 reported emergency room- treated injuries. In 2010, there were 590 deaths and 115,000 ER treated injuries. In 2009, there were 634 deaths and 131,900 ER treated injuries. As you look back on the charts, both the number of deaths and ER treated injuries has decreased in most every year. Two significant items to remember about these figures, as the nos. of deaths and injuries have decreased over the past several years; the number of ATVs in use has increased.

PRIMARY REASONS FOR ATV ACCIDENTS IN WORK SITUATIONS-

- ✓ Unbalanced loads and loads in excess of the recommended limits (especially overloading the rear cargo rack).
- ✓ Operating at excessive speeds for the terrain/operation.
- ✓ Operating on paved roads
- ✓ Not wearing a protective helmet
- ✓ Insufficient or no training
- ✓ Carrying passengers

TIPS FOR ACCIDENT PREVENTION-

- Provide instruction and hands-on training on safe handling and operation of ATVs. Ensure that employees are confident in operating their ATV in a variety of conditions, some of which the liability or safety aspects may be unknown. There are several avenues and sources of training for ATV operators.
- Ensure that all operators have reviewed and understand the operator's manual.
- Ensure that all the manufacturer's warnings are followed and that the drivers review and understand them.
- Do not permit ATV drivers to carry passengers.
- Ensure that a pre-ride inspection is done each time you plan to use the ATV.
- Ensure that the operators wear the proper personal equipment, helmet, boots, gloves, goggles and clothing.
- Make sure that the operators know that public and paved roads are illegal for ATV use, as are areas with high vehicular and heavy equipment traffic.

- Ensure that all operators drive at appropriate speeds to have control should they encounter unforeseen hazards or inclement weather conditions.
- Establish policies outlining the general use of the ATVs, where they can operate them and the conditions that they are allowed to work through.
- Establish maintenance programs based on the manufacturer's instructions and also a pre-ride daily inspection to ensure safety for the operator and the machine.
- Ensure that the operators know and understand the limits of the load they are allowed to carry on the ATV.
- For obvious reasons, make sure that the loads are evenly distributed.
- Do not allow modifications of the ATV without approval from the manufacturer.
- Monitor manufacturer's recalls and act on their recommendations as soon as you should receive a notice.

ATV "GOLDEN RULES"-

- Always wear DOT compliant helmet, goggles, boots, gloves, long-sleeve shirt, and long legged pants.
- Never ride on paved roads and be extremely careful when crossing paved roads.
- Never ride under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- One-Seat>One Rider is always in effect.
- Ride the ATV that is right for your age.

ACRONYM FOR PROPER STARTING – BONEC-

- B – Brake-Always keep the parking brake on.
- O – On-Position for fuel cap vent or valve and then for ignition, if equipped.
- N – Neutral – The transmission should always be in the neutral position.
- E – Engine – The engine stop switch should be in the "Run or "Start" position.
- C – Choke – If the engine is "cold," put the choke in the "on" position and start the engine according to the Instruction manual. Obviously, when the engine starts return the choke to the "off" position.

TIPS FOR PRE-RIDE MAINTENANCE CHECKS-

- Check air pressure - look for cuts or gouges in the tires.
- Check and tighten axle nuts as needed.
- Check controls, cables, and brakes for proper adjustment.
- Check lights and ignition that they are good working order.
- Always check fuel and oil levels.
- Inspect the drive shaft chassis and chains for proper lubrication and that all nuts and bolts are tight.

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FOLLOW SAFE PROCEDURES**

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BE ALERT ~~~ ACCIDENTS HURT