October 2014

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

SNOWMOBILE REFERENCE GUIDE

This booklet contains rules and regulations most likely needed for motorized recreational use in Iowa. However, it is not a complete list of all regulations or laws, nor is it a legal document. For more information, please reference Iowa Code Chapters 321 and 321G and Iowa Administrative Code, Chapter 571.

Snowmobile Education Program

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Snowmobile riders in the state of Iowa who are ages 12 through 17 are required to have taken and passed a snowmobile education course and have an education certificate in their possession when riding on public land, public ice, and designated snowmobile trails, if these areas are signed open to snowmobile use. This regulation applies to both resident and nonresident riders.

For a current listing of IDNR snowmobile education course offerings: http://www.iowadnr.gov/Recreation/Snowmobiles/SnowmobileEducation.aspx

To enroll in the IDNR-approved online course: SnowmobileCourse.com

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

SNOWMOBILE REFERENCE GUIDE

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources is required to collect social security numbers from all persons obtaining a hunting, fishing, or other recreational license under Iowa Code Section 252J.8 and 42 U.S. Code Section 666(a)(13). Your social security number will serve as your principal identification number to determine your eligibility for licenses. It will be provided to law enforcement agencies and the Iowa Child Support Collection Unit to establish, modify, and enforce child support obligations. It will NOT appear on any printed forms.

Changes and Updates

2014 Legislative Changes

- Minors under 16 years of age may operate their own snowmobile under the direct supervision of an adult.
- Operators under 12 years of age do not have to have an education certificate.
- All operators 12 through 17 years of age must have completed and possess a valid snowmobile education certificate.
- Snowmobiles manufactured after 1984 can be registered as an antique snowmobile by providing a bill of sale.
- Antique snowmobiles can be registered through the County Recorder's Office starting September 1, 2014.

Registering Your Snowmobile

All newly owned machines or machines which have not been renewed in the recreational vehicle and vessel registration system (RVVRS) must be registered through the County Recorder's Office in the owner's county of residence.

Renewals can be done at any County Recorder's Office (you only need to provide the IA number assigned to your snowmobile through RVVRS).

Snowmobiles which have been entered into RVVRS can be renewed by U.S. Postal Service fulfillment through the Iowa DNR Online License and Registration Sales Site. You will need to provide your DNR customer number which is printed on your vehicle registration. You will also be able to purchase Iowa Resident User Permits. To access this site, go to www.iowadnr.gov and find the link for Online Hunting/Fishing License System in the Popular Pages listing under the main photo banner.

Iowa DNR User Permits

Both resident and nonresident user permits are available at County Recorder's Offices and any license agent that sells hunting and fishing licenses.

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Definitions

All-terrain vehicle (ATV) means a motorized vehicle with not less than three and not more than six nonhighway tires that is limited in engine displacement to less than 1,000 cubic centimeters and in total dry weight to less than 1,200 pounds and that has a seat or saddle designed to be straddled by the operator and handlebars for steering control.

Commission means the Natural Resource Commission established in Iowa Code § 452A.5.

Department means the Department of Natural Resources established in Iowa Code § 452A.5.

Designated snowmobile trail means a snowmobile riding trail on any public land, private land, or public ice that has been designated by the Department, a political subdivision, or a controlling authority for snowmobile use.

Direct supervision means to provide supervision of another person while maintaining visual and verbal contact at all times.

Education certificate means a snowmobile education certificate, approved by the Natural Resource Commission, which is issued to a qualified applicant who is twelve years of age or older.

Measurable snow means one-tenth of one inch of snow.

Nonresident means a person who is not a resident of this state.

Off-road utility vehicle (ORV) means a motorized vehicle with not less than four and not more than eight nonhighway tires or rubberized tracks that has a seat that is of bucket or bench design, not intended to be straddled by the operator, and a steering wheel or control levers for control. "Off-road utility vehicle" includes the following vehicles: ***"Off-road utility vehicle - type 1"*** means an off-road utility vehicle with a total dry weight of one thousand two hundred pounds or less and a width of fifty inches or less. ***"Off-road utility vehicle - type 2"*** means an off-road utility vehicle, other than a type 1 off-road utility vehicle, with a total dry weight of two thousand pounds or less, and a width of sixty-five inches or less. ***" Off-road utility vehicle - type 3"*** means an off-road utility vehicle with a total dry weight of more than two thousand pounds or a width of more than sixty-five inches, or both.

Operate means to ride in or on, other than as a passenger, use, or control the operation of a snowmobile in any manner, whether or not the snowmobile is moving.

Operator means a person who operates or is in actual physical control of a snowmobile.

Definitions

Owner means a person, other than a lienholder, having the property right in or title to a snowmobile. Owner includes a person entitled to the use or possession of a snowmobile subject to an interest in another person, reserved or created by agreement and securing payment or performance of an obligation. Owner excludes a lessee under a lease not intended as security.

Public ice means any frozen, navigable waters within the territorial limits of this state and the frozen marginal river areas adjacent to this state, other than farm ponds, that are under the jurisdiction of the Natural Resource Commission.

Public land means land owned by the federal government, the state of Iowa, or a political subdivision of the state and land acquired or developed for public recreation pursuant to Iowa Code § 321G.7.

Public water means any navigable waters within the territorial limits of this state and the marginal river areas adjacent to this state, other than farm ponds, that are under the jurisdiction of the Natural Resource Commission.

Railroad right-of-way means the full width of property owned, leased, or subject to easement for railroad purposes and is not limited to those areas on which tracks are located.

Resident means as defined in Iowa Code §483A.1A.

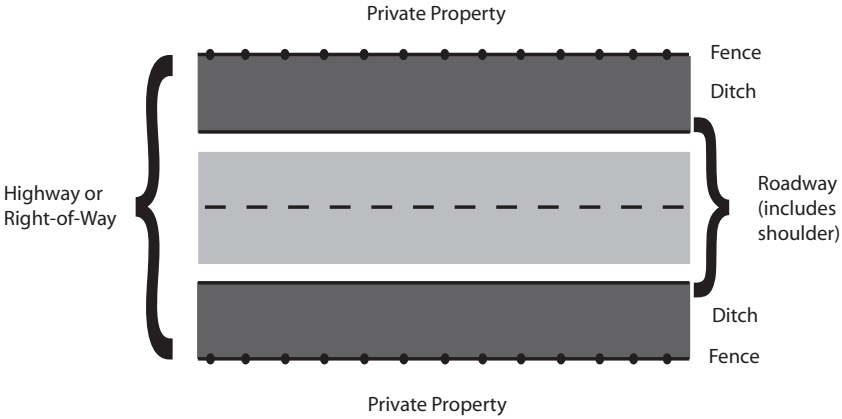
Roadway means that portion of a highway improved, designed, or ordinarily used for vehicular travel.

Special event means an organized race, exhibition, or demonstration of limited duration which is conducted on public land, public ice, or a designated snowmobile trail under the jurisdiction of the Natural Resource Commission according to a prearranged schedule and in which general public interest is manifested.

Section throughout this reference guide you will see this symbol "§" which represents the word section when referring to legal code.

Street or highway means the entire width between property lines of every way or place of whatever nature when any part thereof is open to the use of the public, as a matter of right, for purposes of vehicular travel, except in public areas in which the boundary shall be thirty-three feet each side of the center line of the roadway.

Definitions



Water skipping means the operation of a snowmobile on the surface of water by utilizing the skis, track, and bottom surface area of the snowmobile for flotation while the snowmobile is in motion.

REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Machines Registered in Iowa

- Each snowmobile in Iowa used on public land, public ice, or a designated snowmobile trail of this state must be currently registered with the Department. A person shall not operate, maintain, or give permission for the operation or maintenance of a snowmobile on public land, public ice, or a designated snowmobile trail of this state unless the snowmobile is registered in accordance with the laws and administrative rules of Iowa or applicable federal laws.

- The owner of each snowmobile required to be registered shall file an application for registration with the Department through a County Recorder and pay all applicable fees. Vehicle dealers are required to make application and pay all applicable registration and title fees on behalf of a purchaser.

- An application for registration shall be made on the approved Department form. Applicants shall provide bill of sale, proof of prior registration of the snowmobile, and other proof of ownership of the snowmobile as the County Recorder may require. In the event the applicant does not have documentation required by the Department, the applicant may be required to secure a bond consistent with the requirements of Iowa Administrative Code, Chapter 571.

- Registration certificate.
  - An operator of a snowmobile shall carry the registration certificate either in the snowmobile or on the person of the operator when the snowmobile is in use.
  - An operator must provide the registration certificate to all of the following:
    - To a peace officer or Department personnel upon request.
    - To a person injured in an accident involving the snowmobile, or that person's agent.
    - To the owner or operator of another snowmobile when the snowmobile is involved in a collision or accident of any nature with the other snowmobile, or that person's agent.
    - To the owner of personal or real property when the snowmobile is involved in a collision or accident of any nature with the property of the other person, or that person's agent.

    - To the property owner or tenant when the snowmobile is being operated on private property without permission from the property owner or tenant, or that person's agent.

- Registration decal display.
  - The owner of a snowmobile shall display the registration decal on the windshield of the snowmobile so that the decal is clearly visible.
  - If the snowmobile does not have a windshield, then the decal shall be affixed to the area of the hood near the headlight so that the decal is clearly visible.
- Operation pending registration.
  - Purchase from dealer. An unregistered snowmobile sold by a dealer shall bear a "registration applied for" card with the purchase date printed on it. This entitles the purchaser to operate the snowmobile for 45 days immediately following the purchase while the application is being processed. The purchaser shall place this card on the windshield area of the snowmobile in a position so as to be clearly visible at all times and maintained in a legible manner. The operator of any snowmobile displaying a "registration applied for" card shall carry and provide upon request to any peace officer a valid bill of sale for the snowmobile.
  - Private purchase – registered in Iowa. The purchaser of a snowmobile that is currently registered in Iowa may operate it for 30 days immediately following the purchase without having completed a transfer of registration.
  - Private purchase – not registered in Iowa. A snowmobile not currently registered in the state of Iowa shall not be operated until it is titled and registered in the purchaser's name. Valid registration in another state does not authorize preregistration operation.

- Registration renewals. Every snowmobile registration certificate and registration decal expires at midnight December 31 of the year displayed on the registration.

Machines Registered in Another State
Any snowmobile registered in another state and used on public land, public ice, or a designated snowmobile trail of this state must display registration in accordance with an approved numbering system of that state and the evidence of registration must be in full force and effect. This requirement is waived for an operator if their home state does not have a registration or numbering system.

IDNR User Permits - Required in Addition to a Valid Registration

- All snowmobiles, regardless of owner residency status, operated on public land, public ice, or a designated snowmobile trail are required to display an IDNR User Permit.
- An IDNR User Permit will be issued to the purchaser for use (display) on only one snowmobile and is not transferable.
- IDNR User Permit Decal Display.
  - The IDNR User Permit decal shall be displayed on the windshield of the snowmobile so that the decal is clearly visible.
  - If the snowmobile does not have a windshield, then the decal shall be affixed to the area of the hood near the headlight so that the decal is clearly visible.
- An IDNR User Permit expires December 31 of the year printed on the permit.

Exempt Vehicles

Registration is not required for the following snowmobiles:

- Vehicles owned by the United States, this state, or another state, or by a governmental subdivision of a state and is used for:
  - Enforcement
  - Search and rescue
  - Official research and studies
- Snowmobiles used exclusively as farm implements. However, titling may be required. See following page.

Antique Snowmobiles

A snowmobile that is manufactured prior to 1984 may be registered for a one-time fee. Registration as an antique snowmobile exempts the owner from annual registration requirements for this machine. However, if ownership of the machine is transferred, the new owner shall register the snowmobile and pay the one-time antique registration fee in their name. If the antique snowmobile is operated on public land, public ice, or a designated snowmobile trail, the requirement to display an IDNR User Permit applies.

Titling Requirements

- The owner of a snowmobile acquired on or after January 1, 1998, other than an exempt vehicle or a previously registered snowmobile that is more than 30 years old, must apply to the County Recorder of the county in which the owner resides, or the snowmobile is registered, for a certificate of title for the snowmobile, if not already issued for the machine.
- Snowmobiles that are titled are required to be registered.
- Snowmobiles that are titled must remain titled, regardless of intended use.
- The owner of a snowmobile used exclusively for agricultural purposes may obtain a certificate of title. A person who owns a snowmobile that is not required to have a certificate of title may apply for and receive a certificate of title for the snowmobile which makes the snowmobile subject to the registration requirements of Iowa Code Chapter 321G.
- The owner of a snowmobile is required to apply to the County Recorder in their county of residence for issuance of a certificate of title within 30 days after acquisition.
- The applicant must provide the date of sale, the gross price of the snowmobile or the fair-market value of the snowmobile if no sale immediately preceded the transfer, and any additional information the County Recorder or Department requires.
- If the snowmobile was last previously registered or titled in another state or foreign country, the applicant must provide this information and any other information the County Recorder or Department requires.

- If a dealer is transferring ownership of a snowmobile, the dealer will assign the title to the new owner. In the case of a new snowmobile, the dealer will assign the certificate of origin. Within 15 days of purchase, the dealer must forward all moneys and applications to the County Recorder.
- Once titled, a person must not sell or transfer ownership of a snowmobile without delivering to the purchaser or transferee a certificate of title with an assignment on it showing the title in the purchaser's or transferee's name. A person shall not purchase or otherwise acquire a snowmobile without obtaining a certificate of title for the snowmobile in the purchaser's name.

RVVRS

The Recreational Vehicle and Vessel Registration System (RVVRS) has been implemented by the Department. This web-based system provides added customer convenience by combining registration, title, and lien information for all 99 counties into one system. Additionally, it creates a streamlined renewal process for customers.

All newly owned machines or machines which have not been renewed in RVVRS must be registered through the County Recorder's Office in the owner's county of residence. Renewals for 2015 can be done at any County Recorder's Office; you only need to provide the IA number assigned to your snowmobile through RVVRS.

If your vehicle record has not been entered into RVVRS, please bring the following information with you when you go to renew your registration:

- The most current registration form for your snowmobile.
- Make, model, and model year of your snowmobile.
- VIN.
- Color of snowmobile.
- Weight and engine displacement (CCs).

IDNR User Permits

IDNR user permits will be sold at any general agent ELSI vendor (hunt and fish licenses) and County Recorder Offices. The IDNR User Permit will be printed on license/tag paper. It will not be issued to a machine, but rather to the user. The IDNR User Permit must be displayed on the snowmobile as noted under Laws and Regulations and is not transferable. Printing the IDNR User Permits on the license/tag paper will make them distinct from the registration decals.

Requirements

	Registrations	IDNR User Permits
Renewal Requirement	Must be renewed each year	Must be renewed each year
Renewal Period	Starting September 1 each year	Starting September 1 each year
Expiration	December 31 of the year printed on the registration	December 31 of the year printed on the permit
Late Fee	$5.00, no grace period	Not applicable
Display	Carried either in the machine or on the operator; decal must be affixed to the snowmobile	Permit must be affixed to the snowmobile

Registration Decal

IDNR User Permit

Services Available at County Recorder's Office

Service	Fee
New Registration	$17.75
Registration Renewal	$17.75
IDNR User Permit	$17.75
Duplicate Registrations	$7.75
Duplicate Registration Decals	$7.75
Titles	$11.50
Liens	$11.50

Services Available at ELSI Hunt & Fish Vendors

Service	Fee
IDNR User Permit	$17.50

Unlawful Operation

A person shall not drive or operate a snowmobile:

- At a rate of speed greater than reasonable or proper under all existing circumstances.

- In a careless, reckless, or negligent manner so as to endanger the person or property of another or to cause injury or damage thereto.

- While under the influence of intoxicating liquor or narcotics or habit-forming drugs.

- Without a lighted headlight and taillight from sunset to sunrise and at such other times when conditions provide insufficient lighting to render clearly discernible persons and vehicles at a distance of five hundred feet ahead.

- In any tree nursery or planting in a manner which damages or destroys growing stock.

- On any public land, public ice, or designated snowmobile trail in violation of official signs of the Natural Resource Commission prohibiting such operation in the interest of safety for persons, property, or the environment. Any officer appointed by the Natural Resource Commission may post an official sign in an emergency for the protection of persons, property, or the environment.

- In any park, wildlife area, preserve, refuge, game management area, or any portion of a meandered stream, or any portion of the bed of a nonmeandered stream which has been identified as a navigable stream or river by rule adopted by the Department and which is covered by water, except on designated snowmobile trails. This requirement does not prohibit the use of ford crossings of public roads or any other ford crossing when used for agricultural purposes; the operation of construction vehicles engaged in lawful construction, repair, or maintenance in a streambed; or the operation of a snowmobile on ice.

- Upon an operating railroad right-of-way. A snowmobile may be driven directly across a railroad right-of-way only at an established crossing and, notwithstanding any other provisions of law, may, if necessary, use the improved portion of the established crossing after yielding to all oncoming traffic. This requirement does not apply to a law enforcement officer or railroad employee in the lawful discharge of the officer's or employee's duties or to an employee of

a utility with authority to enter upon the railroad right-of-way in the lawful performance of the employee's duties.

- Upon public land without a measurable snow cover.
- Upon the surface of any public water in a maneuver known as water skipping.

Negligence

The owner and operator of a snowmobile are liable for any injury or damage occasioned by the negligent operation of the snowmobile. The owner of a snowmobile shall be liable for any such injury or damage only if the owner was the operator of the snowmobile at the time the injury or damage occurred or if the operator had the owner's consent to operate the snowmobile at the time the injury or damage occurred.

Officer's Signal to Stop

A person who has received a visual or audible signal from a peace officer to come to a stop shall not operate a snowmobile in willful or wanton disregard of the signal, interfere with or endanger the officer or any other person or vehicle, increase speed, or attempt to flee or elude the officer.

Inspections – Warnings – Termination of Use

A peace officer may stop and inspect a snowmobile operated, parked, or stored on public streets, highways, public lands, public ice, or designated snowmobile trails of the state to determine if the snowmobile is registered, numbered, or equipped as required by the Code of Iowa and the Iowa Administrative Code. The officer shall not inspect an area that is not essential to determine compliance with the requirements. If the officer determines that the snowmobile is not in compliance, the officer may issue a warning memorandum to the operator and forward a copy to the Department. The warning memorandum shall indicate the items found which are not in compliance and shall direct the owner or operator of the snowmobile to correct these items and return a copy of the warning memorandum with the proof of compliance to the Department within 14 days. If the proof of compliance is not provided within 14 days, the owner or operator is in violation of Iowa Code Chapter 321G.

A person who receives a warning memorandum for a snowmobile shall stop using the snowmobile as soon as possible and shall not operate it on public streets, highways, public lands, public ice, or

designated snowmobile trails of the state until the snowmobile is in compliance.

Operation on Roadways and Highways

- A person shall not operate a snowmobile upon roadways or highways except as provided in Iowa Code Chapter 321G.
- A snowmobile shall not be operated at any time within the right-of-way of any interstate highway or freeway within the state except when using an underpass located on an interstate highway or freeway if all of the following apply:
  - The underpass has been abandoned and is no longer being used by motor vehicles or trains.
  - Use of the underpass is the only alternative to the use of a traveled roadway.
  - Notwithstanding the provisions of Iowa Code Chapter 321, use of the underpass does not conflict with any rules or regulations adopted by a federal governmental entity or this state or a political subdivision of this state.
- A snowmobile may make a direct crossing of a street or highway provided all of the following occur:
  - The crossing is made at an angle of approximately 90 degrees to the direction of the highway and at a place where no obstruction prevents a quick and safe crossing.
  - The snowmobile is brought to a complete stop before crossing the shoulder or main traveled way of the highway.
  - The driver yields the right-of-way to all oncoming traffic which constitutes an immediate hazard.
  - In crossing a divided highway, the crossing is made only at an intersection of such highway with another public street or highway.
- A snowmobile shall not be operated on public highways under any of the following conditions:
  - On the roadway portion of a highway and adjacent shoulder, or at least 5 feet on either side of the roadway, unless:
    - Upon city highways which have not been plowed during the snow season or on such highways as designated by the governing body of a municipality.

- On that portion of county roadways that have not been plowed during the snow season or not maintained or utilized for the operation of conventional two-wheel drive motor vehicles.
- On highways in an emergency during the period of time when and at locations where snow upon the roadway renders travel by conventional motor vehicles impractical.
- On the roadways of that portion of county highways designated by the county board of supervisors for such use during a specified period.
- On the roadway or shoulder when necessary to cross a bridge or culvert, or avoid an obstruction which makes it impossible to travel on the portion of the highway not intended for motor vehicles, if the snowmobile is brought to a complete stop before entering onto the roadway or shoulder and the driver yields the right-of-way to any approaching vehicle on the roadway.

- On limited-access highways and approaches.
- For racing any moving object.
- Abreast with one or more other snowmobiles on a city highway.

Use on Off-highway Vehicle Trails

Snowmobiles are not allowed to be operated on off-highway vehicle trails except where designated by the controlling authority and the primary off-highway vehicle trail sponsor.

Equipment Requirements

• Mufflers. The exhaust of every internal combustion engine used in any snowmobile shall be muffled by equipment constructed and used to muffle all snowmobile noise in a reasonable manner. A snowmobile manufactured after July 1, 1975, shall have a muffler system that limits engine noise to not more than 78 decibels as measured on the “A” scale at a distance of 50 feet. This noise restriction does not apply to a snowmobile participating in an authorized special event.

• Headlight and taillight. Every snowmobile must be equipped with at least one headlight and one taillight. Use is required from sunset to sunrise and at such other times when conditions provide insufficient lighting to render clearly discernible persons and vehicles at a distance of 500 feet ahead. The headlight and taillight must

be lighted during operation on a public highway at any time from sunset to sunrise, and at such other times when conditions such as fog, snow, sleet, or rain provide insufficient lighting to render clearly discernible persons and vehicles at a distance of 500 feet ahead.

- Brakes. Every machine shall be equipped with working brakes.

Vehicle Identification Number (VIN)

- Every snowmobile shall have a vehicle identification number assigned and affixed as required by the Department.

- The Department may assign a VIN to a snowmobile when the serial number on the machine is destroyed or obliterated or the snowmobile is homebuilt or rebuilt. If a snowmobile has a VIN which is not legible, the owner must submit to the Department an affidavit which describes the machine. In cooperation with the County Recorder, the Department shall assign a VIN to the snowmobile.

- The Department will issue the owner a decal bearing the new VIN which shall be affixed to the frame under the seat of the snowmobile by a Conservation Officer.

- The snowmobile shall be registered and titled using the new VIN and not the former serial number.

Age-related Operation Guidelines

When operating on designated snowmobile trails, public land, and public ice, the following guidelines apply:

- Minors under 16 years of age may operate their own snowmobile under the direct supervision of an adult.

- Operators under 12 years of age are not required to have an education certificate.

- Operators 12 through 17 years of age must have completed an education course and possess a valid snowmobile education certificate.

- Juveniles who have had their privileges to operate a motor vehicle suspended or revoked under the motor vehicle laws of Iowa can also be prohibited from operating snowmobiles. See Iowa Code § 321.213 and 321.213A.

- Eighteen and older – if a person's privilege to operate a motor vehicle has been revoked or barred, then it is illegal for this person to operate a snowmobile. If a person's privilege to operate a motor vehicle is suspended, then it is illegal for this person to operate on a highway. This person may operate a snowmobile on a designated snowmobile trail which is not on a highway and also on public ice.

Firearms on Snowmobiles

A person shall not operate or ride a snowmobile with a firearm in the person's possession unless it is unloaded and enclosed in a carrying case. However, a nonambulatory person may carry an uncased and unloaded firearm while operating or riding a snowmobile. See [571 IAC 98.2(2)] Turkey and [571 IAC 106.7(6)] Deer.

Hunting and Snowmobiles

The following regulations apply when using a snowmobile for hunting purposes:

- It is illegal to chase or use a snowmobile to assist in the taking of any game animal.
- It is illegal to operate a snowmobile on Department wildlife management areas.
- Physically handicapped persons may apply for a permit to operate a motorized vehicle on Department lands. Issuance of the permit is required prior to accessing the land by a motorized device.
- You must obtain permission from a landowner to operate a snowmobile on private land.
- Guns being transported must be unloaded and enclosed in a case at all times.

Accidents

Whenever a snowmobile is involved in an accident resulting in injury or death to any person or property damage amounting to $1,500 or more, the operator of the snowmobile or a person acting for the operator shall immediately notify the county sheriff or another law enforcement agency in the state.

If the accident occurred on public land, public ice, or a designated snowmobile trail under the jurisdiction of the Natural Resource Commission, the operator shall file a report of the accident with the Department within 72 hours. A copy of the Operator Incident Report

Form can be obtained from a Conservation Officer, calling IDNR at 515-281-5918, or going to http://www.iowadnr.gov/Recreation/Snowmobiles/OperatorIncidentReport.aspx

Proof of Insurance

Iowa Code § 321.20B provides that a person shall not drive a motor vehicle on the highways of this state unless financial liability coverage, as defined in Iowa Code § 321.1(24B), is in effect for the motor vehicle and unless the driver has in the motor vehicle the proof of financial liability coverage card issued for the motor vehicle. The exception for snowmobiles was rescinded effective July 1, 2012. Please see Iowa Code § 321.20B for more details.

Special Events

The Department may authorize the holding of organized special events as defined in Iowa Code Chapter 321G within this state. The Department shall issue permits which address the conduct of special events and designating the equipment and facilities necessary for safe operation of snowmobiles and for the safety of operators, participants, and observers in the special events. At least 30 days before the scheduled date of a special event in this state, an application shall be filed with the Department for authorization to conduct the special event. The application shall set forth the date, time, and location of the proposed special event and any other information the Department requires. The special event shall not be conducted without written authorization of the Department. For more information about special events, go to www.iowadnr.gov.

Education

Snowmobile riders in the state of Iowa who are ages 12 through 17 are required to have taken and passed a snowmobile education course and have an education certificate in their possession when operating a snowmobile. Additional restrictions apply. *See Age-related Operation Guidelines under Laws and Regulations.*

There are two ways that residents can earn an education certificate:

- Take the IDNR Snowmobile Education Course
- Take the IDNR-approved online Course
  http://www.snowmobilecourse.com/usa/iowa

IDNR Snowmobile Education Course

The focus of the IDNR Snowmobile Education Program is to provide an education course that reduces the rate of accidents, injuries, property damage, and fatalities, while at the same time promoting the development of environmental stewards by educating our students about environmental concerns, energy conservation and proper maintenance of snowmobiles, and promoting the practice of only riding in legal areas and with landowner permission.

This is an instructor-led course and is approximately 6 hours in length. It is designed to be completed in one day, usually on a weekend. It is a program designed to teach snowmobile riders the principles and behaviors of safe and responsible snowmobile riding. Students are taught about risk awareness and risk mitigation, trail etiquette, and principles of being a good environmental steward. When possible, some instructors include a riding portion of the course to reinforce skills taught in class.

Classes are taught by IDNR-certified volunteer snowmobile education instructors. The cost of the class is $10.00. **Students will receive a temporary education certificate at the end of the course which will allow them to legally ride in Iowa for 60 days or until their permanent card is received.**

Education certificates will only be issued to students who are 12 or older and pass the course. Students who are 11 may take the course and earn a certificate, but it will not be effective until he or she turns 12.

Classes are offered during snow season.

SnowmobileCourse.com

The IDNR has collaborated with Fresh Air Educators to make an online certification offering available for the IDNR Snowmobile Education Program. The curriculum underwent a thorough review with industry leaders as well as representatives from numerous state agencies responsible for snowmobile safety education. State-specific information regarding riding opportunities, laws, and regulations is a component of the course.

This is a managed course which features interactive exercises for students as well as narrated content to assist with different learning styles. The course fee is $34.95, which includes the $5 IDNR education certificate fee. Students must pass a final exam with 80% accuracy to earn their certificate. There is no riding component for this course.

Topics covered by the course include, but are not limited to, parts of the machine and how they work, riding positions and when to use them, safety gear, personal responsibility, and conservation principles.

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to print a temporary, paper certificate which will allow them to legally ride in Iowa for 60 days or until their permanent card is received. Students must be 12 or older to earn their snowmobile education certificate through SnowmobileCourse.com.

An education certificate issued by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources is recognized by most states. Please call ahead to your destination state to check their requirements.

Risk Awareness and Mitigation

- Know your riding skills and capabilities. Do not try to ride beyond your skill level.
- Do not ride machines that are too large or too powerful for you or that you cannot control.
- Your snowmobile is a powerful machine, but with proper supervision, training, experience, and using good judgment, riding a snowmobile can be a safe and enjoyable recreational experience.
- Know how to operate your snowmobile in a variety of weather, trail, and operating conditions.

- Recognize hazardous riding conditions and make good decisions based upon this information.
- Know how to dress safely to snowmobile. Always wear a DOT-approved helmet, layer clothing, and wear durable and waterproof outer shell, gloves, and footwear.
- Recognize and ignore negative peer pressure. Stay safe.
- Reducing risk is a choice. Practice safe decision making.
- Know how to read maps and use a compass or GPS unit.
- NEVER use drugs or alcohol while riding.
- Always stay on marked and defined trails.
- Know the laws and regulations governing snowmobiling where you ride and where you travel to ride.
- Do not ride in areas without landowner permission.
- Adult supervision is needed for young riders.
- Never ride alone.
- The safest snowmobiling rule is to never cross lakes or rivers since it can never be guaranteed that ice of any thickness will support a snowmobile. Ice is always dangerous. Do not venture out onto lakes or rivers unless you are absolutely certain that it is safe.
- Besides the danger of plunging through the ice, you have far less traction for starting, turning, and stopping on ice than on snow. Always use extreme caution when riding on ice. Always travel at low speeds. The machine is hard to control on ice, so fast stops are impossible and spins are far too common. To stop, let up on the throttle slowly allowing the machine to coast to a stop. Controlling your machine is best when seated.

Education/Safety/Stewardship

Tread Lightly!

By practicing the Tread Lightly! principles you not only protect the outdoors, you also protect access to recreation opportunities for years to come.

Travel Responsibly on trails or in permitted areas. Avoid trails with inadequate snow cover. Be aware of unmarked hazards or obstacles hidden beneath the snow. Respect closed gates and regulatory signs. Stay out of designated wilderness areas. Avoid potential avalanche areas.

Respect the rights of others, including private property owners, to allow them to enjoy their recreational activities undisturbed.

Educate yourself by obtaining maps and regulations from public agencies, planning for your trip, taking recreational skills classes, and knowing how to use and operate your equipment safely. Wear proper safety gear, layer clothing, and wear a durable and waterproof outer shell and footwear.

Avoid sensitive areas such as meadows, wetlands, and streams, unless on designated routes. This protects wildlife habitat and sensitive soils from damage. Be respectful of wildlife's wintering habitats.

Do your part by leaving the area better than you found it. Dispose of waste properly — pack out what you pack in. Stay off soft, wet trails that are easily damaged by vehicles. Minimize harmful emissions by keeping your engine tuned up. Don't' mix riding with alcohol and drugs.

Tread Lightly! is a nonprofit organization with a mission to promote responsible outdoor recreation through ethics education and stewardship.
For more information, please visit www.treadlightly.org.

Trail Ettiquette

- Respect all trail restrictions and use only trails open to snowmobile use.
- Be considerate of other riders on the trail.
- Ride on the right side of the trail.
- Slow down when passing.
- Slow down when sight lines are poor.
- Keep speeds low around other riders.
- Keep noise down.
- Keep your ears open – no ear buds for an IPod or MP3 player.
- Listening to headphones or ear buds can make it difficult to hear and communicate with other riders and recreationists.
- Yield the right-of-way to those passing you from behind or traveling uphill.
- Report all illegal riding.
- Carry out what you carry in.
- Never harass or chase wildlife with your snowmobile.

Conservation Officer List

County	Officer	Phone
Adair	Eric Sansgaard	712-250-0303
Adams	Andrea Bevington	712-520-0508
Allamakee	Bill Collins	563-380-0801
Appanoose	Jacob Fulk	641-777-2164
	Dallas Davis	641-777-2163
Audubon	Jeremy King	712-250-0061
Benton	Ron Lane	319-350-2871
	Brett Reece	641-751-0931
Black Hawk	Mike Bonser	319-240-5034
	Scott Kinseth	563-920-0566
Boone	Matt Bruner	515-290-0527
	Brandon Bergquist	515-290-0177
Bremer	Mike Bonser	319-240-5034
	Chris Jones	319-939-4448
Buchanan	Scott Kinseth	563-920-0566
Buena Vista	Brent Koppie	712-260-1010
Butler	Vacant	319-240-8033
Calhoun	Nathan Haupert	712-330-8462
Carroll	Dan Pauley	515-370-0422
Cass	Eric Sansgaard	712-250-0303
Cedar	Eric Wright	319-530-6121
Cerro Gordo	Matt Washburn	641-425-0822
	Ben Bergman	641-425-0828
Cherokee	Brent Koppie	712-260-1010
	Chad Morrow	712-260-1023
Chickasaw	Vacant	319-240-6662
Clarke	Michael Miller	641-414-2174
Clay	Chris Subbert	712-260-1004
Clayton	Burt Walters	563-880-0108
	Jerry Farmer	563-880-0422
Clinton	Lucas Webinger	563-357-1078
Crawford	Gary Sisco	712-420-1486
Dallas	Craig Lonneman	515-238-5005
	John Steinbach	515-238-5006
Davis	Bob Stuchel	641-777-2169
	Matt Rush	641-777-7805
Decatur	Michael Miller	641-414-2174
Delaware	Jared Landt	563-920-5764
Des Moines	Paul Kay	319-759-0751
Dickinson	Jeff Morrison	712-260-1017
	Steve Reighard	712-260-1018
Dubuque	Andrew Keil	563-590-1945

Conservation Officer List

County	Officer	Phone
Dubuque	Nate Johnson	563-590-1944
Emmet	Gary Koppie	712-260-1009
Fayette	Chris Jones	319-939-4448
Floyd	Eric Johnston	319-240-9174
Franklin	Vacant	319-240-8033
Fremont	Brian Smith	712-520-0121
Greene	Dan Pauley	515-370-0422
Grundy	Vacant	641-751-5246
Guthrie	Jeremy King	712-250-0061
Hamilton	Vacant	515-571-7060
Hancock	Ken Lonneman	641-425-0823
Hardin	Vacant	515-571-7060
Harrison	Dave Tierney	712-249-2015
Henry	Dan Henderson	319-653-1636
Howard	Vacant	319-240-6662
Humboldt	Dakota Drish	515-571-0127
Ida	Dan Mork	712-661-9237
Iowa	Brad Baker	319-430-1630
Jackson	Mike Macke	319-480-0397
	Andrew Keil	563-590-1945
Jasper	Kirby Bragg	641-521-2003
Jefferson	Chris Flynn	641-919-9115
	Dan Henderson	319-653-1636
Johnson	Erika Billerbeck	319-330-9710
	Brad Baker	319-430-1630
Jones	Jared Landt	563-920-5764
	Mike Macke	319-480-0397
Keokuk	Wesley Gould	641-660-3441
Kossuth	Virginia Schulte	712-260-1003
Lee	Ben Schlader	319-470-0788
Linn	Aric Sloterdyk	319-350-2863
	Ron Lane	319-350-2871
Louisa	Lucas Dever	563-260-1225
Lucas	Kyle Jensen	641-414-2175
Lyon	Greg Harson	712-260-1006
Madison	Craig Lonneman	515-238-5005
Mahaska	Mike Ryan	641-660-0741
Marion	Eric Hoffman	641-891-2004
	Ken Kenyon	641-891-1246
Marshall	Vacant	641-751-5246
Mills	Brian Smith	712-520-0121
Mitchell	Eric Johnston	319-240-9174

Conservation Officer List

County	Officer	Phone
Monona	Gary Sisco	712-420-1486
Monroe	Jacob Fulk	641-777-2164
	Dallas Davis	641-777-2163
Montgomery	Deb Howe	712-520-0507
Muscatine	Joe Fourdyce	563-260-1223
O'Brien	John Sells	712-260-1019
	Chris Subbert	712-260-1004
Osceola	Greg Harson	712-260-1006
Page	Deb Howe	712-520-0507
Palo Alto	Gary Koppie	712-260-1009
Plymouth	Chad Marrow	712-260-1023
Pocahontas	Nathan Haupert	712-330-8462
Polk	John Steinbach	515-238-5006
	Nate Anderson	515-238-4849
Pottawattamie	Richard Price	712-520-5570
Poweshiek	Mike Ryan	641-660-0741
Ringgold	Corey Carlton	641-414-2173
Sac	Dan Mork	712-661-9237
Scott	Ed Kocal	563-349-8953
	Jeff Harrison	563-349-9418
Shelby	Dave Tierney	712-249-2015
Sioux	John Sells	712-260-1019
Story	Brandon Bergquist	515-290-0177
	Matt Bruner	515-290-0527
Tama	Brett Reece	641-751-0931
Taylor	Andrea Bevington	712-520-0508
Union	Corey Carlton	641-414-2173
Van Buren	Chris Flynn	641-919-9115
Wapello	Bob Stuchel	641-777-2169
	Matt Rush	641-777-7805
Warren	Nate Anderson	515-238-4849
	Craig Cutts	515-238-4847
Washington	Wesley Gould	641-660-3441
Wayne	Kyle Jensen	641-414-2175
Webster	Dakota Drish	515-571-0127
Winnebago	Vacant	641-425-0821
Winneshiek	Brian Roffman	563-380-0496
Woodbury	Steven Griebel	712-301-4009
	Stacey Beightol	712-301-6735
Worth	Vacant	641-425-0821
Wright	Ken Lonneman	641-425-0823

Trail Signs

Trail Marker - identifies trails or areas where snowmobiles are allowed.

Restricted Area Sign - identifies trails or areas where snowmobiles are not allowed.

Stay on Trail Sign - reminds riders of the importance of staying on the designated trail.

Trail Blazer/Directional Blazer - informs riders that they are on a trail. Arrow indicates changes in direction ahead.

Chevron/Turn Ahead - additional guidance to the rider in a sharp turn.

Intersection ahead - warns riders that they are approaching an intersection.

Bridge ahead - warn riders that there is a bridge ahead.

Directional Arrow - indicates trail direction.

Stop Sign - instructs riders to bring their machine to a complete stop before proceeding with caution.

Easy Moderate Difficult

Trail Difficulty Signs

Websites

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
www.iowadnr.gov
515-281-5918

Education Course Listings
http://www.iowadnr.gov/Recreation/Snowmobiles/SnowmobileEducation.aspx

Online Education Course Offering
www.snowmobilecourse.com

General Snowmobile Information
www.iowadnr.gov/recreation