



All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) Safety Fact Sheet

Definition:

An ATV is a motorised off-highway vehicle designed to travel on four low pressure tyres, having a seat designed to be straddled by the operator and handlebars for steering control, and intended use by a single operator and no passenger (Worksafe Victoria, 2008). Also called 4 wheeler or Quadbike. ATV's come in a variety of sizes; adult size (250cc) which clearly state that no one under 16 years of age should ride them; and a range of smaller sizes such as 90cc, 70cc and lower for recreational use by children.

The Facts

ATV's can be dangerous as they can easily roll over and crush the operator. ATV's are the most common cause of death for children 5-14 yrs on farms. Between 2001-2004, 12 children died on ATV's in Australia and many more were hospitalised with serious injuries, 50% of these children were visitors to farms. (National Farm Injury Data Centre, 2007) Anecdotal reports also suggest that many children have had close calls and minor accidents on ATV's. (Reported incidents at Farm Safety Shows 2004-2008). ATV's were responsible for four times the number of child deaths on farms as two-wheeled motorbikes, even though two-wheeled motorbikes are still more commonly used.

The Risks (Why Death and Injury can Occur)

- The adult ATV is too heavy for children under 16 years to control and they are more easily crushed if the vehicle rolls.
- Taking passengers on large or smaller ATVs upset the balance. ATV's need the operator to be able shift their weight to increase steering control. Many children have died by being a passenger on an ATV.
- More parents are buying smaller ATV's for their children thinking they are safer than two wheel motorbikes as they have four wheels. This is not the case, ATV's are more difficult to control and can roll over forward, backward or sideways more easily.
- Not wearing the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Low tyre pressure in this type of vehicle can cause them to bounce when they hit an obstacle.
- Obstacles such as stumps, rocks, branches can be hidden from view in paddocks.
- The relatively high combined centre of gravity of rider and machine presents an increased risk of overturning when operating on steep slopes, banks, dam edges and other uneven terrain (WorkCover NSW, 2007)
- Allowing untrained people and children to ride the ATV (it takes training and understanding to negotiate different terrains and slopes)
- Riding on Bitumen roads can be hazardous as the smooth road surface may compromise control.

Risk Control Measures

- Do not allow children under 16 years of age ride the adult ATV.
- Never take passengers especially children on the adult ATV.
- Do not let your child take a passenger on their smaller ATV.
- When buying child size ATV's specifically for children make sure it is the correct size for the child's age and size. i.e. 12 – 16 years should not ride anything more powerful than 90cc. It is not recommended that children under 12 years ride ATV's at all. Do not be tempted to get the next size up with the thought that they may out grow it too quickly.
- Ensure children have training in correct riding and handling procedures.
- Do not let other children ride the ATV unless they know how to.
- Make sure your child is of sufficient age to understand the limitations of the vehicle and the hazards they may be exposed to. Children under 9 years do not have developed peripheral vision and do not have an understanding of speed or how fast they are going.
- Teach children to check the terrain and look for hazards before riding.
- Children should always tell someone where they are going before riding.
- Always ride off road.
- Ensure they do not try stunts or show off
- Ensure the ATV is maintained and operated to the manufacturers specifications
- Ensure they wear the appropriate and correctly fitted Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)
 - Helmet (To Australian Standard)
 - Eye protection (Visor or wrap around goggles)
 - Strong over the ankle boots
 - Strong Gloves
 - Long sleeve shirt and long pants



References;

Pollock K, Fragar L, Morton C. Traumatic deaths in Australian agriculture – The facts 2007
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