



**North Carolina**  
**Department of Health and Human Services**

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## **New ATV Safety Law Goes Into Effect December 1**

RALEIGH – Children will be protected thanks to new all-terrain vehicle regulations that go into effect December 1, 2005. The regulations prohibit young children from operating ATVs, older children are allowed to operate only smaller machines under adult supervision, and all operators must wear helmets.

“Since 2000, 36 North Carolina children under the age of 16 died in all-terrain vehicle accidents,” said State Health Director Dr. Leah Devlin. “This law should go a long way toward reducing that tragic toll.”

“It is particularly important that parents are aware of the law this time of year, when they may be considering buying an ATV as a holiday present for their child,” said Tom Vitaglione, co-chair of the N.C. Child Fatality Task Force and a fellow of the Child Advocacy Institute. “While the law is specially designed to save children’s lives, this can only be done with the cooperation and vigilance of parents, who must assure children operate ATVs safely at all times.”

Provisions of the law include:

- Children under 8 cannot operate ATVs.
- Children ages 8-11 may operate only ATVs with an engine displacement less than 70 cubic centimeters.
- Children ages 12-15 may operate only ATVs with engine displacement of 90 cubic centimeters or less.
- Children ages 8-15 may operate an ATV only under the continuous visual supervision of a person 18 years of age or older.
- All operators, including adults, must wear helmets and face protection.
- ATV operators cannot carry passengers, unless the machine is specifically designed for passengers.
- ATVs cannot be operated on public streets, roads or highways, except for purposes of crossing.
- Beginning October 1, 2006, all ATV operators born on or after January 1, 1990 must have a safety certificate showing that he/she has successfully completed an ATV safety course sponsored or approved by the All-Terrain Safety Institute.

Violators of the law may receive fines up to \$200. If the ATV is used for farm purposes, hunting or trapping, then the law does not apply.

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