

# WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

## Ride Responsibly This International Snowmobile Safety Week



*Be smart before you start. Safety should be an important part of your ride during snowmobiling season. / Photo Credit: Travel Wisconsin*

Ahead of International Snowmobile Safety Week (Jan. 15-23), the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is urging snowmobilers to make safety is an important part of the ride this and every season.

Be in the know and review Wisconsin's [snowmobile safety rules and regulations](#) before heading out.

For anyone hitting the trails this season, remember it is illegal to operate a snowmobile on private property without consent. Riding outside the markers and off the trail is considered trespassing. The most common violation is cutting corners on trails crossing private property. Always follow the trail markers.

Any person who is at least 12 years old born on or after Jan. 1, 1985 is required to have a valid [Snowmobile Safety Certificate](#) in order to operate a snowmobile in most areas. Operators must carry the certificate while riding and display it to a law enforcement officer when requested. Visit the [DNR Safety Education webpage](#) for details and to locate a class or take an online course.

The DNR is especially grateful to private landowners who allow snowmobilers to use designated trails that go across their land.

Think smart before you start this season by following these tips:

### **ON THE TRAILS**

- Don't drink and ride.
- Stay on marked trails—riding off-trail or cutting corners is trespassing.
- Always wear your helmet and safety gear.
- Slow down and use extra caution at night.
- Travel with a friend, carry a cell phone and let people know where you are going and when you'll return home.
- Dress appropriately, carry a first aid kit and navigation tools.
- Take a [snowmobile safety course](#).
- Check trail conditions using the [Travel Wisconsin Snowmobile Snow Report](#).

### **ICE SAFETY**

- Remember that ice is never completely safe under any conditions.
- Contact local sport shops to ask about ice conditions locally on the lake or river you want to traverse.
- Wear proper clothing and equipment, including a life jacket or float coat should you fall through the ice and to help retain body heat.
- Do not travel in unfamiliar areas.
- Slow down when traveling at night.
- Know if the lake has inlets, outlets or narrows that have currents that can thin the ice.
- Watch for pressure ridges or ice buckling. These can be dangerous due to thin ice and open water.

For additional information on snowmobile safety classes, regulations, safety tips or to register your snowmobile, click [here](#).

## **DNR VIOLATION HOTLINE**

Anyone with information regarding natural resource violations, including unsafe snowmobile operation, may confidentially report by calling or texting: VIOLATION HOTLINE: 1-800-TIP-WDNR or 1-800-847-9367. The hotline is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Trained staff relay the information to conservation wardens. File an online report [here](#).