

Wisconsin  
Department of Natural Resources  
All-Terrain Vehicle  
Enforcement & Safety Report



2007  
PO Box 7921  
Madison, WI 53707-7921  
PUBL-LE-501 (Rev. 5/08)

# Table of Contents

Summary .....	3
History of ATV Fatalities by Calendar Year .....	4
ATV Fatality Rate per 100,000 Registered ATVs.....	4
History of New ATV Instructors & Students Certified .....	5
Alcohol Involvement in ATV Fatalities.....	6
Age of Fatality Victims .....	7
Helmet Use .....	7
Operator Experience.....	8
Victim / Operator ATV Safety Training.....	8
Number of Fatal Incidents by Day of Week .....	9
Number of Fatal Incidents by Time of Day .....	9
Number of Fatal Incidents by Speed and Location .....	10
Number of Fatal Incidents by Type/Cause.....	10
ATV Injury Accidents .....	11
ATV Citations Issued 2007 .....	12
ATV Fatality Summary .....	13

Randall Stark, Chief Warden  
Bureau of Law Enforcement  
Department of Natural Resources

Gary Eddy, ATV/Snowmobile Administrator  
Recreation Enforcement & Education  
Bureau of Law Enforcement  
Department of Natural Resources

Rachel Lesczynski, Program Assistant  
Recreation Enforcement & Education  
Bureau of Law Enforcement  
Department of Natural Resources

Copyright©2008 by Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

## **Department of Natural Resources Recreation Enforcement and Education Section**

In 2007, Wisconsin unfortunately reached a record high number of fatalities (24) for the second time in three years. Speed was listed as a contributing factor in a majority of the crashes. Wisconsin also experienced a record high number of registered ATVs (314,174). Registrations include Public Use, Private Use and Municipal Use. A total of 308 ATV Safety Courses were taught by 1,043 active volunteer instructors, which certified an all-time high number of students (7,614). This adds to the grand total of 65,741 students certified in ATV Safety since the program began in 1986.

The Department continues to work with the Department of Tourism, The Off-Road Vehicle Council and the Wisconsin ATV Association to promote safe and ethical ATV operation throughout the state.

### **Factors**

Eight of the twenty-four fatal crashes were listed as alcohol involved, however blood test results were unavailable for ten of the victims. Crashes are listed as alcohol involved if any detectable amount of alcohol is found in the victim's body or witnesses verified that the victim had been consuming alcohol. The number of operators arrested for operating an ATV while intoxicated has significantly increased from 34 arrests in 2006 to 51 arrests in 2007. Once again, the vast majority of the fatal crash victims fail to protect themselves through use of a helmet. Over the last five years, an average of 76% of the victims were not wearing a helmet.

The two top locations for fatal ATV crashes continue to be private lands and public roadways, with a slight increase in the number of crashes occurring on roadways. The Department of Natural Resources is becoming more concerned with roadway use of ATVs in Wisconsin. The number of roadways opened up to ATVs by local municipalities continues to increase as ATV owners pressure local governments for places to ride. This is a very unsafe trend, as ATVs are not designed for on-road use. ATVs are equipped with soft, low pressure tires and have a high center of gravity that makes them unstable on roadways and prone to rollover. For the past several years, the most frequent ATV citation issued by law enforcement officers is for illegal operation on or near a highway.

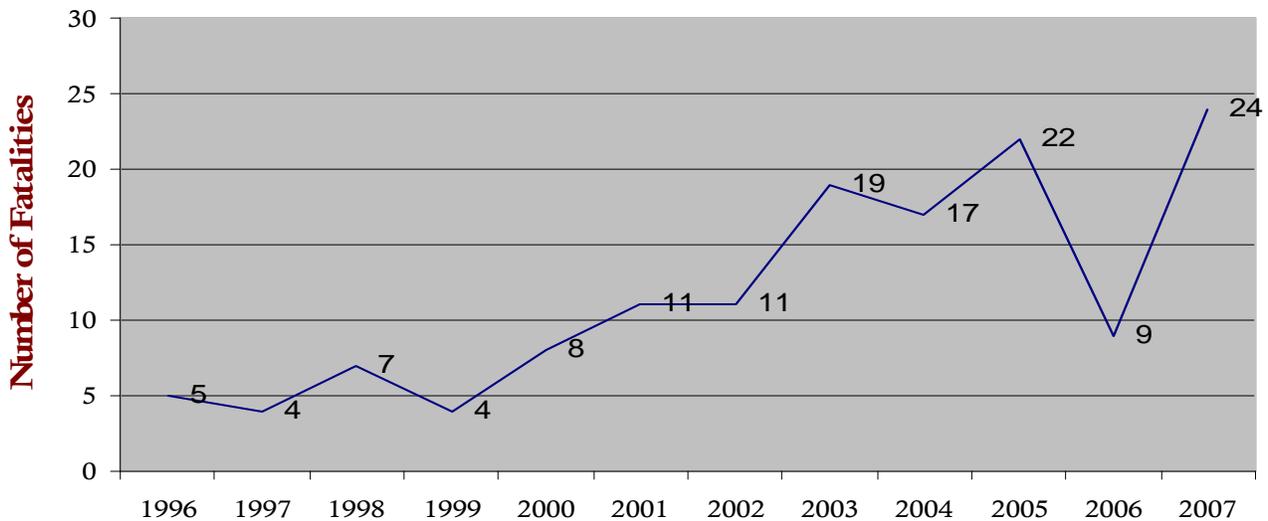
A majority of the fatality victims had not completed a Wisconsin ATV Safety Course. Wisconsin requires all ATV operators at least age 12 and born on or after January 1, 1988 to complete a state or provincial certified ATV safety course to operate in public areas. This age group typically makes up the smallest portion of the fatality victims each year.

### **Safety Tips**

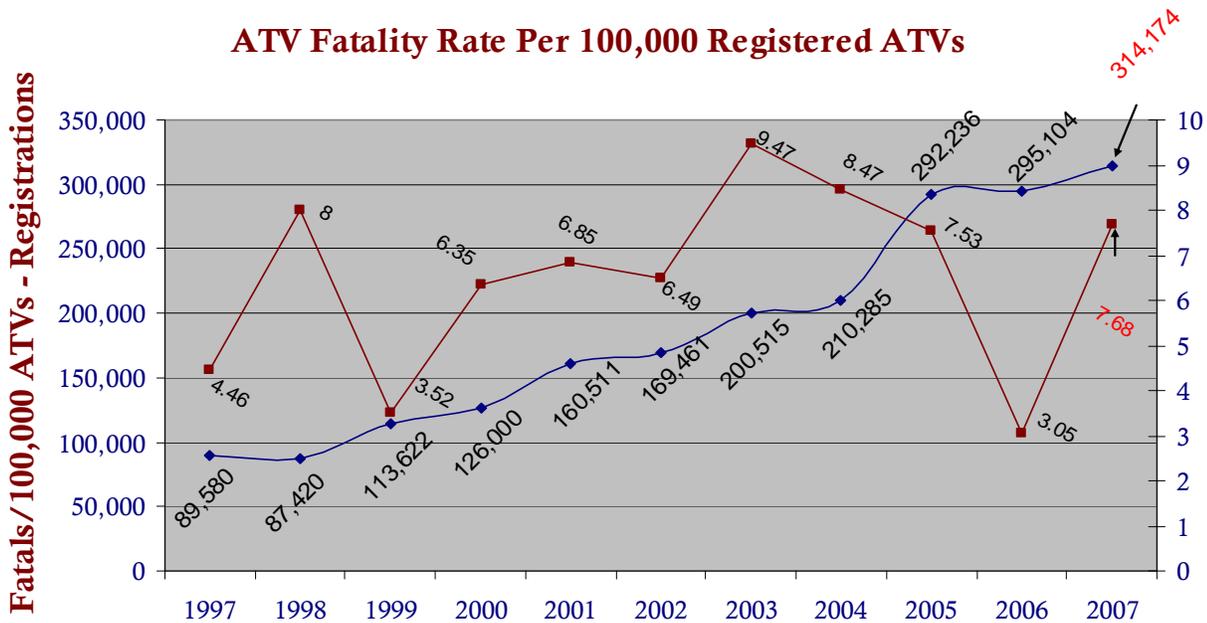
To ensure safe, enjoyable and ethical ATV use in Wisconsin the Department recommends the following safety tips:

- Complete an ATV safety course. These courses establish a safety mindset and provide basic knowledge in the safe, legal and ethical operation of ATVs.
- Always wear an approved helmet. Adults need to set a good example for younger riders.
- Limit your travel on roads and use a high degree caution if you feel it is absolutely necessary to operate on a road.
- Use a higher degree of caution on private lands. Private lands tend to contain trails that are not maintained and additional hazards such as uneven terrain, rocks, ditches, machinery and buildings.
- Don't drink and ride. Even a small amount of alcohol will affect a person's reaction time. Wait until you're done riding for the day before consuming alcoholic beverages.
- Slow down. Keep speeds down, especially when in close proximity to other people and ATV operators. ATVs typically operate on off-road terrain and higher speeds could cause operators to easily lose control. Higher speeds also increase the amount of distance needed to stop or avoid a hazard.

## History of ATV Fatalities By Calendar Year



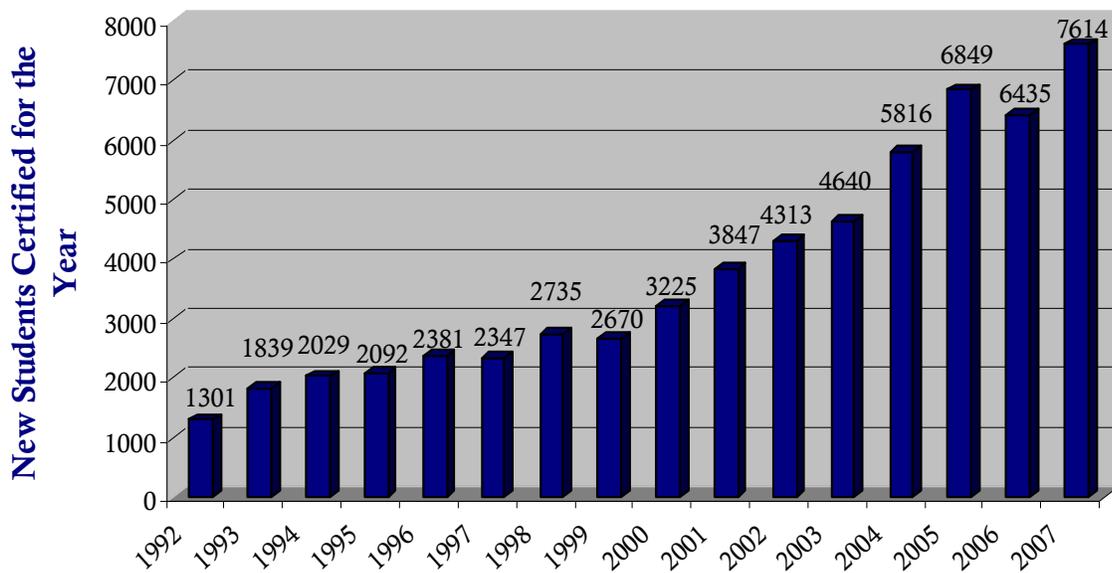
## ATV Fatality Rate Per 100,000 Registered ATVs



Beginning October 1, 2004 the Department began registering machines that weighed up to and including 900 pounds. The change came from a revision in the law.

ATV's must meet a specific definition in order to be registered.

## History of ATV Education Students Certified

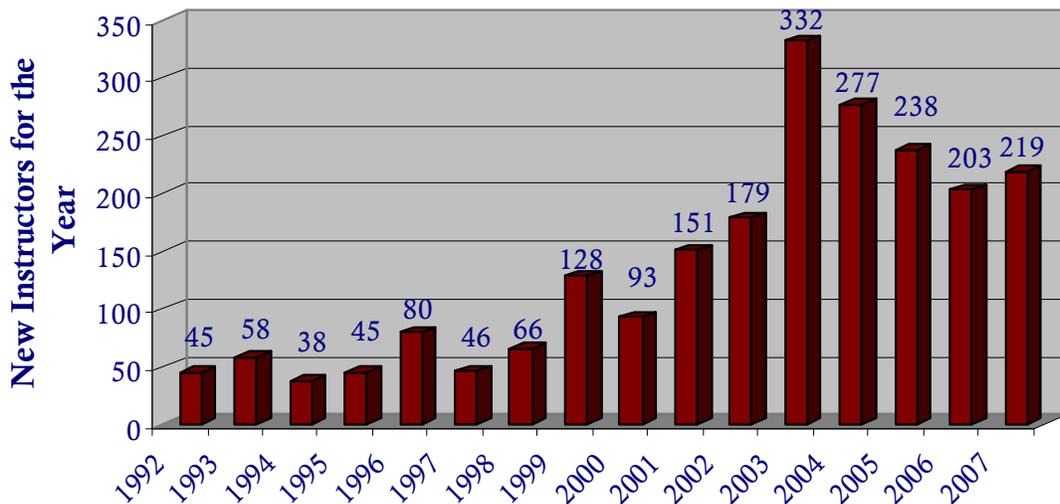


There were a total of 1,043 active instructors for the year 2007.

There were 308 ATV safety training courses held during 2007.

The ATV Safety Education program began in 1986.

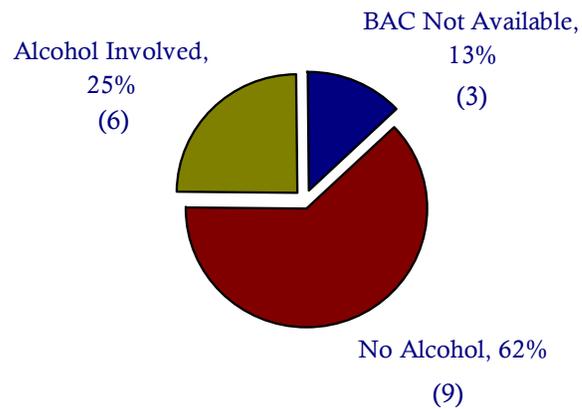
## History of New ATV Education Instructors Certified



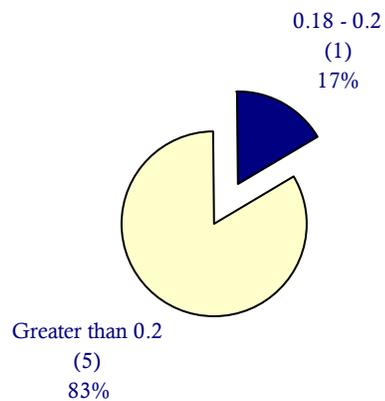
On April 28, 2004 the law changed requiring mandatory ATV education for operators at least 12 and born on or after January 1, 1988.

The total number of students certified for the entire history of the ATV program at the end of 2007 is 65,741.

## 2007 ATV Fatalities Alcohol Involvement



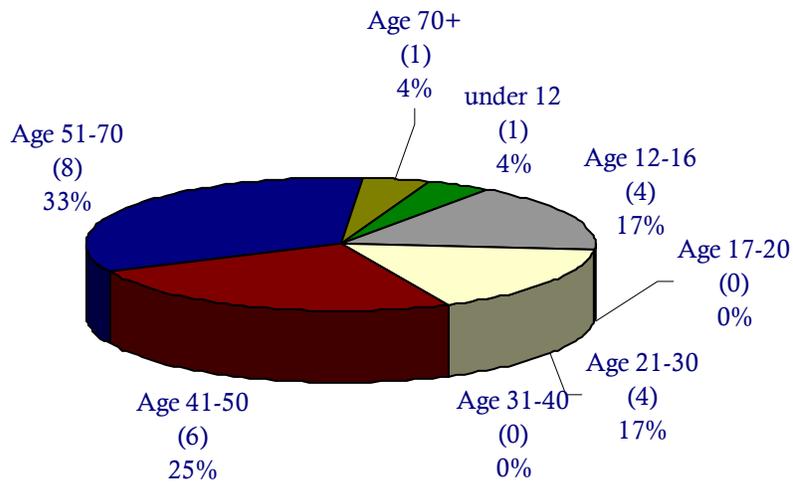
## Blood-Alcohol Content of ATV Fatalities Involving Alcohol



**-Blood alcohol content = grams/ml**

**Alcohol was detected in 38% of victims for 2007. This percentage is down from 56% in 2006.**

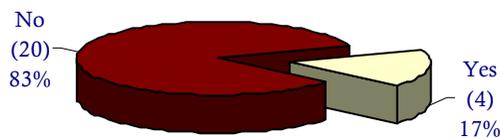
### 2007 ATV Fatalities Age of Victims



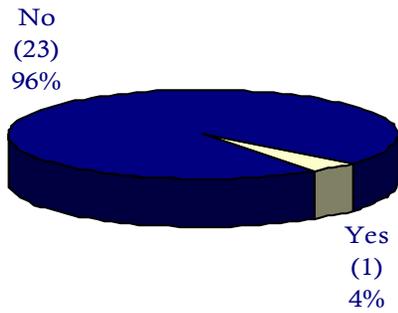
The average age of the fatality victim was 41 years old, a decrease from the previous year (49).

The largest percentage of the victims killed was between the ages 51-70.

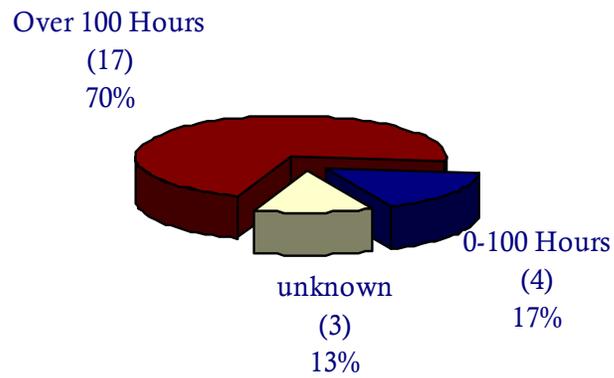
### 2007 Fatal Incident ATV Helmet Use



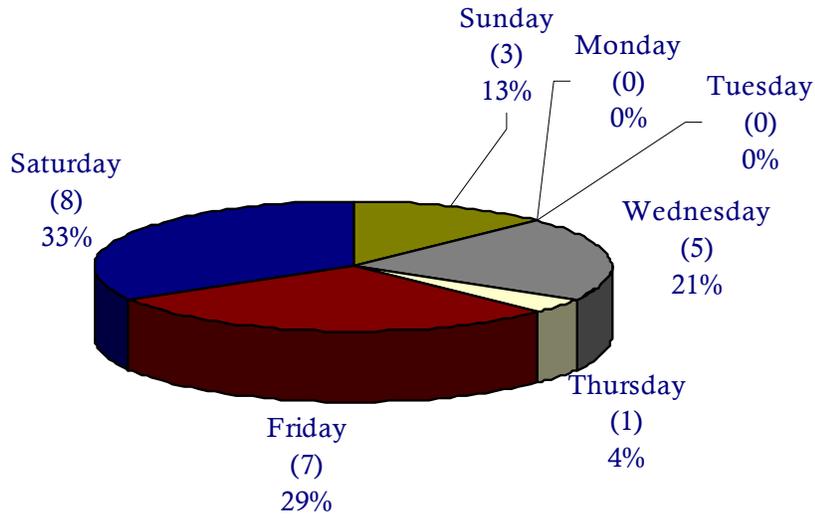
## 2007 Operator ATV Safety Training Certification



## 2007 Fatal Incident ATV Operator Experience

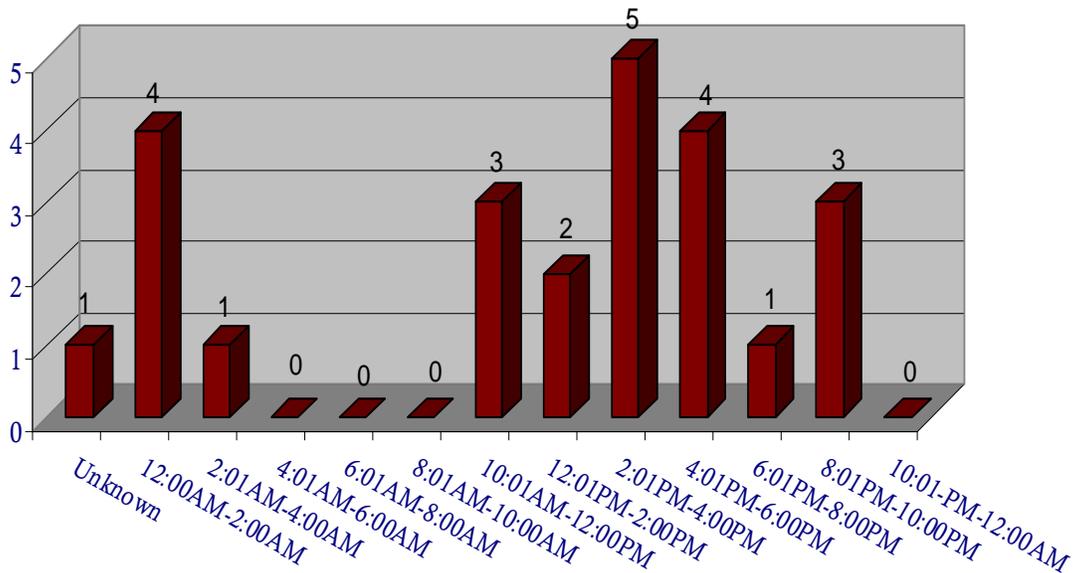


## 2007 ATV Fatal Incident by Day of Week



Fatal incidents typically have the highest frequency of occurrence on Friday, Saturday, and Sundays.

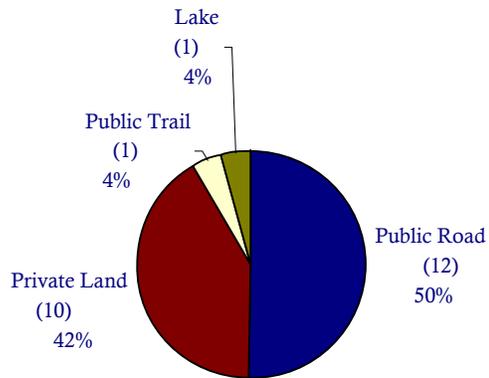
## 2007 ATV Fatal Incident by Time of Day



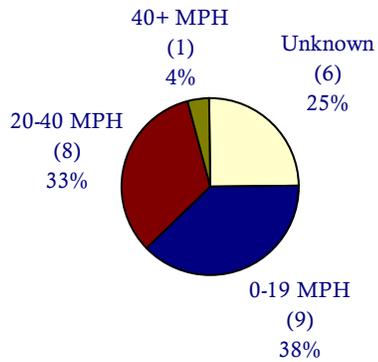
2007 ATV Annual  
Program Report

## 2007 Fatal ATV Incidents Speed & Location at Time of Incident

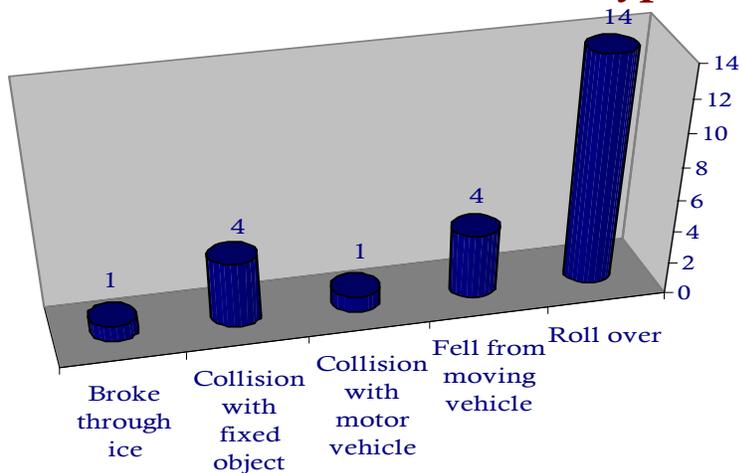
### Location



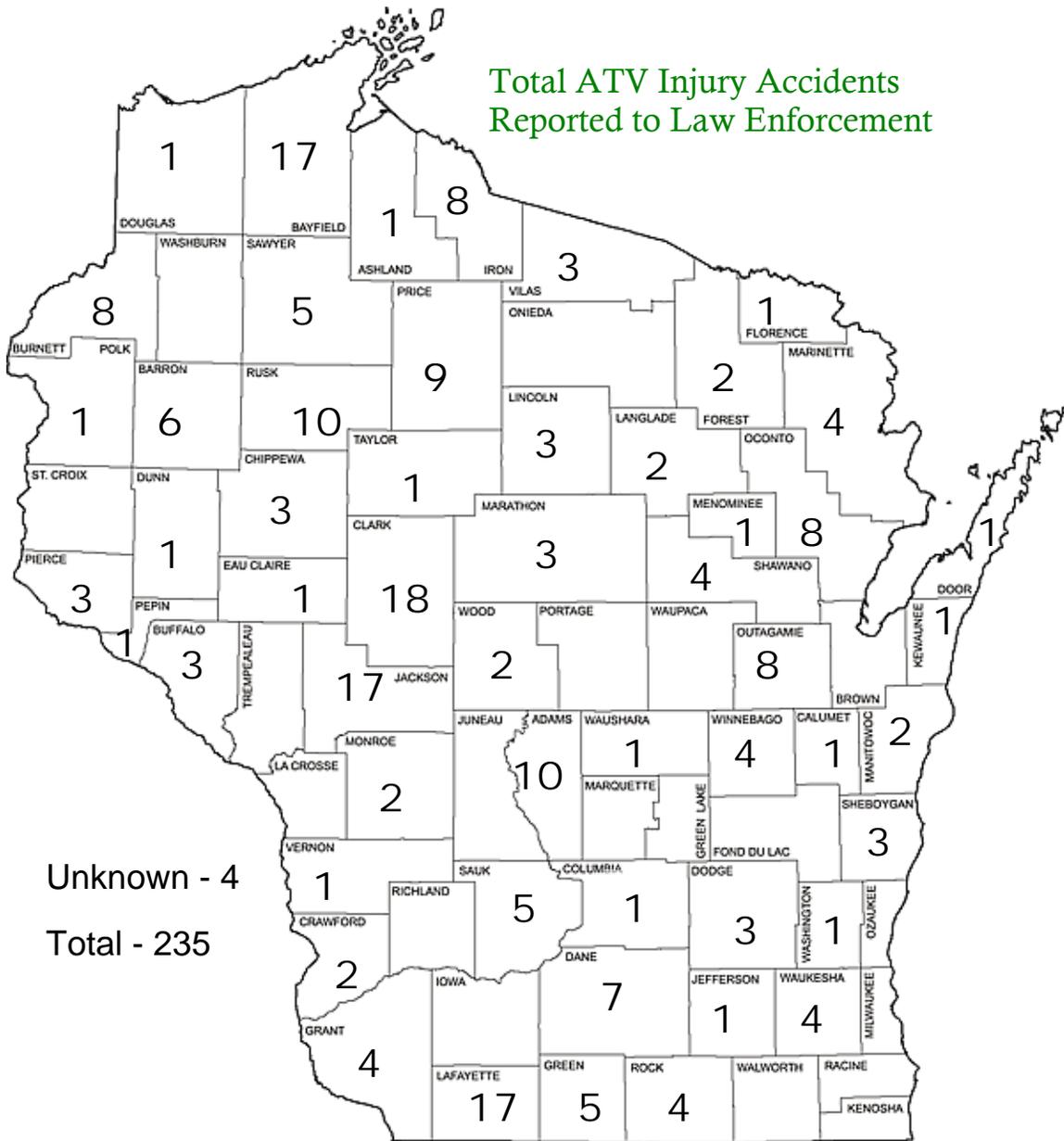
### Speed



### 2007 Fatal ATV Incident Type



Total ATV Injury Accidents Reported to Law Enforcement



Wisconsin law requires each ATV operator involved in an ATV accident (that results in the death of any person or the injury of any person requiring medical treatment) to immediately notify a law enforcement officer, complete a DNR accident report and file that report with the DNR within 10 days after the accident.

## 2007 Citations Issued for ATV Violations

<b>Total Citations</b> (including wardens and sheriff patrols).....	<b>1,326</b>
Operate ATV w/o Registration (V-1).....	<b>191</b>
Permit ATV Operation w/o Registration (V-2) .....	<b>51</b>
Operate ATV in a Careless Manner (V-3).....	<b>25</b>
Operate ATV While Intoxicated (V-4) .....	<b>54</b>
Operate ATV on Private Property w/o Permission (V-5) .....	<b>62</b>
Operate ATV on Native American Lands w/o Permission (V-6) .....	<b>3</b>
Transport Loaded or Uncased Firearm, or Bow on ATV (V-7) .....	<b>18</b>
Drive or pursue Wild Animal with ATV (V-8) .....	<b>0</b>
Operate ATV within 150' of Dwelling over 10-MPH (V-9).....	<b>1</b>
Operate ATV over 10-MPH on Ice within 100' of Persons or Shanty (V-10, V-21)	<b>13</b>
Illegal Operating of ATV on or Near Highways (V-11).....	<b>371</b>
ATV Equipment Violations (V-12).....	<b>27</b>
Fail to Report ATV Accident (V-13) .....	<b>7</b>
Fail to Stop ATV for Officer (V-14).....	<b>11</b>
Fail to Transfer Registration of ATV (V-15) .....	<b>12</b>
Fail to Display or Improper Display of Registration (V-16).....	<b>87</b>
Fail to Notify DNR with Change of Address (V-17) .....	<b>0</b>
Dealer Fail to Collect Fee and Submit Registration Application (V-18).....	<b>4</b>
Operate on a Cemetery, Burial Ground, School, Church w/o Permission (V-19)	<b>1</b>
Operate at Speed that is Unreasonable or Improper (V-20) .....	<b>24</b>
Owner Permitting Operation by Person Under Age, or Disabled (V-22).....	<b>106</b>
Operate with Alcohol Concentration Above 0.1% (V-23).....	<b>33</b>
Refuse to Take Intoxicated ATV Test (V-24).....	<b>7</b>
Absolute Sobriety for Person under 19 (V-25).....	<b>2</b>
Cause Injury by Intoxicated Operation (V-26) .....	<b>2</b>
Miscellaneous (V-27).....	<b>5</b>
Operate/Ride ATV w/o Head Gear (V-28).....	<b>83</b>
Interference with Signs and Standards (V-29) .....	<b>3</b>
Operate ATV on ATV trail without an ATV Trail Pass (V-30).....	<b>29</b>
Operate ATV with detectable amount of controlled substance – first offense (V31)	<b>0</b>
Operate ATV without a valid safety certificate or fail to carry certificate on ATV and display upon request (V32) .....	<b>68</b>
Operate, sell, rent, or manufacture ATV exceeding 96 decibel noise limit (V33)	<b>18</b>
Operate, sell, rent, manufacture ATV that emits noise greater than 96db (V34)	<b>3</b>
Failure to display or improper display of non-resident trail pass on ATV (V35)	<b>5</b>

(These numbers reflect the citations issued and processed through the court system and returned to the Department and entered into the DNR citations database as of 5/03/08.)

# Wisconsin ATV Fatality Summary - Year 2007

#	Date & Time	Location & County	Type & Cause of Incident/Fatality	Age & Sex	BAC & State	Helmet	WI Safety Certified
1.	1/03/07	Town of Colby	Rollover	13	N/A	Yes	No
	5:00PM	Clark County (private land)	Inexperience / Speed	M	WI		

The victim was attempting to cross a field drainage ditch and went airborne. The front of the ATV impacted the bank on the opposite side of the ditch, causing the victim's body to contact the handle bars and console of the ATV. The ATV went airborne, coming to rest upside down.

#	Date & Time	Location & County	Type & Cause of Incident/Fatality	Age & Sex	BAC & State	Helmet	WI Safety Certified
2.	4/20/07	Town of North Bend	Rollover	68	NA	No	No
	5:00PM	Jackson County (private property)	Uneven terrain / Tree branch / Injured arm / Trauma - Impact injury	M	WI		

The victim was checking a fence on his ATV traveling on a side of a hill when his ATV rolled over onto him.

#	Date & Time	Location & County	Type & Cause of Incident/Fatality	Age & Sex	BAC & State	Helmet	WI Safety Certified
3.	4/21/07	Town of Sigel	Ejected From ATV	25	.285	No	No
	5:00PM	Wood County (road)	Speed / Alcohol / Fractured Skull	M	WI		

The victim had been drinking alcohol just prior to operating down a blacktop road. Victim braked hard while attempting turn into a field drive. The victim was ejected from the ATV and hit his head on the roadway. The roadway was not legally open to ATV travel.

#	Date & Time	Location & County	Type & Cause of Incident/Fatality	Age & Sex	BAC & State	Helmet	WI Safety Certified
4.	5/04/07	Town of Alma	Rollover	44	.224	No	No
	3:30PM	Jackson County (ATV park)	Alcohol / Skull fractures	M	WI		

The victim was attempting to climb, vertically, a 12 foot high dirt pile when his ATV flipped over backwards and landed on the victim.

#	Date & Time	Location & County	Type & Cause of Incident/Fatality	Age & Sex	BAC & State	Helmet	WI Safety Certified
5.	5/06/07	Town of Dallas	Rollover	46	NA	No	No
	2:59AM	Barron County (road)	Alcohol / Speed / Head Injury	M	WI		

The victim was on his ATV while watching his truck being removed that he had put in the ditch approximately one hour before when a deputy squad pulled up. The victim then left the scene at a high rate of speed. The deputy learned that the owner of the truck was the person who had just left on the ATV. The deputy was headed to the house of the victim when he found the victim lying in the road with the ATV on its side behind the victim. The victim was med flighted out and pronounced dead two days later.

#	Date & Time	Location & County	Type & Cause of Incident/Fatality	Age & Sex	BAC & State	Helmet	WI Safety Certified
6.	5/11/07	Town of Glencoe	Rollover	59	.000	No	No
	8:30PM	Buffalo County (private property)	Blunt force trauma to head /inexperience	M	WI		

The victim had left camp to go turkey hunting and when he did not return his friends decided to look for him. The victim was found pinned under his ATV and unconscious. It appears that the victim was traveling on a steep trail through a wooded area and lost control and rolled over with the ATV landing on top of him.

#	Date & Time	Location & County	Type & Cause of Incident/Fatality	Age & Sex	BAC & State	Helmet	WI Safety Certified
7.	5/19/07	Town of Bradley	Rollover	65	Unknown	No	No
	5:33PM	Lincoln County (road)	Head injury / Loss of Control	M	WI		

The victim had his dog on the ATV with him when the dog jumped or fell off the ATV. The victim braked hard and stopped then went into reverse, presumably to retrieve the dog. While operating in reverse the victim lost control and flipped the ATV. The incident happened on 5/19/07, victim died from injuries on 5/24/07, final report pending.

#	Date & Time	Location & County	Type & Cause of Incident/Fatality	Age & Sex	BAC & State	Helmet	WI Safety Certified
8.	7/06/07	Town of LaValle	Rollover	23	.257	No	No
	1:43AM	Sauk County (road)	Alcohol / Head Injury	M	WI		

The victim was operating on a state highway illegally when the victim rolled his ATV and was thrown onto the highway, receiving a fatal head injury. A motor vehicle operating on the highway failed see the ATV and the victim and subsequently ran over the victim's body. Incident under investigation, final report pending.

#	Date & Time	Location & County	Type & Cause of Incident/Fatality	Age & Sex	BAC & State	Helmet	WI Safety Certified
9.	7/07/07	Town of Tipler	Rollover	49	N/A	No	No
	8:20PM	Florence County (ATV route)	Head injuries / Loss of Control	F	WI		

The victim was the passenger on an ATV. As the ATV was traveling down an ATV route the right front wheel of the ATV left the road and struck a rock and it appeared to pull the ATV farther off the route and up a slight embankment before the ATV rolled to the left throwing the victim and driver off the ATV. The victim was in the hospital with head injuries on life support until 7/10/07 when at that time she was removed from the life support. Incident under investigation, final report pending.

#	Date & Time	Location & County	Type & Cause of Incident/Fatality	Age & Sex	BAC & State	Helmet	WI Safety Certified
10.	7/15/07	Town of Dewhurst	Rollover	66	.000	Yes	No
	2:34PM	Clark County (ATV Trail)	Inexperience	M	IL		

The victim was operating on an "Intensive Use Area" adjacent to the ATV Trail when he traveled across a set of deep ATV ruts and up a steep berm at an angle. The ATV then began rolling over and ended up on top of the victim. Incident under investigation, final report pending.

#	Date & Time	Location & County	Type & Cause of Incident/Fatality	Age & Sex	BAC & State	Helmet	WI Safety Certified
11.	8/18/07	Town of Drummond	Collision with truck	11	N/A	Yes	No
	12:20PM	Bayfield County (route)	Speed / Wrong side of road / Spine, neck injuries / Inexperience	M	WI		

The victim was under the legal age to operate an ATV and was operating while his father was riding behind him on the seat. The victim was traveling at a high rate of speed on an ATV route which caused the ATV to go wide around a corner and travel into the oncoming lane of traffic. The ATV hit head on with a truck that had nearly come to a stop in the opposite lane; moving the truck backwards slightly.

#	Date & Time	Location & County	Type & Cause of Incident/Fatality	Age & Sex	BAC & State	Helmet	WI Safety Certified
12.	8/24/07	Town of Montrose	Rollover / Head injuries	63	.243	No	No
	5:43PM	Dane County (private property)	Alcohol / Speed	M	WI		

The victim had taken his ATV to go to his garden. The victim was found underneath the overturned ATV, near his house and just off the driveway in the lawn. The victim was transported to a medical facility where he later succumbed to his head injuries.

#	Date & Time	Location & County	Type & Cause of Incident/Fatality	Age & Sex	BAC & State	Helmet	WI Safety Certified
13. & 14.	8/25/07	Town of Lake Holcombe	Rollover	6; 16	NA	No; No	No; Yes
	11:10AM	Chippewa County (route)	Inexperience / 2 passengers / Operating on pavement / Worn out tires	F; F	WI		

Three children were riding on a single ATV on a paved route. The 16 year old victim was operating; the 6 year old victim was behind her with another 16 year old girl was on the very back of the seat. The ATV suddenly flipped over forward, ejecting the rear passenger and landing upside down on top of the 16 year old operator and 6 year old passenger. The 6 year old was pronounced dead at the scene and the 16 year old operator died later at the hospital. The 16 year old passenger received only minor injuries. No one was wearing a helmet as required and further inspection found no mechanical failures but did indicate that the tires were worn out, the front wheels were toed in and the tires were slightly over-inflated and unevenly inflated.

#	Date & Time	Location & County	Type & Cause of Incident/Fatality	Age & Sex	BAC & State	Helmet	WI Safety Certified
15.	9/05/07	Town of Hughes	Collided with tree.	41	.290	No	No
	12:15PM	Bayfield County (road)	Speed / Alcohol / Head injuries	M	WI		

The victim was operating his ATV at a high rate of speed and collided head on with a tree. The victim/driver was thrown forward and impacted the tree with the passenger being thrown to the ground on the right side of the ATV.

#	Date & Time	Location & County	Type & Cause of Incident/Fatality	Age & Sex	BAC & State	Helmet	WI Safety Certified
16.	9/28/07	Town of Oulu	Left road / Collided with fixed object	41	.227	No	No
	8PM	Bayfield County (road)	Alcohol / Speed / Skull fracture / Inattentive	M	WI		

The victim was operating his ATV down a road when he approached a "T" intersection with another road. The victim continued straight across the intersection, left the roadway and collided with a ditch bank. The victim was then ejected from the ATV and hit a telephone pole.

#	Date & Time	Location & County	Type & Cause of Incident/Fatality	Age & Sex	BAC & State	Helmet	WI Safety Certified
17.	9/28/07	Village of Marathon	Ejected / Collided with a tree	16	NA	No	No
	3:45PM	Marathon County	Brain injury / Speed / Inexperience	M	WI		

The victim was jumping a berm at a city park and lost control of the ATV and was ejected into a tree. The victim had severe head injuries and was in a coma until he passed away on 11/16/07.

#	Date & Time	Location & County	Type & Cause of Incident/Fatality	Age & Sex	BAC & State	Helmet	WI Safety Certified
18.	10/12/07	Town of Iron River	Collided with tree.	21	.000	Yes	No
	2:26PM	Bayfield County (road)	Speed / Head & chest trauma.	M	MN		

The victim had just passed another ATV in his group when he rounded a corner losing control causing him to drive off the gravel portion of the roadway losing more control when he hit uneven clumps of dirt, causing him to hit a tree.

#	Date & Time	Location & County	Type & Cause of Incident/Fatality	Age & Sex	BAC & State	Helmet	WI Safety Certified
19.	10/27/07	Town of Metomen	Ejected	21	.042	No	No
	1:00AM	Fond du Lac County (road)	Alcohol / Lost Control	M	WI		

The victim was operating his ATV down a road when he lost control and began to slide on pavement. The victim then overcorrected the steering, causing the ATV to overturn, ejecting the victim from the ATV. The road that the victim was traveling on is not open to legal ATV traffic.

#	Date & Time	Location & County	Type & Cause of Incident/Fatality	Age & Sex	BAC & State	Helmet	WI Safety Certified
20.	11/06/07 or 11/07/07	Town of Marietta	Roll over	71	Pending	No	No
	Unknown	Crawford County (private property)	Terrain	M	WI		

The victim was operating his ATV along a fence in an alfalfa field with moderately steep terrain. It appears the ATV rolled over when the victim crossed over un-even terrain while attempting to make a turn.

#	Date & Time	Location & County	Type & Cause of Incident/Fatality	Age & Sex	BAC & State	Helmet	WI Safety Certified
21.	11/11/07	Town of Birchwood	Roll over	49	.181	No	No
	12:42AM	Washburn County (road)	Alcohol	M	MN		

The victim had to cross over a road into a field to get home and had rolled his ATV over.

#	Date & Time	Location & County	Type & Cause of Incident/Fatality	Age & Sex	BAC & State	Helmet	WI Safety Certified
22.	11/21/07	Town of Waterloo	Roll over	68	N/A	No	No
	12:48PM	Grant County (private property)	Chest Trauma	M	MN		

The victim was attempting to climb a hill when the ATV rolled over backwards on top of him.

#	Date & Time	Location & County	Type & Cause of Incident/Fatality	Age & Sex	BAC & State	Helmet	WI Safety Certified
23.	11/29/07	Town of Summit	Drove off a cliff / Ejected	49	Pending	No	No
	5:57PM	Juneau County (private property)	Internal Injuries	M	WI		

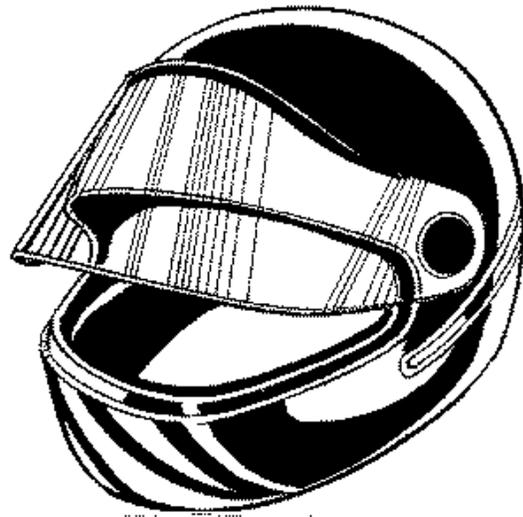
The victim was retrieving a deer at the bottom of a very steep, wooded cliff and as he approached the steep cliff he drove over the edge and fell a significant distance to the bottom. The victim was ejected from his ATV and sustained serious injuries, he was med-flighted to Madison and succumbed to his injuries on 12/10/07.

#	Date & Time	Location & County	Type & Cause of Incident/Fatality	Age & Sex	BAC & State	Helmet	WI Safety Certified
24.	12/05/07	Town of Colburn	Broke through ice	60	.000	No	No
	11:46AM	Chippewa County (Pike Lake)	Drowned	M	WI		

The victim was making a circle around the end of Pike Lake and traveled over a spring area where he broke through thin ice in about 20-30 feet of water.

**WEAR YOUR HELMET**

**While you Ride  
Responsibly...  
Under control...  
&  
SOBER  
and you will....**



# **Ride for life**

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provides equal opportunity in its employment, programs, services, and functions under an Affirmative Action Plan. If you have any questions, please write to Equal Opportunity Office, Department of Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240. This publication can be made available in alternative formats (large print, Braille, audio-tape, etc.) upon request. Please call (608-261-0765) for more information.

<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/es/enforcement/safety/atvsaf.htm>