

**All-terrain vehicles (ATVs) are important tools in the Agriculture industry.** However, they pose rollover risks to riders that could result in hospitalization, permanent disability, or death.

Hospitalizations from **ATV rollovers are preventable!** Proper training, employer policies, a tailored accident prevention plan, and personal protective equipment can prevent ATV injuries.

### Worker pinned beneath ATV after it rolls on hill

Around 2:30 P.M., an experienced and well trained ATV operator at a wheat farm was riding an ATV to close off mainline irrigation risers.

The worker was traveling through a dirt field that was lightly plowed. He was not wearing a helmet, even though the employer's safety policy required it.

His speed was approximately 35 mph—too fast for the surface conditions. He went over a hill and onto a slope where it had been more deeply plowed.

The front wheel of the ATV went into a hole in the dirt, causing it to roll over. The ATV landed on the worker's back, pinning him underneath.

The worker was taken to the hospital by ambulance. He suffered a collapsed lung, multiple fractures in his back and a spinal cord injury. He needed emergency back surgery and was unable to work for six months.



**Incident 1:** The worker was driving the ATV too fast through a freshly plowed field when he hit a hole in the soil.



**Incident 1:** The ATV rolled before it came to rest on top of the worker.

### Worker suffers multiple injuries when thrown from ATV

Around 6:00 P.M., a worker at a crop farm was riding an ATV to unplug irrigation lines. The soil was wet and muddy. The worker was not trained on the ATV and was not wearing a helmet.

Another worker was changing the irrigation line and saw the ATV approaching. The worker on the ATV was waving at him when the wheel struck a hole in the ground and the ATV rolled.

The worker was ejected from the ATV. His face struck a metal irrigation pipe that was sticking out of the ground.

The worker suffered multiple traumatic injuries, including fractures to his face, skull, and rib. He was initially taken to a local hospital and later needed to be flown to a larger hospital for trauma care and surgery.



**Incident 2:** Sticker on ATV reads "Always use an approved helmet and protective gear."

## Recommendations

### Training

- Provide employees with an ATV safety training course and ensure that they demonstrate competency before operating ATVs on the job.
- Provide and review the manufacturer's operating manual and instructions.

### Operation

#### Employers should ensure that ATV operators:

- **ALWAYS**
  - Wear a DOT-approved helmet.
  - Use proper riding techniques to avoid vehicle overturns on hills and rough terrain and in turns.
  - Follow the manufacturer's operating instructions.
- **NEVER**
  - Drive at speeds too fast for the conditions.
  - Operate ATVs on public roads.
  - Operate ATVs on paved surfaces.
  - Carry passengers on single-rider ATVs.
  - Operate up or down hills greater than 25 degrees.
  - Operate an ATV while intoxicated or impaired.

### Inspection

- Before operating an ATV, perform a pre-ride inspection that includes checking:
  - Tires and wheels
  - Controls and cables
  - Lights and electrical
  - Oil and fuel
  - Chassis and drive train

### Plan for Safety

- **Job Hazard Analysis.** Create a Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) for safe ATV operation. Include workers in creating and updating JHA.
- **Limit Speed.** Employers should consider installing speed governors on ATVs to prevent them from going too fast.

## Requirements

### Accident Prevention Program (APP)

- The employer must develop a written accident prevention program tailored to the needs of the employer's agricultural operation and to the types of hazards involved, such as hazards associated with operating ATVs. See [WAC 296-307-030\(2\)](#)

### Personal Protective Equipment

- The employer must ensure that employees use protective clothing; respiratory devices; shields, barriers; and adequate protective equipment for eyes, face, head, and extremities. See [WAC 296-307-10005\(1\)](#)
- The employer must provide personal protective equipment at no cost to employees, including replacement due to normal wear and tear. The equipment must be maintained in sanitary and reliable condition. See [WAC 296-307-10005\(2\)](#)

### Reporting

- Employers are required to contact DOSH within 8 hours of a workplace fatality or in-patient hospitalization of any employee and within 24 hours of a non-hospitalized amputation or loss of an eye of any employee. See [WAC 296-27-031](#)

### Resources

Safety Standards for Agriculture, Chapter 296-307 WAC: <https://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=296-307>

OSHA Agricultural Safety Fact Sheet: <https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/OSHA3758.pdf>

All-terrain Vehicle Safety at Work: <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2012-167/pdfs/2012-167.pdf?id=10.26616/NIOSH PUB2012167>

L&I's Consultation Program offers confidential, no-fee, professional advice and assistance to Washington businesses. To request an L&I Consultation go to: [lni.wa.gov/safety-health/preventing-injuries-illnesses/request-consultation/](http://lni.wa.gov/safety-health/preventing-injuries-illnesses/request-consultation/)