

# MAFES Dawg Tracks



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ATV Safety at  
Work and Play



All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) were first introduced to agriculture in the early 1980s. Over the past thirty years, ATVs have grown so much for recreational and work use that there are approximately 10 million in use. However, like all equipment, there are hazards connected with their use. In 2008, according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, there were 135,000 injuries and 410 deaths in the USA.

To reduce your risk of an ATV related injury or death, take heed to the following precautions:

- ✓ Wear the appropriate personal protective equipment
- ✓ Participate in certified safety training
- ✓ Maintain your ATV in proper working conditions
- ✓ Practice safe operating procedures
- ✓ Follow safety recommendations:
  - ~The ATV manufacturer's instructional manual
  - ~Organizations that stress safety in agriculture, like Cooperative Extension departments in land-grant universities.

## PROTECTIVE GEAR for ATV OPERATORS-

**Helmet** – Make sure that it is the right size and has been approved by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), the Department of Transportation, or the Snell Memorial Foundation.

If the helmet isn't equipped with a face shield, wear ANSI-approved goggles or glasses with hard-coated polycarbonate lenses.

When operating an ATV wear gloves, boots, long sleeve shirt or jacket and long pants.

When you're spraying pesticides, follow the PPE recommendations on the applicator's label as you will be in close proximity of the nozzle and the material being treated.

## SAFE OPERATING PROCEDURES-

- **Turning-**
  - ~Remember to shift your weight properly when making a turn.
  - ~When turning at low speeds, shift your body weight forward and to the outside of the turn while turning the handlebars.
  - ~When turning at high speeds, lean your upper body toward the inside of the turn while keeping your weight on the outer footrest.
- **Braking-**
  - ~Applying the brakes evenly and gently will bring the ATV to a proper stop.
  - ~If possible release the throttle and shift to a lower gear prior to your stopping point.

- **Climbing—**
  - Operating an ATV on steep slopes increases the potential for a rear overturn or any overturn.
  - ~When you approach an incline, keep both feet firmly on the footrests your weight forward and uphill.
  - ~If the ATV stalls on steep inclines and you feel the machine drifting backwards, apply the brakes slowly. Applying the brakes quickly when rolling backward can cause a rear overturn.

## GENERAL SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS-

### **No 2<sup>nd</sup> rider – No extra passenger!**

~It impairs the operator's ability to steer and control the vehicle and can interfere with the operator's ability to shift his weight in a turn.

(Occupants are acceptable only if the vehicle was made to accommodate 2 people).

~Check the riding area to be sure that it is clean and clear of dirt or debris.

~Know the rules and laws of related to ATVs in your area.

~Get permission when operating on private property.

~Use lights, flags and reflectors to increase the visibility of the ATV.

~Do not show off or "hotdog" or try stunt driving or speeding.

~ATV tires are not made for highway use, so stay off the public roads and paved surfaces, which can affect the handling and control of the ATV, resulting in the potential for an overturn.

~Keep your feet on the footrests at all times.

~Remain cognizant of the "hot" parts on the ATV, the exhaust pipe, muffler, and the engine. They will burn you.

~Keep your feet and hands away from moving parts.

~Maintain proper posture in to order to properly operate the controls.

~ Do not operate an ATV or any other vehicle if you have alcohol or prescription drugs in your bloodstream, it affect your ability to maintain control.

## ATV MAINTENANCE TIPS –

- **Tires** – Maintain air pressure according to the manufacturer's recommendations. Uneven tire pressure causes the vehicle to pull in the direction of the tire with less air pressure.
- **Oil & fuel** – Check for leaks and that the proper level of the liquids are maintained.
- **Drive train, chassis and other parts** – Check before each use that all parts are in good repair and ready for use.
- **Lights** – Check all lights that they are working properly and are clean for the best illumination.
- **Brakes** –Check the brakes before every use. Follow the instruction manual to be sure of the proper adjustment

**SAFETY RULES ARE THE BEST  
TOOLS**

**BE ALERT ~ACCIDENTS HURT!**

Ted Gordon-Risk Mgmt. / Loss Control Mgr.  
MAFES – MSU-ES

Excerpts:www.extension.org

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