



Driving on beaches and sand dunes is prohibited under the Environmental Protection Act.

When you drive your ATV...

- watch out for wire fences;
- drive at the appropriate speed for the weather conditions;
- carry a first-aid kit;
- obey No Trespassing signs, ask permission to drive on private property and leave the property if asked to do so.

This pamphlet contains information about one area of the law only – driving an all-terrain vehicle while impaired. It does not contain a complete statement about the law in this area. If you have a legal problem about drinking, drugs and operating an all-terrain vehicle, you need legal advice that this pamphlet cannot provide. To get legal advice, contact a lawyer. As changes in the law occur, the information in this pamphlet may go out of date.

Additional copies of this pamphlet and more information about driving an all-terrain vehicle while impaired may be obtained by contacting:

Highway Safety Division
902-368-5210

Alcohol, Drugs and ATVs



Transportation
and Public Works

All-terrain vehicles (ATVs) can be lots of fun. You can drive them to places where a regular vehicle cannot travel. Some people use them to travel to hard-to-get-to woodlots. Others use them to get to their favourite hunting and fishing spots. ATVs include both three- and four-wheeled models.

Did you know that if you drink alcohol before or while driving your ATV you can be convicted of an offence under the Criminal Code?

The Criminal Code of Canada defines a motor vehicle as “a vehicle that is... driven by any means other than muscular power.”

If you drink or take drugs either before or while driving an ATV, you can be convicted of an offence just as you would be if you were driving your car. It doesn't matter if you're driving across the highway, on an off-road track or across country. You don't even have to actually be driving the ATV to be considered to have “care and control” of it.

To “impair” something means to weaken, lessen or hinder. Your ability to make judgements will be weakened, your vision may be affected and your reaction time will be increased by drinking alcohol, taking drugs or a combination of both. **Symptoms of impairment include slurred speech, dizziness and unsteadiness, but you can still be impaired without these signs.** Your body weight, sex, physical and emotional conditions will all determine your level of impairment.

Alcohol impairment is the most common or best known type of impairment, but taking some common drugs can also make you impaired. Drugs like cough or cold medicines can make you feel drowsy and impair your ability to operate an ATV.

Ask your doctor about possible side-effects of prescription drugs and read the labels of over-the-counter medicines. The label usually states whether it could make you feel drowsy or whether you should operate any type of equipment or drive a vehicle.

The operation of all-terrain vehicles is regulated by the Off Highway Vehicle Act. Under this act and regulations, an all-terrain vehicle is defined as “a wheeled or tracked motor vehicle designed for travel primarily on unprepared surfaces such as open country or marshland but does not include a snow vehicle, implement of husbandry (farm equipment) or construction machinery.”

Your ATV must be registered.

- Children under the age of 10 years cannot drive an ATV, and children between the ages of 10 and 14 must be directly supervised by a parent or guardian.
- You and any passengers must wear a safety helmet.
- You may drive along ditches or across highways only when certain conditions are met.
- There is a speed limit of eight kilometres per hour when driving near a residence or close to other people.