

All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) and Snow-Equipment Safety Tips



A Fact Sheet prepared by National Telecommunications Safety Panel

Introduction:

In The Telecommunications Industry use of All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) and Snow-Equipment (Snowmobiles, Snow-cats, etc.) can be seen when there is a need to gain quick access to remote telecom facilities/sites or traverse rough terrain where accessibility by motor vehicle is not possible. This may be due to the absence of roads or as a result of poor weather conditions (rain/snow). It is imperative that necessary steps are taken to ensure that such equipment is operated safely to protect affected employees and minimize the potential for workplace accidents. Contained in this document is a list of recommended safety tips that can be used to protect employees and additional equipment safety or training resources.

Safety Tips:

Follow these rules when operating ATVs and snow-equipment/snowmobiles:

- **ALWAYS WEAR A HELMET!** It will protect you from serious injury in the event of a crash. Also, wear protective glasses or goggles, gloves and appropriate footwear. When driving or riding in Snow-cats or similar snow equipment ensure provided seatbelts or safety equipment is utilized.
- **DRESS PROPERLY!** When operating equipment during winter or cold conditions, always wear insulated boots, clothing, and gloves. When operating an ATVs dress accordingly and take into account possible changes in weather. When possible carry additional clothing or gloves in case you get wet/cold.
- **KNOW HOW TO PROPERLY OPERATE EQUIPMENT!** Read and follow all manufactures' guidelines. *Take a snowmobile or ATV safe operator's course before attempting to use such equipment* (FYI, a list of training organizations or resource information is included in this document under Additional Safety Information).
- **NEVER OVERLOAD EQUIPMENT!** In most cases, ATVs and snowmobiles should be limited to one person. When in doubt check and follow all applicable manufactures' guidelines. Additional gear should be limited and loads balanced.
- **WATCH YOUR SPEED!** Too many accidents occur because of speed or recklessness. Maintain a slow to moderate speed and exercise caution while turning or traversing rough or uneven terrain.
- **USE THE BUDDY SYSTEM!** Travel in groups/pairs and make sure nobody is left behind. Look over your shoulder often to check on your partners.
- **THINK SAFE AND BE PREPARED!** Plan your route accordingly, be certain conditions are safe before traveling. Avoid, when possible, crossing frozen bodies of water. Always carry a first-aid kit and basic repair tools, parts and equipment to help in the event equipment gets stuck in mud or snow (e.g. winch, ropes, pulleys, etc.).
- **MAINTAIN AND INSPECT EQUIPMENT!** Ensure equipment is maintained in good working order and inspect as recommended by the manufacturer and before each use. Doing so can prevent accidents and breakdown of equipment.
- **COMPLY WITH APPLICABLE REGULATIONS!** Many states and local authorities have specific regulations with regard to use of such equipment. Check for applicable regulations for each area before operating.

Additional Safety Information:

Snow-equipment (Snowmobiles, Snow-cats, etc.):

- **International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association (ISMA)** is an organization representing the snowmobile manufacturers. They coordinate committees within the industry to handle concerns such as snowmobile safety, the promotion of the life-style activity of snowmobiling, keeping accurate statistics, reporting the growth of the industry and the positive economic impact the life-style activity has throughout the world. Information can be obtained at: <http://www.snowmobile.org/>
- **The American Council of Snowmobile Associations:** For general or additional safety information on snowmobiling in a specific state in the United States, contact:
The American Council of Snowmobile Associations, 271 Woodland Pass, Suite 216, East Lansing, Michigan 48823, (517) 351-4362, Fax: (517) 351-1363 or on the web at: www.snowmobilers.org
- **State by State Snowmobile Association:** a list can be found at: http://www.snowmobile.org/resources_associations_us.asp

All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs):

- **ATV Safety Institute (ASI):** ASI is a not-for-profit division of the Specialty Vehicle Institute of America (SVIA), was formed in 1988 to implement an expanded national program of all-terrain vehicle (ATV) safety education and awareness. They can be contacted at: 2 Jenner Street, Suite 150 Irvine, CA 92618-3806, via phone call at: (949) 727-3727 or on the web at: <http://www.atvsafety.org/asi.cfm>
- **ASI's ATV Safety Institute Courses:** For the ATV *Rider Course* nearest you, call toll free (800) 887-2887