



ENVIRONMENTAL, SAFETY, AND RECYCLING OFFICE

UTILITY VEHICLE SAFETY

TO INCREASE SAFE OPERATOR PRACTICES

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UTILITY VEHICLE SAFETY

A) **OVERVIEW**

Departments at the University (OIT, Athletics, Mailroom, and Facilities Management) provide golf carts and other non-traditional vehicles to employees so they can fulfill their job related duties. These utility vehicles are primarily used from spring through fall as a means of saving gas and providing efficiency. This policy establishes consistent standards regarding:

Responsibilities
General Safety
Operation
Maintenance
Accident Reporting

The hope is through the communication of consistent standards, these vehicles will be operated with minimal risk to students, visitors, employees and the environment.

B) **DEFINITIONS**

Utility Vehicle: Any unregistered vehicle that is owned, rented or leased by the University and operated on Campus. This includes golf carts. This does not include earth moving equipment subject to the Massachusetts hoisting regulations. It also does not include lawn mowers or tractors.

Department: An individual division of the University that has a very specific function pertaining to the overall University operation.

Operator: A Department authorized user of utility vehicles on Campus. This may include Faculty, Staff or Students.

C) **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Each Department shall be responsible for understanding and implementing this policy.

Each Department shall ensure that ALL utility vehicle operators read this policy. Each Department shall also ensure that operators sign the acknowledgement form found at the end of this policy. The Department shall maintain ALL signed acknowledgement forms.

Each Department shall properly enforce this policy.

Each Operator shall be responsible for the safe operation of the utility vehicle. At a minimum this includes operation of the vehicle according to Sections D and E of this document.

D) **GENERAL SAFETY**

ALL operators must have a valid drivers' license and be at least 18 years of age. It is up to the specific department heads to make sure these criteria are met.

It is recommended that ALL operators complete the DDC4 Defensive Driving Class available through the Department of Public Safety. This criterion is at the discretion of the Department Head.

The speed limit on campus is 15MPH. While it is unlikely utility vehicles will travel up to this speed, drivers should recognize that terrain, weather, visibility and pedestrian traffic will impact vehicle safety. Operators should consider these factors and maintain speeds accordingly.

Utility vehicles must always yield to pedestrians and motor vehicles. Demonstrating care, courtesy and consideration for others is the most important point in safe operator practice.

Utility vehicles should not be operated at night unless equipped with lights.

Keys should never be left in any unattended utility vehicle.

E) UTILITY VEHICLE OPERATION

Utility vehicles must obey all traffic signs or lights on campus.

Utility vehicle drivers and passengers must be sitting in a seat with all body parts within the passenger compartment.

All cargo being transported within a utility vehicle must be fully in the passenger compartment or cargo area.

Utility vehicles should be operated on paved roadways whenever possible. This is especially true of golf carts. If a utility vehicle is taken off a paved roadway it will be operated at low speeds. Lower speeds of operation will allow stopping time in the event of an unforeseen obstacle.

Utility vehicles should avoid sidewalks and pedestrian walkways whenever possible.

Utility vehicles are NOT authorized for use on City of Springfield public roads. This does not include Campus roads, but does include Wilbraham and Bradley Roads.

Utility vehicles should only cross Wilbraham Road (i.e. to access Gateway Village) at the Welcome Center traffic light.

Utility vehicles will stop at all “blind intersections” and then proceed with caution.

Utility vehicles should not be parked in:

- Fire Lanes
- In reserved parking spaces (i.e. handicapped spaces)
- On a walkway that restricts pedestrian travel.
- Areas that block egress in and out of any building.

Utility vehicles will be operated as to not impede or interfere with normal pedestrian or vehicular traffic flow on sidewalks or University roadways.

Utility vehicle operation must consider the weather. Operation of utility vehicles is not authorized in snow or ice conditions. Operation of utility vehicles in rainy conditions must be at reduced speeds as to account for reduced stopping time and or reduced visibility.

Hand signals must be used when operating a utility vehicle. The primary hand signals are outlined below.



Operators must avoid abrupt or rapid directional changes (i.e. cutting corners) as they may lead to utility vehicle rollovers or other accidents.

Operators may not use electronic devices (i.e. cell phones, IPODs, etc...) while operating utility vehicles.

F) MAINTENANCE

Utility vehicles discovered to have safety or maintenance concerns should not be operated. The safety or maintenance concerns should be brought to the attention of the Department Head. The Department head will then communicate repair needs to the Facilities Management Department through the work order system. A loner utility vehicle may be coordinated at that time.

G) ACCIDENT REPORTING

All accidents involving utility vehicles will be reported immediately to the Department Head and the University Public Safety Department. This is regardless of whether property damage or personal injury occurred.

DO NOT:

- LEAVE THE KEYS IN THE IGNITION WHILE THE UTILITY VEHICLE IS UNATTENDED
- ALLOW YOURSELF OR PASSENGERS TO HANG FEET, LEGS OR ARMS OUT OF THE PASSENGER COMPARTMENT
- DRIVE WITH HEADPHONES ON
- CHANGE DIRECTIONS RAPIDLY
- TRANSPORT CARGO WHICH IS NOT FULLY WITHIN THE CARGO AREA
- OPERATE THE UTILITY VEHICLE ON CITY OF SPRINGFIELD ROADS
- TRAVEL AT A RATE OF SPEED UNSAFE FOR THE CONDITIONS PRESENTED (I.E. WEATHER)
- PARK AS TO RESTRICT ENTRY OR EXIT FROM A BUILDING
- DRIVE AGGRESSIVELY AND NOT ALLOW THE RIGHT OF WAY TO PEDESTRIANS AND OR OTHER VEHICLES

STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

I have read the utility vehicle safety policy and will abide by the safety rules discussed within. I understand that failure to follow these rules may result in suspension of driving privileges. I understand that the safe operation of this vehicle is very dependent on me as the operator.

DEPARTMENT:

DRIVER NAME:

SIGNATURE:

DATE: