



## OTTAWA POLICE SERVICE SERVICE DE POLICE D'OTTAWA

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La sécurité de notre communauté, un travail d'équipe

### ATVs: WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW



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[www.canadasafetycouncil.org](http://www.canadasafetycouncil.org)



### DEFINITIONS

An All-Terrain-Vehicle (ATV) is an Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) that:

- Has four wheels, the tires of which are all low pressure and in contact with the ground;
- Has steering handlebars;
- Has a seat that is designed to be straddled by the driver;
- Is designed to carry a driver only and no passengers; and
- Meets the requirements of the federal Motor Vehicle Safety Act (MVSA), the Ontario Regulation of the Highway Traffic Act, and the American National Standards Institute (ANSI).

The following are not considered ATVs, but instead, types of ORVs: passenger designed ATVs (also known as a two-up), side by sides (SxS), utility terrain vehicle (UTV), dune buggies, off-road dirt bikes, etc.

### REGISTRATION

By law, all ATVs must be registered with the Ministry of Transportation, even if operated only on your property. A one-time fee is payable at a Driver and Vehicle Licence Issuing Office. A licence plate and registration permit is provided together with mounting instructions.

ATV's may not be registered to anyone under the age of 16.

### JOINT RESPONSIBILITY

Both the owner and operator of an ATV (or parents if applicable) are responsible for any violations of the Highway Traffic Act and are liable for any injury or property damage caused by the vehicle.

### OPERATION ON PUBLIC ROADS

It is unlawful to operate ATV's on any public roadway, street, highway or park in the city of Ottawa. This includes the entire area between the boundary lines of adjacent property, including ditches.

ATV's may however be operated directly across a highway, provided the driver has a driver's licence. It should be noted that the driver must wear a helmet and no passengers are allowed on the vehicle when crossing a highway.

If the AVT was manufactured after January 1, 1998, a brake light is required.

### DRIVER REQUIREMENTS

- Persons under 12 years of age are not permitted to operate an ATV except on the owner's property or trails while under close supervision of an adult.
- Persons between the ages of 12 and 15 years of age are permitted to operate an ATV unsupervised on public or private trails.
- If crossing the road on an ATV, the driver must be in possession of a valid G2/G driver's licence or an M2/M motorcycle licence.
- A helmet meeting the standards of the Highway Traffic Act must be worn when operating an ATV on premises other than property owned by the vehicle owner (i.e. helmets certified by DOT, SNELL, or other agencies that meet the standards).



## INSURANCE

The law requires that ATVs be insured under a motor vehicle liability policy. In Ontario, this means an automobile insurance policy. Both the owner and the driver are liable for injuries or property damage arising out of the operation of an ATV.

Personal, Universal, and Farm Liability Policies are not considered motor vehicle liability policies in accordance with the Insurance Act. In fact, personal and farm liability policies usually exclude "the operation of any vehicle subject to motor vehicle registration" such as ATVs. Therefore they would offer no protection or defense against legal action.

Before operating your ATV, verify your coverage with your insurance company.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Q: Why can't ATVs be operated on Ottawa roadways? What about passenger designed ATVs?

A: The Highway Traffic Act does not permit ATVs to be operated on municipal roadways unless permitted by city by-law. Currently, the City of Ottawa does not have a by-law in place permitting the use of ATVs on their roadways.

Passenger or "two-up" designs are a form of ORV and are only allowed on public trails or private lands and cannot cross the road carrying passengers.

### Q: Can I operate an ATV on private land? How about rural wooded lots or Ottawa's Bicycle and Pedestrian Trail System?

A: ATV operators are only allowed to operate ATVs on sanctioned trails, on Crown land when not prohibited, and on private land when given the express permission of the property owner. When operating an ATV on land the owners occupy, lease, or own, no insurance is required.

ATVs are prohibited from using the Bicycle and Pedestrian Trail System as it is designed to be used by pedestrians, cyclists, and on occasion, snowmobiles. In addition, ATVs have the potential to damage the pathways.

### Q: What size of ATV is best for my child?

A: Many ATV-related injuries are caused by children using adult size ATVs as there is a drastic difference in weight between the child and the machine. Also, ATVs have a high centre of gravity, making them more likely to roll over and land on the rider. Manufacturers of adult size ATVs prohibit children under 16 from operating their machines.

When choosing an ATV for your child, it is important to review the ATV's specifications and to take into consideration your child's size and skill level.

### Q: Why can't operators under 16 years-of-age cross the road?

A: You need a driver's licence to cross the road.

### Q: Can an ATV operator be charged for drinking and driving?

A: Yes. It is against the law to operate an off-road vehicle while impaired by alcohol or drugs.

## MUST HAVE RULES FOR ATV OPERATION

- ✓ Must be over the age of 12.
- ✓ Must carry an ATV registration card.
- ✓ Must carry ATV insurance.
- ✓ Must carry a driver's licence to cross the road.
- ✓ Must have a licence plate.
- ✓ Must wear a proper helmet.
- ✓ Must not drive an ATV on the highway.

## WANT MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES?

Visit [ottawapolice.ca](http://ottawapolice.ca).


## MAKE THE RIGHT CALL

 **9-1-1**

Life-threatening Emergency or Crime in Progress

**613-230-6211**

Other Emergencies

**613-236-1222 x 7300**   
(TTY 613-760-8100)

Call Centre: To report a theft, property damage, missing person or stolen vehicle.

**613-236-1222**  (TTY 613-232-1123)

Community Police Centres and all other enquiries

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