

SUMMARY OF PENNSYLVANIA'S ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLE LAW

INTRODUCTION

Pennsylvania has beautiful and challenging opportunities for all-terrain vehicle (ATV) riding. Many trails have been developed on public and private lands to accommodate this recreational pursuit. To ensure safe and enjoyable riding on Pennsylvania's lands an ATV law was established in 1985 and modified in 2001.

This pamphlet summarizes the ATV requirements of the Snowmobile and All-Terrain Vehicle Law (Chapter 77 of the PA Vehicle Law) including the changes made by Act 68 of 2001. It is not the complete law and is only meant to familiarize you with your legal responsibilities as an ATV owner or operator.

REGISTRATION

Pennsylvania residents owning and intending to use their ATV in Pennsylvania (except those used exclusively as a farm or business vehicle) must be titled and registered with the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), Snowmobile/ATV Registration Section.

General Registration

This registration permits the machine to be operated off the owner or operator's private property. The registration fee is \$20 for two years. The owner is provided with a registration plate, an expiration sticker and a Certificate of Registration wallet card.

Limited Registration

This registration is for machines used exclusively on the property of the owner. There is no fee and the registration does not expire. The owner is provided with a registration plate and a card, but no expiration sticker.

All-Terrain Vehicles are defined as follows:

1. Class 1 ATV – A motorized off-highway vehicle, which travels on three or more inflatable tires and has a maximum width of 50 inches and a maximum dry weight of 800 pounds.
2. Class 2 ATV – A motorized off-highway vehicle, which travels on three or more inflatable tires and has a width which exceeds 50 inches or a dry weight which exceeds 800 pounds.

Applications for registration of ATVs are available from the DCNR's Snowmobile/ATV Registration Section. The ATV registration application form must be completed and sent to the DCNR, Snowmobile/ATV Section, P.O. Box 8553, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8553, along with the required fee and sales tax statement. Registration applications are also available from: ATV dealers, Forest Districts and State Park Offices or download and print from the web at www.dcnr.state.pa.us/snowmobile.

Exempt from the registration requirements are ATVs owned by non-residents covered by a valid registration in their state, province or country that honors a Pennsylvania registration.

Temporary registrations are available from registered ATV dealers.

SALE – THEFT – DESTRUCTION – CHANGE OF ADDRESS

The ATV owner shall notify the DCNR's Snowmobile/ATV Section in writing of any change of address within 15 days.

Upon the transfer, destruction or theft of an ATV, the reverse side of the Certification of Registration must be properly filled out in the spaces provided, signed by the owner, and returned to the DCNR's Snowmobile/ATV Section.

OPERATION

ATVs may be operated:

1. On private property with the consent of the owner or lessor;
2. On state-owned property on clearly marked and previously designated ATV trails;
3. On highways and streets for a short distance when necessary to cross a bridge or culvert;
- * 4. On highways and streets during periods of emergency when so declared by a governmental agency having jurisdiction;
- * 5. On highways and streets for special ATV events of limited duration that are conducted according to a prearranged schedule under permit from the governmental unit having jurisdiction
- * 6. On streets and highways that have been designated as "ATV Roads" by the governmental agency having jurisdiction.
- * Only by persons 16 years or older.

An ATV may make a direct crossing of a street or two-lane highway provided:

- The crossing is made at an angle of approximately 90 degrees to the direction of the highway, and at a place where no obstruction prevents a quick and safe crossing;
- The ATV is brought to a complete stop before crossing the highway;
- The driver yields the right-of-way to all oncoming traffic that constitutes an immediate hazard.

It is illegal to operate an ATV:

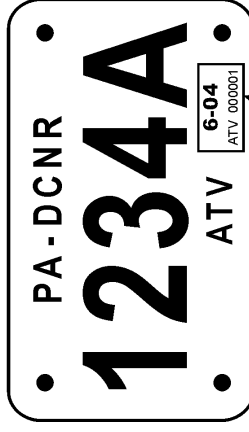
- On State Forest Roads open for use by licensed motor vehicles.
- At the rate of speed that is unreasonable or improper under existing conditions or in excess of the maximum limits posted for vehicular traffic;
- In a careless way so as to endanger the person or property of another;
- While under the influence of alcohol, narcotics or drugs.

REGISTRATION NUMBERS

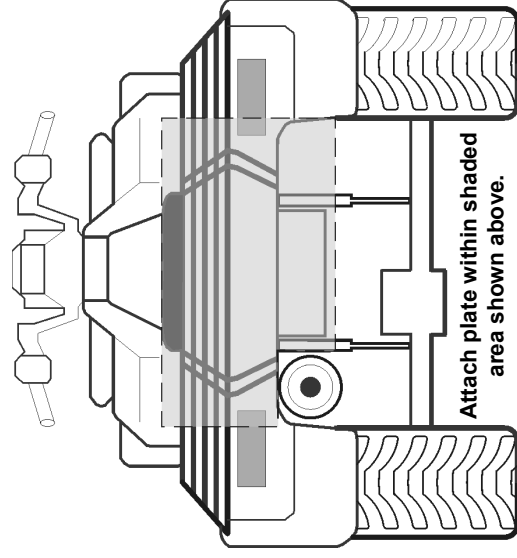
The five-digit registration number containing a combination of numbers and letters is embossed on an aluminum plate, which measures four inches in height and seven inches in width. This permanent registration plate is to be attached to the back of the machine near the center and as high as possible. The plate must be vertical and clearly visible from behind the ATV. This plate remains with the ATV if it is sold or transferred to a different owner.

General Registration requires a valid expiration sticker to be attached to the plate.

REGISTRATION PLATE



EXPIRATION DATE



OPERATION OF ATVs BY YOUTH

No one under 10 years of age shall operate an ATV on any state-owned property.

No person under the age of 16 shall drive an ATV across any highway unless he has a valid safety certificate and is under the supervision of a person 18 years of age.

No person from age 10 to their 16th birthday shall operate an ATV except on lands of his parent or guardian, unless he or she has completed a prescribed safety training course and received an ATV safety training certificate.

ACCIDENT REPORTS

The operator of any ATV involved in an accident that results in the injury or death of any person, or property damages to the estimated amount of \$100 or more, must report the matter in writing within seven days to the DCNR.

The operator of an ATV involved in an accident must stop and give his or her name and address, the name and address of the owner of the ATV and its registration number to the other person(s) involved in the accident or to a police officer.

It is a violation of the ATV Law not to report an ATV accident to the DCNR, Bureau of Forestry, P.O. Box 8552, Harrisburg, PA 17105.

Accident forms are available upon request from the Snowmobile/ATV Section, Bureau of Forestry and State Park offices and state police stations.

LIABILITY INSURANCE

Liability insurance coverage is required for all ATVs that are required to have general registration. Proof of this coverage should be carried by the operator. The law does not specify a minimum dollar amount for this coverage. If you have questions about insurance coverage for ATVs contact the PA Dept of Insurance consumer hotline at 1-877-881-6388.

ATV FUND

All registration fees are deposited in a special ATV Fund. DCNR uses monies from this fund to carry out the ATV registration, safety education and law enforcement requirements of the ATV Law, to develop and maintain trails on public land and to encourage trail development on private land through grants.

ENFORCEMENT

All law enforcement officers in the state, including local and state police, are authorized to enforce the ATV Law.

EQUIPMENT

All ATVs, operating in Pennsylvania must be equipped with a brake system capable of producing deceleration of 14 feet per second at a speed of 20 miles per hour; and a muffler in good working order. The sound intensity produced by an ATV may not exceed 99dba, or decibels, when measured at 20 inches from the tailpipe.

All ATVs operated during hours of darkness or when visibility is less than 500 feet must be equipped with an operating headlight and taillight. The headlight must produce a white light sufficient to reveal persons and vehicles at a distance of 100 feet. The taillight must produce a red light plainly visible during darkness from a distance of 500 feet.

ATV TRAILS

Certain trails on state forest land and the Allegheny National Forest have been designated for ATV use. Class 2 ATVs are not permitted on these trails unless the trail is specifically marked for their use. Additional ATV trail information is available from the Bureau of Forestry website: www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry or from the Snowmobile/ATV Section.

HELMETS

It is illegal to operate an ATV without a securely fastened helmet on the head of the operator.

TITLES

All ATVs in Pennsylvania must have a title issued by DCNR. The only exceptions to this requirement are those ATVs registered with the Department prior to February 12, 1987. These ATVs do not require a title until they are sold by the owner.

FINES

Failure to register your ATV or obtain liability insurance may result in a fine of \$300.

A violation of other provisions of the ATV Law is punishable by a fine of no less than \$50 or more than \$200 plus the cost of prosecution for a first offense, and a fine of no less than \$100 or more than \$300 plus the cost of prosecution for a second offense.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

By Mail:
Snowmobile/ATV Registration Section
P.O. Box 8553
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8553

Location:

Riverfront Office Center
1101 S. Front Street
Harrisburg, PA 17104

Telephone (717) 783-9227
Tollfree 1-866-545-2476

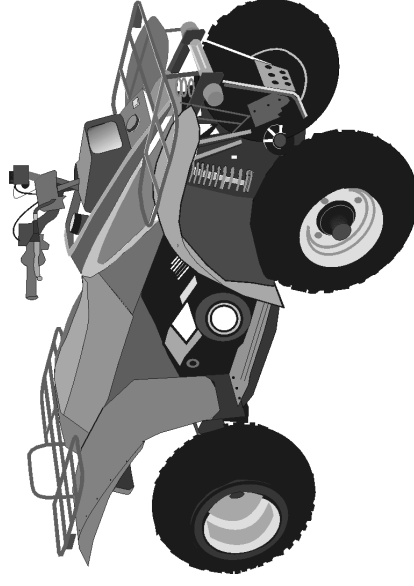
Or visit the PA PowerPort at www.state.pa.us
or visit DCNR directly at www.dcnr.state.pa.us.

**THINK SAFETY
ACT SAFELY**

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Summary of

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COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
Edward G. Rendell, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND
NATURAL RESOURCES
Michael DiBerardinis, Secretary

BUREAU OF FORESTRY