

**STATE OF MICHIGAN
COUNTY OF GRATIOT
ORV ORDINANCE**

An ordinance adopted for the purpose of authorizing and regulating the operation of Off Road Vehicles {ORVs} on Roads in Gratiot County, for the purpose of providing penalties for the violation thereof, and for the distribution of public funds resulting from those penalties pursuant to 2008 PA 240, MCL 324.81131.

THE COUNTY OF GRATIOT ORDAINS:

Sec. 1 As used in this ordinance, the following definitions shall apply:

- a) "County" means County of Gratiot.
- b) "Drivers license" means an operator's or chauffeur's license or permit issued to an individual by the Secretary of State under chapter III of the Michigan Vehicle Code, 1949 PA 300, MCL 257.301 to 257.329, for that individual to operate a vehicle, whether or not conditions are attached to the license or permit.
- c) "Operate" means to ride in or on, and be in actual physical control of the operation of an ORV.
- d) "Operator" means a person who operates or is in actual physical control of the operation of an ORV.
- e) "ORV" or "vehicle" means a motor-driven off-road recreation vehicle capable of cross-country travel without benefit of a road or trail, on or immediately over land, snow, ice, marsh, swampland, or other natural terrain. ORV or vehicle includes, but is not limited to, a golf cart, a multitrack or multiwheel drive vehicle, an ATV, a motorcycle or related 2-wheel, 3-wheel, 4-wheel, or 6-wheel vehicle, an amphibious machine, a ground effect air cushion vehicle, or other means of transportation deriving motive power from a source other than muscle or wind. ORV or vehicle does not include a registered snowmobile, a farm vehicle being used for farming, a vehicle used for military, fire, emergency, or law enforcement purposes, a vehicle owned and operated by a utility company or an oil or gas company when performing maintenance on its facilities or on property over which it has an easement, a construction or logging vehicle used in performance of its common function, or a registered aircraft.
- f) "Road" means a county primary road or a county local road as described in section 5 of 1951 PA 51, MCL 247.655.
- g) "Road Commission" means the Board of County Road Commissioners for the County of Gratiot.

- h) "Safety certificate" means a certificate issued pursuant to 1994 PA 451 as amended, MCL 324.81129, or a comparable ORV safety certificate issued under the authority of another state or a province of Canada.
- i) "Street" means a city or village major street or city or village local street as described in section 9 of 1951 PA 51, MCL 247.659.
- j) "Township" means an individual township within the County of Gratiot.
- k) "Visual supervision" means the direct observation of the operator with the unaided or normally corrected eye, where the observer is able to come to the immediate aid of the operator.

Sec. 2 A township board of a township in the county may adopt an ordinance to close any roads within the boundaries of the township to the operation of ORVs permitted by the county. The township board of a township in the county may adopt an ordinance authorizing the operation of ORVs on the maintained portion of 1 or more roads located within the township, pursuant to MCL 324.81131 (3).

Sec. 3 The county road commission may close no more than 30% of the total linear miles of roads in the county to protect the environment or if the operation of ORVs pose a particular and demonstrable threat to public safety. The road commission may not close a municipal street to ORVs opened under Section 5 of this ordinance.

Sec. 4 An ORV shall not be operated on any state trunkline right-of-way or on any street within incorporated cities and villages unless allowed by city or village ordinance.

Sec. 5 Except as set forth herein or otherwise provided by law, an ORV meeting all of the following conditions may be operated on a road or street in the county:

- a) On the far right of the maintained portion of a road within the county.
- b) At a speed of no more than 25 miles per hour or a lower posted ORV speed limit.
- c) By a person not less than 12 years of age.
- d) With the flow of traffic.
- e) In a manner which does not interfere with traffic on the road or street.
- f) While traveling single file except when overtaking or passing another ORV.
- f) While displaying a lighted headlight and a lighted taillight at all times.
- g) When the person and any passenger in or on the vehicle is wearing on his or her head a crash helmet and protective eyewear approved by the United States Department of Transportation. This subdivision does not apply if the vehicle is equipped with a windshield and a roof or roll bar that meets or exceeds standards for a crash helmet and the operator and each passenger is wearing a properly adjusted and fastened safety belt.

- h) With a throttle so designed that when the pressure used to advance the throttle is removed, the engine speed will immediately and automatically return to idle.
- i) While the ORV is equipped with a spark arrester type United States Forest Service approved muffler in good working order and in constant operation.
- j) When equipped with a braking system that may be operated by hand or foot, capable of producing deceleration at 14 feet per second on level ground at a speed of 20 miles per hour, a brake light brighter than a taillight, visible when the brake is activated to the rear of the vehicle when the vehicle is operated during the hours of 1/2 hour after sunset and 1/2 hour before sunrise.
- k) Pursuant to noise and emission standards defined by law.

Sec. 6 In a court action in this state where competent evidence demonstrates that a vehicle is permitted to be operated on a highway pursuant to the Michigan vehicle code, 1949 PA 300, MCL 257.1 to 257.923, collided with an ORV on a roadway, the driver of the ORV involved in the collision shall be considered prima facie negligent.

Sec. 7 A person less than 18 years of age shall not operate an ORV on a road in the county unless the person is in possession of a valid drivers license or is under the direct visual supervision of an adult and the person has in his or her immediate possession a Michigan issued ORV safety certificate or a comparable ORV safety certificate issued under the authority of another state or a province of Canada.

Sec. 8 Unless a person possesses a valid drivers license, a person shall not operate an ORV on a road or street in the county if the ORV is registered as a motor vehicle and is either more than 60 inches wide or has three wheels.

Sec. 9 Any person who violates this ordinance is guilty of a municipal civil infraction and may be ordered to pay a civil fine of not more than \$500.00.

Sec. 10 A court may order a person who causes damages to the environment, a road or other property as a result of the operation of an ORV to pay full restitution for that damage above and beyond the penalties paid for civil fines.

Sec. 11 The County Treasurer shall deposit all fines and damages collected under this ordinance into a fund to be designated the ORV Fund. The County of Gratiot Board of Commissioners shall appropriate revenue in the ORV fund as follows:

- a) Fifty percent to the County Road Commission for repairing damage to roads and environment that may have been caused by ORVs, and for posting signs indicating ORV speed limits, or indicating whether roads are open or closed to the operation of ORVs.
- b) Fifty percent to the County Sheriff for ORV enforcement and training.

Sec. 12 This ordinance becomes effective November 1, 2011.

This Ordinance is adopted by action of the Gratiot County Board of Commissioners this 4th day of October, 2011.

Commissioners voting "Aye":

Anderson, Bailey, Bunting, Dilts, Everett, Hagerman and Merignac.

Commissioners voting "Nay":

None.

Commissioners abstaining:

None.

Commissioners absent:

None.

Date

Jeff Anderson, Chairman
Gratiot County Board of Commissioners

CERTIFICATION:

I, Carol A. Vernon, Clerk of the Gratiot County Board of Commissioners, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Gratiot County Board of Commissioners at a meeting held on October 4, 2011 and is on file in the Gratiot County Clerk's Office.

Dated: _____

Carol A. Vernon, Gratiot County Clerk