



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
MS AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY
EXPERIMENT STATION

MAFES DAWG TRACKS

What is a UTV? UTV stands for utility vehicle or utility task vehicle. They also may be referred to as ROV (recreational off-highway vehicle), but are most commonly known as a “side by side”.

UTVs have become extremely popular because of their versatility in both work and play settings. For recreation, they can go places most 4x4 vehicles cannot while hauling lots of gear, coolers and friends. At work they are popular for hauling feed, setting up small spray rigs and a variety of other chores previously only done with a truck.

It is important to remember that while using UTVs at work, they must be treated as a tool not a toy.

Excessive speed is a major contributing factor to UTV accidents. Use reasonable speeds for the conditions and terrain. Supervisors must stress and enforce this to all workers – both staff and students. While there is a time and place for showing your extreme driving prowess, it is not at work!

A pre-ride inspection is also necessary to keep your UTV reliable and safe; remember “T-CLOC”:

- ✓ Tires – inspect for cuts, nails; ensure correct air pressure, it may need adjusting according to the load.
- ✓ Controls – shifter, throttle & brakes work correctly.
- ✓ Lights – headlights/taillights; also ensure your SMV triangle is in place or caution light/strobe is working.
- ✓ Oil, fuel, fluids & filters – filled & clean; these are the life-blood of your UTV.
- ✓ Chassis, suspension, shafts & external equipment – clean away debris & inspect for damage.

UTV Safe Operating Tips:

- On UTVs equipped with roll over protection (ROP), always wear the seatbelt. Passengers must also wear seatbelts.
- No passenger is allowed to ride in the cargo area or stand up hanging off the ROPS.
- Stay off public roads.
- Know your machine’s capabilities & limitations – overloading with excessive weight can effect handling capabilities.
- All loads must be tied down to prevent shifting. Be extra careful when loaded with liquid in a portable tank, as sloshing will cause a change in weight distribution.
- Ensure the cargo box is securely latched after dumping.
- Always keep arms and legs inside the cab area.
- Go straight up & down hills, avoid going sideways.
- Be cautious in unfamiliar terrain or high grass areas – look out for ditches, washouts, holes and soft spots.

A safety training course is required for all MAFES employees who operate a UTV. Both online and hands-on training is available.

For more info contact:
Leslie Woolington
MAFES/MSU-Extension
Risk Mgmt./Loss Control
662.325.3204