

Dear Iowa Legislators,

Thank you so much for providing me as a representative of the ATV safety community a chance to speak. I came away wondering if a few things were still not clear in terms of this issue from a prevention perspective. If I might, I will briefly respond to them below.

It was stated that farmers are currently going 35 mph on the roads without any trouble. We don't actually know at this time if either one of those things is true. We know that the speed limit for farmers is 35 mph and we know that we have been having great difficulty telling from our crash reports whether a roadway crash was farming-related. We have studies currently underway to determine how fast farmers are actually going both on and off the roads and how that relates to crashes. These are part of our ATV agricultural safety program and we will certainly share what we learn as we go along.

I think there may be some confusion about how information can be used to predict the effects of more recreational riding on the road and to prevent injuries.

- Whereas personal beliefs and experiences as well as what others say (anecdotal evidence) may vary, the cumulative evidence strongly suggests that when more people ride ATVs on the road, more deaths and injuries result. We also know that the most effective way to prevent deaths and injuries is to use approaches from all 3 Es – Education, Engineering, and Enforcement. Our programs incorporate all of these approaches.
- Relative fatality rates provide insights into preventing ATV deaths and injuries. States with lower fatality rates should be used as models for approaches to reduce injuries. Below are ATV fatality rates in 2008 according to CPSC data (deaths/100,000 population). For each state, half or more of the deaths resulted from roadway crashes. Most of the states with higher crash rates permit much more riding on the roads. Iowa ranks in the middle of all the states.

State	Rate	State	Rate
West Virginia	79.6	Iowa	8.5
Wyoming	36.2	Colorado	7.9
Alaska	34.2	Indiana	7.6
Idaho	32.5	Ohio	7.0
Montana	29.0	*Michigan	6.3
North Dakota	28.6	*Washington	5.7
Kentucky	27.7	✓ Illinois	4.9
Arkansas	23.2	California	3.2
South Dakota	19.3	Massachusetts	0.6
Nebraska	15.6		
Missouri	14.2		
Wisconsin	11.1		
Minnesota	8.9		

*States that have expanded recreational ATV road use in 2012 or 2013.

✓ Illinois prohibits recreational riding on the roads and has an agricultural exemption like Iowa's. Their lower rate provides support for the effectiveness of these laws.

It is unfortunate that different county and city ordinances can create confusion. However, standardizing something that is safety-related, if that standardization is not appropriate, can lead to people getting hurt. Two questions to consider in this respect:

- Is it possible to create a statewide law that keeps deaths and injuries at a minimum and that works for all counties?
- If increased road access statewide should result in increased injuries statewide, is that the best solution to the lack of consistency?

A little more discussion of speed limits may also be valuable, including when considering work-related riding on the road. For most vehicles, going with the speed of general traffic reduces the risk of collisions. ATVs are in the unique position that slower speeds may contribute to greater risk of collisions with faster moving vehicles, but faster speeds may contribute to greater risk of non-collision events (rollover, falling or being thrown from the vehicle, hitting other objects). Since we found that two-thirds of roadway ATV crashes were non-collision events (more likely at speeds over 30 mph), speeds under 35 mph for farmers on the road may be worth considering, especially since pulling things or carrying things on back racks can increase the instability of the vehicle and the chances of a crash, particularly when turning.

I really enjoyed hearing the perspective of the Polaris representative. From a safety standpoint, we believe more and proper use of UTVs (side-by-sides) may be a good thing and are studying UTV crashes to determine if this is true. These vehicles are much more stable than ATVs and have the crush protection roll cage and safety harnesses. I also agree with the Polaris rep that recreational opportunities created by expanding our trail and OHV park system for UTVs is a win-win for fun and for safety. I did want to point out that the ATV industry's position is against recreational riding on the roads and that revenues from registration and tourism need not involve riding on roads. I have looked very hard and I can't find any evidence that allowing ATVs on the road directly increases tourism. If you have a good trail and park system, people will come to enjoy it. And families want to know that where they vacation is safe.

The final comment I have is about the law enforcement perspective. We have talked to a number of law enforcement officers who have found enforcing ATV laws - like no riding double and not riding on the roads - to be quite challenging. I did not hear the broad and diverse perspective that I know exists among our officers and you might want to reach out to more across the state to get their experiences.

Again, thank you so much for taking the time to consider this information.

Sincerely Yours,
Gerene Denning