

**Wisconsin  
Department of Natural Resources  
All-terrain Vehicle  
Enforcement & Safety Report**

**2002**



**PO Box 7921  
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Wisconsin DNR - 2002  
ATV Annual Program  
Report

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**State of Wisconsin  
Department of Natural Resources  
Bureau of Law Enforcement  
2002 ATV Report  
Summary**

The 2002 ATV report is compiled from the eleven fatal investigations and other data collected during the calendar year. The report is based on the growing number of ATVs used and the Department's commitment to promote safe riding by observing trends and providing solutions in areas of concern.

Conservation wardens investigate all fatal ATV incidents and as such, Wisconsin Law requires that a conservation warden or law enforcement officer be notified immediately of any ATV incident that results in a fatality or an injury requiring medical treatment by a physician. In addition, the operator(s) involved in these reportable incidents must file a written report with the Department of Natural Resources within 10 days of the incident, insofar as they are capable of doing so.

**FATAL INCIDENT CAUSES**

The ATV rolling over on the victim was the leading cause of death (4). The secondary factor causing the fatal incident was divided between the ATV striking a fixed object and ejection of the operator, both categories containing three fatalities. Data shows that alcohol as a contributing factor is higher this reporting period (46%) than it was the previous reporting period (27%).

The law expressly states a person operating an ATV is under the influence of alcohol once blood alcohol levels reach 0.10. Of the seven toxicology reports, five showed those victims had consumed some alcohol. Looking closer at the five victims who had consumed alcohol, three had blood-alcohol readings of higher than 0.20. Although the fatal incident data is not statistically large, the information indicates that "alcohol as a factor" has continued to increase for the past several years.

**WHO WAS INVOLVED**

All but one of the fatal accident victims involved was male. The ages of the fatal victims ranged from 4-50 years, with the average age listed at 25.9. All but one of the eleven victims were Wisconsin residents. The largest percentage of the victims killed was evenly distributed for all ages above 12. One child under the age of 12 was killed during this reporting period (4 years old). None of the victims had received formal ATV Safety Training from the Department of Natural Resources. Of the eleven victims, two were positively known to have been wearing a helmet.

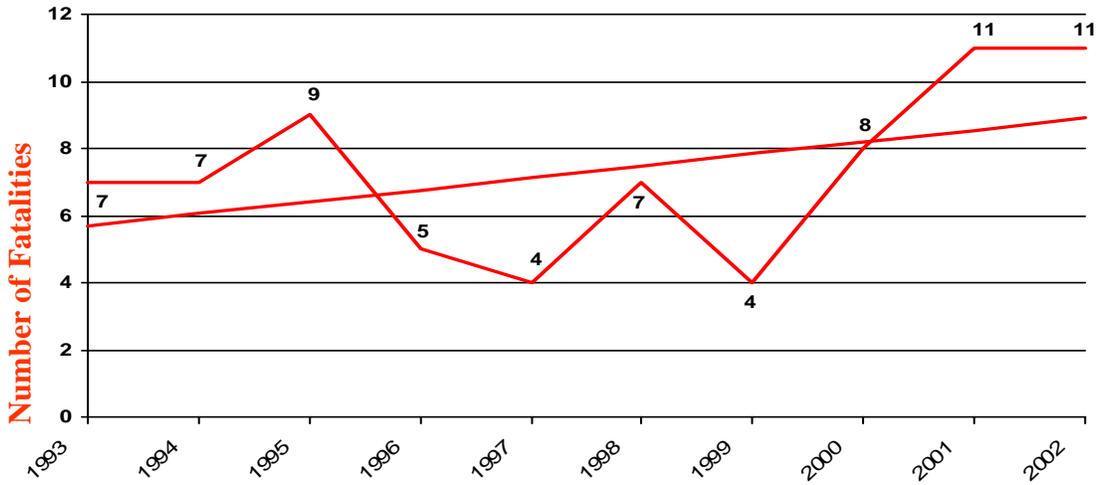
**WHEN DO THE INCIDENTS OCCUR**

The highest percentage of fatalities occurred Sunday (4) and Saturday (3), followed by Friday with 2. The time of day/night that most of the fatal crashes occurred between 5pm - 9pm with two near 1pm.

**FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED**

New ATV purchases and a change in the law allowing ATVs weighing up to and including 900 pounds have resulted in significant increases in the number of registered ATVs and users. The winter months resulted in below average snowfall accumulations and an average summer allowed ATVs to be used in most open trail areas.

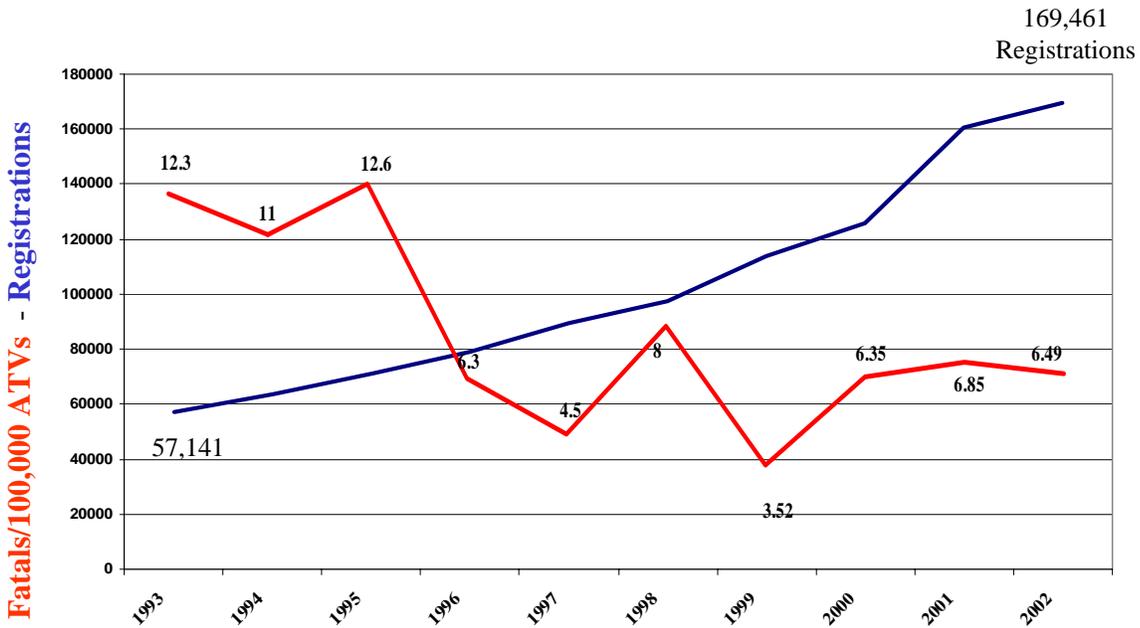
## History of ATV Fatalities By Calendar Year



The ten year fatal average is 7.3 fatalities per year.

Trend

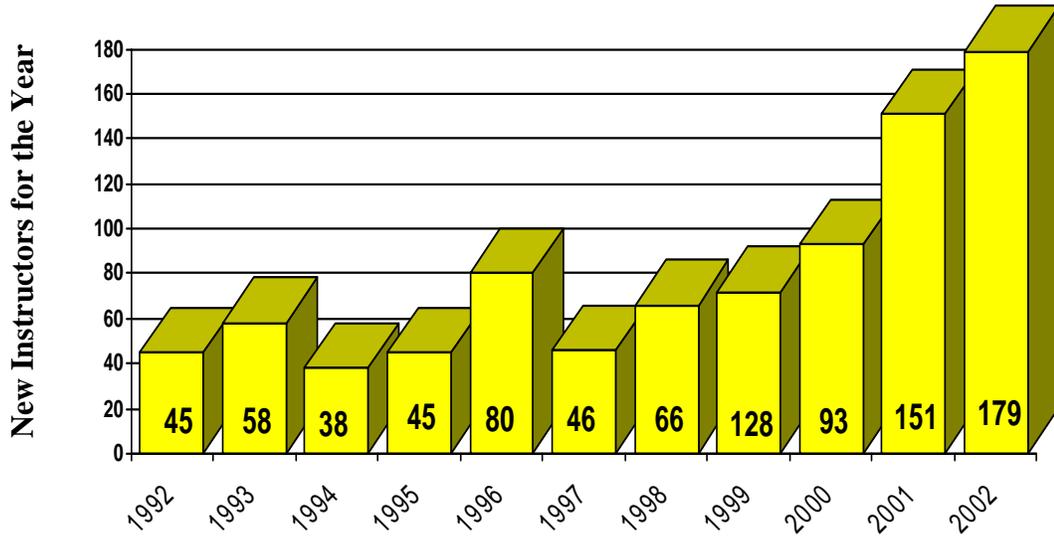
## ATV Fatality Rate Per 100,000 Registered ATVs



Beginning October 1, 2001 the Department began registering machines that weighed up to and including 900 pounds. The change came from a revision in the law.

ATV's must meet a specific definition in order to be registered.

## History of New ATV Education Instructors Certified

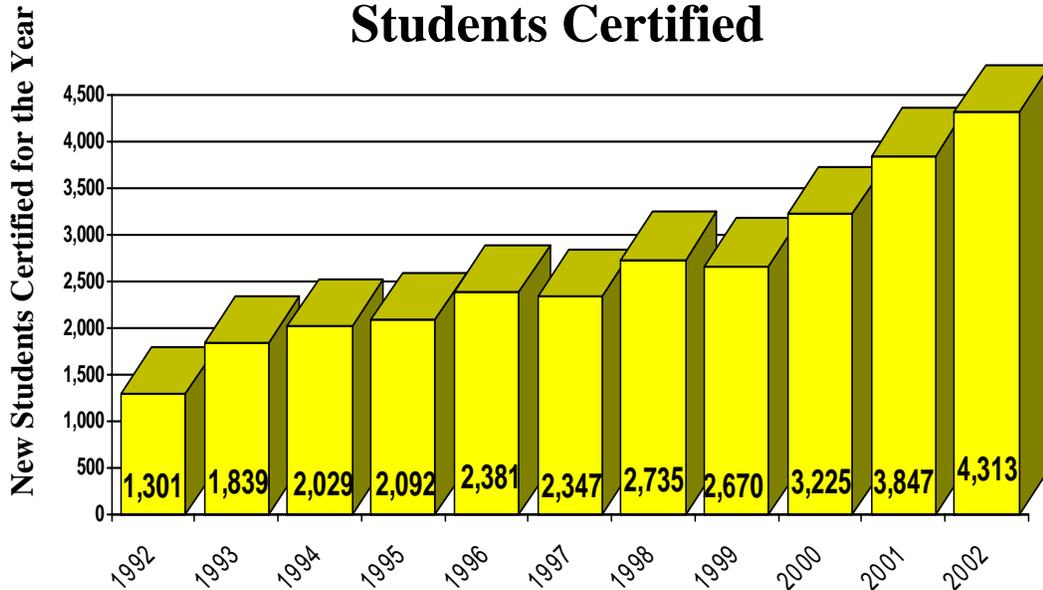


There were a total of 588 active instructors for the year 2002.

There were 213 ATV safety training courses held during 2002.

Historical results have shown the majority of the fatal victims have not been WI ATV safety graduates.

## History of ATV Education Students Certified

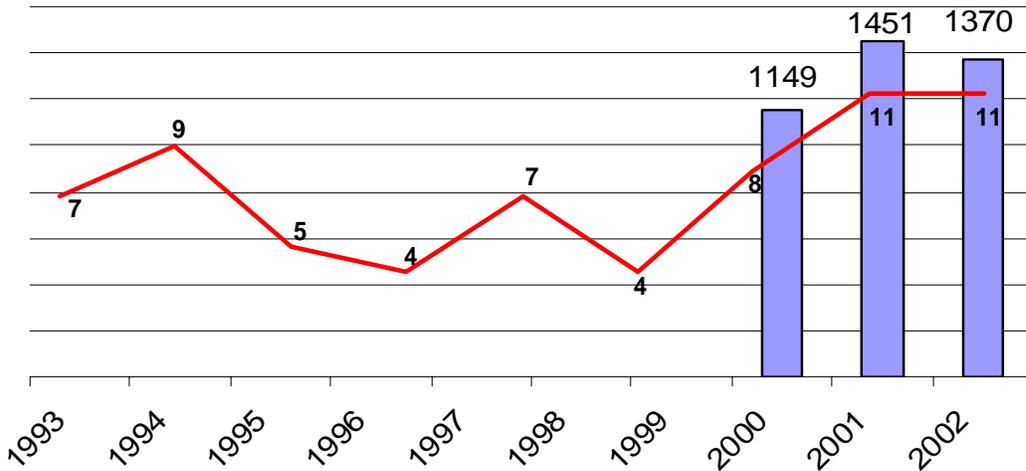


The ATV Safety Education program began in 1986.

The total number of students certified for the entire history of the ATV program is 34,579.

Fatalities to Warden Enforcement Hours

## 2002 ATV Fatality Rate To Warden Enforcement Hours



Enforcement hours were added to the charts in year 2000.

The Budget Bill which passed October 2001 added 2 positions to the ATV program.

The addition resulted in 4-FTE dedicated to the program.

Citations include all sheriff patrols and all Wardens.

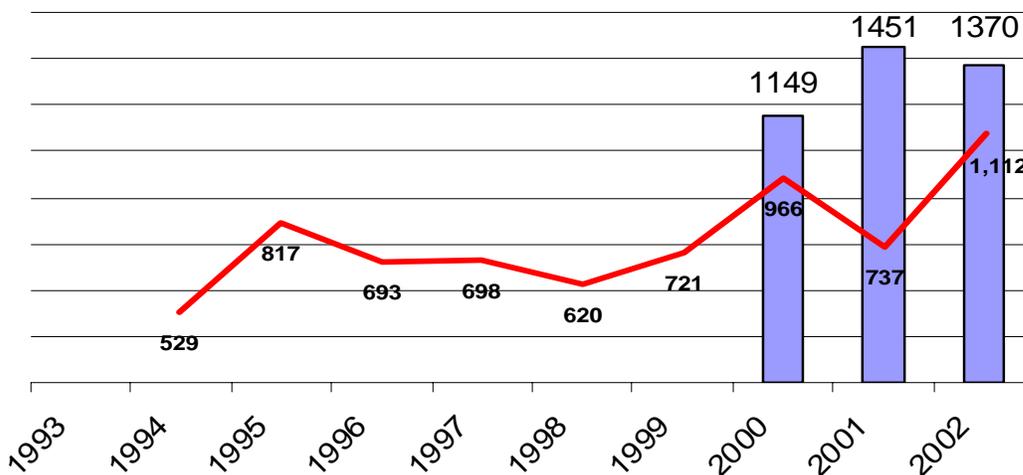
Hours include only Warden enforcement hours.

There were nineteen counties that participated in the ATV enforcement and reimbursement program for 2002.

Citation numbers are affected by hours of ATV use by the public. During low snow years, ATV use is higher and therefore violations are expected to be higher.

Total Citations to Warden Enforcement Hours

## 2002 ATV Warden and Sheriff Citations To Warden Enforcement Hours



Alcohol was detected in 46% of the victims for 2002 .

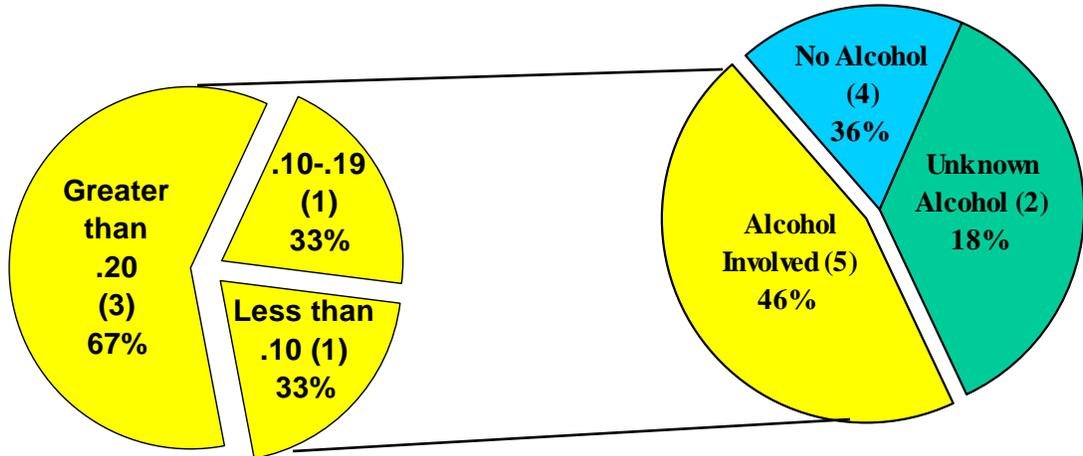
Alcohol was detected in 27% of the victims for 2001 .

Alcohol was detected in 38% of the victims for 2000.

Alcohol was detected 25% of the victims for 1999.

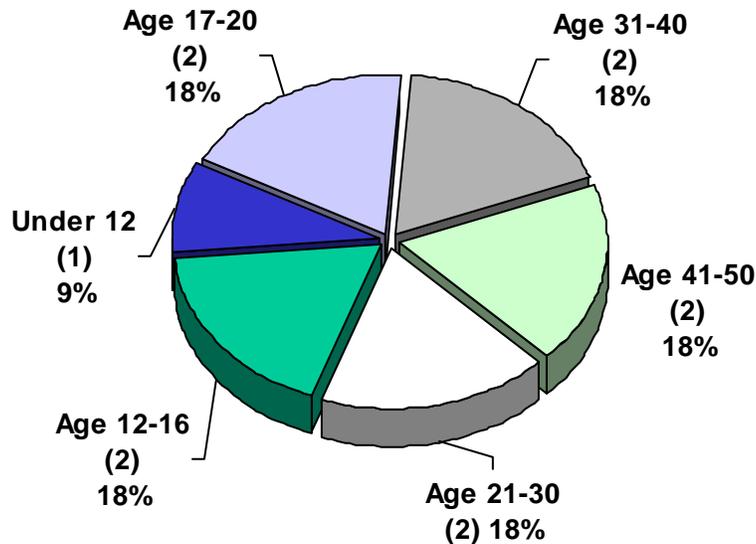
Three of the 2002 victims had blood alcohol levels above 0.2.

## 2002 ATV Fatalities Alcohol Involvement



- Numbers in ( ) represents number of victims.
- Blood alcohol content, grams/ml.

## 2002 ATV Fatalities Age of Victims



The average age of the fatality victim was 25.9 years old a decrease from the previous year (32).

The largest percentage of the victims killed was evenly distributed for all ages above 12.

## 2002 Citations Issued for ATV Violations

<b>Total Citations</b> (including wardens and sheriff patrols).....	<b>1,112</b>
Operate ATV w/o Registration (V-1) .....	160
Permit ATV Operation w/o Registration (V-2) .....	49
Operate ATV in a Careless Manner (V-3).....	20
Operate ATV While Intoxicated (V-4).....	22
Operate ATV on Private Property w/o Permission (V-5).....	122
Operate ATV on Native American Lands w/o Permission (V-6).....	3
Transport Loaded or Uncased Firearm, or Bow on ATV (V-7) .....	12
Drive or pursue Wild Animal with ATV (V-8) .....	1
Operate ATV within 150' of Dwelling over 10-MPH (V-9).....	9
Operate ATV over 10-MPH on Ice within 100' of Persons or Shanty (V-10, V-21) ....	5
Illegal Operating of ATV on or Near Highways (V-11).....	407
ATV Equipment Violations (V-12) .....	16
Fail to Report ATV Accident (V-13).....	2
Fail to Stop ATV for Officer (V-14).....	13
Fail to Transfer Registration of ATV (V-15).....	7
Fail to Display or Improper Display of Registration (V-16) .....	24
Fail to Notify DNR with Change of Address (V-17).....	2
Dealer Fail to Collect Fee and Submit Registration Application (V-18).....	1
Operate on a Cemetery, Burial Ground, School, Church w/o Permission (V-19).....	8
Operate at Speed that is Unreasonable or Improper (V-20) .....	7
Owner Permitting Operation by Person Under Age, or Disabled (V-22).....	97
Operate with Alcohol Concentration Above 0.1% (V-23) .....	13
Refuse to Take Intoxicated ATV Test (V-24) .....	3
Absolute Sobriety for Person under 19 (V-25).....	1
Cause Injury by Intoxicated Operation (V-26).....	2
Miscellaneous (V-27).....	6
Operate/Ride ATV w/o Head Gear (V-28).....	94
Interference with Signs and Standards (V-29).....	0

## Wisconsin ATV Fatality Summary - Year 2002

Incident #	Date Time	Location	Type Primary cause/ Secondary cause	Age Sex	BAC Residency Helmet
1.	4-14-02	Town of Albion	Struck tree	32	0.214
	21:15	Trempealeau County (public trail)	Alcohol Internal injury.	Male	WI No

The victim was traveling with two companions, all on separate ATVs. After leaving a tavern, the three men traveled on Buffalo River State Trail. The victim was on a borrowed 500-cc machine and was the last rider in the group. The two leaders noticed the victim was no longer following. The victim was found next to the ATV, which had crashed into a large tree. The victim died at the hospital later that evening.

2.	4-20-02	Town of Fairchild	Rollover	35	0.337
	13:45	Eau Claire County (private drive)	Alcohol Internal injury	Male	WI No

The victim operator drove a 4 wheel 400cc ATV westbound on his unsurfaced driveway for approximately 131 feet and then began to execute a turn to the right. The ATV rolled over once and landed upright. The operator was killed when he was thrown from the ATV and it rolled over him.

3.	6-09-02	Town of Crandon	Rollover	14	**
	18:40	Forest County (snowmobile trail)	Speed/Inexperience Internal injuries.	Male	WI Yes

A 14-year-old male was operating a 400cc ATV on a snowmobile trail within the Crandon city limits. The victim a passenger on the ATV. The operator and the victim were going down a steep hill and lost control of the ATV. The ATV flipped over and either landed on or rolled over the victim. The victim died the next day, 06-10-2002, at a hospital. The operator was treated and released. The investigation is ongoing.

\*\*BAC not obtained.

4.	6-29-02	Town of Crandon	Ejected	29	0.0
	21:20	Forest County (Public land)	Carless operation Head trauma	Male	WI No

The victim was second in a group of 3 ATVs traveling on Whiteye Lake Road, which is not an ATV route. The group was operating southbound on the left side of the road, apparently heading toward a snowmobile trail. It appears that the victim operated too close to the edge of the roadway and at least one wheel hit the shoulder of the road causing the victim to lose control. The victim was ejected and suffered a serious head injury.

<b>Incident #</b>	<b>Date Time</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Type Primary cause/ Secondary cause</b>	<b>Age Sex</b>	<b>BAC Residency Helmet</b>
5.	7-05-02 17:30	Town of Beecher Marinette County (Public road)	Collision/Rollover Speed/Alcohol Head trauma	22 Male	0.177 WI No

The fatally injured (victim #1) operator was driving an ATV northbound on River Road in Beecher. River Road is not an approved ATV Route. Victim #2, a passenger on the ATV, was wearing a helmet and suffered potentially life threatening head injuries. Victim #1 failed to negotiate a curve, and the ATV left the roadway traveling approximately 55 feet on the shoulder before sideswiping a tree. After striking the tree, the ATV struck uneven ground and rolled several times before coming to rest. Victim #1 was pronounced dead at the scene and did not appear to be wearing a helmet.

6.	7-6-02 20:45	Town of Beecher Marinette County (Public road)	Fall/Ejected  Operator error Internal Trauma	50 Female	0.03 WI No
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At approximately 8:45 PM on 7/6/02, the severely injured (victim #2) was driving an ATV in a field on private property off Weckerle Road in Beecher. The fatally injured (victim #1) was a passenger on the ATV. Victim #2 drove several hundred yards through the field and turned back towards Weckerle Road. Victim #2 drove the ATV into an excavation pit that was approximately 25 feet deep. The ATV impacted near the bottom of the excavation site and both victims were ejected from the machine. Neither victim was wearing a helmet. Victim #1 sustained head, neck, and chest injuries. Victim #2 sustained a broken backbone, broken ribs, facial fractures, and other injuries. Lack of familiarity with the terrain appears to be the major factor in the accident.

7.	7-11-02 19:20	Town of Richland Richland County (Private land)	Rollover Operator error Unknown	4 Male	0.0 WI No
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A 6 year old operator was operating an ATV and towing the victim behind in a lawn cart. The operator entered tall grass adjacent to a creek not realizing how close the ATV was to the creek. The ATV then turned over pinning the victim underneath the cart in the water. The victim later died at the hospital on 7/16/02.

8.	8-11-02 19:20	Town of Niagara Marinette County (Private land)	Rollover  Speed	19 Male	0.0 MI No
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At approximately 5:50 the victim was riding solo on an ATV in a private field with two friends nearby. The victim drove down an incline approximately 250 feet and intentionally jumped a small natural rise of soil in the field at a high rate of speed. The ATV flipped end-over-end and the victim rolled off and landed approximately 96 feet up hill from the soil rise. Victim was transferred to the hospital and later died on 8/17/02.

<b>Incident #</b>	<b>Date Time</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Type Primary cause/ Secondary cause</b>	<b>Age Sex</b>	<b>BAC Residency Helmet</b>
<b>9.</b>	9-10-02 18:40	Town of Preston Trempealeau County (Public road)	Struck tree Alcohol Lacerated Aorta	20 Male	0.29 MI No

The victim was operating a 3 wheel ATV on a town road. The victim lost control of the ATV after traveling up a hill and subsequently struck a tree.

<b>10.</b>	10-27-02 12:59	Town of Stephenson Marinette County (closed snowmobile trail)	Collision w/ATV Failure to yield Chest Injuries	12 Male	0.0 WI No
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Two ATV's were operating on a snowmobile trail. It appears that the operator of ATV A made an abrupt turn to the right and at the same time, the operator of ATV B made an abrupt turn to the left. The two ATV's collided and the operator of ATV A went over the handlebars and came to rest with his legs entangled in ATV B.

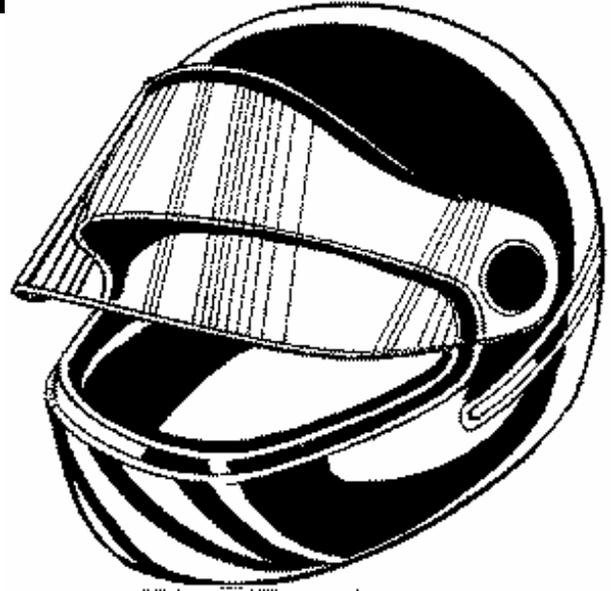
<b>11.</b>	11-29-02 19:00	Town of Mercer Iron County (Flowage)	Went through ice Pending Pending	48 Male	.034 WI No
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The victim was reported missing to the Sheriff's office after not returning from fishing. Due to poor weather condition and unsafe ice, attempts to locate the victim were unsuccessful. On Sunday, 12/29/02, another attempt to locate the victim resulted in finding a upside down submerged ATV protruding from the ice and snow. The victim was found under the ice next to the ATV.

**WEAR YOUR HELMET**

While you **Ride**  
**Responsibly...**  
**Under control...**  
&  
**SOBER**

and you will....



**Ride for life**



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