

Environment aware:

## Safe operation of ATVs and UTVs in agriculture

Use this guide to help lead a discussion with employees on the safe usage of ATVs and UTVs in agriculture. Empower them with strategies to minimize risks and become safer drivers. Use the form on Page 2 to record meeting details.

The use of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and utility terrain vehicles (UTVs) is increasing in farms and agribusiness. While these can be great tools when used correctly, ATVs and UTVs can cause severe injury or death if used incorrectly. Owners and supervisors should limit operation of ATV/UTVs to employees at least 16 years of age with a valid driver's license, ensure ATV/UTVs are sized correctly for the task and driver, and reinforce training prior to operation along with reviewing the following safety tips. Always follow manufacturer recommendations on operations.

### 1 Wear the right personal protective equipment (PPE) while operating ATV / UTVs:

- Use eye and ear protection due to dust and machine noise. Helmet use is key to prevent severe head injuries and can help protect your eyes and ears as well.
- Wear high visibility vests or shirts to increase your visibility to others.
- Gloves and quality work boots protect your hands and feet.
- Long sleeve shirts and pants not only protect from harmful UV rays while outdoors, but they can also help reduce injuries in case of an accident.

### 2 Know how to operate your specific ATV/UTV and review the operator's manual:

- Drivers should be trained on all ATV/UTV(s) they will be operating since these can differ in weight, center of gravity, turning radius and speed.
- Know the company's safety policy as well as local laws and regulations as it relates to the operation of your ATV/UTV and any limits that are imposed.
- Inspect your ATV/UTV prior to riding it for the day. Do not use if there are any deficiencies until the unit is repaired.

### 3 Share the boundaries of operation:

- ATVs and UTVs are designed for off road use. Although it might be legal to drive them on certain public roads, it is recommended to avoid on-road operation. If you must drive on the road, do so cautiously, maintain a slow speed, and adhere to state or local laws.
- If you cross roadways, avoid suddenly emerging from ditches where oncoming vehicles may not see you. Always choose areas with sufficient visibility to ensure safety.
- When driving in ditches, be prepared for draining culverts and other obstacles that commonly appear.
- Familiarize yourself with fences, irrigation pivots and other obstacles in the operation.

### 4 Livestock interactions with ATV/UTVs requires training:

- Using ATV/UTVs to herd and work with livestock is something that requires both training of the driver and the animals it is used around.
- Make sure that livestock is desensitized to the operation of the equipment. Gradually introduce the use to avoid startling animals who may have unpredictable responses.

### 5 Follow guidelines when adding attachments or other equipment:

- UTVs and ATVs have a large variety of attachments and add-on equipment to make them more useful for the operation.
- Make sure the attachment is installed correctly by following the ATV/UTV guidelines and those issued by the attachment's manufacturer.
- Understand how attachments can affect the ATV/UTV's weight, center of gravity, and ability to turn.

For additional information related to driver safety, visit [MyNSightOnline.com/DriveThe5](https://MyNSightOnline.com/DriveThe5)

For further guidance, refer to ATV Safety Institute ([atvsafety.org/atvs-at-work](https://atvsafety.org/atvs-at-work)).



For assistance with risk management services or safety resources, contact us at [RMSolutions@nationwide.com](mailto:RMSolutions@nationwide.com) or 1-800-260-1356.

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# Toolbox Talk

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## Environment aware: Safe operation of ATVs and UTVs in agriculture

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