

University Policy 4112: Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) Usage

Category: Academic Affairs

Sub Category: Research

Covered Individuals: University Employees, Students, and Volunteers

Responsible Executive: Vice President for Research

Policy Custodian: Office of Research, Executive Director of Environmental Health & Safety

Last Revised: 2026/01/16

Previous USU Policy Number: 539 & 4110

4112.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy is to establish the safe and continued use of motorized vehicles defined by Utah State University (USU) as Off Highway Vehicle (OHVs) for all USU sponsored activities or research.

This policy applies to all USU faculty, staff, students and visitors who are authorized to use an OHV or snowmobile. This policy has particular relevance to USU farms, horticultural units, and research conducted outside of USU owned or operated property.

4112.2 POLICY

2.1 General Use of OHVs or Snowmobiles

- 2.1.1 Only Authorized Users may operate an OHV or snowmobile for USU business.
- 2.1.2 OHVs or Snowmobiles owned by USU may only be operated for official USU business. Motorcycle use is strongly discouraged for USU business.
- 2.1.3 Authorized Users of OHVs or snowmobiles must have a driver's license that is valid in the state of Utah. The user must have their driver's license with them when operating the vehicle.
- 2.1.4 Drugs and Alcohol: Authorized users shall not operate an OHV or snowmobile while under the influence of alcohol, cannabis, prescription drugs with potential to impair your ability to operate a motor vehicle, or illegal drugs.
- 2.1.5 Registration: OHVs or snowmobiles owned or operated by USU must be registered with USU Property Management in accordance with Utah Laws. Experimental vehicles are exempt from registration.
- 2.1.6 Mobile Phone: No authorized user shall operate an OHV or snowmobile while using a mobile phone for talking or texting.
- 2.1.7 Purchasing: Beginning July 1, 2021 all purchased, leased or rented All Terrain Type II or Type III vehicles must be equipped with a manufacturer's installed ROPS system including seat belts.

2.2 Training

- 2.2.1 Initial Training: To become an authorized user, faculty, staff or students must complete one of the following training courses:
- Utah OHV Safety Course offered online from Utah State Parks: <https://www.offroad-ed.com/utah/>
 - Utah Snowmobile Safety Course offered online from Utah State Parks: <https://www.snowmobilecourse.com/usa/utah/>
 - Utah State University OHV Training course offered online from the Environmental Health and Safety Office.
- 2.2.2 Specialized Training: Each project using OHVs or snowmobiles must conduct training specific for the location, conditions and type of use.
- 2.2.3 Recurrent Training: Each authorized user shall complete recurrent training at a minimum of every 3 years and refresher training as needed.
- 2.2.4 Training Records: Each department or project supervisor shall keep a record of authorized users training.
- 2.2.5 Laws: Knowledge of and compliance with applicable state and federal laws, rules, regulations and University policies are the responsibility of the authorized user. Noncompliance may result in the user no longer being allowed to operate an OHV or snowmobile and possibly further disciplinary action and/or remedial training.

2.3 Safety and Operation Requirements

- 2.3.1 Accidents: All accidents involving an OHV or snowmobile must be reported immediately to the supervisor of the department to which the equipment is registered, to the Department of Public Safety, USU Environmental Health and Safety, and to USU Risk Management. [Reporting form](#)
- 2.3.2 Modifications: OHV or snowmobiles may not be modified in any manner that affects the recommended mode of operation, speed or safety of the vehicle.
- 2.3.3 Seating: All passengers must be in seats designed and properly installed for such use. No passengers are allowed to be transported on the sides of OHV with the exception of the transport of an injured person secured on a backboard.
- 2.3.4 PPE: Authorized users of OHVs, or snowmobiles shall wear a DOT, ANSI, or SNELL approved Helmet at all times while operating the vehicle. Exemptions to the policy may be granted on a case by case basis by the supervisor overseeing the activity.
- 2.3.5 All-terrain type II and III vehicles must have a properly installed and in-place Rollover Protection Structure (ROPS), seat belts for all occupants, and seat belts must be used at all times.
- 2.3.6 Loading and Unloading Vehicle for Transportation: All loading and unloading activities should be done by a minimum of two people; a rider and a spotter. Under the following guidelines:
- Avoid riding the vehicle up/down the ramp.
 - Loading ramp safety strap or chains must be in place on both sides of the ramp.
 - Loading ramps must be rated for at least 150% of the dry weight of the vehicle.

4112.3 RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Supervisor Responsibilities

- 3.1.1 Supervisors must ensure that each authorized user under their supervision, who operates an OHV motorcycle or snowmobile, has received the required training outlined above.
- 3.1.2 Supervisors who oversee the use of an OHV or snowmobile in accordance with this policy shall ensure that any authorized user operating the vehicle possesses a driver's license that is valid in the state of Utah and has received a copy of this policy.
- 3.1.3 Each OHV or snowmobile vehicle operator is responsible for providing immediate notification of safety and maintenance concerns to the supervisor to which the OHV or snowmobile is assigned.
- 3.1.4 Supervisors who oversee the use of OHVs or snowmobiles will at a minimum, ensure the vehicle is maintained according to manufacture recommendations.
- 3.1.5 Supervisors who oversee the operation of any OHV or snowmobiles will provide authorized users access to a DOT, ANSI, or SNELL approved helmet.

4112.4 REFERENCES

- [Utah Code 41-22-2](#)

4112.5 RELATED USU POLICIES

- [Policy 5312: Vehicle Use Policy](#)

4112.6 DEFINITIONS

- **Authorized User** means any faculty, staff or student that has received USU prescribed training to operate an OHV, motorcycle, or snowmobile for USU business or research.
- **Roadway** means that portion of the highway improved, designed or ordinarily used for vehicular travel.
- **Motorcycle** means any motor vehicle having and saddle for the use of the operator and designed to travel on not more than two tires.
- **Off Highway Vehicles (OHV)** means a motor driven off-road vehicle (excluding watercraft) capable of travel without the benefit of a road or trail, on or over land, snow, ice or other natural terrain. Including but not limited to the following types:
 - **All-terrain type I vehicle** means any motor vehicle 52 inches or less in width, having and unladen dry weight of 1,500 pounds or less, traveling on four or more low pressure tires, having a seat designed to be straddled by the operator, and designed for or capable of travel over unimproved terrain.
 - **All-terrain type II vehicle** means any other motor vehicle 80 inches or less in width, traveling on four or more low pressure tires, having a steering wheel, non-straddle seating, rollover protection systems designed for or capable of travel over unimproved terrain and is:
 - An electric-power vehicle; or
 - A vehicle powered by an internal combustion engine and has an unladen

dry weight of 2,500 pounds or less.

“All-terrain type II vehicle” does not include golf carts, any vehicle designed to carry a person with a disability, any vehicle not specifically designed for recreational use, farm tractors and implements, or any vehicle primarily intended for highway travel.

- **All-terrain type III vehicle** means any other motor vehicle not defined here in designed for or capable of travel over unimproved terrain.

“All-terrain type III vehicle” does not include golf carts, any vehicle designed to carry a person with a disability, farm tractors and implements, or any vehicle primarily intended for highway travel.

- **Personal Protective Equipment** means protective clothing, helmets, goggles, or other garments or equipment designed to protect the wearer's body from injury or infection. The hazards addressed by protective equipment include physical, electrical, heat, chemicals, biohazards, and airborne particulate matter.
- **Rollover Protective Structure (ROPS)** means a system or structure intended to protect equipment operators and motorists from injuries caused by vehicle overturns or rollovers. Like roll cages and roll bars in cars and trucks, a ROPS involves bars attached to the frame that maintain a space for the operator's body in the event of rollover.
- **Snowmobile** means any motor vehicle designed for travel on snow or ice steered and supported in whole or in part by skis, belts, cleats runners, on low pressure tires.
- **Supervisor** means the person or persons who give instructions or orders to subordinates and is held responsible for the work and actions of other employees. Under USU a supervisor is considered anyone who approves a timecard or leave requests for an employee.

Information below is not included as part of the contents of the official Policy. It is provided only as a convenience for readers/users and may be changed at any time by persons authorized by the President, subject to review by the USU Policy Committee.

RESOURCES

Contacts

- [Director of Environmental Health & Safety Office](#)

POLICY HISTORY

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