

What is the hazard?

From 1982-2016, Kentucky reported 675 all-terrain vehicle (ATV) related deaths¹, an average of over 19 deaths per year. That was the 5th highest total in the nation during this time span. Due to their weight, lack of safety features, and the uneven terrain on which they are driven, ATV crashes often result in severe injury and death. Farm workers often use ATVs in isolated areas in order to perform their activities, putting themselves at risk of crashes and inadequate care if an incident occurs.

The following fatalities involving farmers on ATVs occurred in Kentucky:

Case 1: A 72 year old farmer was driving an ATV across his farm and attempted to make a quick left turn up a hill. The speed of the turn threw the victim off the ATV, which then overturned and came to rest on top of the victim's head and neck. It is unknown how long the victim was trapped before being discovered. The victim died due to positional asphyxia and blunt force trauma to the head (2018).

Case 2: A farmer was travelling through a wooded area and attempted to ascend a steep hill on an ATV when the vehicle stalled, flipped backwards, and trapped the victim face down in a creek with approximately two feet of water, resulting in his drowning. His body was not discovered for over 16 hours (2018).

Case 3: A 47 year old farmer was using an ATV to spray herbicide on a fence row located on a hillside. The ATV tipped over and came to rest laying on the victim's chest. Only 10 minutes had passed before he was found by coworkers, but the pressure of the ATV had sent the victim into cardiac arrest. The victim was pronounced dead on the scene by the coroner (2018).

Did you know: According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, in 2017, there were an estimated 93,800 ATV-related emergency department-treated injuries in the United States².



Recommendations:

- Always wear DOT-approved headgear and protective eyewear when operating an ATV that meet the specifications required by 601 KAR 14:010. Studies show that ATV riders who do not wear a helmet are more likely to receive significant injuries to the face, neck, and head, including traumatic brain injury (TBI)³.
- While ascending a steep hill, if the vehicle stalls or begins to slides backwards, apply the front brake, then the rear brake, turn off the ATV, and stand clear. If the vehicle is holding steady, apply the parking brake, chock the rear wheels, and seek assistance from others. Specialized equipment, such as a winch, may be necessary to safely move the ATV.
- Avoid quick turns while operating an ATV on a hill. If an ATV begins to tip to the side while traveling on a hill, turns the wheels downhill in an attempt to re-stabilize the ATV. If a rollover becomes inevitable, attempt to jump clear towards the uphill side.



Further Resources:

Name of Resource	Resource Description	Resource Link
ATV Safety Institute	ASI's primary goal is to promote the safe and responsible use of ATVs, thereby reducing accidents and injuries that may result from improper ATV operation by the rider.	https://atvsafety.org/
United States Consumer Product Safety Commission	Infographics, videos, statistics, and training materials for ATVs to improve operator safety.	https://www.cpsc.gov/Safety-Education/Safety-Education-Centers/ATV-Safety-Information-Center
In Control: ATV and Farm Utility Vehicle Safety	Two-part video produced by the California State Compensation Insurance Fund that demonstrates proper operating techniques for workers who may use ATVs on farms.	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f07PkI14xqU&t=545s
Kentucky Transportation Cabinet—Department of Vehicle Regulation	Specifications for approved headgear and eyewear while operating an ATV.	https://www.cpsc.gov/Global/Safety%20Education/Safety-Information-Centers/ATV/State%20ATV%20Information/KentuckyLaw.pdf (pg. 6)

Let us know what you think about this alert. [Click here](#) to complete our brief, anonymous survey.

For additional training materials and information regarding the KOSHS program, please visit the program website at: <http://www.mc.uky.edu/kiprc/koshs/index.html>

Sources

- [1] <https://www.cpsc.gov/Safety-Education/Safety-Education-Centers/ATV-Safety-Information-Center/Death-Associated-With-ATVs-by-State->
- [2] https://cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/atv_annual%20Report%202017_for_website.pdf?qLMnEEqa.T8KS0dW0r8qGqpUC7gQbqEd
- [3] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19190268>

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