



All Terrain Vehicle Safety

Introduction:

All terrain vehicles, better known as ATV's, can be three or four wheeled motorized cycles with large, low-pressure tires, designed for a single operator riding in off-road areas. ATV's are a common item included in most rural households used for a variety of chores. ATV's are also viewed as a recreational vehicle used in conjunction with other activities such as hunting, or alone such as trail riding or "mud bogging." ATV's are available in a range of sizes, from 50cc to greater than 700cc engines and can have an automatic or manual transmission.

ATV's are essential to many work sites as work horses or for transportation through difficult terrain. Most employers have strict guidelines as per their operation and employees are required to become familiar with the equipment through an ATV operation course. The ATV's are often used at a job site and not public land.

Recreational ATV operators represent the majority of riders, and have a lesser degree of accountability to safe handling practices as they ultimately decide what safety equipment they will put on or the manner in which they choose to operate the ATV. Recreational ATV operators almost always operate on public land.

Unfortunately ATV's have become the cause of several devastating injuries and deaths to residents of Saskatchewan. These injuries and deaths are not isolated incidents and occur in various geographical locations and involve differing age groups, including seniors and toddlers. All of the injuries and deaths are preventable. There seems to be some confusion regarding ATV use in rural Saskatchewan. The Town of Cupar has many concerned citizens making reports to the Town Office and to the RCMP that describe very young riders operating ATV's through the communities and on the public roadways, including the provincial highways. The operators are often doing so without possessing a valid driver's license or wearing any mandatory safety equipment.

Objective:

The Southey RCMP is looking for the public's assistance involving ATV use in the town of Cupar and the surrounding R.M. of Cupar. There are many ATV's being operated unlawfully and in a manner that is concerning. The RCMP request that anyone who owns an ATV ensure that the vehicle is secured against unpermitted use and theft. Due to the large volume of complaints received, the Southey RCMP detachment is stepping up their patrols in their jurisdiction to prevent unlawful use of ATV's. There will be zero tolerance exercised by the police and the purpose of this letter is to educate ATV owners to ensure they are both knowledgeable and lawful in the use of their ATV's.

Did you know:

1. No one under the age of twelve can lawfully operate an ATV on public land, only on their family's land

or if they have permission from the land owner.

2. Youth between the age of 12 - 15 can operate an ATV on public land only if they are under the direct supervision of a person over the age of 16 who's possessed a valid driver's licence for more than one year.

3. A person over the age of 16 may operate an ATV on public land only if they possess a valid driver's licence.

4. Public land means Crown land or land vested in a municipality such as Town of Cupar.

5. No ATV is permitted to be operated on **any road, highway or surface** accessed by registered motor vehicles.

6. It is lawful to operate an ATV on a highway for the purpose of using a bridge or weir if the operator stays as far to the right away from the traveled portion of the road as practicable.

7. Licence must be presented to the Police when requested, so carry your licence with you when operating an ATV.

8. An ATV being used unlawfully may be seized and the owner will have to pay all costs of towing and storage prior to the vehicle being released.

9. ATV's are motorized vehicles and therefore all provincial driving suspensions and criminal prohibitions apply to their use.

10. ATV's cannot be registered to be operated on roads accessed by registered vehicles in Saskatchewan, therefore if found doing so, a fine of \$580.00 would be applicable and the person operating would be arrestable under the Traffic Safety Act.

11. Operating an ATV with a passenger is unlawful unless specifically designed for that purpose, i.e.: side-by-side vehicle, resulting with a fine of \$90.00.

12. Failing to wear a helmet and eye protection carries a fine of \$100.00.

13. Operators failing to produce their licence will receive a fine of \$100.00 or a fine of \$150.00 if they don't have a valid licence at all.

14. Supervising operators that fail to produce a licence will receive a fine of \$100.00

15. Operating an ATV at a speed that is greater than is reasonable and safe in the circumstances or in any case at a speed greater than 80 km/hour will result in a fine of \$150.00.

16. This is only a brief summary outlining some of the common offences observed, for a full review please refer to the Provinces Traffic Safety Act and ATV ACT or contact the Southey RCMP Detachment..

Conclusion:

Strict laws are in place to ensure safety, and a lack of knowledge of the law is no excuse. All ATV operators are recommended to brush up on the provincial statutes including the Traffic Safety Act and the All Terrain Vehicle Act and operate their ATV accordingly. Copies of the ATV and Traffic Safety Act's are available on line at the following website (www.canlii.org) The Southey RCMP is committed to educating the public about ATV safety and an increased enforcement of the Traffic Safety Act and All Terrain Vehicle Act. Those found operating ATV's unlawfully will be fined and their ATV's may be seized. Our mandate is to prevent dangerous and unlawful operation of ATV's in the communities in which we work and live in order to "to ensure safe homes and safe communities."

Sgt. Dean Gherasim
NCO i/c Southey RCMP

