

## You Make Snowmobiling Safe

Across a special part of North America, summer weather is uncertain but winter always brings snow. More than 10 million people look forward to that blanket of white and the pleasures of enjoying the outdoors on snowmobiles.

Many things make snowmobiling fun: the breathtaking beauty of a snow-filled woods, field or mountain; the precision performance of a well-designed machine; the satisfaction of traversing the winter landscape with friends and family.

Yes, snowmobilers savor the winter world, and that calls for extra responsibility. Training, experience and awareness are all traits of the accomplished snowmobiler. **You are the “Safe Riders! You make snowmobiling safe.”**

Snowmobiling is fun, but it's work too. It challenges the body and mind, and that's part of the reason you're so relaxed at the end of a day of snowmobiling. While you're riding, the wind, sun, glare, cold, vibration, motion and other factors work together to affect both driver and passenger.

Yes, there's plenty of challenge awaiting you as you drive your snowmobile into the winter wonderland. Alcohol magnifies and distorts those challenges and can quickly turn an enjoyable outing into a situation that's hazardous for you and others.

### Alcohol and snowmobiling, simply, do not mix

Forget the myth that alcohol warms up a chilled person. It opens the blood vessels and removes the feeling of chill, but it does nothing to increase body heat. Instead, it can increase the risk of hypothermia, a dangerous lowering of the body's core temperature. With alcohol, you may only *feel* warmer, while your body chills dangerously.

Alcohol increases fatigue, fogs your ability to make good decisions, and slows your reaction time. It's part of a formula for disaster. And don't forget: **THERE ARE LAWS PROHIBITING THE OPERATION OF A SNOWMOBILE WHILE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL.**



## As a Safe Rider, you:

**Know** your abilities and don't go beyond them'

**Know** your machine's capabilities and don't push beyond them

**Know** your riding area. Get a map. Talk to local folks.

### Keep your machine in top shape

You have two good guides available for snowmobile maintenance: the owner's manual that came with it and your dealer. Consult both to make sure your machine is kept in top form for dependable, enjoyable fun.

Your local club or association may also conduct safety and maintenance programs.

Before each ride, follow the "re-op" check outlined in your owner's manual.

### Follow the rules

Regulations on sled registration and use are different in various parts of the snow belt. Check with natural resource and law enforcement agencies and snowmobile dealers or clubs in the area you're visiting to make sure your ride results in legal and hassle-free snowmobiling.

Remember, too, that some states and provinces have age restrictions for snowmobile operation, often requiring that children are supervised by adults.

### Safe crossing

Be careful when crossing roads of any kind. Come to a complete stop and make absolutely sure no traffic is approaching from any direction. Then cross at a right angle to traffic.

### Dress appropriately

Wear layers of clothing, so that you can add or remove a layer or two to match changing conditions. A windproof outer layer is especially important, as are warm gloves or mitts, boots and a helmet.

Make sure your helmet is safety-certified, the right size, and in good condition. A visor is essential for clear vision and wind protection and the chin strap should be snug.

Wear glasses or goggles that offer protection from the sun.

## Think ahead

Remember, it's you, the Safe Rider that makes snowmobiling safe. Many problems can be avoided by using common sense. Minor problems can be overcome by carrying a useful tool kit, spare parts, flashlight, first-aid kit, and a few survival items such as high energy food, fire starting equipment and a compass.

### Take it easy

Today's snowmobile is a mechanical marvel. It provides inspiring performance, reliability and pleasing aesthetics, combined with essential safety design and components.

**Safe Riders** drive within the limits of their machine and their abilities.

You should always ride at a speed in which you can stop within your line of sight. Slow down and enjoy the scenery and the experience. Ease up on the throttle especially when near other machines, people, trees, animals and other objects. It's good sense — and it's the law!

### Take a friend

Don't snowmobile alone. Not only is snowmobiling more fun with family and friends, it's safer too.



### File a plan

Airplane pilots and boaters file flight and float plans, respectively, so that others know where to look if they're overdue.

"Snow plans" describing your machine and your planned route can be time-and life-savers. Leave one with your family or friends.

Like those who file travel plans, always let your family and friends know you're back or have arrived at your destination. No one likes needless searches.

## A good turn

Other snowmobilers and car drivers need to know what you're up to. Remember the basic hand signals:

**Left turn:** left arm extended straight out

**Right turn:** left arm out, forearm raised, with elbow at 90-degree angle

**Stop:** left arm raised straight up

**Slow:** left arm out and angled toward ground

## Take care of the trail

**Safe Riders** snowmobile to enjoy the outdoors. They treat it with respect.

They wait for enough snow cover to protect vegetation

They avoid running over trees and shrubs

They appreciate but don't disturb animals or other outdoor users.

## Take the honorable trail

Beautiful trail systems and riding areas are available throughout North America. Stay safe and legal within the areas that you are permitted to ride or those for which you've obtained permission.

## Stay alert

Focusing on the tail light of the snowmobile ahead of you is the cause of many accidents. If your eyes are fixed on the tail light, you're not likely to notice the slight turn the machine ahead makes to avoid collision or the object that was almost hit.

After snowmobiling for several hours, your reaction time slows. Be aware that even though you may not feel tired, the motion, wind and vibration of the machine may begin to dull your senses.

## Be careful at night

Low-light and darkness require special care. Slow down and watch for others. Overcast days require extra caution.

Don't over drive your headlights. Ask yourself, "Am I driving slow enough to see an object in time to avoid a collision?"

At night on the lakes and large open fields, estimating distances and direction of travel may become difficult. It is important to keep some point of reference when riding at night.

## Mountain measures

Even if we don't live near mountains, many of us want to visit the mountains someday. Mountain snowmobiling is spectacular but avalanches occur. Some avalanche areas may be posted and closed.

Be cautious of avalanche dangers throughout mountain country. Riding in these areas should only be done after receiving proper mountain riding training. Mountain snowmobilers should carry avalanche beacons, shovels, and probe poles for locating people buried in snow and a portable radio to summon help. For more info: US: [www.avalanche.org](http://www.avalanche.org) Canada: [www.avalanche.ca](http://www.avalanche.ca)

## Always know local ice conditions

Collisions on lakes account for a significant number of accidents. Don't hold the attitude that lakes are flat, wide open areas, free of obstructions.

Remember, if you can ride and turn in any direction, without boundaries, so can other riders. The threat of a collision, then, can come from any direction.

However, if you do snowmobile on the ice, make absolutely sure the ice is safely frozen. Don't trust the judgment of other snowmobilers. You are responsible for your own safe snowmobiling. Drowning is a leading cause of snowmobile fatalities.

## Join a club

There are thousands of snowmobile clubs scattered throughout snow country, with associations or federations in every state and province.

For information on the snowmobile association in your state or province contact us:

**American Council of Snowmobile Associations (ACSA)**

[www.snowmobilers.org](http://www.snowmobilers.org)

**Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations (CCSO)**

[www.ccsso-ccom.ca](http://www.ccsso-ccom.ca)

## Tell us about yourself

We would love to learn more about you. Please visit us at:

**International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association**

[www.snowmobile.org](http://www.snowmobile.org) and [www.gosnowmobiling.org](http://www.gosnowmobiling.org)

[www.facebook.com/GoSnowmobiling](http://www.facebook.com/GoSnowmobiling)

# You Make Snowmobiling Safe.



## Where to find us on the web:

[www.snowmobile.org](http://www.snowmobile.org)

[www.GoSnowmobiling.org](http://www.GoSnowmobiling.org)

[www.facebook.com/GoSnowmobiling](http://www.facebook.com/GoSnowmobiling)