

# Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) Safety

## Ag Exemption for Roadway Use

- ⇒ Over 60% of all ORV fatalities are on roadways
- ⇒ 43% of all roadway deaths are on unpaved roads
- ⇒ The majority of roadway crashes involve only the ORV - low traffic roads are still unsafe

### Off-Road Vehicles



#### All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV)

- Designed for a single rider
- Requires active riding



#### Utility Task Vehicle (UTV)

- Travels less than 25 mph
- Often does not have roll-over protection structures (ROPS) or seat belts



#### Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle (ROV)

- Can travel over speeds of 30 mph
- Has ROPS and seat belts or harness system

### Why ORVs are NOT suited for the road

- A high center of gravity and narrow track makes them highly prone to rollovers.
- Off-road tires with knobby treads grab roadway surfaces in unpredictable ways; at roadway speeds it's extremely difficult to regain vehicle control.
- A locked rear differential requires wider, slower turns; the wheels turn at the same speed despite the inside wheel covering a shorter distance.



## What is the law?

Iowa Code states that ORVs can be operated on Iowa public roadways for agricultural purposes with the following limitations:

- Operator must have a valid driver's license
- Speed must not exceed 35 mph
- Operation is between sunrise and sunset

*Some counties may allow general use of ORVs on some public roads.*

***It's legal to drive in the ditch - right?  
Well, only if the ditch is adjacent to your own property!***

## How do I stay safe?

- Only drive on roads when necessary and follow all traffic laws.
- Be as visible as possible. Purchase ORVs that are brightly colored, display a fluorescent orange flag on ATVs (at least 5 feet above the ground), and wear highly visible clothing.
- Wear a helmet at all times. Among ATV injuries in Iowa, those wearing a helmet were 80% less likely to have suffered a head injury.
- Always use the seatbelts in ROVs. The major cause of death in ROVs is a rollover with ejection from the vehicle.
- Do not allow passengers on ATVs. In ROVS, there should never be more riders than available seatbelts.
- If your ROV has the ability to unlock the rear differential (sometimes called "turf mode"), do so before traveling on roadways.
- Consider installing a Crush Protection Device to reduce the risk of injury in case of a rollover. [www.quadbarsafety.com](http://www.quadbarsafety.com)



***Check with your insurance provider, your farm policy may not automatically cover ORV use when not on your own property!***