

### **SNOWMOBILE TRAILS**

Hundreds of miles of trails and roads on state forest and state park lands and the Allegheny National Forest have been designated for snowmobile use. Additional snowmobile trail information including maps and winter trail conditions are available from the Bureau of Forestry website at [www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry) and from the Allegheny National Forest's website at [www.fs.fed.us/r9/forests/allegheny](http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/forests/allegheny).

### **PRIVATE PROPERTY**

Snowmobiles may not be operated on private property without the consent of the owner. Use of snowmobiles on private property may be further restricted by municipal ordinance.

### **HELMETS**

It is illegal to operate or ride a snowmobile without a securely fastened DOT approved helmet on the head of the operator.

### **OPERATION OF SNOWMOBILES BY YOUTH**

No one under 10 years of age shall operate a snowmobile on any public land.

No person age 10 to their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday shall operate a snowmobile except on lands of his parent or guardian, unless he or she has completed a prescribed safety education course and received a snowmobile safety training certificate.

### **SNOWMOBILE SAFETY COURSE**

Safety training classes are given by trained volunteer instructors certified by DCNR. All youth ages 10-15 who complete the course will receive a safety course certificate and a graduate patch issued by DCNR. For information on a safety instructor near you contact DCNR's Bureau of Forestry at (717) 783-7941 or the PA State Snowmobile Association at 1-888-411-PSSA.

### **ACCIDENT REPORTS**

The operator of a snowmobile involved in an accident must stop and give his or her name and address, the name and address of the owner of the snowmobile and its registration number to the other person(s) involved in the accident or to a police officer.

If the accident results in the injury or death of any person or property damages to the estimated amount of \$100 or more, the operator must report the matter in writing within seven days to the DCNR, Bureau of Forestry, P.O. Box 8552, Harrisburg, PA 17105. It is a violation of the Snowmobile/ATV Law to not report the accident to the DCNR.

Accident forms are available upon request from the Snowmobile/ATV Registration Section, Bureau of Forestry, and State Parks offices and state police stations.

### **LIABILITY INSURANCE**

Liability insurance coverage is required for all snowmobiles that are required to have general registration. Proof of this coverage should be carried by the operator. The law does not specify a minimum dollar amount for this coverage. If you have questions about insurance coverage for snowmobiles contact the PA Department of Insurance Consumer Hotline at 1-877-881-6388.

### **SNOWMOBILE & ATV FUND**

All registration fees are deposited in a special Snowmobile/ATV Fund. DCNR uses monies from this fund to carry out the Snowmobile/ATV registration, safety education and law enforcement requirements of the Snowmobile/ATV Law, to develop and maintain trails on public land and to encourage trail development on private land through grants.

### **ENFORCEMENT**

All law enforcement officers in the state, including local and state police, are authorized to enforce the Snowmobile/ATV Law. Municipal and state police have enforcement authority on private land.

### **FINES**

Failure to register your snowmobile or obtain liability insurance may result in a fine of \$300.

A violation of other provisions of the Snowmobile/ATV Law is punishable by a fine of \$50 to \$200 plus the cost of prosecution for a first offense, and a fine of \$100 to \$300 plus the cost of prosecution for a second offense.

### **NON-RESIDENT REGISTRATION**

To legally operate a snowmobile in Pennsylvania that is registered in another state where Pennsylvania's registration is NOT honored, the snowmobile must also be registered in Pennsylvania. The owner will receive two registration decals, two expiration stickers and a registration card. Pennsylvania's registration number decals need not be displayed if the home state registration number and validation decals are properly visible, but the Pennsylvania expiration stickers must be displayed on both sides of the cowling next to the home state registration and the registration card must be carried by the operator. Proof of liability insurance is also required.

### **EQUIPMENT**

All snowmobiles operating in Pennsylvania must be equipped with a brake system capable of bringing the snowmobile to a stop, under normal conditions, within 40 feet when traveling at 20 miles per hour; and a muffler in good working order. The sound intensity produced by a snowmobile may not exceed 78dbA, or decibels.

All snowmobiles operated during hours of darkness or when visibility is less than 500 feet must have a lighted headlight and taillight. The headlight must produce a white light sufficient to reveal persons and vehicles at a distance of 100 feet. The taillight must produce a red light plainly visible during darkness from a distance of 500 feet.

### **FOR REGISTRATION INFORMATION:**

DCNR-Snowmobile/ATV Registration Section  
P.O. Box 8553  
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8553

Location:  
1101 South Front Street Harrisburg, PA 17104  
Telephone (717) 783-9227  
Tollfree (866) 545-2476

### **FOR INFORMATION ON SNOWMOBILE ACTIVITIES:**

Pennsylvania State Snowmobile Association (PSSA)  
Telephone (888) 411-7772

Website: [www.pasnow.org](http://www.pasnow.org)

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## *Summary of*

# **PENNSYLVANIA'S SNOWMOBILE LAW**



**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA**

**DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND  
NATURAL RESOURCES**



**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION  
AND NATURAL RESOURCES

# SUMMARY OF PENNSYLVANIA'S SNOWMOBILE LAW

## INTRODUCTION

Pennsylvania's many miles of snowmobile trails provide opportunities to enjoy the beautiful forests in their winter splendor.

This pamphlet summarizes the snowmobile requirements of state law and regulations. The state law is known as the Snowmobile and All-Terrain Vehicle Law and is contained in Chapter 77 of the PA Vehicle Code. The state regulations are in Title 17 Pa. Code Chapter 51. This pamphlet is not intended to be a substitute for the actual law and regulations.

In addition to state law and regulations, Snowmobile riding on municipal and private property may be further regulated by municipal ordinance.

## REGISTRATION

Pennsylvania residents owning and intending to use their snowmobile in Pennsylvania must be registered with the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), Snowmobile/ATV Registration Section.

### GENERAL REGISTRATION

This registration permits the sled to be operated off the owner's or operator's private property. The registration fee is \$20 for two years. The owner is provided with two black and white registration decals, two expiration stickers and a certificate of registration wallet card.

### LIMITED REGISTRATION

This registration is for sleds used exclusively on the property of the owner. There is no fee and the registration does not expire. The owner is provided with two registration decals and a card, but no expiration stickers.

## VINTAGE SNOWMOBILE PERMIT

Every permit shall, at all times while the vehicle is being operated, be in the possession of the person driving or in control of the vehicle or carried in the vehicle and shall be exhibited on demand of a police officer or authorized department employee.

### Definitions:

**Snowmobile:** An engine-driven vehicle which is designed to travel over snow or ice; has an endless belt track or tracks; is steered by a ski or skis; and has an overall width of 48 inches or less.

**Vintage snowmobile:** A snowmobile that is at least 25 years old and is not operated in this Commonwealth except at vintage snowmobile events.

**Vintage snowmobile event:** An organized ride or rally for owners and operators of vintage snowmobiles, for which a permit has been issued under section 7718(a) (relating to vintage snowmobile permits) and carried and exhibited in compliance with section 7718(b) and which meets all of the following conditions:

- (1) It is open to the public and publicized as such.
- (2) It takes place on a specified date or dates and within a specified start and end time.
- (3) It takes place on a designated trail with a specified beginning and end point.

Applications for registration of snowmobiles are available from DCNR's Snowmobile/ATV Registration Section. The snowmobile registration application form must be completed and sent to the DCNR, Snowmobile/ATV Registration Section, P.O. Box 8553, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8553, 1101 South Front Street Harrisburg, PA 17104 along with the required fee and sales tax statement. Registration applications are also available from: snowmobile dealers, or on the web at [www.dcnr.state.pa.us/snowmobile](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/snowmobile).

Exempt from these registration requirements are snowmobiles owned by non-residents covered by a valid registrations in their state, province or country that honors Pennsylvania's registration.

Temporary registrations are available from registered snowmobile dealers.

## TITLES

All snowmobiles in Pennsylvania must have a title issued by DCNR. The cost of a title is \$22.50. The only exceptions to this requirement are those snowmobiles registered with the Department prior to October 23, 2001. These snowmobiles do not require a title until they are transferred to a new owner.

## REGISTRATION NUMBERS

The five-digit registration number containing a combination of numbers and letters is printed on an adhesive backed decal, which measures three inches in height and four inches in width. These permanent registration decals are to be attached to each side of the snowmobile's cowling forward of the handlebars, or on the outside of each trailing edge of the windshield. These decals remain with the snowmobile if it is sold or transferred to a different owner.

Hand-painted registration numbers are not permitted in place of the Department-issued decals.

General Registration requires a valid expiration sticker to be attached to the RIGHT of both permanent registration decals.



## SALE - THEFT - DESTRUCTION - CHANGE OF ADDRESS

The snowmobile owner shall notify DCNR's Snowmobile/ATV Registration Section in writing of any change of address within 15 days.

Upon transfer, destruction or theft of a snowmobile, the reverse side of the certificate of registration must be properly filled out in the spaces provided, signed by the owner and returned to DCNR's Snowmobile/ATV Registration Section.

## OPERATION

Snowmobiles may be operated:

1. on state-owned property on clearly marked and previously designated snowmobile trails and posted snowmobile roads;
- \*2. on highways and streets when necessary to cross a bridge or culvert;
- \*3. on highways and streets during periods of emergency when so declared by a governmental agency having jurisdiction;
- \*4. on highways and streets for special snowmobile events of limited duration, which are conducted according to a pre-arranged schedule under permit from the government unit having jurisdiction;

## \*MUST BE 16 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER.

A snowmobile may make a direct crossing of a street or two-lane highway provided:

- 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 highway;

- The driver yields the right-of-way to all oncoming traffic which constitutes an immediate hazard.
- Driver must be at least 16 years of age unless operator has a safety certificate and is under the direct supervision of a person at least 18 years of age.

In crossing a divided highway, the crossing is made only at an intersection of such highway with another public street or highway.

It is illegal to operate a snowmobile:

- at a rate of speed that is unreasonable or improper under existing conditions or in excess of the maximum limits posted for vehicular traffic;
- in a careless way so as to endanger the person or property of another.
- while under the influence of alcohol, narcotics or drugs.

## DESIGNATED ROADS

State and local highways and roads may be designated and posted for snowmobiles by the government authority with jurisdiction over the road. Township roads designated for snowmobiles are posted with a green sign containing the side view silhouette of a snowmobile and rider in white.

Some roads may be designated and posted as **joint-use** roads open to both snowmobiles and licensed motor vehicles. Joint-use roads are posted with signs stating that both types of vehicles may use the road. Snowmobile operators on joint-use roads must be at least 16 years of age.

Municipal ordinances may further regulate the use of snowmobiles on roads within their jurisdiction.



Municipal Roads

## STATE FOREST AND STATE PARK ROADS

State forest and state park roads that are designated as joint-use roads are posted with a CAUTION sign like the sample shown below. Persons from age 10 through 15 may ride on these designated state forest and state park roads only if they hold a valid safety-training certificate issued or approved by DCNR and are under the direct supervision of a person 18 years of age or older.



State Forest Roads