

Prevent wildfires while operating ATVs and UTVs

All-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and utility-terrain vehicles (UTVs) can be a great resource for work or play for many user groups across North Dakota. However, due to the high fire risk in many locations across the state, they can also be a cause of concern if precautions are not followed while operating.



To protect people and property, NDSU Extension, the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department, and the North Dakota Game and Fish Department are encouraging ATV and UTV owners to practice fire prevention techniques to prevent injuries and fire risks. Photo courtesy of Bobcat Company.

"All it takes is one spark to start a fire, whether that occurs while driving an ATV or UTV in a crop field, riding a fence line with tall, dead grass, or from simply parking the vehicle in an area with tall grass," says Angie Johnson, North Dakota State University Extension farm and ranch safety coordinator. "Focusing on personal safety, such as always wearing a helmet during every ATV ride, and always wearing your seatbelt when driving and riding as a passenger in a UTV is incredibly important, but we must also be diligent in protecting property by practicing fire prevention techniques with our vehicles."

Since ATVs and UTVs are used in agricultural, recreational and hunting settings, all ATV and UTV operators are asked to place personal and fire safety first during every ride - no matter the purpose of your ATV/UTV ride.

"We all play a role in preventing wildfires, especially under current conditions," says Tony Hillig, North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department division chief. "To stay vigilant, we ask all riders to stay on designated trails, respect fire restrictions and keep your vehicle well-maintained to reduce the risk of starting a wildfire."

North Dakota Game and Fish Department communications supervisor, Greg Freeman, agrees that all ATV and UTV operators must work together to protect our resources.

"Always know what the fire danger index and county burn restrictions are in your area before venturing out into the field," says Freeman. "If you see something, report the situation immediately to law enforcement authorities."

To identify the burn restrictions in your area, visit https://ndresponse.gov/burn-restrictions-fire-danger-maps.

Fire prevention recommendations when using ATVs and UTVs:

- Be sure chains and other metal parts are not dragging from your vehicle, as they can they throw sparks.
• Check your tire pressure. Driving on an exposed wheel rim can cause sparks.
• Stay on trails and avoid riding or parking in tall grass. Hot exhaust pipes can start the grass on fire. You may not even notice the fire until it is too late.
• Never let your brake pads wear too thin as metal-on-metal causes sparks.
• Make sure your spark arrester is installed and free of carbon buildup.
• Riders should carry a shovel and a water source or fire extinguisher when operating in high- or extremely-high fire conditions.
Johnston also encourages ATV and UTV owners to keep their vehicles clean to ensure rider safety and fire

prevention.

"Take the time to clean your ATVs and UTVs, as plant seeds, leaves and stems can accumulate in certain areas of the ma-

chine, such as the undercarriage, frame and even the exhaust system, leading to an increased risk of fire," says Johnson.

Review the owner's manual for the machine to determine the best steps for cleaning the machine, being mindful of electrical components that may be sensitive to moisture.

"Heavy use of an ATV or UTV often leads to accumulation of debris, which can mask mechanical problems that could be easily identified on clean vehicles," states Johnson. "Cleaning the vehicle to perform a regular check-up for maintenance and to reduce risk of fire hazards is a good practice. It also helps the operator ensure that the machine is in good condition for a safe riding experience."

While geared toward preventing the spread of crop pests, such as noxious and invasive weed seeds, NDSU Extension's fact sheet on ATV cleanup and sanitation at ndsu.ag/ATV cleaning, contains helpful guidance on cleaning procedures for all ATV and UTV owners, which can also help prevent fires.

Bismarck State College recognizes graduates of Summer 2024

Bismarck State College is pleased to announce the following students who completed the coursework to graduate in Summer 2024.

Summer 2024 graduates were eligible to walk in BSC's 84th commencement ceremony on Friday, May 10, 2024, at the Bismarck Event Center. The 2024 BSC Commencement speaker was BSC Athletics Hall of Fame inductee Deb Hoistad. Originally from Havana, N.D., Hoistad was a Mystics three-sport athlete from 1975 to 1977. The student speaker was Kaia

Lehman from Dickinson, N.D., graduating with an Associate in Applied Science degree in Graphic Design and Communications. The ceremony is available to view on the BSC website.

BSC Summer 2024 area graduates include:

- Mya Reimche-Nelson, Carrington, N.D., graduated with a Certificate in Practical Nursing
• Kaleb Short, McHenry, N.D., graduated with an Associate in Applied Science in Farm and Ranch Management

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ALL SEASONS WATER USERS DISTRICT ANNUAL MEETING

Thursday, Nov. 21, 2024 • 6:30 p.m.
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General meeting with election of directors & other business.
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Public Notice

NOTICE OF ELECTION

Notice is hereby given that the General Election will be held Tuesday, November 5, 2024 at one (1) polling location - Brown Memorial, 625 Central Avenue Suite B, New Rockford, ND. The polling place will open at 8:00 A.M. and will close at 7:00 P.M. Those who have cast their ballot through the mail may not vote in person. Dated at New Rockford, Eddy County, ND this 15th Day of October, 2024. Becki Schumacher, Eddy County Auditor

GENERAL ELECTION BALLOT NOVEMBER 5, 2024
Includes sections for Party Ballot, State Representative District 09, State Representative District 14, Governor and Lt. Governor, State Auditor, State Treasurer, Insurance Commissioner, and State Senator District 09 and 14.

MEASURES BALLOT
Includes sections for Constitutional Measure No. 1, 2, 3, and 4, and Initiated Statutory Measure No. 5. Each section includes a description of the measure and voting instructions.

