

Farm Safety And Health Week

Sept. 19-25 Aims At ATV Safety

COLUMBIA, MO.

A growing number of deaths and injuries resulting from all-terrain Vehicle accidents has led the National Education Center for Agricultural Safety to make ATV safety the theme for its 2010 Farm Safety and Health Week, Sept. 19-25, urging farm families to "Work Smart. Ride Safe."

Each year, about 800 deaths are reported nationally associated with ATV accidents. In Missouri, 68 deaths were recorded from 2006 through 2008, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

"Research by an MU doctoral student in 2008 indicated that the majority of ATV incidents occurred because of the operator's disregard for safe vehicle practices," said Karen Funkenbusch, MU Extension safety specialist and instructor in farm safety and health.

"Farm operators use ATVs to haul livestock feed or to get out into a field, but oftentimes these vehicles are used by younger family members for recreation," she said. "It is important that all family members know and follow necessary precautions every time an ATV is used for work or play."

According to government statistics, four out of 10 people treated in emergency rooms for ATV injuries are under the age of 16. The exact number is not known because many ATV injuries are treated at home and not reported, she said.

In Missouri, male operators accounted for more than eight out of 10 reported ATV accidents, and a third of these involved an operator between 7 and 18 years of age.

ATV safety should be a family matter, from purchase of the right-sized vehicle to instruction and close supervision, Funkenbusch said.

For more information about Farm Safety and Health Week, see <http://www.necasag.org/nf-snhw.php>.

The MU Extension guide "All-Terrain Vehicles" (G1936) is available for free download at <http://extension.missouri.edu/publications/DisplayPub.aspx?P=G1936>.

The Missouri State Highway Patrol has published a brochure that outlines ATV safety guidelines, including requirements for use of ATVs on public roads. It is available online at <http://bit.ly/MSHP-ATV>. Δ



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