

Attention All Off-highway Vehicle (OHV) Users: New OHV regulations in Arizona will go into effect Jan. 1, 2009

INTRODUCTION

Thanks to a collaborative effort between a broad coalition of OHV enthusiasts, sportsmen, conservationists, elected officials and the public, new laws that will help better manage Arizona's rapidly growing OHV use will take effect Jan. 1, 2009. Among other provisions, the new law requires an annual purchase of an Off-Highway Vehicle Decal for the operation of any ATV or OHV in Arizona that meets both the following criteria:

- Designed by the manufacturer primarily for travel over unimproved terrain.
- Has an unladen weight of eighteen hundred pounds or less.

Why is the new law needed?

- OHV use in Arizona has exploded (347 percent increase since 1998), outpacing the existing funding to manage that growth, protect wildlife habitat, and help maintain recreational access. Revenues generated from the new OHV Decal user fee will be used to help ensure sustainable opportunities and natural resource protection by bolstering funding and grant programs that pay for trail maintenance, signage, maps, facility development, habitat damage mitigation, education, and enforcement.

What does the new law do?

- It specifies OHV Decal, title, license plate and registration requirements.
- It specifies equipment requirements.
- It specifies regulations for safe, ethical and responsible operation.

OHV DECAL / TITLE/ LICENSE PLATE / REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

What is the OHV Decal?

- The OHV Decal is a sticker that must be purchased annually to allow your OHV to be operated within Arizona. The decal will need to be applied to the upper left corner of your license plate, and your license plate will need to be visibly displayed on the rear of your OHV. The dollars collected through the purchase of the OHV Decal are considered an OHV user fee and apply to all OHVs meeting the bulleted criteria in the following paragraph. The OHV Decal should not be confused with "registration." Registration is required if you want to your OHV to be "street legal" (i.e., operate it on paved and improved roads and streets - see registration information on page 3).

What is considered an off-highway vehicle for the purpose of obtaining the OHV Decal?

- An off-highway vehicle is any motor vehicle operated on unimproved roads, trails and approved use areas not suitable for conventional two-wheel-drive vehicular travel. Examples include: ATVs, UTVs, trail motorcycles and dirt bikes. The requirement to purchase an OHV Decal only applies to OHVs meeting both of the following criteria:
 - Designed by the manufacturer primarily for travel over unimproved terrain.
 - Has an unladen weight of eighteen hundred pounds or less.
- Pickup trucks, SUVs, cars and other recreational vehicles are not required (and will not be able) to obtain an OHV decal. All other regulations apply.

How do I obtain the OHV Decal and what does it cost?

- The OHV Decal will be available for purchase starting January 1, 2009 on-line at www.servicearizona.com or at a Motor Vehicle Division (MVD) Office or Authorized Third Party Provider. The cost is yet to be determined but will be posted at www.azgfd.gov/ohv when available. The decal is valid for one year. It is the ATV/OHV owner's responsibility to purchase subsequent year decals.

Title, License Plate, OHV Decal and Registration: What steps do I need to take to be in compliance with the law?

- Your OHV/ATV must have an Arizona Certificate of Title in your name. If the vehicle is not titled in your name or you have an out-of-state title, you will need to visit an MVD Office or Authorized Third Party Provider to obtain an Arizona Certificate of Title. All ATV/OHV owners must obtain an Arizona Title for their vehicle(s) by July 1, 2009. Vehicles with an engine displacement less than 49cc's are not titled in Arizona.
- The vehicle must have an Arizona license plate. The license plate must be securely attached to the rear of the vehicle and clearly visible.
- If you need to confirm the vehicle has been issued a license plate and title, you may request a Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) online at www.servicearizona.com or visit an MVD Office or Authorized Third Party Provider. The vehicle identification number (VIN), your driver license number and a \$3.00 fee is required to obtain an MVR.
- Purchase the annual OHV Decal for your OHV on-line at www.servicearizona.com or at an MVD Office or Authorized Third Party Provider. The OHV Decal shall be affixed to the upper left corner of the license plate.
- The OHV Decal is valid for one year from purchase. You will NOT be sent a renewal notice. It is your responsibility to renew and display a current OHV Decal on your vehicle license plate annually.
- If you want to ride on improved and maintained roads, your OHV can be registered for "street legal" use in Arizona. Your vehicle will first need to be titled and then meet all on-highway equipment requirements, plus you will need to

purchase the annual OHV Decal.

How do I register my OHV to be "street legal"? (i.e., to operate it on paved or maintained roads)

- Depending on how you plan to operate your OHV in Arizona, you have two options:
- Option 1: If you operate primarily off-highway, then your vehicle is eligible for a reduced Vehicle License Tax (VLT) of \$3.00 and waiver of the registration fee. The following requirements must be satisfied:
 - You must purchase an OHV Decal. An OHV owner may request a free motor vehicle registration when paying for the OHV Decal.
 - The vehicle must be designed by the manufacturer primarily for travel over unimproved terrain and have an unladen weight of 1,800 pounds or less.
 - You must affirm that your vehicle is equipped for highway use and will be primarily used off-highway.
 - Registered vehicles must comply with mandatory insurance requirements.
 - Vehicle emission testing requirements may apply.
- Option 2: If you operate primarily on improved roads and highways (such as city driving), then you are required to register your vehicle, including payment of all fees, through the standard registration process. You must also satisfy the following requirements:
 - If your vehicle is designed by the manufacturer primarily for travel over unimproved terrain and has an unladen weight of 1,800 pounds or less, you must purchase the OHV Decal.
 - You must affirm that your vehicle is equipped for highway use.
 - Registered vehicles must comply with mandatory insurance requirements.
 - Vehicle emissions testing requirements may apply.

My OHV is currently registered for highway use and is street legal, but I primarily use it off highway. When can I get the reduced Vehicle License Tax (VLT) and the registration fee waived?

- At the time of your vehicle registration renewal, you will be eligible for the reduced VLT and the registration fee waived if your qualifying vehicle has a valid OHV Decal. There are no refunds for VLT or registration and you WILL still need to purchase the OHV Decal to legally operate in Arizona as of Jan. 1, 2009.

I lost my license plate and/or my OHV Decal, now what do I do?

- If it is lost, stolen or mutilated, then you may purchase a replacement for a \$5.00 fee at an MVD Office or Authorized Third Party Provider.

I own a truck and would like to purchase the OHV Decal to help support the program. Can I do that?

- No, at this time the OHV Decal can only be purchased for qualifying vehicles:
 - Designed by the manufacturer primarily for travel over unimproved terrain and
 - Has an unladen weight of 1,800 pounds or less

EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

What equipment is required to operate my OHV in Arizona?

- Brakes.
- Lighted head and taillights if operated between one half-hour after sunset and one half-hour before sunrise.
- A muffler or noise dissipative device that prevents sound above 96 decibels.
- A United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)-approved spark arrestor device.
- For those under 18, a properly fitted and fastened U.S. DOT-approved helmet.
- Sand dunes and certain areas designated by a land managing agency may require a safety flag. The flag shall be at least 6 by 12 inches and attached to the OHV and flying at least 8 feet above the surface of the level ground.

SAFE, ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE OPERATION

What are the new operating regulations?

- Travel is limited to roads, trails and areas that are designated open by the land management agency for motorized vehicle use.
- Travel by motorized vehicles that causes damage to wildlife habitat, riparian areas, cultural or natural resources or property or improvements is prohibited.
- No reckless operation.
- No removal or placement of regulatory signs.

Can I operate on State Trust Land?

- An OHV meeting the 1,800-pound requirement and displaying the OHV Decal may cross State Trust Land only on designated or open existing roads and trails. Do not enter closed areas.
- Operation of support vehicles (RV, truck, trailer, etc.) requires a recreational permit.
- Any other recreational purposes (picnics, camping, etc.) require the purchase of the recreation permit from the [Arizona State Land Department](http://www.land.state.az.us).

Where can I find more information?

- ADOT Motor Vehicle Division – www.azdot.gov/mvd
- Arizona State Land Department – www.land.state.az.us

- Arizona State Parks – www.pr.state.az.us
- Arizona Game and Fish Department – www.azgfd.gov

Remember to leave no trace and “Nature Rules!” Stay on Roads and Trails.