



# THE STOUFFER REPORT

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**Capitol Building, Room 332**  
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## Drive Safely When Riding All-Terrain Vehicles

All-terrain vehicles (ATVs) have made life easier for farmers and offer great recreational opportunities for youths. These vehicles are excellent ways to experience the outdoors in Missouri and get around on the farm. However, ATV safety is critical in maintaining the health and well-being of riders.

Missouri already has witnessed tragedy in 2006 due to ATV accidents. In June, two teenagers died due to injuries sustained after their ATV struck a tree in Ashland. Nationwide in 2004, ATVs caused an estimated 129,500 injuries requiring emergency treatment and 703 deaths, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. The Children's Safety Network estimates that children under 16 accounted for 31 percent of all ATV injuries and 27 percent of fatalities, the highest of any age group. By focusing on safety measures to help protect ATV riders, Missourians can reduce the number of accidents and the devastation they cause.

The following pointers are designed to decrease ATV accidents and injuries in Missouri:

- **Wear protective gear:** By wearing helmets, gloves, boots, long pants and eye protection, ATV users can drastically reduce their chances for injury in case of an accident. Protective gear can mean the difference between inconvenience and tragedy.
- **Check ATV maintenance:** Before using their ATVs, riders should first check to make sure all mechanical controls are working properly. Acceleration, steering, and braking mechanisms are essential for safely operating vehicles.

- **Drive cautiously:** Although having fun is a large part of using ATVs, drivers should avoid showing off and putting themselves and others at risk. Stunts that appear fun and exciting can be extremely dangerous. Drivers should also remember to avoid obstacles and proceed with caution over hills.

By focusing on safety measures to help protect ATV riders instead of applying legislative burdens to do the same, Missourians can reduce the number of accidents and the devastation they cause.

For more information on ATV and farm safety, visit the Missouri Farm Bureau's Web site at [www.mofb.org/tb\\_PrevSafety.htm](http://www.mofb.org/tb_PrevSafety.htm). I encourage everyone to have fun in Rural Missouri, but please be safe when you do.

If you have questions or comments about this or any other issue, please call toll free (866) 768-3987 or by email at [bstouffer@senate.mo.gov](mailto:bstouffer@senate.mo.gov).

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