

Section 4.12 Specialty Use Equipment

1. Scope

This section establishes safety requirements for specialty use equipment, which this RSHS defines as: all-terrain vehicles (ATV), utility terrain vehicles (UTV), snowmobiles, snow cats, burden carriers, and tow carts.

2. General Requirements

Qualified personnel must operate specialty use equipment in compliance with this section. All operators must be at least 18 years of age.

3. Responsibilities

a. Area, Facility, and Powerplant Managers

- Shall provide necessary support and resources to implement and maintain the requirements set forth in RSHS 4.12.
- Shall designate qualified trainers for each type of specialty use equipment utilized in their area.

b. First Line Supervisors

- Shall ensure that documented training and appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) are provided to employees assigned to operate specialty use equipment and that employees are proficient and qualified, as required by this RSHS.
- Shall assign only trained and qualified employees to operate specialty use equipment.
- Shall ensure that a Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) is prepared for all projects or activities using specialty use equipment and for each type of utilized specialty use equipment. RSHS 1.04, Work Safety Planning, defines JHA requirements.

c. Employees

- Shall complete all training and evaluations for specialty use equipment the employee is assigned to operate, as required by this section.
- Shall inspect and perform maintenance on all specialty use equipment per the operator's manual and as required by this section.
- Shall demonstrate proficiency to operate specialty use equipment.
- Shall meet the DOT licensing requirements for on-highway operations and comply with applicable manufacturer requirements and OSHA standards on jobsites where DOT is not applicable.
- Shall comply with applicable operating instructions, limitations, regulations, and written safety programs and plans.

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- Shall participate in the JHA process for the specialty use equipment they will be operating.
- Shall wear appropriate PPE for the specialty use equipment they are operating.

4. Training Requirements

a. Initial ATV

The initial training program requirements shall consist of the following:

- reviewing the operator’s manual,
- understanding the characteristics of an ATV,
- required PPE (clothing, helmets, eye protection, boots, gloves),
- tire pressure and wheel tightness,
- controls: throttle and other cables, brakes, foot shifter,
- lights and switches: engine stop switch, lights (if equipped),
- oil and fuel: oil levels, gasoline and leaks,
- chain/driveshaft and chassis maintenance,
- tool kit,
- starting and stopping the ATV,
- correct riding posture,
- shifting gears, braking, and stopping,
- turning the ATV,
- reading terrain,
- riding up hills, riding down hills, and traversing a slope,
- riding with a passenger (if so equipped),
- riding different terrains: dirt, snow, sand, mud, and water,
- crossing roads and highways,
- towing a trailer with an ATV (if applicable),
- understanding rider fatigue,
- trailering or hauling an ATV in a truck,
- hauling cargo with an ATV,
- first aid kit requirements and fire extinguishers,
- travel planning, working alone, and communication plans, and
- practical hands-on exercises performed by the trainee under direct observation of the trainer.

Trainer specific requirements also include:

- providing practical, hands-on training that includes demonstrations performed by the trainer,

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- providing practical hands-on exercises performed by the trainee under direct observation of the trainer, and
- conducting the training on the type of equipment the trainee will be operating on the job. When differences exist between equipment used for training and equipment being used on the job, the trainer will explain those differences, in detail, to the trainee prior to use. Trainers shall complete a proficiency evaluation of each operator at the conclusion of the training.

b. Initial UTV

The initial training program requirements shall consist of the following:

- reviewing the operator’s manual,
- understanding the features of a UTV,
- differences between UTVs and ATVs
- required PPE,
- pre- ride inspections,
- UTV components: steering wheel, seat belt, accelerator pedal, lights, ignition, parking brake, brake pedal, passenger seat, hand holds, taillights, roll over protection system,
- tire pressure and wheel tightness,
- two-wheel and four-wheel drive operations,
- oil and fuel: oil levels, gasoline, and leaks,
- driveshaft and chassis maintenance,
- tool kit,
- starting and stopping a UTV,
- shifting gears, braking, and stopping,
- cornering in a UTV,
- reading terrain,
- riding up hills, riding down hills, and traversing a slope,
- operating with a passenger,
- riding different terrains: dirt, snow, sand, mud, and water,
- crossing roads and highways,
- towing a trailer with a UTV (if applicable),
- understanding operator fatigue,
- trailering or hauling a UTV in a truck,
- hauling cargo with a UTV,
- first aid kit requirements and fire extinguishers,
- travel planning, working alone, and communication plans, and
- practical hands-on exercises performed by the trainee under direct observation of the trainer.

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Trainer specific requirements also include:

- providing practical, hands-on training that includes demonstrations performed by the trainer,
- providing practical hands-on exercises performed by the trainee under direct observation of the trainer, and
- conducting the training on the type of equipment the trainee will be operating on the job. when differences exist between equipment used for training and equipment being used on the job, the trainer will explain those differences, in detail, to the trainee prior to use. Trainers shall complete a proficiency evaluation of each operator at the conclusion of the training.

c. Initial Snowmobile

The initial training program requirements shall consist of the following:

- reviewing the operator's manual,
- understanding the unique features of snowmobiles,
- required PPE and cold weather gear,
- pre-ride inspections,
- rules for trail riding and understanding trail signs,
- snowmobile components: handlebars, lights, ignition, brake handle, passenger seat (if applicable), hand holds, taillights, tracks, slide rails, throttle, idler/bogie wheels, skis, wear bars, kill switch, auto start button, pull cord, air intake.
- required safety equipment: shovel, Global Positioning System (GPS) satellite emergency notification device (send unit), avalanche beacon, snow probe, radio/cell phone, satellite phone (if send unit lacks two-way communication or radio and cell phone coverage is lacking) compass, map, waterproof matches/fire starter, flares, flashlight, spare batteries, extra ignition key, water, food, critical medications extra drive belt, ice picks if traversing frozen bodies of water (worn on wrists under jacket for self-rescue), and extra spark plugs,
- oil and fuel: oil levels, gasoline, and leaks,
- tool kit components for minor maintenance,
- starting a snowmobile,
- braking and stopping,
- cornering and weight transfer,
- reading terrain,
- riding up hills, riding down hills, and traversing a slope,
- operating with a passenger (only for snowmobiles meant for two persons),
- how to dig out a stuck snowmobile,
- being prepared to deal with an emergency (broken down, lost, stuck, injured),
- crossing roads and highways,

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- towing a sled with a snowmobile (if applicable),
- understanding operator fatigue,
- trailering or hauling a snowmobile in a truck,
- hauling cargo on a snowmobile,
- first aid kit requirements and fire extinguishers,
- travel planning, working alone, and communication plans, and
- practical hands-on exercises performed in the field by the trainee under direct observation of the trainer.

Trainer specific requirements also include:

- providing practical, hands-on training that includes demonstrations performed by the trainer,
- providing practical hands-on exercises in the field performed by the trainee under direct observation of the trainer,
- conducting the training on the type of equipment the trainee will be operating on the job. When differences exist between equipment used for training and equipment being used on the job, the trainer will explain those differences, in detail, to the trainee prior to use. Trainers shall complete a proficiency evaluation of each operator at the conclusion of the training.

d. Initial Snowcat

The initial training program requirements shall consist of the following:

- reviewing the operator's manual,
- understanding the unique features of snowcats,
- required PPE and cold weather gear,
- pre-ride inspections,
- entering and exiting the snowcat safely with three points of contact,
- rules for trail riding and understanding trail signs,
- snowcat components: steering, lights, ignition, brake handle, hand holds, taillights, tracks, wipers, heater, and seatbelts/restraint systems,
- required safety equipment: shovel, GPS satellite emergency notification device (send unit), avalanche beacon, snow probe, radio/cell phone, satellite phone (if send unit lacks two-way communication or radio and cell phone coverage is lacking) compass, map, waterproof matches/fire starter, flares, flashlight, spare batteries, extra ignition key, water, food, critical medications oil, hydraulic and fuel: oil levels, hydraulic levels, and gasoline and leaks,
- tool kit components for minor maintenance,
- starting a snowcat,
- braking and stopping,

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- cornering and weight transfer,
- reading terrain,
- driving up hills, down hills, and traversing slopes,
- operating with passengers,
- being prepared to deal with an emergency (broken down, lost, stuck, injured),
- crossing roads and highways,
- understanding operator fatigue,
- trailering a snowcat,
- hauling cargo with a snowcat,
- first aid kit requirements and fire extinguishers,
- travel planning, working alone, and communication plans, and
- practical hands-on exercises performed in the field by the trainee under direct observation of the trainer.

Trainer-specific requirements also include:

- providing practical, hands-on training that includes demonstrations performed by the trainer,
- providing practical hands-on exercises in the field performed by the trainee under direct observation of the trainer, and
- conducting the training on the type of equipment the trainee will be operating on the job. When differences exist between equipment used for training and equipment being used on the job, the trainer will explain those differences, in detail, to the trainee prior to use. Trainers shall complete a proficiency evaluation of each operator at the conclusion of the training.

e. Initial Burden Carriers/Tow Tractors/Tool Carts

The initial training program requirements shall consist of the following:

- understanding the characteristics of burden carriers/tow tractors/tool carts,
- required maintenance practices,
- performance limitations,
- primary surfaces for operation,
- tire pressure and wheel tightness,
- controls: steering, horn, parking brake, and reverse beeper (if equipped),
- lights and switches: engine stop switch, lights (if equipped), battery indicator, and directional signals (if equipped),
- oil and fuel (if applicable): oil levels, gasoline, and leaks,
- battery servicing and charging safety for electric powered equipment,
- new battery break in requirements,
- foot brake pedal,

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- accelerator pedal,
- starting and stopping,
- turning and cornering safety,
- yielding right of way to pedestrians and emergency vehicles,
- keeping the vehicle under control at all times,
- not overtaking vehicles at intersections, blind spots, or other dangerous locations,
- maintaining safe following distances with other equipment,
- limitations for operating on inclines and declines (see owner’s manual),
- riding with a passenger (if so equipped),
- loading and unloading,
- towing,
- crossing roads and highways,
- hauling cargo,
- travel planning, working alone, and communication plans, and
- practical hands-on exercises performed by the trainee under direct observation of the trainer.

Trainer specific requirements also include:

- providing practical, hands-on training that includes demonstrations performed by the trainer,
- providing practical hands-on exercises in the field performed by the trainee under direct observation of the trainer, and
- conducting the training on the type of equipment the trainee will be operating on the job. When differences exist between equipment used for training and equipment being used on the job, the trainer will explain those differences, in detail, to the trainee prior to use. Trainers shall complete a proficiency evaluation of each operator at the conclusion of the training.

f. Equipment Specific Instructor and Operator Training Requirements

- **ATV Qualified Instructor.** Qualified instructors must complete an ATV Safety Institute Rider Course Instructor Certification training, or an equivalent ATV instructor course that meets the criteria outlined in paragraph 4.12.4.a, “Initial ATV,” above.
- **ATV Operator.** ATV operators must complete an ATV Safety Institute Rider Course Certification training or equivalent ATV training course that meets the requirements of paragraph 4.12.4.a, above.
- **UTV Qualified Instructor.** Qualified instructors must complete a UTV instructor course that meets the requirements of paragraph 4.12.4.b, “Initial UTV,” above.
- **UTV Operator.** Operators shall complete a UTV operator training program that meets the requirements of paragraph 4.12.4.b, above.

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- Snowmobile Qualified Instructor. Snowmobile-qualified instructors shall complete a snowmobile instructor training program, that meets the requirements of paragraph 4.12.4.c, “Initial Snowmobile,” above.
- Snowmobile Operator. Snowmobile operators shall complete a snowmobile operator training program that meets the requirements of paragraph 4.12.4.c above. A qualified instructor will conduct an evaluation of each operator's performance once every 3 years.
- Snowcat Qualified Instructor. Snowcat qualified instructors shall complete a snowcat instructor training program that meets the requirements of paragraph 4.12.4.d, “Initial Snowcat,” above.
- Snowcat Operator. Snowcat operators shall complete a snowcat training program that meets the requirements of paragraph 4.12.4.d above.
- Burden Carriers/Tow Tractors/Tool Carts Qualified Instructor. Qualified instructors must present a course that meets the requirements of paragraph 4.12.4.e, “Initial Burden Carriers/Tow Tractors/Tool Carts,” above.
- Burden Carriers/Tow Tractors/Tool Carts Certified Operator. Operators shall complete a training program that meets the requirements of paragraph 4.12.4.e above.

g. Proficiency Qualification and Requalification

Specialty use equipment training shall follow the manufacturers’ requirements for safe proficient operation. A qualified instructor will conduct an evaluation of each operator's performance at least once every 3 years on all specialty use equipment.

h. Lack of Proficiency

The supervisor or affected personnel shall immediately stop an operator who demonstrates a lack of proficiency when operating specialty use equipment. Employees shall receive refresher training anytime any Reclamation personnel observes an operator using specialty use equipment in an unsafe manner, evaluation shows lack of proficiency, conditions in the workplace have changed that could affect safe operation, or the operator is assigned to a different type of equipment.

i. Recordkeeping

- Training Documentation. The training provider shall document initial training on all specialty use equipment to include the name of the training organization, if one is used; instructors name and signature; operator’s name; date of the training; the make, model, and configuration of the specialty use equipment used in the evaluation; certification documentation; and any attachments included in the training. This RSHS includes Appendix 4.12-A, Operator Training Documentation Form, for use as training documentation. If the training provider uses another tool to document training, it shall capture the required information listed in this paragraph.
- Records. Reclamation shall keep records in the Department of the Interior's approved repository and manage records in accordance with the Information Management

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Handbook as referenced in Reclamation Manual Directive and Standard, Information Management (RCD 05-01).

5. Pre-job Briefing and Post-job JHA Review

The first-line supervisor shall include all employees involved in a project in the pre-job briefing and planning requirements prior to starting work. The first-line supervisor and the relevant employees shall plan and review the JHA to ensure the written JHA includes appropriate procedures for job tasks. All team members involved in the task must perform a post-job review within 7 days of job completion. This can be an informal review conducted after completing the work, except when an activity resulted in a near miss, an injury, or damage to a facility. Refer to RSHS Section 1.04, Work Safety Planning.

6. Hazardous Environmental Conditions (Weather/Other)

Operators shall not operate specialty use equipment when hazardous environmental conditions (weather/other) will not allow for the safe operation of the equipment.

7. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Operators shall wear appropriate Reclamation-provided PPE while operating specialty use equipment per the manufacturer's requirement and JHA.

8. Other Safety Equipment

Any additional safety equipment used during the operation of specialty use equipment must not impede or restrict the operation of the original safety equipment installed by the manufacturer.

9. Safe Practices

a. Speeds

Operators will not operate specialty use equipment above posted speed limits or at speeds greater than those reasonable and safe considering weather conditions, traffic, road conditions, type and condition of equipment, and manufacturer's recommendations. Operators must always maintain control of the equipment and be able to stop within the clear-sight distance.

b. Loading and Unloading an ATV/UTV/Snowmobiles

There are two methods of transporting an ATV/UTV/Snowmobile: towing on a trailer or transporting in a truck bed. Reclamation prefers transporting ATV/UTV/Snowmobiles with a trailer as trailers normally have built-in ramps and are set lower to the ground (see paragraph 4.12.9.e, "Trailer"). Loading and unloading an ATV/UTV/Snowmobiles in a truck bed is a hazardous operation and employees should only use this method if there is no other option available.

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- Recommended Measures for Loading ATV/UTV/Snowmobiles into Pickup Trucks.
 - Operators will use one piece-, bi-, or tri-fold ramps that are strapped, chained, bolted to the truck bed.
 - If using 2 individual ramps, the ramps shall be a minimum of 10 inches wide and 72 inches long, positioned to assure that the manufacturer's maximum slope for operation of the ATV/UTV/Snowmobile is not exceeded. Operators must use chains or straps to secure the ramps to the vehicle and prevent rearward movement of the ramps during loading.

- Ramp Loading Criteria.
 - Operators must use ramps manufactured specifically for the use of loading and unloading specialty use of equipment.
 - Operators must use ramps made of aluminum or steel and must be of welded construction. A driving surface must have closely spaced crossed members or mesh construction with high traction surface. Operators may not use wooden ramps.
 - Operators may use either one or two piece-ramps with factory-installed hinges.
 - The weight capacity of the ramp(s) must meet or exceed the weight of the ATV/UTV/Snowmobile and any additional equipment and contents (i.e., filled water tanks) that have been added.

c. Towing

Operators will not exceed the maximum towing capacity, specified by the manufacturer in the operator's manual.

d. Unauthorized Riding

Operators shall not allow employees to ride in, or on, specialty use equipment unless they are sitting in a seat designed and installed for that purpose by the manufacturer and the operator has been trained to safely operate the equipment with a passenger.

e. Trailing

Qualified personnel shall ensure that the trailer used to transport specialty use equipment is rated to safely handle the weight of the equipment and its attachments. Qualified personnel shall properly distribute, chock, tie down, or otherwise secure every piece of specialty use equipment on the trailer. Operators must also secure tools and material during transport and keep stored items and personnel in separated locations. Only qualified trailer operators may tow a trailer per RSHS 4.13, Towable Trailer Safety.

f. Hauling Cargo

All specialty use equipment used to haul cargo shall not exceed the weight capacities specified by the manufacture. ATVs may only haul liquid cargo up to a maximum of 15 gallons on the rear

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cargo rack. Operators must properly secure cargo with devices rated for the weight of the hauled cargo.

g. Seats and Seatbelts

Operators shall not allow passengers to ride in, or on, specialty use equipment unless they are seated with the installed seatbelts fastened. This excludes equipment not equipped with a belt-type restraint system like two-person snowmobiles. All operators and/or employees must use the provided restraint system if one is available.

h. Emergency Equipment

First-line supervisors shall provide operators of specialty use equipment with emergency equipment per the operator's manual and JHA.

i. Wheel Chocks

Operators shall use 2-wheel chocks for each vehicle or trailer where there is a possibility that the vehicle will move or shift because of roadway conditions or loading/unloading of the vehicle or trailer, as required in 29 CFR 1910.178(k)(1), mechanical means to secure trucks.

j. Fire Extinguishers

Operators shall ensure fire extinguishers are available on specialty use equipment and ensure they are in a serviceable condition.

k. Audible Alarms

Operators shall ensure that factory installed audible alarms on all Reclamation-owned bi-directional specialty use equipment and rental equipment always remain operable and audible.

l. Horns

Operators shall ensure that specialty use equipment horns are distinguishable from the surrounding noise level. The operator shall ensure that the horn is operational at the beginning of each shift.

10. Inspection Requirements

a. Initial Inspection

A trained operator or maintenance technician shall perform an initial safety inspection, per the operator's manual, on all new specialty use equipment before putting it into service to ensure it is safe to operate.

b. Periodic Inspection

The operator must inspect specialty use equipment at the beginning of each work shift per the manufacturer's requirements. This includes, but is not limited to the following safety items:

- service brake,

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- parking brake,
- windows,
- tires/tire pressure,
- tracks,
- lights,
- signals,
- warning devices,
- steering mechanism,
- operating controls,
- wipers,
- defrosters,
- first aid kits,
- coupling devices, and
- fire extinguishers.

11. Maintenance Requirements

a. Removal from Service

The operator or maintenance technician must remove specialty use equipment from service whenever the operator or any other Reclamation employee detects an unsafe condition. Operators must tag equipment with a “Do Not Use” tag or similar tag that alerts employees not to use the equipment. No employee may place the unsafe equipment back into service until a certified technician has repaired and tested or inspected the equipment to ensure it is safe to operate.

b. Repair Shutdown

The operator must shut down and secure equipment from any accidental release of hazardous energy (see RSHS Section 1.13, Control of Hazardous Energy, Lockout/Tagout), while making repairs or adjustments unless operation is essential to making the adjustments or repairs. Operators shall use all energy isolation devices during the repair process, if required.

c. Refueling

Refueling is subject to the requirements set forth in the operator’s manual and in RSHS Section 3.01, Standards for Material Handling, Storage, and Disposal.

d. Blocking

Operators shall block or crib equipment or parts suspended or held aloft by cables, hydraulic cylinders, slings, ropes, hoists, jacks, or manufacturer-supplied hazardous energy control devices, or lower the equipment or parts to a supporting surface before permitting employees to work in, under, or between pieces of equipment or parts.

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e. Certification of Rollover Protective Structures (ROPS)

First-line supervisors shall verify that the ROPS are certified by one of the following methods:

- manufacturer or PE's written confirmation that the structures meet required design criteria, or
- permanent labels attached to the structure.

▲ RSHS Appendix A: Definitions

RSHS Appendix A ([Definitions](#)) is available to print at:

<https://www.usbr.gov/safety/rshs/index.html>.

▲ RSHS Appendix B: Additional References and Citations

RSHS Appendix B ([Additional References and Citations](#)) is available to print at:

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