

Work environment – Rural safety

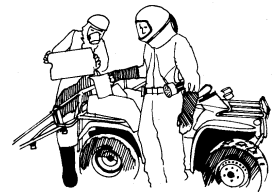
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4 wheeled all terrain vehicles ATVs >

Four-wheeled All Terrain Vehicles or ATVs are a popular “workhorse” on the farm. A large proportion of four-wheeled ATV injuries result from sideways, backward and forward overturns.

Injury frequently occurs from the following situations:

- Rider struck by an object (eg overhanging branch).
- Rollover from striking an object or the terrain being too steep.
- Leg of rider or passenger caught in rear tyre, chain, etc.
- Incorrect use of controls leads to feet being caught in tyres.
- Loads are too heavy, unequally distributed or not secured properly.
- Rider inexperience with the effects of slope, speed or weight distribution.
- Poor maintenance of brakes and suspension.

**Selecting an ATV**

Purchase a “workhorse” ATV not a sports recreational model. The workhorse model is designed for power, traction and stability.

When choosing for your property, there are numerous factors and features to consider.

Major options are as follows: intended use of ATV, terrain and ground conditions, power, speed, gear ratio, suspension, centre of gravity, drive mechanism, brakes, seat carrying capacity and reverse gear.

General safety precautions

These include:

- Read and follow all the manufacturer’s operating instructions.
- Keep children away from ATVs and attachments.
- Wear appropriate clothing and boots, not thongs.
- Ensure correct training for ATV operators. The training should be specialised for particular tasks on the farm.
- Adjust all controls so they can be operated comfortably and safely while seated.
- Keep all guards in place, particularly including foot plates.
- NEVER carry passengers.

putting safety first >



Fitting and use of accessories

- Fit the company's original equipment or after-market equipment according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Whenever fitting equipment, always use the mounting point or draw bar provided by the manufacturer. Incorrect attachment can increase instability and cause overturns.
- Do not alter the height of the mounting point or increase the towing capacity outside those provided by the manufacturer.
- When a powered implement is attached to the ATV, ensure all guards are in place and the machine can be comfortably operated from the seated position.
- Observe manufacturer's specifications with regard to load ratings of the front and rear carrier racks. Loading, or overloading in particular, the front and rear carriers increases instability of an ATV.
- Adhere to manufacturer's specifications with regards to towing capacity of ATVs. Overweight loads can adversely affect braking and increase the risk of rollover.

Operational safety

- Adopt a "dynamic" riding style by transferring the rider's weight from side to side and forward and backwards to counter balance the ATV's directional mass.
- Ride at speeds slow enough to retain control over the unexpected.
- Reduce speed before turning or applying brakes.
- Scan the environment ahead and identify visible hazards, such as rocks or stumps, low or fallen branches, fences and rough or unstable trail surfaces. Crumbling and slippery banks have also caused many overturns.
- Be wary of unexpected hazards such as other riders and frightened animals.
- Descend slopes cautiously by keeping the ATV in low gear and allowing the motor compression to act as a brake.

Personal protection

Wear protective equipment such as helmets, face shields, goggles, boots or shoes, gloves and appropriate clothing. In open terrain operation, less protective or alternate clothing may be dictated by task.

Be aware of solar radiation and risk of dehydration. Riders involved in continuous low speed operations such as mustering should consider broad brim hats to alleviate the onset of heat stress

To reduce the risk of ATV accidents, operators must be trained in safe practices.

Safe practices include:

- The operator must be willing to follow rules. Never allow passengers on the ATV. Never allow anybody to operate an ATV who has not had adequate training or may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs. ATVs are designed for one person only – the operator.
- Passengers will interfere with normal dynamics of the vehicle. The added weight also will complicate handling the ATV up and down slopes, around curves and stopping distances.

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