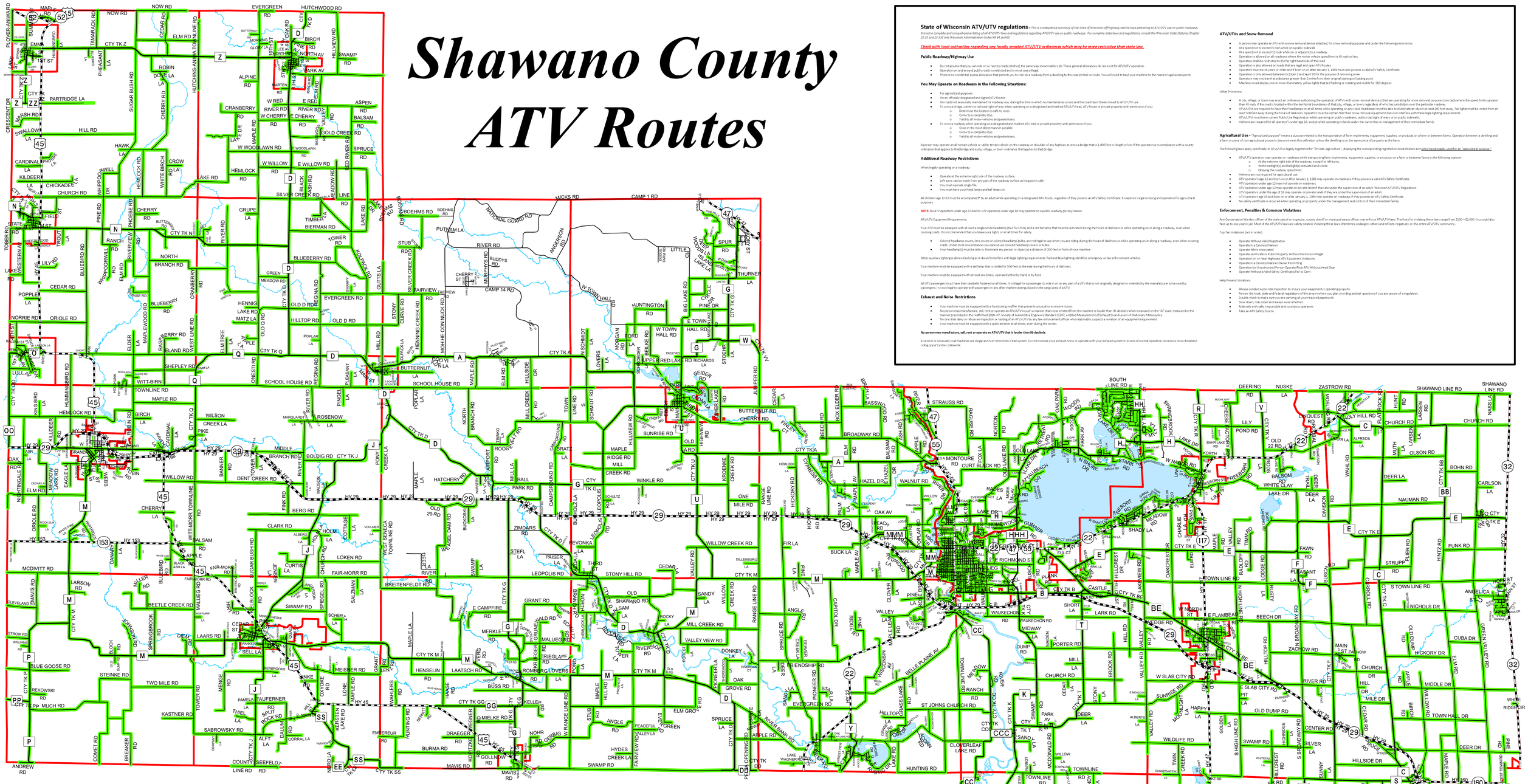
Shawano County ATV Routes



State of Wisconsin ATV/UTV regulations

- This is a interpretive summary of the State of Wisconsin off-highway vehicle laws pertaining to ATV/UTV use on public roadways. It is not a complete and comprehensive listing of all ATV/UTV laws and regulations regarding ATV/UTV use on public roadways. For complete state laws and regulations, consult the Wisconsin State Statutes Chapter 23.33 and 23.335 and Wisconsin Administration Codes NR 64 and 65.

Check with local authorities regarding any locally enacted ATV/UTV ordinances which may be more restrictive than state law.

Public Roadway/Highway Use

- Do not assume that you can ride on or next to roads (ditches) the same way snowmobilers do. These general allowances do not exist for ATV/UTV operation.
- Operation on and around public roads is restricted and in most cases illegal.
- There is no residential access allowance that permits you to ride on a roadway from a dwelling to the nearest trail or route. You will need to haul your machine to the nearest legal access point.

You May Operate on Roadways in the Following Situations:

- For agricultural purposes
- On an officially designated and signed ATV Routes
- On roads not seasonally maintained for roadway use, during the time in which no maintenance occurs and the road hasn't been closed to ATV/UTV use.
- To cross a bridge, culvert or railroad right of way when operating on a designated and marked ATV/UTV trail, ATV Route or private property with permission if you:
  - Determine the location is safe to cross
  - Come to a complete stop
  - Yield to all motor vehicles and pedestrians.
- To cross a roadway while operating on a designated and marked ATV trail or private property with permission if you:
  - Cross in the most direct manner possible
  - Come to a complete stop.
  - Yield to all motor vehicles and pedestrians.

A person may operate an all-terrain vehicle or utility terrain vehicle on the roadway or shoulder of any highway to cross a bridge that is 1,000 feet in length or less if the operation is in compliance with a county ordinance that applies to that bridge and a city, village, or town ordinance that applies to that bridge.

Additional Roadway Restrictions

When legally operating on a roadway:

- Operate at the extreme right side of the roadway surface.
- Left turns can be made from any part of the roadway surface as long as it's safe.
- You must operate single file.
- You must have your head lamps and tail lamps on.

All children age 12-15 must be accompanied* by an adult while operating on a designated ATV Route, regardless if they possess an ATV Safety Certificate. Exceptions: Legal crossing and operation for agricultural purposes.

NOTE: *No ATV operators under age 12 and no UTV operators under age 16 may operate on a public roadway for any reason.*

ATV/UTV Equipment Requirements

Your ATV must be equipped with at least a single white headlamp (two for UTVs) and a red tail lamp that must be activated during the hours of darkness or while operating on or along a roadway, even when crossing roads. It is recommended that you leave your lights on at all times for safety.

- Colored headlamp covers, lens covers or colored headlamp bulbs, are not legal to use when you are riding during the hours of darkness or while operating on or along a roadway, even when crossing roads. Under most circumstances you cannot use colored headlamp covers or bulbs.
- Your headlamp(s) must be able to illuminate any person or object at a distance of 200 feet in front of your machine.

Other auxiliary lighting is allowed as long as it doesn't interfere with legal lighting requirements. Red and blue lighting identifies emergency or law enforcement vehicles.

Your machine must be equipped with a tail lamp that is visible for 500 feet to the rear during the hours of darkness.

Your machine must be equipped with at least one brake, operated either by hand or by foot.

All UTV passengers must have their seatbelts fastened at all times. It is illegal for a passenger to ride in or on any part of a UTV that is not originally designed or intended by the manufacturer to be used by passengers. It is not legal to operate with passengers in any after-market seating placed in the cargo area of a UTV.

Exhaust and Noise Restrictions

- Your machine must be equipped with a functioning muffler that prevents unusual or excessive noises.
- No person may manufacture, sell, rent or operate an ATV/UTV in such a manner that noise emitted from the machine is louder than 96 decibels when measured on the "A" scale, measured in the manner prescribed in the reaffirmed 1998-07, Society of Automotive Engineers Standard J1287, entitled Measurement of Exhaust Sound Levels of Stationary Motorcycles.
- No one shall deny or refuse an inspection or testing of an ATV/UTV by any law enforcement officer who reasonably suspects a violation of an equipment requirement.
- Your machine must be equipped with a spark arrester at all times, even during the winter.

No person may manufacture, sell, rent or operate an ATV/UTV that is louder than 96 decibels.

Excessive or unusually loud machines are illegal and hurt Wisconsin's trail system. Do not increase your exhaust noise or operate with your exhaust system in excess of normal operation. Excessive noise threatens riding opportunities statewide.

ATV/UTVs and Snow Removal

- A person may operate an ATV with a snow removal device attached, for snow removal purposes and under the following restrictions:
- At a speed not to exceed 5 mph while on a public sidewalk
- At a speed not to exceed 15 mph while on or adjacent to a roadway
- Operation is allowed on all roadways where the motor vehicle speed limit is 45 mph or less
- Operation shall be restricted to the far right hand side of the road
- Operation is also allowed on roads that are legal and open ATV Routes
- Operators must be 16 years or older and if born on or after January 1, 1988 must also possess a valid ATV Safety Certificate.
- Operation is only allowed between October 1 and April 30 for the purpose of removing snow.
- Operators may not travel at a distance greater than 2 miles from their original starting or loading point
- Machines must display one or more illuminated, yellow lights that are flashing or rotating and visible for 360 degrees

Other Provisions:

- A city, village, or town may enact an ordinance authorizing the operation of ATVs with snow removal devices (that are operating for snow removal purposes) on roads where the speed limit is greater than 45 mph, if the road is located within the territorial boundaries of that city, village, or town, regardless of who has jurisdiction over the particular roadway.
- ATVs/UTVs are required to have their headlamps on at all times while operating on any road. Headlamps must be able to illuminate an object at least 200 feet away. Tail lights must be visible from at least 500 feet away during the hours of darkness. Operators must be certain that their snow removal equipment does not interfere with these legal lighting requirements.
- ATVs/UTVs must have current Public Use Registration while operating on public roadways, public road right of ways or on public sidewalks.
- Helmets are required for all operator's under age 18, except while operating on lands under the ownership or management of their immediate family.

Agricultural Use – "Agricultural purpose" means a purpose related to the transportation of farm implements, equipment, supplies, or products on a farm or between farms. Operation between a dwelling and a farm or piece of non-agricultural property does not meet this definition unless the dwelling is on the same piece of property as the farm.

The following laws apply specifically to ATVs/UTVs legally registered for "Private–Agriculture", displaying the corresponding registration decal stickers and while being legally used for an "agricultural purpose."

- ATV/UTV operators may operate on roadways while transporting farm implements, equipment, supplies, or products on a farm or between farms in the following manner:
  - At the extreme right side of the roadway, except for left turns.
  - With headlight(s) and taillight(s) activated and visible.
  - Obeying the roadway speed limit.
- Helmets are not required for agricultural use.
- ATV operator's age 12 and born on or after January 1, 1988 may operate on roadways if they possess a valid ATV Safety Certificate.
- ATV operators under age 12 may not operate on roadways.
- ATV operators under age 12 may operate on private lands if they are under the supervision of an adult. Wisconsin UTV/UTV Regulations
- UTV operators under the age of 16 may operate on private lands if they are under the supervision of an adult.
- UTV operators age 16 and born on or after January 1, 1988 may operate on roadways if they possess an ATV Safety Certificate
  No safety certificate is required while operating on property under the management and control of their immediate family

Enforcement, Penalties & Common Violations

Any Conservation Warden, officer of the state patrol or inspector, county sheriff or municipal peace officer may enforce ATV/UTV laws. The fines for violating these laws range from $150—$2,000. You could also face up to one year in jail. Most of the ATV/UTV laws are safety related. Violating these laws oftentimes endangers others and reflects negatively on the entire ATV/UTV community.

Top Ten Violations (not in order)

- Operate Without Valid Registration
- Operate in a Careless Manner
- Operate While Intoxicated
- Operate on Private or Public Property Without Permission Illegal
- Operation on or Near Highways ATV Equipment Violations
- Operate in a Careless Manner Owner Permitting
- Operation by Unauthorized Person Operate/Ride ATV Without Head Gear
- Operate Without a Valid Safety Certificate/Fail to Carry

Help Prevent Violations

- Always conduct a pre-ride inspection to ensure your equipment is operating properly.
- Review the local, state and federal regulations of the area in where you plan on riding and ask questions if you are unsure of a regulation.
- Double check to make sure you are carrying all your required paperwork.
- Slow down, ride sober and always wear a helmet.
- Ride only with safe, responsible and courteous operators
- Take an ATV Safety Course.

Shawano County ATV Route Rules

ATV Routes

Local municipalities may have rules that are more strict than the Shawano County rules. Contact the municipality that you will be riding in to verify the local rules.

- ATVs and UTVs shall be operated on the extreme right side of the roadway on the paved surface.
- ATVs and UTVs shall be operated in compliance with all applicable Wisconsin laws, orders, regulations, restrictions and rules, including § 23.33, Wis. Stats., and Chapter NR 64, Wis. Admin. Code.
- All operators shall ride in single file.
- Operators are required to have headlamps (white light) and tail-lamps (red light) turned on at all times. However, no off-road auxiliary lighting on ATVs or UTVs shall be used on county segments approved for ATV/UTV use.
- No person under twelve (12) years of age shall operate an ATV or UTV under any circumstances.
- All operators who were born after January 1, 1988 and are over the age of 12 are required to complete an approved ATV/UTV Safety Course, and carry the safety certificate with them while riding on public lands.
- All operators and passengers under the age of 18 shall wear a helmet approved by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.
- The maximum speed limit on all designated routes shall be thirty five (35) miles per hour. Operators shall reduce speed whenever the posted limited is less, or as required by Wisconsin Statutes, or as conditions warrant.

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ATV/UTV Route information and local regulations were provided by the local municipalities and are subject to change at any time. Additional local regulations may also be present that are not represented on the map. Please contact the local municipalities for the most up to date information.

State of Wisconsin ATV/UTV regulations and laws were taken from the WIDNR publication PUN-LE-500 2016 "Wisconsin Off-Highway Vehicle Regulations" (https://dnr.wi.gov/files/pdf/pubs/le/le0500.pdf) and are subject to change at any time. For complete Wisconsin ATV/UTV laws and regulations, consult the Wisconsin State Statutes Chapter 23.33 and 23.335 and Wisconsin Administration Codes NR 64 and 65.

Information depicted on this map was interpreted from digital orthophotography and various other land records. An attempt was made to accurately represent the information shown hereon, however, recent changes in the physical and cultural landscape many not be represented. This map is intended for planning and general use only. Please refer to the original source documents for detailed information. If you have any questions or discover any discrepancies on this map, please contact the Shawano County Technology Services Dept. 715-526-4614.

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