

Wisconsin Off-Highway Motorcycle Laws



This pamphlet is not a complete set of OHM laws. However, it supplies the essential information. Please read it carefully. If you have any questions, contact the Department of Natural Resources personnel or your local law enforcement authorities.

Check with local governing agencies for local ordinances that may be more restrictive than state regulations.

**The Future of OHMs in Wisconsin Depends On You.
Ride Responsibly!**

Helmets Save Lives. Wear it Wisconsin!



Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 7921
Madison, WI 53707

For more info and safety information, visit dnr.wi.gov and search "OHM"

DNR Call Center

1-888-936-7463

(7 a.m.–10 p.m. Seven days/week)

Live chat and e-mail service available.



LE-510 2020

OHM Clubs / Organizations

The development and maintenance of Wisconsin's OHM trails is accomplished, in part, through the efforts of OHM club members and private citizens. Their volunteer time is spent performing the crucial tasks of maintaining, enhancing and expanding OHM trails. Please consider joining a club. For more info visit: www.wohma.com

OHM Contents

Definitions	5
Frequently Asked Questions.....	6
OHM Clubs/Organizations	7
What is considered an OHM?.....	7
OHM Registration	7
Dealer Requirements	9
Trade-In of Limited Use OHMs	10
Rental Requirements—Limited Use OHMs.....	10
Non-Resident Registration Options.....	10
General Safety Information.....	10
Driver's License Requirement.....	10
OHM/ATV Safety Certification Courses.....	10
Customer ID numbers.....	11
Agricultural Use	12
Helmet Requirements.....	12
Alcohol and Drugs.....	13
Public Roadway/Highway Use	14
Unimproved Right-of-Way/Ditch Use	14
Where Can I Ride My OHM?.....	15
Speed Limits/Restrictions.....	17
Other OHM Restrictions.....	17
Operation On and Around Waterways.....	17
Equipment Requirements	18
Exhaust and Noise Restrictions.....	18
Accidents and Crashes	18
OHM Races/Events.....	19
Events on Frozen Waterways	19
OHMs and Hunting	19
Disabled Operators.....	19
Liability of Landowners.....	20
Winter OHM Use.....	20

What's New?

The Off-Highway Motorcycle (OHM) Program is new in Wisconsin. The new OHM laws were signed into law on March 1, 2016 with an effective date of October 1, 2016. Review this section for all the new rules and regulations related to OHMs. For the most updated version of the regulations, view them online at dnr.wi.gov.

General Overview:

- All OHMs must be registered with the DNR if they are operated on private or public areas specifically open for public OHM use.
- Not all ATV trails and routes are open for legal off-highway motorcycle use. OHMs may only be used where their use is explicitly authorized. Previously open OHM areas should continue to remain open, however please check with local trail managers or local governments for any updates on OHM areas or local regulations. Also check with the Wisconsin Off-Highway Motorcycle Association (www.WOHMA.com).
- Public areas previously open to OHMs may require that operators of OHM obtain a local OHM trail use sticker. This local sticker requirement would be in addition to DNR OHM registration and decal; please check with your local trail manager about any local OHM trail use sticker requirement.
- All OHM operators that are at least 12 years old and born *after* January 1, 1998, must have completed OHM Safety certification to operate an OHM on areas open to the public for recreational use. The DNR will be creating a combined online ATV/OHM Safety Certification training course for operators needing both certifications and an online OHM short-course for previous WI ATV Safety graduates that only need OHM Safety certification.

Definitions

- Accident**—a crash involving an OHM is any accident (regardless of the number of vehicles involved) which results in a fatality or an injury that requires medical treatment by a physician.
- Accompanied**—subject to continuous verbal direction or control, but not necessarily on the same machine.
- Agricultural Purpose**—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.
- Designated Adult**—parent, guardian or adult designated by the parent or guardian.
- DNR**—Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.
- DOT**—Department of Transportation.
- Highway**—all public ways, thoroughfares, and bridges on the same. It includes the entire width between the boundary lines of every way open to the use of the public as a matter of right for the purpose of vehicle traffic.
- Immediate family**—persons who are related as spouses, who are related as siblings, or who are related as parent and child.
- Limited use off-highway motorcycle**—an off-highway motorcycle that is not registered by the department of transportation for use on highways.
- Off-highway motorcycle corridor**—an off-highway motorcycle trail or other established off-highway motorcycle corridor that is open to the public for the operation of off-highway motorcycles for recreational purposes but does not include an off-highway motorcycle route.
- Off-highway motorcycle**—a 2-wheeled motor vehicle that is straddled by the operator, that is equipped with handlebars, and that is designed for use off a highway, regardless of whether it is also designed for use on a highway
- Off-highway motorcycle route**—a highway or sidewalk designated for recreational use by operators of off-highway motorcycles by the governmental agency having jurisdiction.
- Off-highway motorcycle trail**—a marked corridor on public property or on private lands subject to public easement or lease, designated for recreational use by operators of off-highway motorcycles by the governmental agency having jurisdiction.
- Roadway**—that portion of a highway between the regularly established curb line or that portion, which is improved, designed or ordinarily used for vehicle travel excluding the berm or shoulder.

Frequently Asked Questions

- Q.** Can my 10 year old ride their 50 cc OHM with me on a trail?
- A. Yes.** They must be accompanied by a designated adult at all times and the OHM must be registered.
- Q.** Can I still operate my DOT licensed dual-sport motorcycle on open public forest roads like I used to; without DNR registration?
- A. Yes.** As long as the forest road isn't a designated ATV trail that is closed to all motor vehicles and OHMs. If the forest road is an ATV trail that is open to OHMs, then your dual-sport motorcycle will also require DNR registration in order to ride on the trail.
- Q.** Can the DNR assist me with making my OHM street legal?
- A. No.** The Dept. of Transportation and the Dept. of Motor Vehicles regulate and license street legal motor vehicles. These agencies can assist you with questions regarding street legal equipment requirements.
- Q.** I have to complete OHM Safety Education before I can legally operate my OHM. A couple years ago I completed ATV Safety, does that qualify? Do I have to take the new ATV/OHM combination course?
- A. No.** Any WI ATV Safety Courses completed prior to October 1, 2016 did not contain any OHM safety training information and does not certify persons in OHM Safety. If you previously graduated from a WI ATV Safety Course, you are eligible to complete a free, OHM Safety mini-course available online at www.atvcourse.com. If you need both ATV and OHM Safety certification, you may complete any approved WI online ATV/ OHM Safety combination course to become certified in both.

OHM Clubs/Organizations

Please consider joining a club, your help is needed. By staying on the trail and obeying off-highway motorcycle laws, you show your respect for the hard work of the local clubs and/or trail managers.

What is considered an OHM?

An off-highway motorcycle means a 2-wheeled motor vehicle that is straddled by the operator, that is equipped with handlebars, and that is designed for use off a highway, regardless of whether it is also designed for use on a highway.



Trail motorcycle



Dual-sport motorcycle

Trail or dirt bikes are a "limited use off-highway motorcycle" which means an off-highway motorcycle that is not registered by the Department of Transportation for highway use.

OHM Registration

OHM Registration Requirements

All OHMs must apply for Wisconsin public use registration if they are operated or intend to operate on designated OHM trails, areas that are specifically open to the public for recreational OHM use, designated and signed OHM road routes and while otherwise operating legally on or adjacent to public highways. OHMs do not require DNR registration if they are operating on private lands that are not held open to the public for recreational use of OHMs. Private use registration is required for OHM used for operating on roads for agricultural purposes.

All OHMs required to be registered in Wisconsin must:

- Display a current Wisconsin registration decal and carry the registration certificate, or
- Have a temporary operating receipt with the operator (valid until the decal and certificate arrives).

Registration Display

The OHM registration decal must be affixed to the exterior of the OHM by its own adhesive and clearly visible to law enforcement at all times. Only one decal is issued to each OHM. The registration certificate must also be carried with the operator at all times and displayed to law enforcement upon request.

LATE FEE: There is a \$5.00 late fee charged for renewing your OHM registration after your current registration decal has expired.

Registration Types

Public Use—Valid for legal operation on areas open to OHMs for public use, road routes and other legal roadway use as specified by law. Not valid for agricultural use. Valid for up to 2 years, beginning April 1st and expiring two years later on March 31st: \$30.00

Private Use—Valid for use exclusively on private lands owned by the applicant or by an immediate family member. This type of registration remains valid until ownership is transferred: \$15.00

Private Use, Agricultural—Valid for machines used for an agricultural purpose. Agricultural purpose includes a purpose related to the transportation of farm implements, equipment, supplies, or products on a farm or between farms. It is valid during operation on public roads for agricultural purposes, but is not valid for recreational operation on public lands open to OHMs. Owners may dual register their machines for public use also. This type of registration remains valid until ownership is transferred: \$15.00

Free Registration Weekend. All ATVs, UTVs and OHMs are exempt from registration and trail pass requirements during the first full weekend in June. All other laws apply.

How do I Register my OHM?

For more info Visit: dnr.wi.gov and search keyword “OHM registration.”

Transaction Type

- New or transfers of existing Wisconsin registrations: may be done online, at a DNR Service Center or by mail.
- Application must be submitted within 10 days of purchase. Dealerships must submit application within 7 days of the sale.
- Renewals: may be done online, at any of our sales agents, at a DNR Service Center or by mail.
- Replacement: may be done online, at a DNR Service Center or by mail.

Where can I Register?

NOTE: If you are registering your OHM, you will need to provide the make, model, year, cc size, and Vehicle Identification Number.

- **Online**—Visit GoWild.WI.Gov to complete your new, transfer, renewal and replacement transactions.
- **Sales Agents**—More than 1,000 sales agents provide registration renewal service only.
- **Service Center**—DNR Service Centers provide full registration service for new, renewal, replacement and transfer of OHMs. Verify service center hours before visiting.
- **By Mail**—After completing all requested information on the application form, make a photocopy, and mail the original application and appropriate fees to the address provided on the form. Customers who submit their application and payment by mail will have to wait until they receive their materials in the mail before they can operate their OHM in public areas open to OHM use.

Temporary Operating Receipt

Customers who submit registration applications and payment at a DNR Service Center, online or at a sales agent will receive a temporary operating receipt that allows for immediate operation until the registration decal and certificate is received. Customers who submit their application and payment by mail will have to wait until they receive their materials in the mail before they can operate.

Registration Exemptions

Registration is not required if:

- The OHM displays an approved registration decal required by a federally recognized American Indian tribe or band.
- The OHM displays a commercial registration plate or sign attached in the manner authorized by law.
- The OHM is operated exclusively for racing on a raceway facility or as part of a special off-highway motorcycle event as authorized by law.
- The OHM is present in this state, for a period not to exceed 15 days, and is used exclusively as part of an advertisement being made for the manufacturer of the off-highway motorcycle.

Commercial Registration

OHM dealer definitions and requirements

Commercial Certificate—Every person who is an OHM dealer, engaged in business within this state shall register with the department and obtain a Commercial OHM certificate.

A commercial dealer certificate and three registration decals and certificate cards will be issued.—\$90.00

Additional Commercial Decals/Cards—Additional registration decals and certificate cards can be ordered with original and renewal Commercial Certificate applications.

A current Commercial Certificate holder may also order additional registration decals (\$30) and certificates (\$5).

Commercial Decal Display—Commercial dealers will create or purchase their own plates to display their commercial decals upon. The registration period will begin on April 1 or the date of issuance/renewal and end on March 31 of the 2nd year.

Dealer Requirements

Dealer registration

OHM dealers and engaged in business in this state must register with the DNR and obtain a commercial certificate. The DNR will issue three commercial decals. The decals must be attached to a plate or sign (any type or size) that is clearly displayed and mounted to each OHM that you offer for sale or otherwise allow to be operated as part of your business. Additional decals can be purchased from the DNR. Dealers cannot operate on temporary operating receipts. OHMs can only be operated legally when the commercial decal is displayed. Commercial registrations expire every two years. Commercial Fee: \$90. Additional Decal Fee: \$30

Sales by Dealers

If the OHM is intended to be operated in areas open for public use, road routes and other legal roadway use as specified by law, dealers shall require the purchaser of each OHM to complete an application for registration, collect the fees and submit everything to the DNR within 7 days unless it is exempt from registration. The dealer may then issue the purchaser a signed copy of the application which they can operate with.

Trade-In of Limited Use OHMs

A dealer cannot accept a limited use OHM for trade-in unless it's currently registered with the DNR or exempt from registration.

Rental Requirements—Limited Use OHMs

- Instruct first time (new) operators on how to operate the OHM.
- Restrict rental or lease of OHMs to persons age 12 or older.
- Verify that all riders and operators under 18 years of age have a helmet to use.
- Provide clean, usable helmets available for rent to any operator or passenger under 18 years of age that may be on the OHM.

Non-Resident Registration Options

A non-resident trail pass is not available at this time. All non-resident OHM owners must purchase Wisconsin Public Use registration to operate on OHM routes or areas held out to the public for the recreational use of off-highway motorcycles.

General Safety Information

Off-highway motorcycles (OHMs) take specialized skills to operate safely. Riders should seek out training from experienced operators and practice in controlled settings. The use of these machines by children should be highly controlled and supervised. Use of safety equipment such as helmets, eye protection, chest protectors, arm and leg protection and off-road footwear is recommended and in some instances required by law.

Driver's License Requirement

An operator of a limited use OHM does not need a driver's license if they are legally operating on a public highway, such as on a designated OHM Route, certain crossings, etc. (See Public Roadway/Highway Use). Operators of DOT licensed OHMs must have a valid driver's license to operate on all public roadways.

OHM/ATV Safety Certification Courses

- An Internet OHM Safety certification mini-course is available for current graduates of a Wisconsin ATV Safety Course. This course is available at www.atvcourse.com.
- An Internet OHM/ATV combination course is available to certify operators in **both** courses. These courses are available at www.atvcourse.com and www.offroad-ed.com.

OHM Safety Certification Requirements

Wisconsin ATV Safety certification does not meet the OHM Safety requirement. An additional OHM short course must be completed by current Wisconsin ATV Safety graduates in order to obtain OHM Safety certification.

All OHM operators at least 12 years of age and born *after* January 1, 1998 must possess a valid Wisconsin ATV/OHM combination safety certificate or valid certificate from another state or province.

Operators must carry proof of certification while operating and display it to a law enforcement officer upon request. Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) certificates do not satisfy this requirement in Wisconsin.

Safety Certification Exemptions

- Children under the age of 12 may operate an OHM on off road trails, frozen waterways and private property if they are accompanied by a designated adult (parent, guardian or other adult designated by the parent or guardian).
- Children age 12 and older are not required to possess a safety certificate while operating on frozen waterways.
- Safety certification is not required on private property unless the private property is held open to the public for the recreational use of off-highway motorcycles.
- Children under the age of 12 may operate a non-DOT licensed OHM at a sponsored OHM event if:
 - ◊ The child is wearing an approved helmet with chin strap fastened.
 - ◊ The child is accompanied by a designated adult.

Customers must have a valid DNR Customer ID number to complete a safety course. This ID number is also used to purchase hunting and fishing licenses.

Customer ID numbers

You can obtain a DNR Customer ID number by:

- using the [DNR web site](#).
- calling DNR Customer Service from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. at 1-888-936-7463
- visiting a [DNR Service Center](#) during their regularly scheduled hours.

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 OHMs legally registered for “Private–Agriculture” and displaying the registration decal; while being legally used for an “agricultural purpose.”

- OHM 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 mandated for agricultural use.
- OHM operators age 12 and born after 1-1-98 may operate on roadways if they possess a valid ATV/OHM Safety Certificate.
- OHM operators under age 12 may not operate on roadways.
- OHM operators under age 12 may operate on private lands if they are under the supervision of an adult.

Helmet Requirements

Please set a good example for children and others by always wearing a helmet whether you’re legally required to or not.

Helmet save lives! Wear it Wisconsin!

All OHM operators and passengers under the age of 18 are required to wear a minimum DOT-approved ATV or motorcycle helmet while on trails and areas held open to the public for recreational OHM use including OHM road routes. Bicycle helmets do not meet this requirement.

Helmet Exceptions

Helmets are not required in the following situations:

- While operating on private property that is not held open to the general public for recreational OHM purposes.
- While operating for agricultural purposes.
- While operating for the purpose of hunting and fishing.
- If the operator or passenger is age 18 and older.

Helmet for Passengers:

If circumstances would require you to wear a helmet as the operator then you, as a passenger, must wear a helmet. For example, a passenger riding on an OHM on private property that is held open to the public for recreational OHM use would be required to wear a helmet.

Alcohol and Drugs

- It is illegal to operate an OHM under the influence of alcohol or other drugs while operating on any trail, corridor, route or any other area (public or private) that is held open to the public for OHM; whether a fee is charged or not.
- Being under the influence is a condition in which a person is rendered incapable to operate an OHM safely due to the consumption of drugs and/or alcoholic beverages.
- No person may operate an OHM with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08% or more. In addition, a person can also be arrested for operating under the influence with a BAC that is under .08%.
- No person may operate an OHM with any detectable amount of a restricted controlled substance in their blood.

Implied Consent law—You are required to provide a sample of your breath, blood or urine if an officer has probable cause to believe you are operating an OHM under the influence. By operating an OHM on areas open to the public you have automatically consented to provide a sample of your breath, blood or urine to an officer who requests the test. If you refuse to provide a breath, blood or urine sample, you will be charged with an additional violation.

Absolute Sobriety—OHM operators may not have any amount alcohol in their system if they are under the age of 21.

Don't drink and ride. This can lead to crashes, injuries and death. Practice "**Zero Alcohol**" which is a personal choice to wait until you are done riding for the day before consuming any alcoholic beverages, it's the smart choice!

Public Roadway/Highway Use

Do not assume that you can ride on or next to roads (ditches). Unless your OHM is currently licensed with the Department of Transportation, 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:

- While operating on legally designated and signed OHM road routes. A local ordinance must exist and DOT standard OHM route signs must be properly posted.
- To cross in the most direct manner practicable, if the crossing is made at a place where no obstruction prevents a quick and safe crossing, and if the operator stops and yields the right-of-way prior to crossing. **NOTE: The OHM must be crossing from one legal area to another.**
- To cross a bridge, culvert or railroad right-of-way when operating on a designated and marked OHM trail, route or private property with permission if you cross at a place where no obstruction prevents a quick and safe crossing, and if the operator stops and yields the right-of-way prior to crossing.
- Operation is on the roadway or shoulder of a state trunk highway to cross a bridge that is 1,000 feet in length or less if there is a county ordinance and a city, village or town ordinance adopted which allows crossing of a bridge within their territorial boundaries, except that no crossing is allowed on interstate and defense highways.
- Operation is on a roadway which is not maintained, or is only minimally maintained, on a seasonal basis for motor vehicle traffic. Such operation is authorized only during the seasons when no maintenance occurs and only if the roadway is not officially closed to off-highway motorcycle traffic.
- The OHM is registered for private-agricultural use and the OHM is being operated for an agricultural purpose on a farm or between farms. Operation must be on the extreme right side of the roadway, except for when left turns may be safely made.
- Other special exceptions may apply.

Additional Roadway Restrictions

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

Unimproved Right-of-Way/Ditch Use

Operation on the unimproved right-of-way or ditch, outside the regular traveled portion of the road, is highly restricted and in most cases illegal. Many right-of-ways or ditch lines are privately owned, operation on private property without permission is trespassing.

You may operate on unimproved right-of-ways, outside the shoulder, in the following situations:

Town Roads—(Maple Road, Oak Lane, etc.) On officially designated OHM trails or routes or on private property with permission.

County Highways—(Highway C, Highway AB, etc.) On officially designated OHM trails, OHM routes or on private property with permission. If operating on a trail or running parallel to

the highway, you must be at least 10 feet from the roadway portion of the highway. **NOTE: Local route ordinances must specifically direct OHM operators to ride in the unimproved right-of-way which is uncommon.**

State Highway—(Highway 8, Highway 141, etc.)—On officially designated OHM trails or routes or on private property with permission. If operating on a trail or route running parallel to the highway, you must be at least 10 feet from the roadway portion of the highway. Travel in the median is prohibited other than when legally crossing.

Interstate Highway—(I-90, I-41, I-39, etc.)—No operation allowed.

Travel Adjacent to Roadways

- When legally operating alongside roadways during the hours of darkness, operation must be in the same direction as motor vehicle traffic in the nearest lane unless the trail or route is located at least 40 feet from the roadway or separated by a headlight barrier.
- During daylight hours, you may travel in either direction regardless of the flow of motor vehicle traffic.
- A person legally operating an OHM adjacent to a roadway must obey the motor vehicle speed limit of the adjacent roadway.

Where Can I Ride My OHM?

Most off-road trail riding opportunities are located on County and Federal owned lands, with some also found on State lands. In most instances, OHM riding is strictly restricted to trails and routes specifically open for recreational use of OHMs. Check with local, County, State and Federal offices to ensure that trails and/or routes are legally open to OHM use. **NOTE: OHMs licensed for street use may operate in all areas open to other licensed motor vehicles.**

OHM Trail Information Sources:

- County Forestry Offices
- DNR dnr.wi.gov search keyword "[OHM](#)"
- U.S. Forest Service fs.fed.gov website, search "Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest" and "Motor Vehicle Use Map"
- Wisconsin Off-Highway Motorcycle Association wohma.org

Off-Highway Motorcycle Trails

- All ATV/UTV trails are closed to OHM use unless specifically opened for their use. Check with local authorities.
- An ATV trail is an off-road corridor identified by (6"x6") brown signs with a white silhouette of an ATV and orange trail blazer (diamond) signs.
- Some trails may be designated as multiple use trails. On these trails you could encounter other users such as horses, ATVs, UTVs, hikers and bicyclists.

OHM Routes

An OHM Route is a public roadway designated as open to non-street legal OHMs (limited use OHMs) through enactment of an ordinance by local units of government. OHM Routes must be posted with OHM Route signs (24"x 18") which are green with the white silhouette of an OHM. For a complete list of roadways designated as OHM Routes, contact the local township office and/or County Highway Department.

Trail Signs

Trail and Route signs are standardized across Wisconsin.

Be familiar with them before your ride. When a county, city, village or town creates a route, ATV route signs must be erected along with directional arrow(s), at the beginning of an all-terrain vehicle route and at locations and intervals necessary to enable all-terrain vehicle operators to follow the route. Only individuals authorized by a local municipality may post, remove or alter ATV signs. If you see a signing problem, contact the local municipality and/or ATV club representative immediately.



Speed Limits/Restrictions

You must slow your OHM to 10 mph or less:

- While operating on frozen waterways within 100 feet of a person who is not on a motorized vehicle or an ice shanty.
- While operating on a trail within 100 feet of a person who is not on a motorized vehicle, such as bicyclist, hikers and other riders standing along the trail.
- When you are riding within 150 feet of a home or dwelling.*
- Obey the posted trail speed limits at all times.

Exception: *The 10 mph speed limit doesn't apply while operating on roads designated as OHM Road Routes, unless restricted by local ordinance. This rule doesn't apply to DOT licensed OHMs.*

- When operating on trail adjacent to roadways riders must obey the posted roadway speed limit unless there is a specific speed limit posted for OHMs.

Other OHM Restrictions

It's unlawful to:

- Operate at speeds that are unreasonable or improper.
- Operate in a careless manner so that it endangers another person or property of another.
- Operate on public property in areas where such operation is prohibited by signage and/or local rule or law.
- Operate on private property without the permission of the owner or lessee. Failure to post the property does not give you the authority to ride there.
- Fail to stop after being requested or signaled to do so by a law enforcement officer.

Operation On and Around Waterways

You cannot operate an OHM in any navigable water, or on the exposed bed of any navigable water (including exposed lakebeds in front of your property) except:

- To cross a stream by use of a bridge, culvert, ford or similar structure provided the crossing is in the most direct manner practical.
- To launch or load a boat, canoe, or other watercraft in the most direct manner practical.
- To access the frozen surfaces of any navigable waters provided the crossing or access is in the most direct manner practical.

"Bed of a navigable water" means all of the area below the ordinary high water mark of a lake or stream. During low-water periods, there may be several feet or more of exposed lake or streambed that is closed to ATV and other vehicular traffic.

Equipment Requirements

No one may operate a “limited use” OHM during the hours of darkness unless it is equipped with a white headlamp and a red tail lamp that are activated. It is recommended that you leave your lights on at all times for safety.

Equipment requirements for limited use OHMs do not apply while operated with permission on private property that is not open to the public.

- Colored headlamp covers, lens covers or colored headlamp bulbs are not legal to use when you are riding during the hours of Darkness.
- Limited use OHM headlamps must be able to illuminate any person or object at a distance of 200 feet in front of your machine.
- The tail lamp must be plainly visible from a distance of 500 feet away.

Note: *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.*

- The limited use OHM must be equipped with at least one brake, operated either by hand or by foot.
- The limited use OHM must be equipped with foot rests or pegs for the operator and any passenger.

Exhaust and Noise Restrictions

- Limited use OHMs must be equipped with a functional muffler that prevents unusual or excessive noises except for OHMs propelled by electric power.
- No person may operate a limited use OHM in such a manner that noise emitted from the machine is louder than 96 decibels.
- Limited use OHMs must be equipped with a spark arrestor at all times, even during the winter.

Excessive or unusually loud OHMs hurt Wisconsin's trail system. Do not increase your exhaust noise or operate with your exhaust system in excess of the legal sound limits. Loud pipes threaten riding opportunities statewide.

Accidents and Crashes

If an operator of an off-highway motorcycle is involved in an accident that occurs on public and private areas open for public OHM use and that results in the death of any person or in the injury of any person on public land that requires treatment by a physician, the operator of each off-highway motorcycle involved in the accident shall give notice of the accident to a conservation warden or local law enforcement officer as soon as possible. The crash victim, or other witness if victim is incapable, must file a written report of the incident within 10 days to the DNR. [Official DNR Operator Crash Report forms](#) can be obtained by visiting the DNR website at dnr.wi.gov, a DNR Service Center or sheriff's office. Reports may be completed and submitted online from the DNR website.

OHM Races/Events

Machines are exempt from registration only if they are used:

- Exclusively for racing at a racing facility or during a special event.
- During a special event, such as a race or parade, limited use OHMs may be operated on certain roads only if the road is blocked off by the unit of government having jurisdiction. No state trunk highway or connecting highway may be blocked off.
- The unit of government blocking the road(s) must notify local law enforcement at least one week in advance.

Events on Frozen Waterways

Races or derbies are exempt from speed restrictions on the public frozen waterways under the following conditions:

- The event is sponsored by a local unit of government, club or other entity,
- Is approved by the local unit of government, and
- The sponsor marks the track/race areas to warn spectators from entering.

All Sponsored Special Events

- Operators age 12 and above are exempt from the safety certification requirement while operating at sponsored, special events if the operator is:
 - ◊ Operating a limited use OHM
 - ◊ Wearing approved protective headgear
 - ◊ Accompanied by a designated adult

OHMs and Hunting

- It is illegal to drive, pursue or harass any wild animal.
- All firearms (excluding handguns) must be unloaded when in or on any vehicle, except that a loaded firearm may be placed on, but not in, a vehicle which is stationary.
- It is illegal to place, possess, or transport a cocked crossbow in or on a motorized vehicle unless it is unloaded and enclosed within a case.
- It is illegal to load a firearm other than a handgun while it is in a vehicle or to discharge any firearm, including handguns, in or from any moving or stationary vehicle except for certain disabled hunters with proper permits.
- Qualified disabled hunters with the permit authority to shoot from a stationary vehicle must have all firearms (other than handguns) unloaded while the vehicle is in motion.

Disabled Operators

If you hold a Class A or Class B disabled hunting permit, you may operate a limited use OHM on the roadway portion of a highway (not an interstate) if you are traveling for the purposes of hunting that are allowed by the permit. All other safety certificate and age restrictions apply.

Liability of Landowners

895.52 Wisconsin Statutes Landowners who allow OHM trails to cross their property are not required to keep the premises safe for recreational activities, to inspect the property, or to give warning of an unsafe condition, use, or activity on the property. They are generally held free of liability. For complete information, review sec. 895.52 in its entirety.

Winter OHM Use

OHMs may operate on public frozen waterways, private property and other public lands open for their use in the winter.

- All children are exempt from the safety certification requirement while recreationally operating on public frozen waterways.

OHM-Snow bikes

- OHMs modified with an after-market track and ski are not considered snowmobiles and cannot be registered or used as such. They may be operated on frozen waterways and private property with permission.
- Factory snow bikes that are manufactured with a track and ski do meet the definition of a snowmobile and require snowmobile registration.

Helmets Save Lives. Wear it Wisconsin!



This pamphlet is not a complete set of OHM laws; however, it supplies the essential information. Please read it carefully. If you have any questions, contact the Department of Natural Resources or your local law enforcement authorities. Check with local governing agencies for local ordinances that may be more restrictive than state regulations.

	<p>Citizen Input in Conservation Attend Spring Hearings and get Involved dnr.wi.gov search "Conservation Congress"</p>
---	---