



# Lawn Care: Utility-Type Vehicle Safety

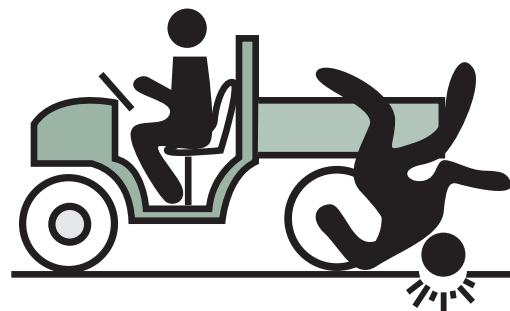
**Objective:** To promote the safe use of utility-type vehicles.

## How to Use This Training Module – Steps to Success

- Read the utility-type vehicle’s operator’s manual and understand UTV operation and safe practices.
- Ask your supervisor to point out the safety features on UTVs.
- Ask your supervisor to demonstrate the safe use of UTVs and their maintenance.
- Become familiar with personal protective equipment (PPE) to be used when operating a UTV.
- Discuss common UTV accidents and ways to prevent them with your supervisor.
- Review the important points in the Review section of this module.
- Take a quiz — available at <http://connect.ag.vt.edu/safe-utv/> — to check your understanding of utility-type vehicle safety.

## Safety Tips for Operating a UTV

- Avoid distraction; drivers should not use cell phones or listen to music through headphones when operating a UTV.
- Keep the legs and arms of the operator and passenger inside the vehicle at all times.
- Drive slowly and turn smoothly to prevent an overturn.
- Avoid driving a UTV on steep slopes. In a “must” situation, drive uphill or downhill rather than across the slope. Drive all the way to the top or the bottom of the hill before making a turn. When approaching a downhill slope, reduce the speed before reaching the slope to minimize wear on the brakes.
- Never allow more than two occupants in a UTV.



**No passengers allowed in cargo box**

## Background

Utility-type vehicles are popular, multipurpose equipment used for different applications in the lawn care industry. Their hauling capability and versatility have increased their popularity, and they are widely used in rural, suburban, and urban settings for a variety of lawn care, agricultural, construction, and industrial applications.

- Slow down to maintain control and protect the occupants when operating on rough terrain.
- Stay clear of ditches and embankments. If a ditch is 6-feet deep, the rule of thumb is that the vehicle should be at least 6 feet away from the edge of the embankment to avoid embankment failure.

- Permit as passengers only adults who can reach the handhold when sitting with their backs against the seat and their feet flat on the floorboard.
- Ensure that the seat belts of the operator and occupant are always be fastened.
- Be careful when reversing a UTV. Watch especially for young children and pets.
- Do not operate a UTV inside an enclosed area in order to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Never operate a UTV under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Make sure all cargo being transported — including toxic materials — is properly secured in the cargo box. Shifting cargo may cause tipping and spills.
- Use all recommended personal protective equipment when operating a UTV.
- Do not drive UTVs on a public road; they are off-road vehicles.
- Maintain a safe speed and load the cargo box for improved traction when using a UTV for towing.
- Never disengage warning systems or safety devices available on a UTV.

## Review

- Do not allow more than one passenger in addition to the operator.
- Stay clear of ditches and embankments.
- Avoid driving on steep slopes.
- Drive slowly and turn smoothly to avoid overturns.
- Keep the legs and arms of the operator and occupant inside the vehicle at all times.



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