

Operating Guideline # 1416

All Terrain Vehicles

Created January 2023; Updated February 21, 2024



PURPOSE:

To establish a guideline for the safe operation of all Fire Department All Terrain Vehicles, including Wildland 4, Wildland 5, Wildland 7, and Wildland 9; and Sled 1 and Sled 3.

RATIONALE:

An ATV is a vehicle that requires a strong combination of skill, good judgment, attention and physical strength. Someone who does not have this combination of qualities is at serious risk. Research shows that in an ATV accident, a helmet may be the only thing between the operator and a disastrous head injury or death. Many of the most serious ATV accidents have been collisions with other vehicles. In a collision between an ATV and a car or truck, the ATV operator loses. Driving on or crossing a public road or highway is dangerous. If your work requires you to cross or drive along a roadway additional precautions are necessary.

GUIDELINE:

1. All operators must have completed the VFIS Emergency Services ATV/UTV Safety Program put on by the Training Department.
2. All operators must have a minimum of 3 years on the Fire Department
3. All operators must be legally allowed to operate the vehicle. This includes licensing, insurability and suitability.
4. All operators and riders must wear all appropriate safety gear ex. helmets, life jackets etc.
5. All operators and riders must have a good working knowledge of all the features of the vehicle, this includes the safety features and navigation equipment.
6. Drivers will maintain an appropriate speed in relation to terrain and conditions. Speed of vehicles should be 20 kph in zones where the posted speed is 50 kph or lower; and no more than 50 kph in zones where the speed is posted in excess of 50 kph. In emergency conditions where a life is at threat, operators are allowed to exceed the speed by 20 kph.
7. All terrain units must only be operated by MLFD personnel as per insurance.
8. Seat belts and DOT approved helmets **MUST** be worn by all riders when vehicle is in motion. Eye protection is required by riders when the windshield is not in place. Minimum safety apparel for all riders is coveralls/turnout gear, station wear, gloves and CSA safety approved boots. When operating near water or there is a risk of entering water, members must wear PFD's.
9. No modifications shall be made to the Wildland or Sled units.
10. When traveling the operator will never exceed 45% slopes.

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11. All operators shall perform a pre ride inspection, see inspection sheet Appedix I.
12. Do not operate any vehicle that has any warning lights.
13. Secure all cargo and ensure that all tools will not interfere with operation of vehicle.
14. Always be cautious when approaching hills, turns and obstacles and when operating in unfamiliar terrain.
15. For the Wildland units only one rider per seat is allowed.
16. When loading or unloading vehicles ensure that the ramps and trailers are in position and that there is suitable traction for the vehicle. Ensure the loading and unloading area is clear of obstacles. Do not unload or load if you feel uncomfortable.
17. Ensure that the vehicle and ramps are secure before you move the trailer.
18. Re-fueling is not permitted with any source of ignition within 10 meters. Battery operated devices will be shut off before fueling. Re-fueling should not take place within 100 m of a water course.
19. Allow for off gassing of fuel and do not over fill the fuel tanks.
20. Tow vehicles for all all terrain vehicles will be any Rescue vehicle and Car 1/2/3, unless directed by the Fire Chief.
21. When operating in water on the Argo, Wildland 9 riders will always wear PFD's.

RESPONSIBILITY:

It is the responsibility of all staff to comply with the provisions of this Operating Guideline

DEFINITION:

“CSA” means the Canadian Standards Association.

“DOT” means Department of Transportation

“Recreational Vehicles” means any Snowmobile, All Terrain Vehicle or Motor Boat owned, rented or borrowed by the Fire Department.

Note:

A member of the Fire Department may use their personnel recreational vehicle to assist at an incident only with the permission of Incident Commander and only if they have met the criteria outlined in this Operational Guideline.

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Pre-Ride Inspection

The pre-ride inspection takes place in two parts –

With the ATV turned off, check:

- look for red maintenance tags to see if any recent problems or warnings are noted
- gas tank level
- oil level
- tire pressure on all four wheels and make sure there are no worn or cut patches
- tire stability by pulling on each one to see if there's movement
- helmet in good condition (chinstrap, visor)
- the first aid, AED, portable radio are there, complete and in good order
- walk around the vehicle before you start it up to see if anything is dragging or entangled in the wheels or axles
- the wheel bolts on each rim

With the ATV turned on check that:

- the lights come on, including emergency lights, spot lights if required
- the steering wheel turns all the way & moving does not affect throttle
- the brakes work smoothly when you move forward slowly and that they don't pull to one side
- the engine stops immediately and smoothly when you turn off the ignition.

Post-ride check all the above and before you put the ATV away, check:

- all fluid levels and top them up
- the pressure and condition of all four tires and add air if necessary

Clean the ATV thoroughly. Grit and standing water will corrode and damage important parts. Fill out the call sheet noting any damage for the Deputy and tag any items that you note are damaged or need repairs.