

## Michigan Laws

### NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT Act 451 of 1994

#### **324.81101.amended Definitions.**

Sec. 81101.

As used in this part:

(a) "ATV" means a 3- or 4-wheeled vehicle designed for off-road use that has low-pressure tires, has a seat designed to be straddled by the rider, and is powered by a 50cc to 500cc gasoline engine or an engine of comparable size using other fuels.

(n) "ORV" or "vehicle" means a motor driven off-road recreation vehicle capable of cross-country travel without benefit of a road or trail, on or immediately over land, snow, ice, marsh, swampland, or other natural terrain. ORV or vehicle includes, but is not limited to, a multitrack or multiwheel drive vehicle, an ATV, a motorcycle or related 2-wheel, 3-wheel, or 4-wheel vehicle, an amphibious machine, a ground effect air cushion vehicle, or other means of transportation deriving motive power from a source other than muscle or wind. ORV or vehicle does not include a registered snowmobile, a farm vehicle being used for farming, a vehicle used for military, fire, emergency, or law enforcement purposes, a vehicle owned and operated by a utility company or an oil or gas company when performing maintenance on its facilities or on property over which it has an easement, a construction or logging vehicle used in performance of its common function, or a registered aircraft.

(u) "Safety chief instructor" means a person who has been certified by a nationally recognized ATV and ORV organization to certify instructors and to do on-sight evaluations of instructors.

(v) "Visual supervision" means the direct observation of the operator with the unaided or normally corrected eye, where the observer is able to come to the immediate aid of the operator.

#### **324.81102 Vehicles exempt from licensure provisions.**

Sec. 81102.

(1) A vehicle registered under the code or a vehicle registered under part 801 is exempt from the licensure provisions of this part, unless the vehicle is operated as an ORV off highways, roadways, streets, and forest roads.

(2) An ORV operated solely on private property by the owner of the property, a family member of the owner, or an invited guest of the owner is exempt from the licensure provisions of this part.

### **324.81103 ORV; certificate of title generally.**

Sec. 81103.

(1) After April 1, 1991, every ORV sold by a dealer to a retail purchaser shall be subject to the certificate of title provisions of this part.

(2) After April 1, 1991, a person who purchases or otherwise acquires an ORV shall make application for a certificate of title as provided in this part.

(3) After April 1, 1991, the owner of an ORV that has not been titled pursuant to subsection (1) or (2) or the code may apply for and, if otherwise eligible, receive a certificate of title issued under this part. If the ORV was previously titled under the code, it is not eligible for titling under this part.

### **324.81115 Licensing of ORV required; exceptions.**

Sec. 81115.

(1) Except as otherwise provided by law, an ORV shall not be operated on or over land, snow, ice, marsh, swampland, or other natural terrain unless licensed by the owner with the department or a dealer as provided in this part. Except as otherwise provided in this part, a vehicle operating on a forest trail or in a designated area shall be licensed under this part.

(2) Licensure is not required for an ORV used exclusively in a safety and training program as required in section 81129.

### **324.81122 Prohibited operation of unregistered ORV; exceptions; operator as prima facie negligent.**

Sec. 81122.

(1) A person shall not operate an ORV that is not registered under the code upon a public highway, street, or right-of-way of a public highway or street, except as provided in section 81131 or under the following conditions and circumstances:

(a) The operator of a vehicle may cross a public highway, other than a limited access highway, at right angles, for the purpose of getting from 1 area to another, if the operation can be done in safety. The operator shall bring the vehicle to a complete stop before proceeding across a public highway, and shall yield the right-of-way to oncoming traffic.

(b) A vehicle may be operated on a street or highway for a special event of limited duration and conducted according to a prearranged schedule only under permit from the governmental unit having jurisdiction. A special event involving ORVs may be conducted on the frozen surface of public waters only under permit from the department.

(c) A farmer, employee of a farmer, or family member of a farmer who is at least 16 years of age may operate an ORV on the extreme right side of a roadway or highway right-of-way when it is not practicable to operate off that roadway or highway right-of-way. Such operation shall be limited to traveling to or from the farmer's residence or work location or field during the course of farming operations. An ORV shall not be operated pursuant to this subdivision during the period of 30 minutes before sunset to 30 minutes after sunrise, when visibility is substantially reduced due to weather conditions, or in a manner so as to interfere with traffic. The state transportation department and all of its employees are immune from tort liability for injury or damages sustained by any person arising in any way by reason of the operation or use of an ORV for the limited purposes allowed under this subdivision. An operator of an ORV under this subdivision shall have attached to the ORV a flag made of reflective material. The flag shall extend not less than 8 feet from the surface of the roadway and not less than 4 feet above the top of the ORV. The flag shall be not less than 12 inches high by 18 inches long and not measure less than 100 square inches.

(2) In a court action in this state where competent evidence demonstrates that a vehicle that is permitted to operate on a highway pursuant to the code is in a collision with an ORV on a roadway, the operator of the ORV involved in the collision shall be considered prima facie negligent.

**324.81129 Operation of ORV by child or by incompetent; requirements; ORV information, safety education, and training program; course instruction; ORV safety certificates; rules.**

Sec. 81129.

(1) Subject to subsections (2), (3), and (17), a parent or legal guardian of a child less than 16 years of age shall not permit the child to operate an ORV unless the child is under the direct visual supervision of an adult and the child has in his or her immediate possession an ORV safety certificate issued pursuant to this part or a comparable ORV safety certificate issued under the authority of another state or a province of Canada.

(2) A parent or legal guardian of a child less than 12 years of age shall not permit the child to operate a 4-wheeled ATV, unless the child is not less than 10 years of age and is on private land owned by a parent or legal guardian of the child. This subsection does not apply to the operation of an ATV used in agricultural operations.

(3) A parent or legal guardian of a child less than 16 years of age shall not permit the child to operate a 3-wheeled ATV.

(4) Subject to subsections (5), (6), and (17), the owner or person in charge of an ORV shall not knowingly permit the vehicle to be operated by a child less than 16

years of age unless the child is under the direct visual supervision of an adult and the child has in his or her immediate possession an ORV safety certificate issued pursuant to this part or a comparable ORV safety certificate issued under the authority of another state or a province of Canada.

(5) The owner or person in charge of a 4-wheeled ATV shall not knowingly permit the vehicle to be operated by a child less than 12 years of age, unless the child is not less than 10 years of age and is on private land owned by a parent or legal guardian of the child. This subsection does not apply to the operation of an ATV used in agricultural operations.

(6) The owner or person in charge of a 3-wheeled ATV shall not knowingly permit the vehicle to be operated by a child less than 16 years of age.

(7) The owner or person in charge of an ORV shall not knowingly permit the vehicle to be operated by a person who is incompetent to operate the vehicle because of mental or physical disability except as provided in section 81131.

(8) The department shall implement a comprehensive ORV information, safety education, and training program that shall include the training of operators and the preparation and dissemination of information and safety advice to the public. The program shall provide for the training of youthful operators and for the issuance of ORV safety certificates to those who successfully complete the training provided under the program and may include separate instruction for each type of ORV.

(9) In implementing a program that is established pursuant to this section, the department shall cooperate with private organizations and associations, private and public corporations, the department of education, the department of state, and local governmental units. The department shall consult with ORV and environmental organizations and associations in regard to the subject matter of a training program and performance testing that leads to certification of ORV operators.

(10) The department may designate a person it considers qualified to provide course instruction and to award ORV safety certificates.

(11) The department may promulgate rules to implement subsections (8) to (10).

(12) Subject to subsections (13), (14), and (17), a child who is less than 16 years of age may operate an ORV if the child is under the direct visual supervision of an adult and the child has in his or her immediate possession an ORV safety certificate issued pursuant to this section or a comparable ORV safety certificate issued under the authority of another state or a province of Canada.

(13) A child who is less than 12 years of age shall not operate a 4-wheeled ATV, unless the child is not less than 10 years of age and is on private land owned by a parent or legal guardian of the child. This subsection does not apply to the operation of an ATV used in agricultural operations.

(14) A child who is less than 16 years of age shall not operate a 3-wheeled ATV.

(15) When operating an ORV under subsection (12), a child shall present the ORV safety certificate to a peace officer upon demand.

(16) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, an operator who is less than 12 years of age shall not cross a highway or street. An operator who is not less than 12 years of age but less than 16 years of age may cross a highway or street or operate on the right-of-way or shoulder of designated access routes pursuant to section 81131 if the operator has a valid ORV safety certificate in his or her immediate possession and meets any other requirements under this section for operation of the vehicle.

(17) The requirement of possession or presentation of an ORV safety certificate under this section does not apply until implementation of the program for the vehicle proposed to be operated required by subsection (8).

### **324.81130.amended ORV safety education course.**

Sec. 81130.

(1) A person who is under 16 years of age, before operating an ATV or ORV, shall complete an ORV safety education course approved by the department. This course may include a written examination and a driving test designed to test the competency of the applicant. Upon successful completion of this safety education course, a person shall receive an ORV safety certificate.

(2) A safety education course conducted by a college or university, an intermediate school district, a local school district, a law enforcement agency, or another governmental agency located in this state or by a department approved nonprofit service organization shall be conducted in compliance with this section. An agency or a school conducting a course under this subsection may apply to the department for a grant from the off-road vehicle account for costs associated with conducting a course.

(3) Except for a course conducted by a private business enterprise as provided by subsection (4), an applicant for a safety education course under this section shall pay not more than a \$25.00 course fee or in the case of a university or community college a fee not more than the cost of 1 credit hour of instruction. The course fees shall only be used for funding the administration and implementation of the course.

(4) An ATV or ORV, or both, safety education course required by this section and approved by the department may be conducted by a private business enterprise. A private business enterprise may charge a course fee not to exceed the cost of conducting the course.

(5) The director shall designate a person to be the state coordinator of the ATV and ORV safety education program. A person designated under this subsection shall have successfully completed ATV and ORV safety courses.

(6) The director shall designate a person who has successfully completed ATV and ORV safety courses to perform annual inspections of course sites.

### **324.81133 Operation of ORV; prohibited acts.**

Sec. 81133.

A person shall not operate an ORV:

(a) At a rate of speed greater than is reasonable and proper, or in a careless manner having due regard for conditions then existing.

(b) Unless the person and any passenger in or on the vehicle is wearing on his or her head a crash helmet and protective eyewear approved by the United States department of transportation. This subdivision does not apply if the vehicle is equipped with a roof that meets or exceeds standards for a crash helmet and the operator and each passenger is wearing a properly adjusted and fastened safety belt.

(c) During the hours of 1/2 hour after sunset to 1/2 hour before sunrise without displaying a lighted headlight and lighted taillight.

(d) Unless equipped with a braking system that may be operated by hand or foot, capable of producing deceleration at 14 feet per second on level ground at a speed of 20 miles per hour; a brake light, brighter than the taillight, visible when the brake is activated to the rear of the vehicle when the vehicle is operated during the hours of 1/2 hour after sunset and 1/2 hour before sunrise; and a throttle so designed that when the pressure used to advance the throttle is removed, the engine speed will immediately and automatically return to idle.

(e) In a state game area or state park or recreation area, except on roads, trails, or areas designated for this purpose; on state owned lands under the control of the department other than game areas, state parks, or recreational areas where the operation would be in violation of rules promulgated by the department; in a forest nursery or planting area; on public lands posted or reasonably identifiable as an area of forest reproduction, and when growing stock may be damaged; in a dedicated natural area of the department; or in any area in such a manner as to create an erosive condition, or to injure, damage, or destroy trees or growing crops. However, the department may permit an owner and guests of the owner to use an ORV within the boundaries of a state forest in order to access the owner's property.

(f) On the frozen surface of public waters within 100 feet of a person not in or upon a vehicle, or within 100 feet of a fishing shanty or shelter or an area that is cleared of snow for skating purposes, except at the minimum speed required to maintain controlled forward movement of the vehicle, or as may be authorized by permit in special events.

(g) Unless the vehicle is equipped with a spark arrester type United States forest service approved muffler, in good working order and in constant operation. Exhaust noise emission shall not exceed 86 Db(A) or 82 Db(A) on a vehicle manufactured after January 1, 1986, when the vehicle is under full throttle, traveling in second gear, and measured 50 feet at right angles from the vehicle path with a sound level meter which meets the requirement of ANSI S1.4 1983, using procedure and ancillary equipment therein described; or 99 Db(A) or 94 Db(A) on a vehicle

manufactured after January 1, 1986, or that level comparable to the current sound level as provided for by the United States environmental protection agency when tested according to the provisions of the current SAE J1287, June 86 test procedure for exhaust levels of stationary motorcycles, using sound level meters and ancillary equipment therein described. A vehicle subject to this part, manufactured or assembled after December 31, 1972 and used, sold, or offered for sale in this state, shall conform to the noise emission levels established by the United States environmental protection agency under the noise control act of 1972, Public Law 92-574, 86 Stat. 1234.

(h) Within 100 feet of a dwelling at a speed greater than the minimum required to maintain controlled forward movement of the vehicle, except on property owned or under the operator's control or on which the operator is an invited guest, or on a roadway, forest road, or forest trail maintained by or under the jurisdiction of the department, or on an ORV access route as authorized by local ordinance.

(i) In or upon the lands of another without the written consent of the owner, owner's agent or lessee, when required by part 731. The operator of the vehicle is liable for damage to private property, including, but not limited to, damage to trees, shrubs, growing crops, or injury to living creatures or damage caused through vehicle operation in a manner so as to create erosive or other ecological damage to private property. The owner of the private property may recover from the person responsible nominal damages of not less than the amount of damage or injury. Failure to post private property or fence or otherwise enclose in a manner to exclude intruders or of the private property owner or other authorized person to personally communicate against trespass does not imply consent to ORV use.

(j) In an area on which public hunting is permitted during the regular November firearm deer season from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. and from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m., except during an emergency or for law enforcement purposes, to go to and from a permanent residence or a hunting camp otherwise inaccessible by a conventional wheeled vehicle, to remove a deer, elk, or bear from public land which has been taken under a valid license; or except for the conduct of necessary work functions involving land and timber survey, communication and transmission line patrol, and timber harvest operations; or on property owned or under control of the operator or on which the operator is an invited guest. A hunter removing game pursuant to this subdivision shall be allowed to leave the designated trail or forest road only to retrieve the game and shall not exceed 5 miles per hour. A vehicle registered under the code is exempt from this subdivision while operating on a public highway or public or private road capable of sustaining automobile traffic. A person holding a valid permit to hunt from a standing vehicle issued pursuant to part 401, or a person with disabilities using an ORV to access public lands for purposes of hunting or fishing through use of a designated trail or forest road, is exempt from this subdivision.

(k) While transporting on the vehicle a bow unless unstrung or encased, or a firearm unless unloaded and securely encased, or equipped with and made inoperative by a manufactured keylocked trigger housing mechanism.

(l) On or across a cemetery or burial ground, or land used as an airport.

(m) Within 100 feet of a slide, ski, or skating area, unless the vehicle is being used for the purpose of servicing the area.

(n) On an operating or nonabandoned railroad or railroad right-of-way, or public utility right-of-way, other than for the purpose of crossing at a clearly established site intended for vehicular traffic, except railroad, public utility, or law enforcement personnel while in performance of their duties, and except if the right-of-way is designated as established in section 81127.

(o) In or upon the waters of any stream, river, bog, wetland, swamp, marsh, or quagmire except over a bridge, culvert, or similar structure.

(p) To hunt, pursue, worry, kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, worry, or kill a bird or animal, wild or domesticated.

(q) In a manner so as to leave behind litter or other debris.

(r) In a manner contrary to operating regulations on public lands.

(s) While transporting or possessing, in or on the vehicle, alcoholic liquor in a container that is open or uncapped or upon which the seal is broken, except under either of the following circumstances:

(i) The container is in a trunk or compartment separate from the passenger compartment of the vehicle.

(ii) If the vehicle does not have a trunk or compartment separate from the passenger compartment, the container is encased or enclosed.

(t) While transporting any passenger in or upon an ORV unless the manufacturing standards for the vehicle make provisions for transporting passengers.

(u) On adjacent private land, in an area zoned residential, within 300 feet of a dwelling at a speed greater than the minimum required to maintain controlled forward movement of the vehicle except on a roadway, forest road, or forest trail maintained by or under the jurisdiction of the department, or on an ORV access route as authorized by local ordinance.

**324.81134 Operation of ORV by person under influence of intoxicating liquor or controlled substance; authorizing or permitting operation; violation as misdemeanor; penalty; subsequent convictions; violation as felony; screening, assessment, and rehabilitative services; duty of court before accepting guilty plea; record.**

Sec. 81134.

(1) A person who is under the influence of intoxicating liquor or a controlled substance, as defined by section 7104 of the public health code, 1978 PA 368, MCL 333.7104, or a combination of intoxicating liquor and a controlled substance shall not operate an ORV.

(2) A person who has an alcohol content of 0.10 grams or more per 100 milliliters of blood, per 210 liters of breath, or per 67 milliliters of urine shall not operate an ORV.

(3) The owner or person in charge or in control of an ORV shall not authorize or knowingly permit the ORV to be operated by a person who is under the influence of intoxicating liquor or a controlled substance or a combination of intoxicating liquor and a controlled substance.

(4) Except as otherwise provided in this section, a person who is convicted of a violation of subsection (1), (2), or (3) is guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable by imprisonment for not more than 93 days, or a fine of not less than \$100.00 or more than \$500.00, or both, together with costs of the prosecution. As part of the sentence for a violation of subsection (1) or (2), the court shall order the person convicted not to operate an ORV for a period of not less than 6 months or more than 2 years.

(5) On a second conviction under subsection (1) or (2) or a local ordinance substantially corresponding to subsection (1) or (2) within a period of 7 years, a person is guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable by imprisonment for not more than 1 year, or a fine of not more than \$1,000.00, or both. As part of the sentence, the court shall order the person convicted not to operate an ORV for a period of not less than 1 year or more than 2 years.

(6) On a third or subsequent conviction within a period of 10 years under subsection (1) or (2) or a local ordinance substantially corresponding to subsection (1) or (2), a person is guilty of a felony and shall be sentenced to imprisonment for not less than 1 year or more than 5 years, or a fine of not less than \$500.00 or more than \$5,000, or both. As part of the sentence, the court shall order the person convicted not to operate an ORV for a period of not less than 1 year or more than 2 years.

(7) A person who operates an ORV in violation of subsection (1) or (2) or section 81135 and by the operation of that ORV causes the death of another person is guilty of a felony punishable by imprisonment for not more than 15 years or a fine of not less than \$2,500.00 or more than \$10,000.00, or both.