

# VERMONT

## SNOWMOBILE

### REGULATIONS



*Chittenden Reservoir - Courtesy of Meghan Burke*

**2024**



**Phil Scott**, Governor  
State of Vermont

**Joe Flynn**, Secretary  
Agency of Transportation

**Wanda Minoli**, Commissioner  
Department of Motor Vehicles

 VERMONT



## ***Message from the Commissioner***

Snowmobiling is a very popular winter sport and an important component of Vermont tourism. Machines have evolved from heavy and slow to lightweight, powerful, and fast. Operating a snowmobile requires skill and attention on the part of the operator. Safety and consideration for others should always be your first priority.

Vermont, through continuous efforts of private citizens and state government, has thousands of miles of well-marked and groomed snowmobile trails. Use them with care and enjoy a fine winter sport.



Wanda Minoli, Commissioner Department of Motor Vehicles



**State of Vermont**  
*Agency of Transportation*  
**Department of Motor Vehicles**  
120 State Street  
Montpelier, Vermont 05603-0001  
**[dmv.vermont.gov](http://dmv.vermont.gov)**

Vermont State Police  
Recreational Enforcement &  
Education Unit  
2777 St. George Road  
Williston, VT 05495  
802.878.7111  
[vsp.vermont.gov](http://vsp.vermont.gov)

Vermont Association of Snow  
Travelers (VAST)  
26 Vast Lane  
Barre, Vermont 05641  
802.229.0005  
[vtvast.org](http://vtvast.org)

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**Visit [mydmv.vermont.gov](https://mydmv.vermont.gov) to schedule an appointment.**

## **Office Locations**

### **Bennington**

Bennington County  
530 Main St

### **Dummerston**

Windham County  
AOT District #2 Office, Route 5

### **Montpelier**

Washington County  
120 State Street

### **Newport**

Orleans County  
100 Main Street

### **Saint Albans**

Franklin County  
27 Fisher Pond Rd

### **Saint Johnsbury**

Caledonia County  
Green Mtn Mall, 1998 Memorial Dr

### **South Burlington**

Chittenden County  
4 Market Street

### **Springfield**

Windsor County  
100 Mineral St, Suite 103

### **Rutland**

Rutland County  
101 State Place

### **White River Junction**

Windsor County  
221 Beswick Drive

## **Vermont State Holidays**

New Year's Day	January 1 <sup>st</sup>
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday in January
Presidents' Day	3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday in February
Town Meeting Day	1 <sup>st</sup> Tuesday in March
Memorial Day	Last Monday In May
Independence Day	July 4 <sup>th</sup>
Bennington Battle Day	August 16 <sup>th</sup>
Labor Day	1 <sup>st</sup> Monday in September
Veterans' Day	November 11 <sup>th</sup>
Thanksgiving Day	4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday in November
Day After Thanksgiving	Friday after Thanksgiving
Christmas Day	December 25 <sup>th</sup>

All offices are closed on Vermont State Holidays. Any legal holiday which falls on a Saturday shall be observed on the preceding Friday. Any legal holiday which falls on a Sunday shall be observed on the following Monday.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **WHO MUST REGISTER?**

Any snowmobile owner who plans to operate anywhere except: (1) on land owned by the snowmobile owner; (2) in a ski area for purposes of packing snow or in rescue operations; (3) solely on privately owned land when the operator is specifically invited to do so by the owner of the property and has on his person the written consent of the owner; (4) for official use by a federal, state or municipal agency and only if the snowmobile is identified with the name or seal of the agency in a manner approved by the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles. (*See sample Snowmobile Registration and Title Application at end of manual.*)

### **WHAT MUST I HAVE TO SNOWMOBILE IN VERMONT?**

To ride the more than 4,600 mile Vermont Statewide Snowmobile Trails System, your snowmobile(s) must:

- ✓ Be legally registered in Vermont or any other state or province. If your sled(s) is already registered in your home state or province, then you do not need to register in Vermont.
- ✓ Properly display a Vermont Association of Snow Travelers (VAST) Trail Maintenance Assessment (TMA) Trail Pass decal; this is your

permission to operate your snowmobile(s) on private land in Vermont. TMA decals can only be purchased from a local snowmobile club's membership chairperson, a local business that has been contracted to sell TMA's for the club or online at club websites.

In addition, the following regulations also apply to operating a snowmobile in Vermont:

- ✓ All snowmobile operators who are 12 years of age and older must take and pass a snowmobile safety course.
- ✓ A snowmobile is required to have a working headlight (with a clear lens), red rear light, a windshield free from sharp or jagged edges and a fully functional brake in good mechanical condition. Colored lens covers on headlights are illegal.
- ✓ The snowmobile operator and any passengers are required to wear an approved helmet and protective eye wear (face shield, goggles or glasses).
- ✓ Snowmobiling While Intoxicated (SWI) is strictly enforced. The legal limit is 0.08, for operators 21 and over.
- ✓ The maximum speed limit on state land is 35 MPH. Snowmobiles are also subject to posted speed limits on public roads open to snowmobile traffic. A frozen lake is considered a public highway and the maximum speed limit is 50 MPH.
- ✓ It is a snowmobiler's duty to stop and report to local authorities any snowmobile crash resulting in personal injury, death or property damage in excess of \$500. The snowmobiler must give their name, address, registration number and the name of the owner of the snowmobile to the party whose person or property is injured or damaged. A written report must be filed with the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles within 72 hours.
- ✓ All individuals operating a snowmobile in Vermont on the statewide snowmobile trails system, shall have a liability insurance policy or bond in the amounts of at least \$25,000 for one person and \$50,000 for two or more persons killed or injured and \$10,000 for damages to property in any one crash. In lieu thereof, evidence of self-insurance in the amount of \$115,000 must be filed with the commissioner. You must carry proof of insurance and show it upon demand.
- ✓ You must operate your snowmobile at a speed that is reasonable and prudent, taking into consideration current conditions, trail traffic, posted speed limits and other hazards present on the trail.

- ✓ Your snowmobile must be equipped with an efficient muffler and such other equipment and devices as may be required to meet the noise level specifications of not more than 73 decibels on the A scale at 50 feet in a normal operating environment. It is against Vermont law to sell a replacement exhaust system that exceeds the manufacturer's original equipment specifications. Violation of this law will result in a fine of \$500 for the snowmobile operator and a \$500 fine for the person selling the illegal exhaust system. No by-pass of a muffler system is allowed.

## DOES MY SNOWMOBILE NEED TO BE TITLED?

Vermont titles snowmobiles with the following exceptions:

- ✓ Snowmobiles owned by the United States (federal government) unless they are registered in Vermont.
- ✓ Snowmobiles owned by a manufacturer or dealer and held for sale.
- ✓ Snowmobiles owned by a nonresident of Vermont whose state of residence does not require a certificate of title for them.
- ✓ Snowmobiles owned by a nonresident of Vermont whose state of residence does require a certificate of title for any such snowmobile, and the title has been issued or applied for.

## HOW LONG IS THE REGISTRATION VALID?

The registration year for all snowmobiles registered in Vermont is from September 1 to August 31.

## HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO REGISTER/TITLE MY SNOWMOBILE?

- Visit [dmv.vermont.gov](http://dmv.vermont.gov) or,
- Call 802.828.2000

**NOTE:** A valid VAST Trails Maintenance Assessment decal must be displayed on the left side of the snowmobile operated in Vermont whether registered in VT or another state or province. For more information contact the Vermont Association of Snow Travelers, Inc. (VAST), 26 Vast Lane/Berlin, Barre, VT 05641, 802.229.0005 or [vtvast.org](http://vtvast.org).

## HOW DO I TRANSFER REGISTRATION TO A NEW SNOWMOBILE?

When you trade-in or sell your present snowmobile and purchase a new one, you must enter the name and address of the new owner, and date of sale on

your current registration certificate in the space provided. Fill out a registration application for the new snowmobile, attach the registration certificate from your previous snowmobile, and mail all documents (including Title if applicable) to the Department of Motor Vehicles, visit a DMV office or a VAST agent. The Department of Motor Vehicles will send you a registration decal and registration certificate. **Note:** If your snowmobile is titled, you must complete the assignment of ownership on the back of the title when trading in or selling your snowmobile.

### WHERE ARE VERMONT REGISTRATION DECALS PLACED ON THE SNOWMOBILE?

- Snowmobile registration decals are issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles or Agents authorized by the Department. Each registration decal will have a printed registration number assigned to the registered snowmobile. The registration decal may be placed in any of the following locations on the LEFT side of the snowmobile.
  - The Cowling
  - The Windshield
  - The Tunnel

**Note:** The registration decal itself is renewable and remains on the snowmobile when selling it.

- The VAST (Vermont Association of Snow Travelers) “Trails Maintenance Assessment Decal” (Resident or Nonresident) should be affixed on the left cowling.
- Snowmobiles owned by a federal, state or municipal agency and used for official purposes shall be identified as such by the name and seal of the agency mounted on the front cowling.



## WHAT IF I LOSE MY REGISTRATION OR TITLE CERTIFICATE?

Complete the appropriate form, Request for Replacement Registration (VL-040) or Application for Replacement Title (VT-004) and submit with appropriate fee. The forms are available online or at any DMV office. Replacement titles may be processed by mail or at any office. Replacement registrations can be processed online, issued at any office, or processed by mail.

## DO I HAVE TO PAY ANY TAX?

Yes, a 6% sales tax based on the purchase price of your snowmobile will be collected at time of registration. If you register your snowmobile at a time different from time of purchase and you paid the 6% sales tax at time of purchase, you must show proof of payment to be exempt at time of registration. If you lived in another state and your snowmobile was registered in that state you may be exempt from tax.

## **Operation**

### **WHERE MAY I OPERATE MY SNOWMOBILE?**

- Across the public highway provided the crossing is made at an angle of approximately 90 degrees to the direction of the highway where no obstruction prevents a safe and quick crossing. You must come to a full stop and yield to any other vehicles, bicycles or pedestrians using the highway. You must be at least 12 years of age, and if under the age 16, you must be under the direct supervision of someone at least 18 years of age.
- On any highway not plowed in the winter months.
- On any highway opened to snowmobiles by the selectmen, trustees or local governing body of the municipality provided the highway is legally posted.
- On any land owned by the owner of the snowmobile or an immediate member of the landowner's family.
- If you are under the age of 12 years, you may operate a snowmobile on land owned by parents, family or guardian; or with written permission of the landowner or lessee has been granted; or if operation is under direct supervision of a person at least 18 years of age.
- On any other privately owned land or body of water provided you have written permission of the landowner in your possession; or you have proof of membership in a club and association that has been granted permission by the landowner either verbally or in writing.
- Beside any plowed highway provided you are traveling a minimum of five feet from the plowed portion. However, this shall not apply to class IV roads or trails that are privately maintained or plowed (23 VSA §3206(b)(3)).
- On any public land, body of water or natural area designated for such use by the Secretary of Natural Resources. (See "Snowmobiling on State Owned Lands" in this manual.)

### **WHEN AND WHERE MAY I NOT OPERATE MY SNOWMOBILE?**

- On any highway not opened to snowmobile travel.
- On any private land for which you have not received the landowner's permission.

- In any manner intended or reasonably expected to harass, drive or pursue any wildlife.
- While under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs.
- In a reckless manner so as to endanger a person or property.
- Within any cemetery.
- On limited access highway, rights of way or approaches on any portion of the national system of interstate and defense highways unless operation is permitted by the traffic committee.
- On sidewalk unless permitted by the selectmen, trustees or local governing body.
- If you do not have a valid registration certificate in your possession.
- If your snowmobile does not display the registration number decal issued by the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles or another jurisdiction.

#### WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO IF INVOLVED IN A CRASH?

- If involved in a crash with another person or property resulting in personal injury, death or property damage, you must stop immediately and render assistance as may be reasonably necessary.
- You must give the injured person or owner of the damaged property your name and address, the name and address of the owner of the snowmobile if owned by someone other than you, and the registration number.
- You must notify an enforcement officer immediately if injury or death of another person results or there is damage to someone else's property in excess of \$500. Further, you are required to file a written report of the crash with the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, on a form prescribed by the commissioner within 72 hours following the crash.
- If you are involved in a crash that results in only damage to your property, no report is required.

## WHO ENFORCES SNOWMOBILE LAWS AND RULES?

- Constables
  - Deputy Sheriffs
  - Motor Vehicle Inspectors
  - Municipal Enforcement Employees
  - Police Officers
  - Sheriffs
  - State Game Wardens
  - State Police
  - State's Attorney
- WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I DO NOT STOP FOR AN ENFORCEMENT OFFICER?
- You must bring your snowmobile to a stop when you are signaled to do so by an enforcement officer who is wearing an insignia identifying her/himself; or if he/she is operating a law enforcement vehicle sounding a siren or displaying a flashing blue or blue and white signal lamp.
  - If you fail to stop you may be prosecuted and if found guilty subject to a fine. In addition, the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles may suspend or revoke the registration of the snowmobile involved in the violation.

## TRESPASSING:

It is important that you respect the property rights of others. Do not travel on posted land, or if on land not posted and you are requested to leave by the landowner or his agent, do so immediately.

A snowmobile shall not be operated:

- On any privately-owned land or body of private water unless:
  - The operator is the owner, or member of the immediate family of the owner or lessee of the land or private body of water; or
  - The operator has, on his or her person, the written consent of the owner or lessee of the land to operate a snowmobile in the specific area in which the operator is operating, or the snowmobile displays a valid TMA decal as required by Title 23 section 3202(a) that serves as proof that the snowmobile and its operator by virtue of the TMA are members of a VAST-affiliated snowmobile club to which such consent has been given orally or in writing; or

- The owner of the land has designated the area for use by snowmobiles by posting the area in a manner approved by the secretary to give reasonable notice that snowmobiling is permitted.

#### WHAT IF I AM INJURED WHILE ON SOMEONE'S PROPERTY?

No public or private landowner shall be liable for any property damage or personal injury sustained by any person operating or riding as a passenger on a snowmobile or upon a vehicle or other device drawn by a snowmobile upon the public or private landowner's property, whether or not the public or private landowner has given permission to use the land unless the public or private landowner charges a cash fee to the operator or owner of the snowmobile for the use of the property or unless said damage or injury is intentionally inflicted by the landowner.

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### ***OFF-TRAIL RIDING IS TRESPASSING AND SUBJECT TO ENFORCEMENT***

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**NOTICE:** Convictions of operating a snowmobile under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs subject to severe penalties including operating privilege suspension, fines, and imprisonment.

# **SNOWMOBILE LAWS**

## **Liability Insurance is mandatory**

All individuals operating a snowmobile, in Vermont on the statewide snowmobile trails system, shall have a liability insurance policy or bond in the amounts of at least \$25,000 for one person and \$50,000 for two or more persons killed or injured and \$10,000 for damages to property in any one crash. In lieu thereof, evidence of self-insurance in the amount of \$115,000 must be filed with the commissioner. You must carry proof of insurance and show it upon demand.

## **Speed considerations**

Under Vermont Law, Title 23, Chapter 29, you must operate your snowmobile at a speed that is reasonable and prudent, taking into consideration current conditions, trail traffic and other hazards present on the trail.

The maximum speed limit on state lands is 35 mph. The use of radar on snowmobile trails is becoming a standard practice. With the use of hand held radar guns, the enforcement of speed limits that are imposed on all state lands, has increased dramatically. Snowmobiles are subject to posted speed limits on public roads open to snowmobile traffic.

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**A frozen lake is considered a public highway and  
the maximum speed limit is 50 mph.**

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## **Snowmobiling While Intoxicated**

This law covers both drugs and alcohol. While you will be charged with SWI on the VAST trail system, intoxicated snowmobilers operating on a public highway will be charged with DWI. As a result of this violation, you will be assessed points and your driver's license will be suspended.

## **Crash Reporting**

If you are involved in A CRASH, resulting in personal injury, death or property damage in excess of \$500, it is your duty to stop and report it to local authorities. You must give your name, address, registration number and the name of the owner of the snowmobile to the party whose person or

property is injured. You must also file A CRASH report with the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles within 72 hours.

### Equipment Requirements

Your snowmobiles must be equipped with: headlight; red rear light; windshield free from jagged or sharp edges; a fully functional brake in good condition; efficient muffler and such other equipment and devices as may be required to meet the noise level specifications of not more than 73 decibels on the A scale at 50 feet in a normal operating environment.

Colored lens covers on headlights are illegal.

Windshields are mandatory or the operator must wear eye glasses, goggles or a protective face shield.

Helmets are mandatory for all riders on the VAST trail system.

### Replacement Exhaust Systems

It is against Vermont law to sell a replacement exhaust system that exceeds the manufacturer's original equipment specifications.



# **STATE OF VERMONT SNOWMOBILE RULES**

## **AUTHORIZATION**

These regulations are entitled and may be referred to as Rules Governing the Registration of and Operation of Snowmobiles and have been adopted by the authority under provisions of 23 V.S.A. § 3208 and DMV Rule 14-050-027 - Registration and Operation of Snowmobiles, and VAST Snowmobile

Registration Application or Renewal:

(a) Annually on or before September 1, the owner of each snowmobile required to be registered by this state shall file an application for registration with the Department of Motor Vehicles or authorized agents, on forms printed by the Department. Owners of snowmobiles registered the previous year must complete and return to the Department or authorized agents, a renewal registration certificate furnished by the Department. Each registration application or renewal certification must be accompanied by the statutory fee. Upon receipt of an application in approved form, the Department shall issue a registration certificate stating the number awarded to the snowmobile and the name and address of the owner.

Replacement registration certificates may be obtained upon payment of the statutory fee.

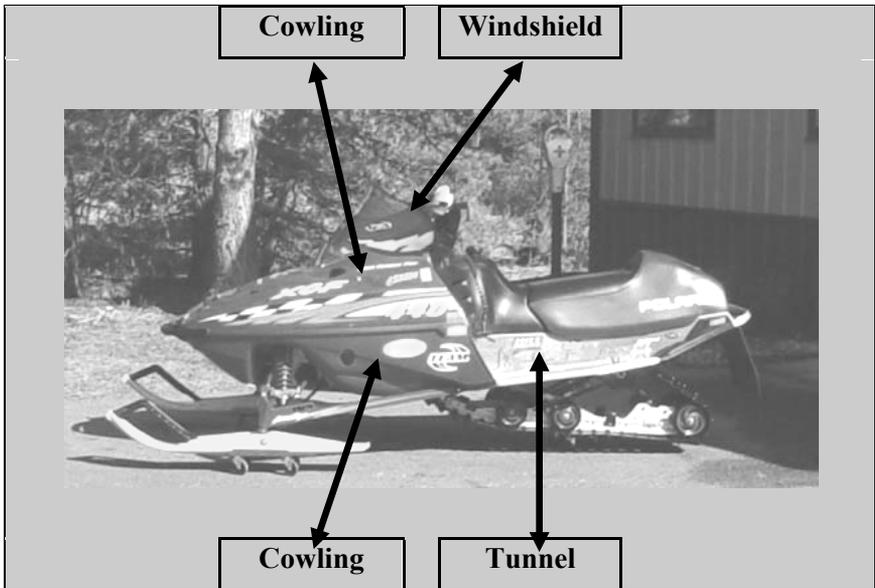
The registration certificate shall be available at all times for inspection on the snowmobile for which issued or on the person of the operator.

(b) Any person engaged in the manufacture or sale of snowmobiles in the State of Vermont shall make application to the Department of Motor Vehicles for manufacturers' and dealers' registration certificate(s) and identifying number plate(s) upon prescribed forms.

1. Manufacturers' and dealers' registration certificates expire on the day prior to the beginning of the next ensuing registration year. All number plates previously issued shall be returned to the Department of Motor Vehicles within 72 hours thereof unless the completed renewal of registration certificate(s) has (have) been returned to the Department with proper fee.
2. Number and Plate Display Requirements.

Registration numbers, plates or other identification issued or authorized by the Department of Motor Vehicles shall:

- a) Consist of not more than five (5) Arabic numbers and letters. A registration decal, supplied by the Department of Motor Vehicles will be attached to the left of the snowmobile on the cowling; windshield or what is commonly referred to as the "tunnel."
- b) Shall be mounted on the front cowling of the snowmobile if temporary plates are issued by a manufacturer or dealer.
- c) Be identified by the name and seal of the agency mounted on the front cowling if owned by a federal, state or municipal agency and used for official purposes.



**DESIGNATION OF LANDS AND TRAILS FOR USE BY SNOWMOBILES:**

**1. Definitions.**

"Owner" means a person who has a legal interest in land and has the authority, power or right to permit or invite others to enter upon such land or exclude others from entering thereon and includes the State of Vermont;

"Private Land" means real property owned or controlled by a person or persons other than the State of Vermont or any department, agency or subdivision of the state.

## 2. Designation of Private and Public Lands for Use by Snowmobiles.

Except in the case where the operator of a snowmobile (i) is the owner, or member of the immediate family of the owner of private land or (ii) has, on their person, the written consent of the owner or lessee of private land to operate a snowmobile in the specific area in which the operator is operating, or proof of membership of a club or association to which such consent has been given orally or in writing, no person shall enter upon the land of another, whether private or public, provided however, the owner of land may designate such land for snowmobiling by the general public by posting in accordance with these regulations.

If the owner of land designates land for use by snowmobiles, such owner may designate the point or points of entry and trails therein for the purpose of snowmobiling by proper posting. In such event, no person shall enter or travel within such land excepting at points of entry and on trails so designated.

## 3. Manner of Designation.

An owner of land may designate land for snowmobiling by posting an approved sign adjacent to those points intended to be used for access to the land. Signs shall be diamond-shaped, 11 inches high and 11 inches wide, orange in color with a black silhouette of a snowmobile and operator entered thereon or any other signs which give reasonable notice that snowmobiles may enter upon such land.

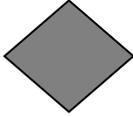
Trails: An owner of land may designate snowmobile trails on land with standard trail signs approved by the International Snowmobile Congress as described below or any other signs which give reasonable notice a trail has been designated:

Cautionary signs used at intersections of trails with other trails and/or plowed roads, resemble standard highway signs. The STOP sign is red, octagonal in shape, 12 inches wide and 12 inches high, with the word STOP centered thereon in large white letters. Caution signs are yellow, diamond-shaped, with sides 12 inches long. Centered thereon, in black, shall be the appropriate symbols for intersections, crossroads and hazards.

Trail blazers are orange or green, diamond-shaped markers, 5 inches wide and 7 inches high, used to identify the trail route and reassure the user is on the trail.

Directional signs are orange, diamond-shaped, 9 inches wide and 12 inches high, with a black directional arrow centered thereon, used to indicate changes in trail direction.

Information signs are specialized signs for marking points of interest, entrances and giving control and distance information. Such signs may be designated by the owner.

 <p>Identifies areas where snowmobiling is not allowed.</p>	 <p>Informs the rider that they are on a designated snowmobile trail</p>
 <p>Informs the rider of a turn ahead.</p>	 <p>Instructs riders to bring their snowmobile to a complete stop before proceeding with caution.</p>
 <p>Instructs rides not to enter a particular road or trail. Typically used in conjunction with one way trails.</p>	 <p>To advise snowmobile operators to proceed at a reduced speed or to advise the snowmobiler of a specific trail condition.</p>

In all cases an owner electing to designate point or points of entry to property and snowmobile trails thereon shall place signs at such point or points of entry in such a manner and at such intervals along trails that a person entering and traveling thereon will have reasonable notice that they are in fact entering at a designated point and traveling on a designated trail. Unless proved otherwise, posting of trail signs as provided for in this section at intervals of not more than 1,000 feet shall be deemed adequate notice that the owner has designated a trail or trails within the property to which travel by snowmobile is intended to be restricted.

### Designation of Public Lands - Agency of Natural Resources.

After due notice and public hearing the Agency of Natural Resources (Secretary) may designate public land and trails thereon for use by snowmobiles in accordance with sections II (2) and III (3) of these regulations; provided however, if the Secretary thereafter finds that use of

any lands and trails so designated is causing undue adverse impact on the environment or on the health, safety and welfare of the public the Secretary may close all or portions of such lands and trails for a period not to exceed thirty (30) days and thereafter only upon due notice and public hearing.

### Criteria for Designation of Lands and Trails.

**Private Lands:** Although not required, owners of private land electing to designate such lands and trails thereon for use by snowmobiles are encouraged to apply for same general standards in so doing as are to be applied by the Secretary. For this purpose any owner may request assistance and advice from the Secretary.

**Public Land:** In evaluating a proposal to designate public lands or trails thereon for use by snowmobiles the Secretary shall apply the following criteria:

Trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation or other resources of the public lands and to the greatest extent possible utilize existing roads, paths and rights-of-way.

Trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats.

Trails and land shall be located to minimize conflicts between snowmobiles and other existing or proposed uses on the same or neighboring public and private lands and to ensure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas taking into account noise and other factors. Excepting in unusual circumstances no trail shall be located closer than 500 feet to an occupied dwelling or camp.

Lands and trails shall not be designated where it is found that there are unique natural or wildlife values unless the Secretary affirmatively finds that these unique values will not be adversely affected.

### Special Use Permits-Public Lands.

There shall be no operation of snowmobiles on public lands whether designated for snowmobiles or not for the purpose of conducting organized races, rallies, meets, endurance contests and other similar events sponsored or held for other than general recreational purposes unless a special use permit is applied for and issued by the Secretary. Applications for special use permits must be submitted no less than one month in advance in order to allow sufficient time to assure that such use will not adversely affect the public land and the general public and to provide for the imposition of such conditions as the Secretary finds necessary to protect the public interest

including but not limited to posting of surety for rehabilitation of land or compensation for damage to it and property thereon. Special use permits may if necessary provide for no more than three alternative dates.

#### VAST Snowmobile Registrations Records Required:

The Vermont Association of Snow Travelers (VAST) must maintain on file copies of temporary registration certificates issued. These must be maintained for a period of three years at the VAST Headquarters.

All voided temporary registrations must be accounted for by VAST. When a temporary registration is voided, the issuing agent must write VOIDED across the temporary certificate with an explanation. One copy must be maintained by VAST and two copies returned to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

VAST must maintain a log of all temporary certificates distributed to their Agents which shall include the date of distribution, agent's name and address, and temporary certificate numbers assigned.

#### Audits:

All records must be made available for audit at the office of VAST Headquarters during normal business hours.

An audit will be conducted at least annually by the DMV to ensure compliance with the requirements set by the Commissioner.

The annual audit will be conducted during the month of July.

Any unaccounted-for temporary registration certificates will require payment of the registration fee at time of audit.

#### Fees:

No fee will be charged by the Department of Motor Vehicles for temporary registration certificates issued to VAST.

VAST will be responsible for collecting all fees due at the time of issuance of temporary registration certificates. If sales tax has been previously paid or applicant is claiming a gift exemption proof of such payment or gift must be retained by VAST and submitted with the application and registration fee to the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Each temporary registration certificate must include the legal residence of the registered owner.

## Agents:

VAST must provide the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles with a list of authorized agents during the month of October of each year and any additions or deletions to that list as they occur during the year.

Agents must be members in good standing of VAST to be eligible to issue temporary registration certificates.

All Agents must submit to VAST Headquarters the two copies of each certificate issued within 48 hours of issue accompanied by the application for registration and proper fees for residents and non-residents. VAST will be responsible for forwarding the DMV copy of the temporary registration certificate accompanied by the application for registration and fees within 48 hours of receipt from the Agent to the Department of Motor Vehicles.

VAST will be responsible and accountable for all temporary registrations assigned to it, or its Agents.

VAST will file with the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles within 30 days of the adoption of these regulations and on or before July 1 of each consecutive year a set of procedures which detail how the agents of VAST will receive and process snowmobile registration applications, supporting documents and fees including the issuance of temporary registration certificates to residents and non-residents.

## Violations:

The penalties may be assessed to either VAST or to the VAST Agent as applicable but in each incident, not to both.

## Snowmobile Registration Renewals:

VAST Agents may renew snowmobile registrations of Vermont residents and non-residents provided the applicant deposits with the Agent the following:

- The proper fees; and,
- The pre-printed renewal notice for each machine to be renewed; or,
- A properly completed renewal form for each machine to be renewed.

Repetitive errors in recordkeeping, completing the application, or tardiness in submitting the fees or documents will result in the Agent's privilege to issue temporary registrations being suspended or revoked.

# **STATE OF VERMONT AGENCY OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

## **SNOWMOBILING ON STATE OWNED LANDS**

Under the authority vested in 23 VSA §3206 (b), (3), (5) and §4308 (b), the Secretary of the Agency of Natural Resources designates the following public lands and waters for use by snowmobiles to be effective May 15, 1992.

### **1. Purpose:**

Pursuant to 23 VSA §3206 (b), (3), (5), no person may operate a snowmobile on public land or public body of water unless such land or body of water has been expressly designated for use by snowmobiles by the Secretary of the Agency of Natural Resources. Public lands and bodies of water as specified or described in these regulations shall be open for use by snowmobiles under the conditions described. Operation on all other public lands and bodies of water is prohibited. Any person may make application for designation or closure of public land or body of water by writing the Secretary, Agency of Natural Resources, 103 S Main St., Waterbury, VT 05671. All existing marked snowmobile trails shall continue in place and no new permission shall be needed for these trails only.

### **2. Definitions:**

- (A) Marked Snowmobile Trail: means a trail which has been approved for snowmobile use by the State agency administering the land and so marked with signs approved by the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation.
- (B) Unplowed Roads: means an open field approved for snowmobile use by the State agency administering the land and so marked with signs approved by the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation.
- (C) Play Area: means an open field approved for snowmobile use by the State agency administering the land and so marked with signs approved by the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation.
- (D) Snow Cover: means adequate snow or ice to prevent the underlying ground from damage by snow machine use.

### 3. Designated Public Lands:

- (A) The use of snowmobiles shall be permitted only on marked snowmobile trails, unplowed roads (unless specifically closed or designated for other use), and designated play areas on the following public lands when there is adequate snow cover. All state forests except the following which shall be permitted only on marked snowmobile trails and designated play areas: Camel's Hump State Forest.
- (B) The use of snowmobiles shall be permitted only on marked snowmobile trails and designated play areas on the following public lands when there is adequate snow cover:
- All State Parks
  - All Fish and Wildlife Management Areas
  - Stream bank lands, pond sites, hatcheries and miscellaneous lands
  - All Agency of Natural Resources dam sites
  - All rails-to-trails
  - All state airports and railroads

### 4. Designated Public Waters:

The use of snowmobiles shall be permitted on all bodies of public water, including the access purposes only, all Fish and Wildlife Department Access Areas. Any person may petition to close specified areas of public waters for snowmobiling after due notice and public hearing. The following bodies of public water are excluded and snowmobiling is prohibited:

- Colchester Pond
- Department of Fish and Wildlife Management Area Waters
- Waterbury Reservoir

### 5. Restricted Lands:

The following areas of public lands are **restricted and the operation of snowmobiles thereon is prohibited** unless specifically approved by the State agency administering the land:

- All Division of Historic Preservations land
- All Agency of Transportation limited access highways, rights-of-way, or approaches
- All Military Department lands
- All State College lands
- All Buildings Division lands

- All state lands leased to other parties (unless approved by the other party)
- All Agency of Natural Resources dam structures
- All other state owned lands not previously designated
- The Long Trail/Appalachian Trail corridor except for designated crossings

**6. All Public Lands and Public Waters Shall Be Open:**

- (A) For official use by federal, state, county or municipal agencies.
- (B) For emergency search and rescue operations and other occurrences involving health, safety and welfare of persons or for protection of property.
- (C) For use by a person conducting a business or operation on public lands under permit, license, lease or contract with the State of Vermont, but only if directly related and necessary to such business or operation; provided that such person file with the Secretary prior to December 1 of each year a statement indicating the number of snowmobiles intended to be operated on State land, the specific purpose of such use, and area or areas on which snowmobiles are to be used.

**7. Permission Required to Mark Trails and Play Areas:**

Snowmobile trails and play areas may not be marked on public lands without the documented permission of the State agency administering the land.

**8. Speed Limit:**

The maximum speed limit on all marked snowmobile trails, unplowed roads, and play areas on state lands, excluding public waters, shall be 35 MPH. A frozen lake is considered a public highway and the maximum speed limit is 50 MPH.

**9. Races:**

Organized races on all state lands and waters require a special use permit.

**10. Exception:**

The Secretary may, in the interest of the public good, make exceptions to these regulations for a period not to exceed thirty-five (35) days and thereafter only upon due notice and public hearing.

## **REGISTRATION AND TMA DECAL EXCEPTIONS**

Registration and decal required. A person shall not operate a snowmobile unless registered and numbered by the state of Vermont or another state or province and displays a valid Vermont trails maintenance assessment (TMA) decal adjacent to the registration decal on the left side of the snowmobile in accordance with this chapter, except when operated:

- on the property of the owner of the snowmobile; or
- off the highway, in a ski area while being used for the purpose of packing snow or in rescue operations; or
- for official use by a federal, state, or municipal agency and only if the snowmobile is identified with the name or seal of the agency in a manner approved by the commissioner; or
- solely on privately-owned land when the operator has the written consent of the owner, or his or her agent, of the property; or
- on frozen bodies of water as designated by the agency of natural resources under the provisions of 10 V.S.A. § 2607. For purposes of this subdivision, a snowmobile shall not be required to display a trails maintenance assessment decal if not operating on a portion of the statewide snowmobile trails system. Liability insurance as provided for in subdivision 3206(b)(19) of this title and a valid registration decal are required; or
- for emergency use by fire service personnel.

### **Special decal exemptions**

A snowmobile, legally registered in another state or province may enter and operate in this state without a TMA decal as follows:

- Using a portion of the statewide snowmobile trail system, a public right-of-way open to snowmobiles, or private land that is posted open to snowmobiles, for a distance not to exceed three miles for the sole purpose of accessing the closest food, fuel, lodging, and repair services. At a point three miles from the state line, trails shall be posted "VT TMA Required Beyond This Point".
- In Addison, Bennington and Rutland counties, from the New York border to Poultney village via corridor trail 4A (Delaware Hudson Rail Trail); from the New York border in Pawlet in the north to the New York border in the south in the town of Rupert (13 miles) along

corridor trail 4; and from Lake Champlain at Benson Landing to the town of Benson via the local snowmobile trail.

- For the purpose of accessing international customs services, on the so-called “Keyhole Trail,” for a distance of approximately one-half mile from United States/Canadian Customs at Beecher Falls to the town line of Pittsburg, New Hampshire, and for a distance of approximately four miles via Vermont Association of Snow Travelers snowmobile corridor 105 to Canaan and to the West Stewartstown, New Hampshire bridge connecting to the New Hampshire 3A snowmobile trail on the Beecher Falls to Colebrook, New Hampshire railbed, and on immediately adjacent areas for services.
- In Essex County, for a distance of approximately 18 miles to and from the New Hampshire border to the village of Beecher Falls in the town of Canaan, via Vermont Association of Snow Travelers snowmobile trails 103 to 96 to 105/96 to 105.

## ***SNOWMOBILE SAFETY***

**Snowmobile injuries can be extensive and painful. An injury in a remote area may mean death. Avoid the following hazards.**

- Jumping, speeding and reckless operation.
- Lack of experience has been shown to be a definite hazard. Have an experienced operator teach you the basic principles of safe snowmobiling. Even experienced operators should familiarize themselves with new machines before attempting unusual maneuvers.
- Poor visibility has caused a number of bad crashes. Don't overdrive headlights. Drive cautiously at night, especially over rough terrain. Keep all lights clear of snow and debris.
- Driving too fast for conditions has been a major contributor to crashes. Reduce speed in line with conditions.
- Alcohol and snowmobiling do not mix. Alcohol reduces sensitivity to cold. You can suffer severe frostbite, or freezing, unknowingly. Alcohol also impairs an operator's ability to control a snowmobile.
- Be careful of barbed wire or electric fences. Stay on marked trails.
- Make sure you are familiar with a machine before operating it the first time.

- Thin ice is particularly dangerous. At least three inches of solid ice is necessary for a 300 pound snowmobile, driver and passenger, and ice fishing gear. Ice thickness may vary greatly -- be careful.
- Operate your snowmobile in accordance with your ability.
- Never ride on an operating railroad track or adjacent railroad right-of-way. You endanger yourself and the railroad. Snowmobiles riding between the tracks pack the snow. When the drive motors on the railroad engine strike this packed snow, the engine may be derailed causing heavy property damage and possible injury to the crew on the train. Further, if you are riding between or beside the tracks you may not see or hear a train approaching. If you do, you may not get out of the way in time. REMEMBER, a lot of people have worked hard to provide a statewide system of snowmobile trails for you to use; PLEASE USE THEM.
- Speed (MPH) x (times) 1½ = feet per second. 25 MPH = 37 feet per second. Ride within your ability to control your machine.

## *SAFETY TIPS*

- **Physically Fit** – Take no one who cannot walk out in case of breakdown. Human efficiency declines in below-zero weather.
- **Good Equipment** – Have equipment tested and in top shape. Carry an emergency repair kit (spare drive belt, spark plug) and know how to use it. Carry extra gas.
- **Ice** – Ice can be treacherous. Stay off ponds and lakes.
- **Planned Trip** – Plan your route in advance and notify a responsible person of your route and estimated time of return.
- **Travel in a Group** – Travel in a group of at least three. In unfamiliar territory, travel with at least two machines.
- **Proper Clothing** – Should be warm and windproof. Carry extra clothing, sunglasses, extra gloves, socks and hats.
- **Weather** – Check the forecast, don't travel in storms.
- **Navigation** – Carry a map or a GPS, and know how to use them. Study terrain beforehand if possible. Stay on marked trails.

- **Survival Kit** – Carry a survival kit. Recommended items in the survival kit are:
  - Matches (in waterproof case)
  - Hatchet
  - Plastic tarp (6' x 8')
  - First Aid Kit
  - Extra food (candy bars)
  - Canned heat
  - Snowshoes (or skis)
  - Signals
  - Flares
  - Lights
  - Horn
  - Rope

**CAUTION: Some roads designated as snowmobile trails may be used for winter logging. Stay out of the traveled portion.**