

CHAPTER 375  
Snowmobiles and All Purpose Vehicles

375.01 Definitions.	375.05 Licensing requirements of operator.
375.02 Equipment.	
375.03 Code application; prohibited operation	375.06 Registration of vehicles.
375.04 Permitted operation.	375.07 Accident reports.
	375.99 Penalty.

CROSS REFERENCES

See sectional histories for similar State law.

Power of trial court of record to impound registration  
certificate for certain violations - see Ohio R.C. 4519.47

Power to regulate; municipal licensing prohibited -  
see Ohio R.C. 4519.48

Street or highway defined - see TRAF. 301.42

Required usage of helmets and safety glasses -  
see TRAF. 373.02(f)

Lights, brakes and muffler - see OAC Ch. 4501-29

375.01 DEFINITIONS.

As used in this Chapter:

(a) "Snowmobile" means any self-propelled vehicle designed primarily for use on snow or ice, and steered by skis, runners or caterpillar treads.  
(ORC 4519.01(A))

(b) "All purpose vehicle" means any self-propelled vehicle designed primarily for cross-country travel on land and water, or on more than one type of terrain and steered by wheels or caterpillar treads, or any combination thereof, including vehicles that operate on a cushion of air, vehicles commonly known as all-terrain vehicles, all season vehicles, mini-bikes and trail bikes, but excluding any self-propelled vehicle not principally used for purposes of personal transportation, any vehicle principally used in playing golf, any motor vehicle or aircraft required to be registered under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4503 or Chapter 4561, and any vehicle excepted from definition as a motor vehicle by Section 301.20 of this Traffic Code. (ORC 4519.01(B))

(c) "Owner" means any person, firm or corporation, other than a lien holder or dealer, having title to a snowmobile or all purpose vehicle, or other right to the possession thereof. (ORC 4519.01(C)).

(d) "Operator" means any person who operates or is in actual physical control of a snowmobile or all purpose vehicle.

(e) "Limited access highway" or "freeway" means a highway especially designed for through traffic and over which abutting property owners have no easement or right of access by reason of the fact that their property abuts upon such highway, and access to which may be allowed only at highway intersections designated by the Ohio Director of Transportation. (ORC 5511.02)

(f) "Interstate highway" means any part of the interstate system of highways as defined in subsection (d), 72 Stat. 888 (1958), 23 U.S.C.A. 103, and amendments thereof. (ORC 4519.01(H))

### 375.02 EQUIPMENT

Equipment of snowmobiles and all purpose vehicles shall include, but not necessarily be limited to requirements for the following items:

(a) At least one headlight having a minimum candlepower of sufficient intensity to reveal persons and objects at a distance of at least 100 feet ahead under normal atmospheric conditions during hours of darkness;

(b) At least one red taillight having a minimum candlepower of sufficient intensity to be plainly visible from a distance of 500 feet to the rear under normal atmospheric conditions during hours of darkness;

(c) Adequate brakes. Every snowmobile shall, while traveling on packed snow, be capable of carrying such driver, be capable of stopping in not more than forty feet from an initial steady speed of twenty miles per hour, or locking its traction belt;

(d) A muffler system capable of precluding the emission of excessive smoke or exhaust fumes, and of limiting the engine noise of vehicles. On snowmobiles manufactured after January 1, 1973, such requirement shall include sound dampening equipment such that noise does not exceed eighty-two decibels on the "A" scale at fifty feet as measured according to SAE J192 (September, 1970);

(e) No person shall operate any snowmobile or all purpose vehicle in violation of this section, except that equipment specified in subsections (a) and (b) hereof shall not be required on snowmobiles or all purpose vehicles operated during the daylight hours on State controlled land under the jurisdiction of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and that are limited to off-highway use. (ORC 4519.20).

**375.03 CODE APPLICATION; PROHIBITED OPERATION.**

The applicable provisions of this Traffic Code shall be applied to the operation of snowmobiles and all purpose vehicles, except that no snowmobile or all purpose vehicle shall be operated as follows:

- (a) On any street or highway except for emergency travel only during such time and in such manner as the State or local authority having jurisdiction over such street or highway shall designate, and except as provided in Section 375.04.
- (b) Upon any property owned or leased by the Municipality except in areas designated for such purposes.
- (c) On any private property, or in any nursery or planting area, without the permission of the owner or other person having the right to possession of the property;
- (d) On any land or waters controlled by the State, except at those location where a sign has been posted permitting such operation;
- (e) On tracks or right of way of any operating railroad;
- (f) While transporting any firearm, bow or other implement for hunting, that is not unloaded and securely encased;
- (g) For the purpose of chasing, pursuing, capturing or killing any animal or wild fowl;
- (h) During the time from one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise, unless displaying lighted lights as required by Section 375.02.  
(ORC 4519.40)

**375.04 PERMITTED OPERATION.**

Snowmobiles and all purpose vehicles being used for winter travel may be operated as follows:

- (a) To make a crossing of a highway, other than a freeway or limited access or interstate highway, whenever the crossing can be made in safety and will not interfere with the movement of vehicular traffic approaching from any direction on the highway, and provided that the operator yields the right of way to any approaching traffic that presents an immediate hazard;
- (b) On highways in the County or Township road systems that are not maintained for vehicular winter travel by snow removal, whenever the local authority having jurisdiction over such highway so permits;

(c) Off and alongside a street or highway for limited distances from the point of unloading from a conveyance to the point at which the snowmobile or all purpose vehicle is intended and authorized to be operated. (ORC 4519.41)

#### 375.05 LICENSING REQUIREMENTS OF OPERATOR.

(a) No person who does not hold a valid, current motor vehicle operator's or chauffeur's license, motorcycle operator's endorsement or probationary license issued under Ohio R.C. Chapter 4507, shall operate a snowmobile or all purpose vehicle on any street or highway, on any portion of the right of way thereof, or on any public land or waters. This subsection shall not be construed to permit the holder of such a license to operate a snowmobile or all purpose vehicle in violation of Section 375.03.

(b) No person who is less than sixteen years of age shall operate a snowmobile or all purpose vehicle on any land or waters other than private property or waters owned by or leased to such person's parent or guardian, unless accompanied by another person who is eighteen years of age, or older, and who holds a license as provided in subsection (a) hereof, except that the Ohio Department of Natural Resources may permit such operation on State controlled land under its jurisdiction when such person is less than sixteen years of age but is twelve years of age or older and is accompanied by a parent or guardian who is a licensed driver eighteen years of age or older.

(c) Failure to produce an operator's or chauffeur's license, motorcycle operator's endorsement, or probationary license, upon the reasonable demand of any law enforcement officer or other person authorized by Ohio R.C. 4519.42 and 4519.43, shall be prima-facie evidence that the license has not been obtained. (ORC 4519.44)

#### 375.06 REGISTRATION OF VEHICLES.

Except as provided in Ohio R.C. 4519.02(B), (C) and (D), no person shall operate any snowmobile or all purpose vehicle unless the snowmobile or all purpose vehicle is registered and numbered in accordance with Ohio R.C. 4519.03 and 4519.04. (ORC 4519.02)

#### 375.07 ACCIDENT REPORTS.

The operator of a snowmobile or all purpose vehicle involved in any accident resulting in bodily injury to or death of any person or damage to the property of any person in excess of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) shall report the accident within forty eight hours to the Chief of Police, and shall within thirty days forward a written report of the accident to the Ohio Registrar of Motor Vehicles on a form prescribed by the Registrar. If the operator is physically incapable of making the reports and there is another participant in the accident not so incapacitated, such participant shall make the reports. In the event that there is no other participant, and the operator is other than the owner, the owner shall, within the prescribed time, make the reports.

Any law enforcement officer or other person authorized by Ohio R.C. 4519.42 and 4519.43, who investigates or receives information of an accident involving a snowmobile or all purpose vehicle shall forward to the Registrar a written report of the accident within forty eight hours. (ORC 4519.46).

**375.99 PENALTY**

(EDITOR'S NOTE: See Section 303.99 for misdemeanor classifications and penalties.)