

Golf Carts and ORVs/ATVs on Local Streets

Introduction

Two separate pieces of legislation allow for the use of golf carts and Off-Road Vehicles/All-Terrain Vehicles (ORVs/ATVs) on municipal streets, and each requires a different municipal action. Under the Michigan Vehicle Code, golf cart use requires a resolution, and under the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (NREPA), an ordinance is required to allow the use of ORVs/ATVs.

Golf Carts—summary of requirements

Public Act 491 of 2014 enables local units of government with a population of 30,000 or less to adopt a resolution to allow the use of golf carts on certain streets within their jurisdiction—streets with a speed limit of 30 MPH or less. The city or village may maintain a recorded list of golf cart operators; if so, they may not charge operators to compile the list.

The local unit of government does not have the ability to modify the requirements or conditions established by the state, with the exception of further prohibiting golf carts on selected streets with a 30 MPH or lower speed limit.

The following conditions are required under the Michigan Vehicle Code:

An Operator

- Must be at least 16 and have a valid driver's license.
- Must comply with signal requirements.
- Must ride as far to the right as possible.
- Is not required to wear a helmet.

Golf Carts

- Shall not be operated on sidewalks.
- May not pass between lines of traffic.
- May travel at a maximum speed of 15 MPH.
- May not be operated 1/2 hour before sunset or 1/2 hour after sunrise.
- Are only permitted to operate on streets that are 30 MPH or less.
- By local ordinance may be required to use a path adjacent to a road, over the use of the roadway, if a path adjacent to a road is provided.

*The local unit may by resolution further restrict which streets golf carts are allowed on.

Off-Road Vehicles (ORVs) and All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs)

Municipalities are permitted to adopt an ordinance allowing ORVs and ATVs to operate on their streets in a manner allowed under NREPA. The following conditions are required:

ORVs/ATVs

- May travel at a maximum speed of 25 MPH.
- Must have a lighted headlight and taillight.
- Driver must wear a helmet and eye protection (unless the ORV has a windshield and a roof or roll bar which meets or exceeds crash helmet standards and the driver is wearing a safety belt).
- Driver must be at least 18 years old; or, between 12 and 18, the driver must either have a valid driver's license or have a valid ORV safety certificate on them and be under the immediate visual supervision of an adult.
- Are required to attach the license to the vehicle.