

# All-terrain Vehicle (ATV) Safety at Work



## Facts Related to ATV Crashes and Injuries at Work<sup>1</sup>

- Males are at a much higher risk
- Workers 65 years of age or older are at higher risk than younger workers
- Rollovers are the most common cause of crashes
- Animal production workers have the highest risk for injury

*Note: This document does not apply to Utility Vehicles (UTVs)*

## Background

ATVs were first introduced in the U.S. for agricultural use in the early 1980s. Over the past thirty years, ATVs have grown increasingly popular recreationally and more recently, have become a valuable asset at work. With more than 10 million in use, it is important to know the hazards associated with ATVs and how to operate them safely.<sup>1,2</sup>

## Recommended Practices for the Safe Use of ATVs at Work<sup>3-5</sup>

### FOR EMPLOYERS

- Provide helmet and eye-protection for workers and encourage the use of other personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Identify and mark – and eliminate if possible – hazards such as excavations, trenches, and guy wires that might be present in specific work environments, so they are easily seen and avoided by workers on the job site
- Establish operating and maintenance policies that follow manufacturer's terrain guidelines, specified hauling and towing capacity, and passenger restrictions
- Provide employees access to hands-on training by an ATV Safety Institute instructor or a similarly qualified instructor
- Share responsibility with employees on the practices detailed below

### FOR EMPLOYEES

- Wear PPE including a helmet, eye-protection, long pants, and sturdy boots
- Participate in hands-on training in the safe handling and operation of an ATV
- Conduct a pre-ride inspection of tires, brakes, headlights, etc., and follow employer's maintenance policies for upkeep of the ATV
- Understand how implements and attachments may affect the stability and handling of the ATV
- Never exceed the manufacturer's specified hauling and towing capacity or weight limits and ensure cargo is balanced, secured, and loaded on provided racks
- Be aware of potential hazards such as trees, ruts, rocks, streams and gullies, and follow posted hazard warnings
- Drive at speeds safe for weather and terrain and never operate ATVs on surfaces not designed for ATVs such as paved roads and highways
- Never permit passengers on the ATV, unless the ATV has an additional seat specifically designed to carry them
- Never operate an ATV while under the influence of drugs or alcohol



## Common Work Related Uses of ATVs

- Border patrol and security
- Construction operations
- Emergency medical response
- Land management and surveying
- Law enforcement
- Military operations
- Mineral and oil exploration, pipeline maintenance
- Ranching and farming
- Search and rescue
- Small-scale forestry activities
- Wildland fire control

## Did You Know?

ATVs have unique features that enable them to operate in harsh work environments where larger, less mobile vehicles cannot safely be used. Their oversized, deep tread, and low-pressure tires (4-5 psi) and light weight (600-1000 pounds) - compared to other motorized vehicles - enhance their maneuverability but also present risks such as a rollover which may occur due to a high center of gravity and a relatively narrow wheelbase.



## ONLINE RESOURCES

- Agricultural Safety and Health Council of America: <http://www.ashca.com>
- ATV Safety Institute: [http://www.atvsafety.org/InfoSheets/ATV\\_Riding\\_Tips.pdf](http://www.atvsafety.org/InfoSheets/ATV_Riding_Tips.pdf); <https://online.svia.org/training/default.aspx>
- Farm Safety 4 Just Kids: <http://www.fs4jk.org>
- National Children's Center for Rural Agricultural Health and Safety: <http://www.marshfieldclinic.org/nccrahs>
- National Education Center for Agricultural Safety: <http://www.necasag.org>

To receive documents or other information about occupational safety and health topics, contact NIOSH at: ■ Telephone: 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636); TTY: 1-888-232-6348 ■ E-mail: [cdcinfo@cdc.gov](mailto:cdcinfo@cdc.gov), ■ or visit the NIOSH web site at: [www.cdc.gov/niosh](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh)

For a monthly update on news at NIOSH, subscribe to NIOSH eNews by visiting [www.cdc.gov/niosh/eNews](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/eNews)

---

**This document is in the public domain and may be freely copied and reprinted.**

---

Mention of any company or product does not constitute endorsement by NIOSH. In addition, citations to Web sites external to NIOSH do not constitute NIOSH endorsement of the sponsoring organizations or their programs or products. Furthermore, NIOSH is not responsible for the content of these Web sites.

## References

<sup>1</sup>Helmkamp JC, Marsh SM, Aitken ME. Occupational All-terrain Vehicle Deaths among Workers 18 Years and Older in the United States, 1992-2007. *J Ag Safety and Health* 2011; 17(2):147-152. Available at: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21675284>

<sup>2</sup>Garland, S. Annual Report of ATV-related Deaths and Injuries: December 2011. Bethesda, MD: U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Directorate for Epidemiology. Available at: <http://www.cpsc.gov/library/foia/foia12/os/atv2010.pdf>

<sup>3</sup>U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. ATV Safety Messages. Available at: <http://www.atvsafety.gov/safetytips.html>

<sup>4</sup>U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Hazards Associated with All-terrain vehicles (ATVs) in the Workplace. Safety and Health Information Bulletin 08-03-2006. Available at: <http://www.osha.gov/dts/shib/shib080306.html>

<sup>5</sup>U.S. Department of Labor, Safety and Health in the Workplace: Drug-free Workplaces. Available at: <http://www.dol.gov/compliance/topics/safety-health-working-partners.htm>