

MINNESOTA SNOWMOBILE

SAFETY LAWS, RULES & REGULATIONS



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Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
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Be a Safe and Responsible Rider

Register Your Sled, It's the Law

Take A Snowmobile Safety Training Course

Check the Weather Forecast and Trail Conditions

Check the Local Laws

Wear Appropriate Clothing and Safety Gear

Inspect Your Snowmobile

Ride With a Buddy

Carry a First Aid, Survival and Repair Kit

Stay Sober and Stay Alert

Avoid Unknown Lakes and Rivers

Do Not Speed, Stay in Control

Stay On The Trails, Respect Private Property

Children Should Always Be Supervised

Stay To The Right On Trails

Watch Out For Groomers

Cross Roads In a Safe Manner

Respect Other Trail Users

Make New Friends, Join a Club

Don't Trespass

If You Are On A Field, or

If You Are On Railroad Tracks, or

If You Are Off the Marked And Groomed Trail, or

If You Are On The Inside Slope Of A Ditch, or

If You Are On a Power Line, or

If You Are On A Trail Between April 1st & December 1st

You Are Probably Trespassing

Join MnUSA – Be Part of our Team



Minnesota United
Snowmobilers Association

Message brought to you by
Minnesota United Snowmobilers Association &
Minnesota Snowmobile Education and Advancement Fund

www.mnsnowmobiler.org

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

This is a summary of the 2018-2019 Minnesota snowmobile regulations. For complete regulations, consult the state statutes and rules and check for any local ordinances. MN Laws website: <https://www.leg.state.mn.us/>

What's New	4
Registering Your Snowmobile	7
How to Register Your Snowmobile	7
Fees	7
Registration Numbers and Validation Decals	8
Snowmobile State Trail Sticker	14
Rules of the Road and Trail	15
Signs	16
Equipment Requirements	18
Safety Training Requirements	19
Youth Operation Requirements	20
General Operation	21
Where You May Ride	21
Where You May Not Ride	22
Other Prohibitions	23
Snowmobiling While Intoxicated	24
Speed Limits	25
Accidents	25
Enforcement	26
Penalties	26
Minnesota Trespass Laws	27
Game Laws Related to Snowmobiling	28
For More Information	29
Grant-In-Aid Program	30
Sunrise/Sunset Table	30

Did you know?

DWI LAW Operating Privileges and Driver's License

NEW effective August 1, 2018

If you refuse chemical testing – regardless of what vehicle type you are driving

- Your driver's license is revoked, and your snowmobile and ATV privileges are all suspended for a year

If you are convicted of DWI – regardless of what vehicle type you are driving

- Your driver's license is revoked, your snowmobile and ATV privileges are suspended for a year and your motorboat privileges are suspended for 90 days between May and October and over two years if necessary

A Message from MN DNR Conservation Officers:



Operating a snowmobile while intoxicated is dangerous for you and others and is against the law. Snowmobile operation while intoxicated is further aggravated by such factors as vibration, cold weather and uneven terrain on the trail. Operating a snowmobile while intoxicated/ under the influence can result in loss of driver's license, and operating privileges for your snowmobile, ATV and motorboat. Your vehicle may be forfeited. Your highway licensed vehicle plates may be impounded and you may need to enroll in an ignition interlock program in order to drive your highway licensed vehicles.

2017 Snowmobile Safety Instructor of the Year

Marvin Buchholz, of Ham Lake, has been named the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Snowmobile Volunteer Instructor of the Year for 2017. During the 50 years Buchholz has been a volunteer instructor, he's instructed more than 2,500 youth and adults about how to operate snowmobiles safely and responsibly. In addition, he's helped recruit and train more than 20 other certified instructors. "The best example I can give of the quality and character of Marvin's instruction is that Marvin is now teaching third and fourth generations of the same families," said Kevin Vnuk, who nominated Buchholz for the award. "They keep coming back to Marvin's class because of the quality and content of the class."

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer DNR youth instructor:

<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/safety/instructors/become.html>



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WELCOME TO SNOWMOBILING

Minnesota has over 22,000 miles of snowmobile trails. Access to trails depends on the cooperation of landowners, non-motorized trail users, other recreationists, and local units of government. The vast majority of trails are groomed and maintained by snowmobile club volunteers.

Be aware that trespass is the most frequent complaint landowners have against snowmobilers. Trespass seriously impacts the ability of clubs to get private landowners to allow grant-in-aid trails on their property. We recommend that all recreational users ask first before entering private lands, even if the land is not posted.

When you ride:

- No alcohol or drugs.
- Stay to the right on trails and use your headlight and taillight.
- Maintain adequate spacing between machines to avoid collision.
- Reduce your speed when riding at night to less than 40 MPH. Studies have shown speed over 40 MPH results in overdriving your headlights.
- Always yield to other motor vehicles.
- Stay clear of thin ice and lake inlets — never cross open water.
- Never ride alone; use the buddy system.
- Stay on groomed area of trails.
- Wear a helmet, eye protection, and proper clothing.

RIDE FOCUSED

STAY SOBER.
PAY ATTENTION.

This message brought to you by the American Council of Snowmobile Associations
www.snowmobilers.org



Registering Your Snowmobile

Snowmobiles **operated** or **transported** in Minnesota must be registered with the DNR. If your snowmobile is not registered, you may not operate, transport, or permit it to be operated. You must be at least 18 years old to register a snowmobile.

A majority of the revenue generated from snowmobile registration will be used for snowmobile grant-in-aid trails, trail maintenance, grooming, and easement acquisition.

How to Register Your Snowmobile

Register your snowmobile in person at any deputy registrar or at the DNR License Center in St. Paul. When you register, you will need the make, model, year, serial number, engine size, and sales receipt that shows the proof of sales tax payment. Sales between private parties do not require payment of sales tax.

Purchase from a Private Party: A person may not sell a snowmobile without furnishing the buyer with a bill of sale that includes the **signature of the registered owner** and the **serial number** of the snowmobile. Transfers and registration renewal fees are the responsibility of the new owner.

Purchase from a Dealership: Snowmobiles purchased from a retail dealer must be registered by the purchaser at the dealer. The dealer will issue a 21-day temporary registration.

Snowmobile registration fees:

Type of Registration	Fee
Trail Use Registration	\$105.50 plus filing fees
Non-trail Registration [3yrs]	\$ 45.00 plus filing fees
Duplicate Registration [3yrs]	\$ 16.00
Card Duplicate Decal	\$ 6.00
Transfer – Trail use registration only	\$ 18.50
Dealer [annual]	\$ 58.50 every year
Manufacturer [annual]	\$158.50 every year
Collector Unlimited Use	\$ 14.50

Expiration, Renewal, and Duplicate

The expiration date appears on both the registration card and the registration validation decal. All snowmobile registrations expire on June 30 of the last year the registration expires. Example: June 30, 2019

You should receive a notice by mail to renew your registration. Please notify the DNR of any address change. Whether you are notified or not, you are responsible for renewing your snowmobile registration. You may renew your registration at <http://licenses.dnr.state.mn.us/>.

To obtain a duplicate registration card or decal, contact your local deputy registrar or the DNR License Center 1-800-285-2000.

Non-Trail Snowmobile Registration is available for snowmobilers who do not operate on state or grant-in-aid state trails. A unique non-trail registration number will be assigned which will need to be displayed on the snowmobile.

- Non-trail registration does not allow for operation on state or grant-in-aid state trails even if you have a one-year trail sticker on the snowmobile.
- If a road right-of-way is part of a state or grant-in-aid state trail, you cannot operate a non-trail registered snowmobile on it.
- If a non-trail registered snowmobile is changed to the regular trail registration, new registration numbers will be assigned which will need to be displayed on the snowmobile.
- Non-trail snowmobile registrations are non-transferrable.
- Snowmobiles with 125cc or less engine displacement do not need registration (including non-trail registration) if NOT operated on state and grant-in-aid trails.

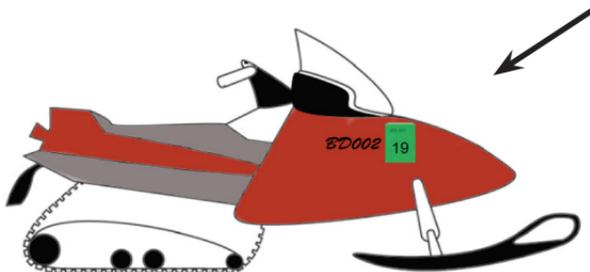
Registration Numbers and Validation Decals

When you register your snowmobile, you will be assigned a snowmobile registration number and receive a registration card. When you receive your registration card, sign it and keep it handy. You do not have to carry it with you, but if an enforcement officer asks to see it, you must produce it within a reasonable amount of time. The current registration number and validation decal must be displayed.

Display of Registration Number and Validation Decals

- Display in the 3" x 7" space provided by the manufacturer on the cowling or pan, or
- If no space is provided, place on each side of the snowmobile on the upper half, forward of the handlebars in a visible location.

Reading from left to right: The letters and numbers must be 1- 7/8" high with 3/16" stroke in width and in the English language.



Note: Letters and numbers must be contrasting color of the snowmobile

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Snowmobiles do not need to be registered with the DNR if

- being used to groom a state or grant-in-aid trail
- owned and used by the federal government, an Indian tribal government, another state or a political subdivision
- if the snowmobile is registered by tribal members through the tribal government
- registered in a country other than the U.S. and being used temporarily in Minnesota
- currently registered in another state and not kept in Minnesota for more than 30 consecutive days
- used exclusively in organized track-racing events
- in transit by a manufacturer, distributor, or dealer
- at least 15 years old in transit by an individual for use on land owned or leased by the individual
- used exclusively for agricultural purposes
- a snowmobile with an engine displacement that is 125 cubic centimeters or less and the snowmobile is not operated on a state or grant-in-aid trail.

Transfer of Ownership

If you buy a snowmobile that is currently registered for trail use in Minnesota, you may use a transferred registration for the time remaining on the previous owner's registration.

Simply obtain a **bill of sale** that includes the serial number of the snowmobile from the previous owner and send it, along with a transfer application and the transfer fee, to the DNR License Center or a deputy registrar. Transfer applications must be made **within 15 days** after the transfer or sale actually occurs. A transferred registration is only valid until the previous owner's registration expires. Non-trail registration is non-transferrable. If you buy a snowmobile that is currently registered for non-trail use, you must either apply for a new non-trail or trail registration.

TRANSFER OR TERMINATION OF SNOWMOBILE OWNERSHIP: Within 15 days after the transfer of ownership, an application for transfer must be executed by the registered owner and the purchaser using a bill of sale that includes the vehicle serial number. An owner must report the destruction or abandonment of any snowmobile by written notice to the commissioner in such form as the commissioner shall prescribe.



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Collector Snowmobile

• Special Permit

A **special permit** may be issued to a person or organization to operate or transport a collector snowmobile without registration for parades or organized group outings, such as races, rallies, and other promotional events, and for up to ten days each year for personal transportation. “Collector snowmobile” means a snowmobile that is 25 years old or older, was originally produced as a separate identifiable make by a manufacturer, and is owned and operated solely as a collector’s item.

• Collector Registration (Optional)

Snowmobiles 25 years old or older may be registered for unlimited use. This registration is non-transferable. The collector registration does not expire and is valid until the ownership of the snowmobile is transferred. A **snowmobile state trail sticker** is required if you operate on a state or grant-in-aid trail.

Destroyed, Abandoned, or Stolen Snowmobile

If your snowmobile is destroyed, abandoned, or stolen or you no longer register it in Minnesota, notify the DNR License Center at 500 Lafayette Rd, St. Paul, MN 55155-4026, (651) 296-2316 or 1-800-285-2000 within 15 days.

Dealer and Manufacturer Registration

Dealers must register snowmobiles they own and use for demonstration purposes. A registration plate will be issued along with a registration certificate that must be displayed conspicuously in the place of business. Additional plates are available for \$4.00, plus filing fees.

Manufacturers must register snowmobiles they own and operate for research, testing, experimentation, or demonstration. A registration plate will be issued along with a registration certificate that must be displayed conspicuously in the place of manufacture.

A valid registration number plate must be displayed on snowmobiles operated, or permitted to be operated, by a dealer or manufacturer. The registrations are not transferable. Dealer and manufacturer registrations are valid July 1 - June 30.

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State Trail Stickers

Snowmobile State Trail Sticker

Snowmobiles registered in another state or country must have a Snowmobile State Trail Sticker when operating on state and grant-in-aid trails. A Snowmobile State Trail Sticker is valid November 1 – June 30 of each year. Anyone operating a snowmobile in violation of this law will be required to purchase an annual penalty sticker for \$71.00 in addition to any ticket or fine.

These stickers are available at Deputy Registrar locations, Game and Fish Licensing agents, DNR License Center, online www.mndnr.gov or by phone 1-888-MNLICENSE

One Year Trail Sticker - \$51.00

Penalty Annual Trail Sticker - \$71.00

(Required to buy if found operating on state or grant-in-aid trail without a sticker)

Dealer/Manufacturer Trail Sticker - \$16.00

Duplicates - \$2.50

Note: For Online purchases, add 3% plus a \$1.65 service fee. For phone purchases, add \$3.50

The Snowmobile State Trail Sticker must be displayed in one of the following ways:

- on the forward half of the snowmobile, directly above or below the headlight
- above the expiration year on the top portion of the registration validation decal
- on the lower right corner of a dealer or manufacturer plate

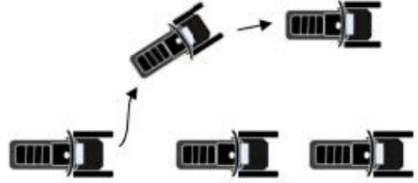
A Snowmobile State Trail Sticker is not required for:

- a snowmobile while being used to groom a state or grant-in-aid trail
- a snowmobile owned by the federal government, Indian tribal government, state, and political subdivisions
- operating a collector snowmobile with a permit
- operating a snowmobile on portions of a trail owned by the person or the person's spouse, child, or parent

Rules of the Road and Trail

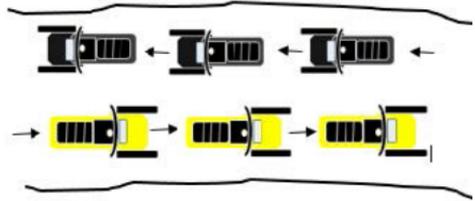
Passing

When overtaking another snowmobile going in the same direction, always pass on the left.



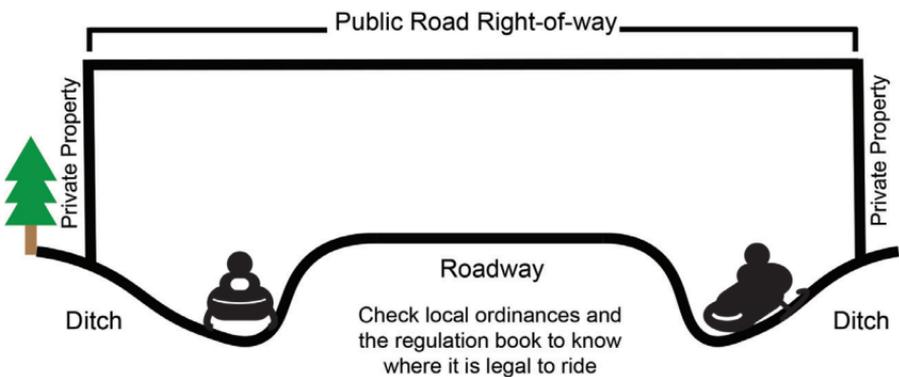
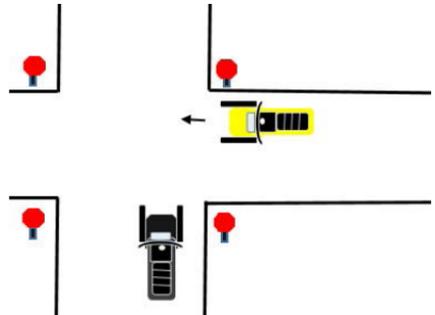
Meeting

When meeting another snowmobile, always slow down and stay to the right.



Meeting at an intersection

When meeting at an intersection, the operator to the right has the right of way.



NOTICE: Snowmobile operation is restricted to the bottom and outer slope of a road ditch of a state highway or county road. Road authorities may allow two-way operation on either side of road if deemed safe to others.

Check with local government officials on operating snowmobiles within township or city limits as private property boundaries vary.

Signs

Snowmobile operators should be familiar with the meaning of the following trail signs.

Informational sign:

indicates intersections or major changes in trail direction.



Directional blazer:

indicates changes in trail direction.



Reassuring blazer:

placed at intervals along the trail reassures users that they are still on the trail.



Stop sign:

placed at a road or highway crossing indicates a snowmobile must come to a complete stop.



No-snowmobiling sign:

indicates a trail or area where snowmobiling is prohibited.



No-studded tracks sign:

indicates no metal traction devices allowed on trail.



Two-way trail sign:

indicates trails with permitted two-way travel during nighttime hours within the public road right-of-way.



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Equipment Requirements

All snowmobiles operated on public lands, waters, or roadways must be equipped as follows:

Helmet

- Operators or riders under 18 years of age must wear an approved helmet, except when participating in a parade or operating on land belonging to a parent, grandparent, sibling, uncle, or aunt.

An approved helmet must meet federal law, which requires the helmet to display the symbol DOT. DOT is the manufacturer's certification that the helmet conforms to motor vehicle safety standards. Standard bicycle and hockey helmets are not legal helmets for snowmobiling.

Lights

- Headlights and taillights must be on during hours of darkness.
- Headlights must be able to reveal people and vehicles 100 feet ahead and aimed so they will not blind an oncoming snowmobiler.
- Colored lenses on headlights are NOT lawful when the snowmobile is operated on roads or road rights-of-way, including crossing roads and operating in ditches or outside slopes.
- Red taillights must be visible for 500 feet to the rear of the snowmobile.

Brakes

- Brakes must be able to control movement and to stop and hold the snowmobile track.

Reflector Material

- Snowmobiles must have at least 16 square inches of reflector material on each side forward of the handlebars.
- Any sled, trailer, or other device that is towed by a snowmobile during hours of darkness must display visible reflector material on each side and at the rear.

Mufflers

- Snowmobiles must be equipped with mufflers that are in good working order and that do not produce sharp popping or cracking sounds or excessive or unusual noise. After-market exhaust systems may not meet this requirement and may not be lawful to operate.
- You may not operate or sell a snowmobile built on or after April 1, 1975, that exceeds 78 decibels on the A scale at 50 feet, except under a permit of the DNR or county sheriff.
- No snowmobile shall be modified by any person in any manner that shall amplify or otherwise increase total noise level above that emitted by the snowmobile as originally equipped, regardless of date of manufacture.

Safety Training Requirements

Residents born after December 31, 1976, must complete a snowmobile safety training course to operate a snowmobile in Minnesota. While operating a snowmobile, you must have either:

- a snowmobile safety certificate in your possession or
- a snowmobile safety certificate indicator on your driver's license or on your Minnesota ID card

Youth ages 11 to 15 years can complete safety training by selecting one of the choices below.

Either choice will have a **required** “hands on” snowmobile riding course.

Choice 1: Attend a Traditional classroom snowmobile course:

- Course fee \$5.00
- 8 hour course provided by DNR Volunteer Instructors
- Meets two or more times in a classroom setting
- Required “hands on” snowmobile riding course**

Choice 2: Select and complete the Online course:

- Snowmobilecourse.com [*course fee \$24.95]
- Required “hands on” snowmobile riding course**

**Additional fees may apply to attend the hands-on course. Contact the Instructor.

Where do I find a training course?

On the DNR website www.mndnr.gov, click on **Education & Safety** and then under **Recreational Vehicle Safety Classes** to find snowmobile safety training. You may also contact the DNR Information Center by email (info.dnr@state.mn.us) or by phone 1-888-646-6367.

Adult Snowmobile Safety Training (16 years and older)

Complete the online course (Snowmobilecourse.com) and pay with credit card to obtain the safety certificate via online portal. Adults are not required to attend the “hands on” snowmobile riding course.

Offender Snowmobile Safety Training

A person who is convicted of careless or reckless operation, or two or more speeding violations in a snowmobile season, must successfully complete a snowmobile safety training course before operating a snowmobile.

Non-residents: certificates for snowmobile safety training issued in another state will be recognized in Minnesota.

Youth Operation Requirements

- The owner or person in lawful control of a snowmobile is jointly responsible for laws broken by a minor on that snowmobile.
- Anyone under 18 years old must wear an approved helmet.

Snowmobile Safety Certificate

Minnesota Residents

Any resident of Minnesota born after **December 31, 1976**, must have a snowmobile safety certificate to operate a snowmobile in Minnesota. Youth must be 11 years old to take a snowmobile safety course, the certificate is not valid until the 12th birthday.

Residents and Non-Residents

Under Age 12

(Without safety certificate)

- May drive snowmobiles on public lands, public waters, or grant-in-aid trails if accompanied by an adult*
- May not drive a snowmobile across state or county roads
- May not drive snowmobiles on streets or highways in a municipality

Ages 12 & 13

- May drive snowmobiles on public lands, public waters, or grant-in-aid trails **IF** Accompanied by an adult* **OR** In possession of a valid snowmobile safety certificate
- May not drive a snowmobile across state or county roads
- May not drive snowmobiles on streets or highways in a municipality

Ages 14 to 18

- May drive a snowmobile across state or county roads **IF** in possession of a snowmobile safety certificate or driver's license or ID card with valid snowmobile indicator
- May drive snowmobiles on public lands, public waters, or grant-in-aid trails **WITH** a snowmobile safety certificate
- May drive snowmobiles on streets or highways in municipalities, if not prohibited by local ordinance

Over Age 18

- Residents born after December 31, 1976, who operate a snowmobile in Minnesota must possess a valid snowmobile safety certificate or a driver's license or ID card with a valid snowmobile indicator.

** Accompanied by an adult means a parent, legal guardian, or other person 18 years of age or older designated by the parent or guardian who needs to be close enough to be able to direct the youth's operation of their snowmobile.*

Exception for Residents and Non-Residents

Without a snowmobile safety certificate, a person under the age of **14 years** may operate a snowmobile only if they are supervised or accompanied by one of the following: parent, legal guardian, or other person 18 years of age or older designated by the parent or guardian. The supervising or accompanying adult needs to be close enough to be able to direct the youth's operation of their snowmobile. This exception does not allow an operator under the age of 14 to cross a public road. Non-residents who are **18 years old and older** do not need a snowmobile safety certificate.

General Operation

Where You May Ride

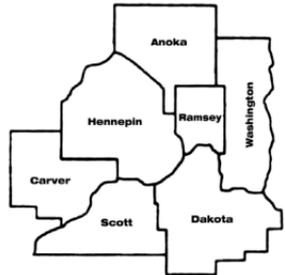
- in the bottom or outside slope of a ditch of a county or state road (see page 15)
- in the same direction as road traffic in the ditch from one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise (other than this time, you can ride in either direction)
- one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise on two-way snowmobile trails that are located within the ditches or adjacent to streets or highways when specifically permitted by the road authority (look for posted two-way signs, see page 16)
- on a bridge, other than a bridge that is part of the main-traveled lanes of an interstate highway, in order to avoid obstructions to travel when absolutely necessary (the snowmobile must be operated in the extreme right-hand lane, the entrance to the roadway must be made within 100 feet of the bridge, and crossing must be made as quickly as possible)
- on state and local grant in aid trails
- on iced-over waters that have legal access (unless restricted by local ordinances)
- on township roads when not restricted by local ordinance
- on public lands that are open to motorized vehicles. Land uses vary. Be sure to check all federal, state, and local ordinances.
- on your own land

Inside the seven-county metro area, you may ride:

- on land that is posted with signs stating “snowmobiles allowed”
- on land other than your own, with written or verbal permission of the landowner, occupant, or lessee
- on the groomed area of a snowmobile trail.

Outside the seven-county metro area, you may ride:

- on agricultural land with permission of the landowner
- on land, other than agricultural land, that you have not been told verbally, by written warning, or by posted signs, that riding is prohibited
- on the groomed area of a snowmobile trail.



When making a direct crossing of a street or road, you must:

- bring the snowmobile to a complete stop before crossing, whether there is a stop sign or not
- yield to all oncoming traffic
- have both front and rear lights on when crossing between one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise, or during periods of reduced visibility (see page 30 for sunrise/sunset table)
- cross at a 90-degree angle with respect to the road
- cross a divided road at an intersection

State forest lands classified as “closed” are open to off-trail snowmobile use unless specifically posted closed to snowmobiling.

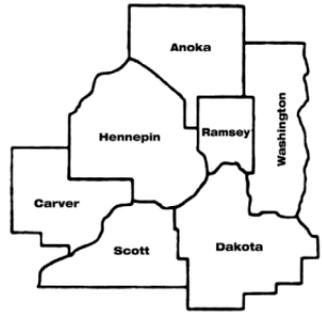
Where You May NOT Ride

- on the roadway, shoulder, or inner slope of the ditch of a state or county road
- on the median of a four-lane roadway
- within the right-of-way of any interstate
- on the right-of-way between opposing lanes of traffic
- against traffic at night within the road right-of-way *Except when two-way trail travel signs permit use
- at airports
- in any state park, state recreation area, state historic site, wildlife management area, or state scientific and natural area with the exception of posted snowmobile trails and areas
- in any wildlife management area south of U.S. Highway 2 from Grand Forks east to Bemidji, then south along U.S. Highway 71 to Wadena, then east along U.S. Highway 10 to Staples and U.S. Highway 210 to the eastern boundary of the state, without written permission from the DNR
- on any iced-over waters located in a restricted area or iced-over waters where you don't have legal access
- in any areas restricted by local ordinances or municipalities
- in a tree nursery or planting area
- on state forest lands that are posted or designated closed to snowmobiling
- on state forest lands located in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, including all of Lake Isabella and Insula; and portions of Lake Jeanette and Burntside State Forests.
- in National Wildlife Refuges, Waterfowl Production Areas, or the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. For more information, contact your local U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Municipalities, counties, school districts, and other political subdivisions or state agencies may impose further restrictions on snowmobiling on property not owned by the operator. Check local ordinances where you want to ride.

Inside the seven-county metro area, you may **NOT** ride:

- on land that you do not own, unless given written or verbal permission to ride on that land by the owner, occupant, or lessee, or unless signs are posted stating snowmobiling is allowed.



Outside the seven-county metro area, you may **NOT** ride:

- on land that you have been told not to verbally, in writing, or by posted signs
- on agricultural land without the permission of the owner.

Other Prohibitions

It is unlawful to:

- operate your snowmobile in a careless, reckless, or heedless manner that endangers the operator, or property of another, or causes injury or damage (intentionally driving over open water, or water skipping, may be considered careless or reckless unless done as an event under special permit issued by the local sheriff's office)
- litter
- enter or leave lands by cutting wire or tearing down a fence
- mutilate, destroy, damage, or remove any shelter, comfort station, or facility on any state or grant-in-aid trail
- post, damage, or remove any signs on any lands or waters unless you are the landowner, occupant, or lessee of the property
- operate on state forest lands in a manner that causes erosion or rutting, damages or destroys trees or growing crops
- operate on a state forest trail that is posted for non-motorized use
- operate a snowmobile with metal traction devices on paved public trails when posted closed by state or local government.

Metal traction device means any metal device, or array of metal devices, attached to a snowmobile track to enhance traction. This includes metal components that extend more than one-fourth inch from the bottom of the track. Note: Metal cleats affixed perpendicular to the direction of travel of a 1981 or earlier snowmobile are not considered a metal traction device.

Special Provision - Richard J. Dorer Memorial Hardwood Forest: Motor vehicles and snowmobiles may operate only on forest roads that are not posted closed and on forest trails that are designated for motorized use. No motorized travel is allowed off designated trails under any circumstances.

Snowmobiling While Intoxicated (SWI)

New Effective August 1, 2018

If you are convicted or refuse chemical testing – regardless of what vehicle type you are driving:

- Your driver's license is revoked, and your ATV, snowmobile, and motorboat privileges are all suspended

If you test .08 or more – regardless of what vehicle type you are driving:

- Your driver's license is revoked

If it's your first driving while intoxicated (DWI) offense and you are operating a snowmobile or other off-road recreational vehicle:

- You are also subject to chemical use assessments, conditional release, and plate impoundment of your highway licensed vehicles – the same as a DWI on a highway licensed vehicle

The underage not-a-drop provisions in the DWI laws now apply to snowmobiles and other off-road recreational vehicles

- Your driver's license and operating privileges for highway vehicles will be revoked

Operating a snowmobile while under the influence of alcohol, a controlled substance or its metabolite, or other hazardous substance is unlawful. Operators who are impaired may be required to submit to tests by an enforcement officer to determine the presence of these substances. There is a separate additional criminal penalty for refusal to submit to the tests, and the person's snowmobiling privileges will be suspended for one year upon refusal. SWI convictions and refusals are recorded on the violator's driver's license record and affect their driver's license privileges.

An operator who is found to be impaired or has an alcohol concentration of .08 or more, can be charged with a misdemeanor, gross misdemeanor, or felony level Driving While Intoxicated (DWI). Persons convicted of a misdemeanor will be subject to: up to \$1,000 fine (plus surcharges); possible jail sentence; and loss of snowmobile operating privileges for one year.

In addition to the above misdemeanor penalties, the following gross misdemeanor penalty provisions may apply if the person has any prior DWI violations, has an alcohol concentration of twice the legal limit, or has a child under 16 years of age with them on the snowmobile:

- up to \$3,000 fine with longer mandatory jail time
- forfeiture of the snowmobile

*If a person has three or more DWI convictions or revocations in the last 10 years, or has a prior felony conviction, he or she can be sentenced to 3-7 years in jail, up to \$14,000 fine, or both. Longer license revocations also would be imposed.

Open Bottle Law

It is unlawful for a person to drink or consume alcoholic beverages when operating a snowmobile on a roadway or shoulder of a roadway that is not a part of a designated snowmobile trail.

ZERO Alcohol

Snowmobiling takes place in unpredictable and uncontrollable natural settings. That's why DNR conservation officers strongly encourage every snowmobiler to practice 'Zero Alcohol' as part of their own regular safe riding habits. Many snowmobilers already choose to ride alcohol free. Practicing 'Zero Alcohol' before and during your ride will save lives and reduce injuries.

Speed Limits

It is unlawful to operate a snowmobile in excess of:

- 50 MPH on any public lands or waters
- the posted speed limits on a trail
- a speed greater than various conditions dictate for the trail, terrain and visibility
- the posted road speed limit or 50 MPH, whichever is LOWER, while operating in the ditch
- any governmental unit snowmobile speed limit. Governmental units include any city, county, municipality, township, or conservation district.

Speed on frozen lake surfaces: A county may enact a daytime 65 MPH speed limit for marked trails on frozen lakes that are over 10,000 acres. The county would need to pass an ordinance and receive approval by the DNR Commissioner. Individual counties will have more information on the location and status of any designated 65 MPH trails.

Accidents

Minnesota has worked hard to reduce snowmobiling accidents, injuries, and fatalities through education and safety training programs. The largest contributing factor to crashes is excessive speed, followed by alcohol usage.

Reporting Requirements: If you are involved in a snowmobile accident that results in injury requiring medical attention, death, or damage of more than \$500, you must file an official accident report with the Department of Natural Resources within 48 hours of the accident.

Accident reporting forms are available on the DNR website under the enforcement division at www.mndnr.gov/enforcement or call 1-800-366-8917.

Enforcement

Conservation officers, state troopers, deputy sheriffs, police officers and other peace officers are responsible for the enforcement of Minnesota's snowmobile laws. Whenever an enforcement officer signals you, you must stop. Fleeing an enforcement officer is a felony and the snowmobile used may be forfeited.

Part of a conservation officer's duty is to ensure your safety while snowmobiling. If you need an enforcement officer, contact your nearest State Patrol dispatch center. Your local conservation officer can also be found at www.mndnr.gov/officerpatrolareas.

Penalties

Violation of most snowmobile statutes and rules are misdemeanors and carry a fine of up to \$1,000 and imprisonment for up to 90 days. Youth violations may result in snowmobile safety certificate suspension. Also, snowmobiles used in burglaries, fleeing a peace officer, or a DWI, may be subject to seizure and confiscation or forfeiture.

The owner or person in lawful control of a snowmobile is subject to penalties if he or she knowingly allows the snowmobile to be operated by someone physically or mentally unable to drive the vehicle safely, or is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

A person operating a snowmobile with metal traction devices on any paved trail is guilty of a petty misdemeanor punishable by a civil penalty or criminal fine of \$50 for the first offense, \$200 for the second offense, and \$500 for the third or subsequent offense. Criminal fines will be subject to court surcharges and fees in addition to this penalty amount.

Anyone operating a snowmobile in violation of the Snowmobile State Trail Sticker law will be required to purchase an annual penalty sticker for \$71.00, in addition to any ticket or fine.

Minnesota Law on Registration

"A person may not operate or transport a snowmobile unless the snowmobile has been registered." Violation of this law is a misdemeanor and is punishable by fines up to \$1,000 and a jail sentence of up to 90 days.

Sunken Snowmobiles

Minnesota law requires snowmobiles and motor vehicles (including cars, trucks, watercraft and ATVs) that sink in a lake or river, be removed by the owner within 30 days. Owners must also notify the county sheriff within 48 hours. If the snowmobile or vehicle is not removed, the local unit of government can remove it and charge the owner two to five times the cost of removal.



Minnesota Trespass Laws

Trespass is the most frequent complaint landowners have against snowmobilers. Always ask for permission before entering private land.



Just because property isn't posted that doesn't mean you have a right to enter someone else's private property. The posted signs indicate the landowner's intention to prevent unauthorized entry. If you violate Minnesota's trespass laws, you will be guilty of a misdemeanor or gross misdemeanor, or may be charged with a civil penalty. A misdemeanor is punishable by fines of up to \$1,000 and a jail sentence of up to 90 days. Civil penalties range from \$50 for a first time violation to \$500 and loss of registration for a third violation.

You are guilty of a gross misdemeanor when you:

- knowingly disregard signs prohibiting trespass
- trespass after the landowner tells you not to
- violate the trespass law twice in three years.

If you are convicted of a gross misdemeanor, you will be subject to fines up to \$3,000 and up to one year in jail, your snowmobile registration will be null and void, and you will lose all hunting privileges for two years.

You must have permission to:

- Enter posted land
- Enter Agricultural land — land that is plowed or tilled; has standing crops or crop residue; is within a maintained fence for enclosing domestic livestock; is planted native or introduced hay land or grassland; or is planted to short rotation woody crops (harvested within 15 years of planting).
- All planted grassland, hay land, and short rotation woody crop land meet the definition of agricultural land, grass land enrolled in the federal Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), or the state Reinvest in Minnesota Reserve Program (RIM), Walk In Access areas. These lands do not need to be posted to prevent trespass.

It's unlawful to:

- wound or kill another person's domestic animal or destroy private property
- pass through a closed gate without returning it to the original position
- stray off the groomed portions of marked state trails.

Game Laws Related to Snowmobiling

General Restrictions

A person licensed to take deer must not operate a snowmobile or an off-highway vehicle on public or private property in an area open for the taking of deer by firearms on a day that they are licensed to take deer in that area except:

- Before legal shooting hours (1/2 hour before sunrise)
- From 11am until 2pm.
- After legal shooting hours (1/2 hour after sunset).
- On property that they own.
- On private property with the landowner's permission.
- Under a permit issued by a conservation officer to operate these vehicles in an emergency, medical, or other unusual situation during the restricted hours.

Recreational Snowmobile and OHV Riders

During the firearms deer season, option A season, snowmobile trails and OHV trails and routes on state forest lands are closed to ALL recreational snowmobile and off-highway vehicle riding (ATV, OHM, and ORV) where deer may be taken by rifle only (see MN Hunting and Trapping Regulations booklet):

- Series 100 permit areas (November 3-18, 2018)
- Portions of series 200 permit areas (November 3-11, 2018)
- Forest roads remain open to snowmobile and OHV use

Firearms Transportation in Motor Vehicles

A person may transport unloaded, uncased firearms (excluding pistols) in a motor vehicle, including snowmobiles:

- While at a shooting range with permission
- While lawfully hunting on private or public land or while traveling to or from a site the person intends to hunt or trap or has lawfully hunted that day.

Firearms must be transported unloaded and cased:

- Within Anoka, Hennepin, and Ramsey counties
- Within boundaries of a home rule charter, or statutory city with population of 2,500 or more
- On school grounds
- As otherwise restricted in game refuges, shining, thermal imaging or night vision laws
- A handgun/pistol cannot be transported uncased without a valid permit to carry.

It is unlawful to:

- use a snowmobile to chase, run over, or kill a wild animal
- shoot or attempt to shoot a wild animal from a snowmobile.

TURN IN POACHERS 24-hour hotline, 1-800-652-9093

Conservation Officer

1-888-MINNDNR (1-888-646-6367)

Call the DNR Information Center for easy access to DNR information and to connect with a conservation officer.



Turn in Poachers (TIP)

1-800-652-9093

If you witness a violation in progress or need to contact a conservation officer immediately, call the Turn-in-Poachers 24-hour hotline.



Special Permits for Disabled Hunters

A permit to shoot from a standing motor vehicle, including a snowmobile, may be issued to a licensed hunter who has a permanent physical disability and is unable to step from a vehicle without the aid of mechanical support, prosthetic device or is required to use supplemental oxygen to assist breathing because they are unable to walk any distance due to a permanent lung, heart, or other internal disease. For more details contact the Department of Natural Resources Information Center.

For More Information on snowmobile trails; maps of state parks, forests, and state trails; weekly snow reports; and other information, contact:

DNR Information Center

500 Lafayette Road

St. Paul, MN 55155-4040

(651) 296-6157 or 1-888-MINNDNR

General information: M-F 8 am - 8 pm, Sat. 9 am - 1 pm

www.mndnr.gov

DNR License Center

500 Lafayette Road

St. Paul, MN 55155-4026

(651) 296-2316 or 1-800-285-2000

License, titling and registration: M-F 8 am - 4:30 pm



For information on scheduled snowmobile safety classes statewide:

Website: <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/safety/vehicle/snowmobile/index.html>

DNR Safety Training Center
15011 State HWY 115
Camp Ripley, Little Falls, MN
1-800-366-8917

Grant-In-Aid Program

The Grant-in-Aid Program is a cooperative effort between the Minnesota DNR, local governments, local snowmobile organizations, and private landowners who provide the majority of Minnesota's 22,000 miles of snowmobile trails. Funded through snowmobile registration and Snowmobile State Trail Sticker fees and gas taxes, the grant-in-aid program helps local groups and clubs develop and maintain trails.

- Grant-in-aid trails are open each year from December 1 through April 1
- Many grant-in-aid trails throughout the state run through private property. Stay on good terms with these landowners by staying on marked trails. Don't jeopardize your ability to use private lands
- Remember you need a Trail Use Registration sticker when operating on grant-in-aid trails.

Sunrise/Sunset Table

To find the sunrise and sunset times in your area. See the link to the U.S. Naval Observatory website:

http://aa.usno.navy.mil/data/docs/RS_OneYear.php

Note: Sunrise and sunset times are shown in a table format and can be printed for viewing or saved to your computer's desktop.

Daylight Time

Daylight time is not implemented in time tables. When daylight time is in use, add one hour to the times listed in the tables.



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