

By Senator Wright

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A bill to be entitled
An act relating to utility terrain vehicles; creating
s. 316.21275, F.S.; defining terms; authorizing the
operation of a utility terrain vehicle (UTV) during
all hours; authorizing the operation of UTVs on
certain roadways; authorizing the operation of UTVs on
certain parts of the State Highway System; authorizing
the Department of Transportation to prohibit the
operation of UTVs under certain circumstances;
authorizing persons possessing certain licenses to
operate a UTV; requiring owners or operators of a UTV
to comply with certain requirements and regulations;
authorizing a county or municipality to restrict or
prohibit the operation of UTVs under certain
circumstances; providing civil penalties; amending s.
320.0847, F.S.; requiring the Department of Highway
Safety and Motor Vehicles to issue a license plate to
the owner or lessee of a vehicle registered as a UTV
upon payment of certain taxes and fees; requiring that
license plates for UTVs comply with specified
provisions; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Section 316.21275, Florida Statutes, is created
to read:

316.21275 Operation of a UTV on certain roadways.-

(1) As used in this section, the term:

(a) "Direct supervision" means a person is in the adjacent

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front passenger seat of the UTV being operated.

(b) "Utility terrain vehicle" or "UTV" means a vehicle less than 70 inches in width which has at least two seats allowing passengers to sit in a side-by-side manner, is operated by foot controls and a steering wheel, and is equipped with headlamps, stop lamps, turn signals, tail lamps, rearview mirrors, a windshield, seat belts, and a horn.

(2) A UTV may be operated during all hours.

(3) A UTV may be operated only upon:

(a) A two-lane county road with a posted speed limit of less than 55 miles per hour which has been designated for UTV use by a county; or

(b) A two-lane municipal street with a posted speed limit of less than 55 miles per hour which has been designated for UTV use by a municipality.

Before making such designation, the responsible county or municipality must first determine that a UTV may safely travel on or cross the public road or street, considering factors including the speed, volume, and character of motor vehicle traffic using the road or street.

(4) A person may operate a UTV on the State Highway System only when necessary to cross the highway at an angle of approximately 90 degrees to the direction of the roadway and at a place where a quick and safe crossing can be made. The Department of Transportation may prohibit the operation of UTVs on any road in its jurisdiction if it determines that such prohibition is necessary in the interest of safety.

(5) A person may operate a UTV only if he or she possesses

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a driver license pursuant to s. 322.18, or if he or she possesses a learner's driver license pursuant to s. 322.1615 and is under the direct supervision of a licensed driver.

(6) The owner or operator of a UTV must comply with all of the following requirements and regulations:

(a) Obey traffic regulations enumerated in this chapter and operate the UTV with due care.

(b) Provide proof of ownership under chapter 317 upon request of a law enforcement officer.

(c) Fulfill all insurance requirements pursuant to ss. 324.022 and 627.736.

(d) Ensure that the UTV has the proper license plate pursuant to s. 320.0847.

(e) Maintain the registration certificate or a copy thereof in the UTV pursuant to s. 320.0605.

(7) A county or municipality may enact an ordinance regarding UTV operation and equipment which is more restrictive than the requirements enumerated in this section.

(8) A county or municipality may prohibit the operation of a UTV on any road or street under its jurisdiction if the governing body of such county or municipality determines that such prohibition is necessary in the interest of safety.

(9) A violation of this section is a noncriminal traffic infraction, punishable as a nonmoving violation, as provided in chapter 318.

Section 2. Section 320.0847, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

320.0847 Mini truck, utility terrain vehicle, and low-speed vehicle license plates.—

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(1) The department shall issue a license plate to the owner or lessee of any vehicle registered as a low-speed vehicle as defined in s. 320.01, ~~or~~ a mini truck as defined in s. 320.01, or a utility terrain vehicle as defined in s. 316.21275 upon payment of the appropriate license taxes and fees prescribed in s. 320.08.

(2) The license plate for a low-speed vehicle, ~~or~~ mini truck, or utility terrain vehicle must ~~shall~~ comply with ~~the provisions of~~ s. 320.06.

Section 3. This act shall take effect January 1, 2027.