

# UTILITY VEHICLE OPERATION AND SAFETY POLICIES



# APPLICABILITY OF POLICY

University Policy 4219 covers the Operation and Maintenance of utility vehicles, including the John Deere Gators, golf carts, tractors and other Utility vehicles which used on campus. It is applicable to every operator of these vehicles, and those who maintain them. Most of these utility vehicles, **are not all-terrain recreation vehicles** and not designed to be used for “off roading”.

# REQUIRED TRAINING

- These golf carts and non-registered/non-licensed motor vehicles (UTV) have grown in popularity because their light weight and oversized, low pressure tires allow them to maneuver in difficult terrain where larger vehicles cannot. **These vehicles are used at Louisiana Tech University solely for University business in the areas of security, law enforcement, grounds and building maintenance, athletics, and farming operations.** They are to be operated in accordance with the requirements of Louisiana General Laws, manufacturer's specifications and other Louisiana Tech policies and procedures (Ex: Driver Safety Policy).

# REQUIRED TRAINING

- The “Golf Cart and Non-registered/Non-licensed Motor Vehicle Operator Training Program” has been developed for operators of these vehicles. **ALL OPERATORS MUST BE TRAINED AND CERTIFIED ON A “NON-LICENSED VEHICLE OPERATOR TRAINING ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TRAINING FORM”.** These forms must be received in the Office of Environmental Safety BEFORE anyone **WILL BE ALLOWED TO OPERATE THEM.**

LOUISIANA TECH UNIVERSITY NON-LICENSED VEHICLE OPERATOR TRAINING  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TRAINING FORM

(This training and this form must be completed prior to any employee operating a non-licensed vehicle.  
Operators must be re-trained every 3 years)

- Department \_\_\_\_\_
- Employee Name \_\_\_\_\_
- Employee CWID Number \_\_\_\_\_
- Name of Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_
  
- By signing below, the employee acknowledges that they:
- Have read the University Non-registered Motor Vehicle Operator Manual and shall adhere to all the rules for operating these vehicle that are contained therein;
- Attended a Non-licensed Vehicle Safety Training session and has demonstrated to the trainer that they are competent in the operation of these type vehicles on \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date of Training)
- Have been given the opportunity to ask their supervisor and trainer any questions related to the operation of these vehicles;
- Have been certified to drive through the Louisiana Tech University Driver Safety Program.
  
- Employee Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_
- (Please print))
  
- Employee Signature \_\_\_\_\_
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- I acknowledge that this employee is competent to operate a non-licensed vehicle on the Louisiana Tech University campus:
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- Name of Trainer \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Training \_\_\_\_\_
- (Please print)
  
- Signature of Trainer \_\_\_\_\_

# REQUIRED TRAINING

- As part of the training, the Louisiana State Office of Risk Management requires that Supervisors of the effected employees **MUST** review the Operator's Manual and all safety issues associated with the use of the utility vehicle with all employees who will operate or ride in this equipment.
- The Supervisor must also review each part of the "Louisiana Tech University Non-Registered/Non-Licenses Motor Vehicle Operator Training Manual" with each employee and verify that they understand each part.
- The operator's manual for the VEHICLE and "Louisiana Tech University Non-Registered/Non-Licenses Motor Vehicle Operator Training Manual" are available with the Supervisor. **Maintaining a legible copy of the owner's manual on the vehicle and "Louisiana Tech University Non-Registered/Non-Licenses Motor Vehicle Operator Training Manual" is also a requirement of the University and/or the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).**

# Step-By-Step Procedure for Operator Certification

- Step 1-Any employee who is assigned to operate these types of vehicles must complete the Louisiana Tech University Driver Safety Program offered through the Office of Environmental Health and Safety (EHS). Recertification is required every 3 years for non-student employees and every year for student employees.
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- **Step 2-** Any employee who is assigned to operate these types of vehicles must review and follow the [“Golf Carts and Other Non-Registered/NON-licenses Motor Vehicles \( EX: John Deere Gator\) Safety” section of University Policy 4210.](#)

# Step-By-Step Procedure for Operator Certification- Cont'd

- **Step 3** – Employee, including student employees, that must operate golf carts, must be formally trained and certified by the **Louisiana Tech University Police Department** to operate a golf cart, before they can operate these vehicles. Employees, including student employees, that will operate other types of non-registered/non-licensed motor vehicles, shall be trained and certified by the Supervisor of the areas in which the vehicle is to be used before they can operate these vehicles. **Each operator along with their supervisor must complete a “Louisiana Tech University Non-Licensed Vehicle Operator Training Acknowledgement Form” and submit the completed form to the Office of Environmental Health and Safety (EHS)** for each of their employees that operate these types of vehicles. This Form can be downloaded from the “Forms” section of the EHS web page. Names of Certified operators will be posted in the Driver Safety section of the EHS web page. Recertification is required every 3 years for non-student employees and every year for student employees.

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# Step-By-Step Procedure for Operator Certification- Cont'd

- **Step 4** – The University Police shall use a golf cart training program for golf cart operator training. Supervisors who train operators of other types of non-registered/non-licensed vehicles should use the training material supplied by the manufacturer of the vehicle. A training module to use in conjunction of the Operator's Manual for John Deere Gators is located in the "Safety Training Resources" section of the EHS web page. Supervisors of all operators must document their training on a **"Louisiana Tech University Non-Licensed Vehicle Operator Training Acknowledgement Form"** and submit the completed form to the Office of Environmental Health and Safety (EHS)

# GENERAL RULES OF OPERATION

- a. These vehicles and lawnmowers may not be driven along sidewalks that are adjacent to non-College property
- b. Operators and passengers should be seated separately, and shall not under any circumstances be allowed to ride on the vehicle, unless they are seated in the center of the seat with both feet inside the vehicle.
- c. These utility vehicles are permitted to cross streets on campus from one Tech property to another, provided appropriate care is used with regard to pedestrians and traffic.
- d. A utility vehicle must come to a complete stop before crossing. The crossing of public ways is never permissible during the hours of darkness.
- **e. When approaching another motor vehicle or any pedestrian, they always have the right-of-way. Operators of the utility vehicle must come to a complete stop and allow them to pass. NO EXCEPTION!!!!**

# DRIVING A UTILITY VEHICLE

- **During the operation, the driver shall:**
  - a. Know the location of all controls, both inside and outside the vehicle.
  - b. Not operate the vehicle with the cargo box raised.
  - c. Check brake action before, during and after use, and report any abnormalities to the mechanic.
  - d. Not leave the vehicle running, unattended.
  - e. Avoid sudden starts, stops and turns.
  - f. Use directional signals to indicate path of travel.
  - g. Turn the vehicle only on level ground.
  - h. Not wear headphones designed to play music or other distracting noises. Earplugs or muffs may be used to lower decibel levels which are generated by the Gator, during normal operation.
  - i. Use the vehicle when adequate lighting is present.
  - j. Not permit horseplay or any other activity that will place passengers, cargo or the vehicle at risk.
  - k. Keep front wheels straight at crest of hill or when going over bumps or depressions

# BRAKING AND PARKING A UTILITY VEHICLE

- **Braking-**
- a. The parking brake system shall be engaged whenever the vehicle is unoccupied.
- b. Brakes shall be tested before and during operation for reasons of safety.
- c. Braking shall be used when descending steep slopes to prevent the vehicle from freewheeling.
  
- **Parking- The vehicle shall:**
- a. Be stopped and parked on a level surface.
- b. Be locked as indicated on the center console.
- c. Engine shall be stopped, and have the key removed to prevent unauthorized use.

## OTHER POLICIES

- **Smoking-** In accordance with the Louisiana Tech Smoking Policy, smoking is not permitted in any vehicle, including these utility vehicles. Some persons, including passengers, may find smoking and second hand smoke offensive and a potential health risk.
- **Keys-** Louisiana Tech Vehicle Policies, including the use of utility vehicles prohibit the leaving of keys in the ignition for reasons of liability and safety. A stolen vehicle, in which an injury or property damage occurs, shall be the responsibility of the operator.
- **Riding in Trailer-** Riding in trailers pulled by a utility vehicle is strictly prohibited.

**University Police can ticket an operator for violation of these policies**

# SAFETY DECALS AND LABELS

- **Utility vehicles have safety decals and labels that warn of the appropriate hazards and risks. Safety alerts range in hazards from a lower risk “Notice” to a much more significant “Danger”.**
- **ALL EMPLOYEES MUST BE AWARE OF THESE DECALS AND LABELS AND FOLLOW THE RULES SPECIFIED ON EACH.**
- A **DANGER** label indicates a hazardous situation with high probability of death or severe injury
- A **WARNING** label indicates hazardous situation which have some probability of death or severe injury
- A **CAUTION** label indicates a hazardous situation which may result in minor or moderate injury
- A **NOTICE** label indicates a possibility of University policy as the message relates (in)directly to personnel safety or protection of property.

# “CAUTION” LABELS

Instructions of what to do before leaving the vehicle:

- Stop engine.

- Set parking brake.

- Remove key.

Ways to prevent injury when dumping loads:

- Operate dump with parking brake lock.

- Never dump while moving.

- Operate dump on level ground only.

- Do not place hands behind seat when lowering box.

- Refer to Operator’s Manual for correct load distribution.

# OPERATING IN SPECIAL SITUATIONS

## 1. WATER HAZARDS

**When a water hazard is encountered, the operator shall:**

- Not cross the hazard if the operator is not fully aware of the actual depth.
- Not attempt to cross if water level is 6" or greater in depth.
- Proceed slowly and carefully if the water level is less than 6".



# OPERATING IN SPECIAL SITUATIONS

## 2. LOADING AND LOADING DISCHARGE

- The cargo bed or box of a utility vehicle shall be
  - Evenly distributed.
  - Securely anchored to prevent shifting or loss of load.
  - Loaded in a lesser quantity, if on uneven or hilly terrain.
- Never drive vehicles with tailgates hanging down and unsupported. Lugs on tires will contact tailgate causing potential structural damage to the vehicle.
- Material and equipment shall be flagged (orange or red) if it exceeds the length of the bed by 3'.
- Before dumping load, be sure the vehicle is on level ground and stable surface.
  - Set brake before raising cargo box.
- A cargo box can be very heavy. Cargo boxes that are not equipped with power lift were not meant to be raised by hand. Back injury may result.
- The center of gravity changes as a loaded cargo box is raised.
  - Do not allow rear wheels to hang over the edge of a loading dock or trench.

# OPERATING IN SPECIAL SITUATIONS

## 2. ROUGH TERRAIN-

**When using the vehicle on rough terrain the following precautions shall be used.**

- Use existing trails.. Avoid swails, dangerous slopes or depressions, bumps, holes, ruts and other obstacles.
- Because of lower roof clearance, the manufacturer recommends the use of head protection.
- Keep wheels straight at crest of hill or over bumps
- Reduce speed to lower risk of rollover.
- Brake frequently when descending slopes.. Do not permit the Gator to “freewheel”.
- If vehicle stops or loses power, lock brake to hold vehicle in place.

# DAILY CHECKLIST BEFORE STARTING VEHICLE

**Before operation of a utility vehicle, the operator shall:**

- Inspect the vehicle for
  - Fuel and oil leaks
  - Warning decals and labels in good condition
  - Lighting abnormalities or failures
  - Horns and other warning signals
  - Properly inflated tires
  - Guards and shields for personnel safety
  - Broken or missing parts
  - Check for proper security of loads

# STARTING THE VEHICLE

## **To start the vehicle:**

- a. Operators must be sitting in appropriate seat.
- b. Vehicle brake should be engaged.
- c. Start vehicle in neutral with choke engaged (during cold weather).
- d. If engine does not start within 5 seconds, turn key off and wait 10 seconds before next attempt.
- e. Never attempt starting the engine more than 3 times within a 5 minute period. The starter must have time to cool to prevent damage.

# Fueling and Maintenance of Vehicle

- SEE

LOUISIANA TECH UNIVERSITY UTILITY VEHICLE  
SAFETY POLICY IN THE SAFETY MANUAL

OR

THE UTILITY VEHICLE'S OPERATOR'S MANUAL

# John Deere Training Video

- Summarize your training by having the operator view the training video found at this web site.
- <https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=john+deere+gator+training+video&&view=detail&mid=D9BEB55C53AF75FD294ED9BEB55C53AF75FD294E&&FORM=VRDGAR>

# DISCUSSION

