

SNOWMOBILE SEASON IS OPEN!

12/1/08-3/31/09

Snowmobile Basics: Before You Ride

Know Your Snowmobile

IC-13-16-1-3; IC-14-16-1-9; IC-14-16-1-11; IC-14-16-1-11.5

A snowmobile is a recreational vehicle designed to travel over ice or snow. It has sled-type runners or skis on the front end and a tractor-like belt tread in the rear.

- Snowmobiling can be a fun and safe sport; however, it can be hazardous if you're reckless, inattentive, or uneducated about the snowmobile you're driving.
- A safe snowmobiler:
 - Understands the mechanics of the machine.
 - Has respect for its capabilities and its limitations.
 - Knows how to maneuver through a variety of operating conditions.
 - Knows the laws governing snowmobiles.
 - Uses good judgment.
 - Respects others and the environment.
- A safe snowmobiler also seeks out equipment with the Label of Certification from the Snowmobile Safety and Certification Committee.

Pre-Season Checkup and Maintenance

- It's a good idea to give your snowmobile a checkup before the season starts so that problems can be fixed before they interfere with your enjoyment. Consult your owner's manual for items that may need to be lubricated, tightened, adjusted, aligned, or checked for wear.
- In addition to the checkup, be sure to perform all recommended maintenance.

Proof of Registration

IC-14-16-1-9; IC 14-16-1-11.5

- Your snowmobile isn't ready to ride unless it has an up-to-date registration decal attached to both sides of the forward half of the machine.
- You also must carry a pocket-size registration card with you whenever you ride

Essential Gear for Snowmobiling

Mechanical problems can occur at any time, so it's wise to carry the tool kit and owner's manual that came with your vehicle. In addition, you should carry some spare parts and emergency items.

Dress for the Weather

As with any outdoor winter recreation, you'll need clothing that will keep you warm and dry. Bear in mind that the wind chill factor can lower your temperature considerably. For example, as the chart below indicates, the ambient temperature may be 30° Fahrenheit; but if you are riding at 30 miles an hour, the wind chill temperature drops to -2° Fahrenheit.

Emergency Items

- Drive belt
- Duct tape
- First aid kit
- Flashlight
- Knife
- Spark plugs
- Tow rope

U.S. Customary Wind Chill Chart												
Estimated Wind Speed in MPH	Actual Thermometer Reading (F)											
	50	40	30	20	10	0	-10	-20	-30	-40	-50	-60
	Equivalent Temperature (F)											
Calm	50	40	30	20	10	0	-10	-20	-30	-40	-50	-60
5	48	37	27	16	6	-5	-15	-26	-36	-47	-57	-68
10	40	28	16	4	-9	-21	-33	-46	-58	-70	-83	-95
15	36	22	9	-5	-18	-36	-45	-58	-72	-85	-99	-112
20	32	18	4	-10	-25	-39	-53	-67	-82	-96	-110	-124
25	30	16	0	-15	-29	-44	-59	-74	-88	-104	-118	-133
30	28	13	-2	-18	-33	-48	-63	-79	-94	-109	-125	-140
35	27	11	-4	-20	-35	-49	-67	-82	-98	-113	-129	-145
40	26	10	-6	-21	-37	-53	-69	-85	-100	-116	-132	-148
(Wind speeds greater than 40 mph have little additional effect)	LITTLE DANGER*			INCREASED DANGER*				GREAT DANGER*				
	(for properly clothed person)			(for properly clothed person)								
	*DANGER FROM FREEZING OF EXPOSED FLESH											

Dress in layers, and wear gloves and a warm head covering under your helmet. Gloves with gauntlets will keep cold air from blowing up your sleeves. Do not wear:

- A scarf, which can get caught in moving parts of your vehicle or in branches and bushes
- A bubble-type face guard, which may frost up

- **Snowmobile Suit**

The ideal winter outfit for snowmobilers is a snowmobile suit. In addition to keeping you warm, a **snowmobile suit will keep you afloat if you fall into freezing water**. Because it traps air, it acts like a flotation device. Some suits also have flotation material sewn into the lining, and others have special air pockets that you can inflate by blowing into a tube.

- Clothing should fit snugly and still be comfortable.
- Clothing that's too loose can snag on your vehicle, twigs, and branches.



Snowmobile Basics:

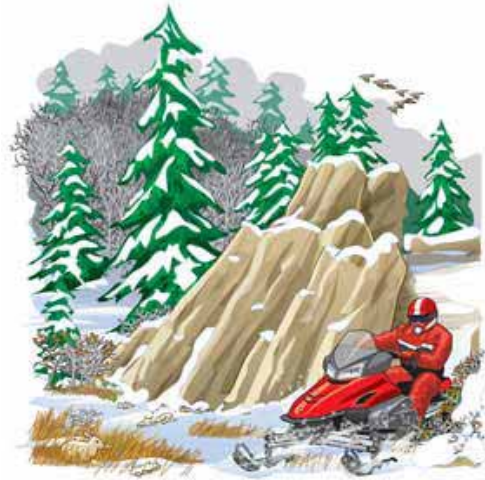
Before You Start

- Check the following:
 - Fuel and oil levels
 - Brakes and lights
 - Emergency stop switch
 - Track

Starting Safely

- Accidents happen during starts when a driver isn't prepared to take control of the vehicle.
- When you start your snowmobile:
 - Point the machine in a safe direction.
 - Position yourself to control the machine when it starts.
 - Check the throttle to make sure it's not frozen—it should snap back to the idle position when released.
 - Set the key and the engine stop switch to the “on” position.
 - If your machine is cold, choke or prime it.
 - If you have an electric starter, turn the key and release the choke as soon as the engine starts.
 - If your machine has a reverse gear, be sure the snowmobile is in a forward gear when you start off.





Special Situations

Deep Snow

You need more power to operate in deep, fluffy snow than on hard-packed snow because your vehicle sinks deeper. Turn in a wide arc, and look for a firmer base.

Hard-Packed Snow in Drifted Areas

Hard-packed snow presents problems in drifted areas where the packed snow isn't uniform. Unexpected bumps and dips can cause back injuries, especially at higher speeds. Travel cautiously in these areas.

Safety Tips

- Don't ride alone.
- **Avoid alcohol and drugs which impair key functions.**
- Don't drive tired.

Ice

- Ice is as hard as pavement and requires extreme caution. Spins are common, and fast stops are impossible.
- Use slow speeds. To stop, let up on the throttle and allow the machine to coast to a stop.

Be Sure the Ice Is Thick Enough



If You Get Stuck in the Snow

Don't attempt to lift your machine out by yourself. In some cases, people have had heart attacks from the strain. Instead, try one of these three methods.

- Use a rope to pull out the machine.
- Tramp down the snow in front of the machine, "rock" it free, and drive forward.
- If the two methods above fail, ask someone to help you lift your machine out of its hole.

Carrying a Passenger or Towing

- Only carry a passenger if your machine is designed to carry another person; most are not.
- When towing, use a rigid tow bar, which will prevent the sled from crashing into you if you stop suddenly.

If You Have an Accident

IC-14-16-1-24

You are required by law to report immediately any accident you are involved in that results in serious injury or death, or more than \$750 in damages.

Ice Fishing Safely

**When in doubt,
DON'T GO OUT!**

BEWARE OF THIN ICE

Every winter, thousands of Hoosiers enjoy fishing, skating, hiking or just sliding around on frozen ponds and lakes. And every year, people drown after falling through ice. Like driving on snow, Hoosiers need to re-learn how to have safe fun on ice.

WARN KIDS ABOUT PLAYING ON FROZEN LAKES AND STREAMS WITHOUT SUPERVISION!

If You Are Fishing:

1. Drill your own test hole near shore. Your test hole should show at least a four-inch thickness of clear ice like you get from your freezer.
2. Wear a life jacket for extra warmth and safety.
3. Be aware of various ice strengths and qualities. One area of a pond may be a foot thick while another spot of ice may only be an inch thick.
4. Ice strength can also change. Thick ice is rotten after rain. Old honey-combed ice, slush ice or ice with current under it is also dangerous. New ice is almost always stronger than old ice. Wind, waterfowl and beavers can also keep areas of ice thin.
5. Indiana law limits ice fishing holes to a diameter of twelve inches.
6. Fishing shanties must have reflectors on each side so snowmobiles won't crash into them at dusk or during snowstorms.



Use these guidelines to judge the **SAFETY** of **FRESH SOLID ICE**

One inch of ice

Four inches of ice

Five inches of ice

Eight inches of ice

Ten inches of ice

STAY OFF!!!

Needed for safe ice fishing

Needed for safe snowmobiling

Needed to support the weight of a car or light truck

Needed to support a medium weight truck.