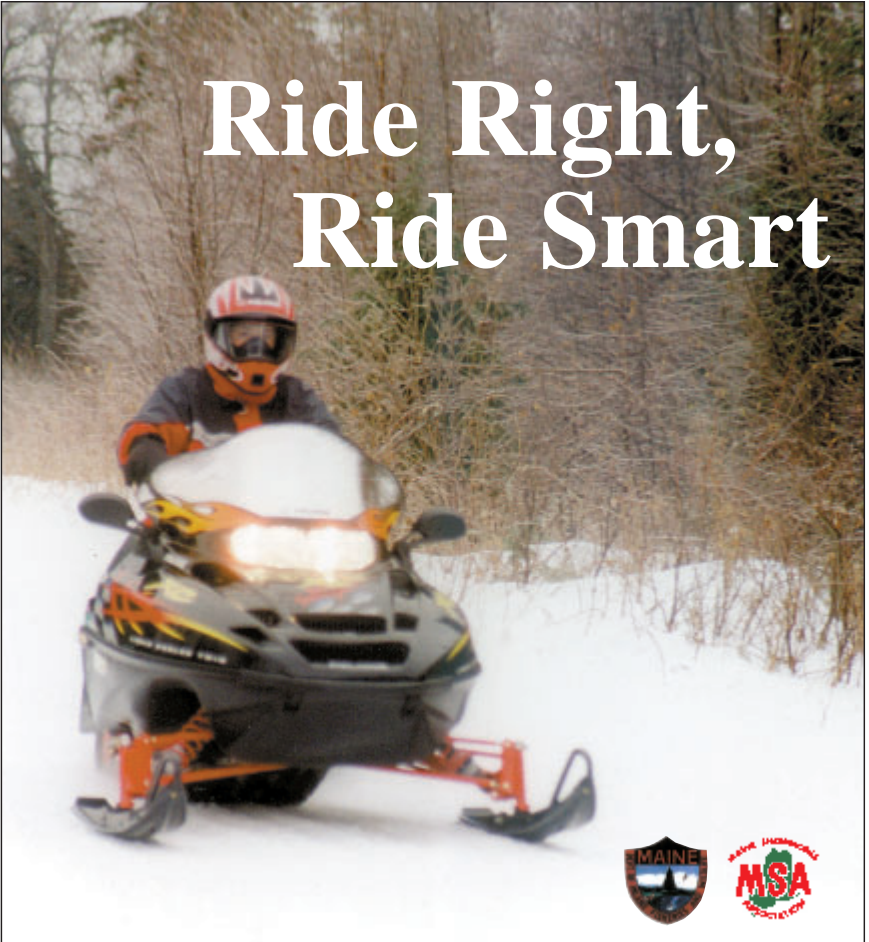


The Brian Wass Fund  
Snowmobile Safety Course

# Ride Right, Ride Smart



A Cooperative Effort Between The Maine Snowmobile Association and the Maine Warden Service To Improve Snowmobile Safety and Expand Community Wardening



**RIDE RIGHT**  
*in Maine*



## The Ride Right, Ride Smart Safe Snowmobiling course

The MSA has put together this presentation for all snowmobilers, to be an educational tool for the experienced, as well as a beginning step for the inexperienced snowmobiler. It is not intended to replace any courses in snowmobile safety presented by other agencies, such as the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (IF&W), but as an introduction to the basics of safe snowmobiling.

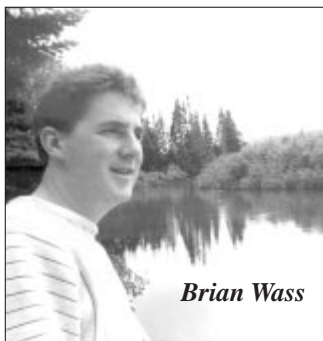
On March 11, 1996 after eleven people lost their lives in snowmobiling accidents in Maine, Governor Angus King appointed a task force on snowmobile safety. One of the recommendations of the task force was that the MSA increase safety programs within its organization. A trail safety check program was developed and put in place at that time, and is still in use today. With snowmobiling in Maine increasing each year, the MSA decided to create a safety presentation designed to be given by snowmobile clubs, teachers or other individuals to all interested participants.

As you proceed through this presentation you will see an emphasis has been placed on education. Educating the younger as well as the older snowmobiler will ensure the future of this sport. The information you will receive is intended for snowmobile club safety officers, club members educators or other individuals to be able to present in a single 2 to 2 1/2 hour session, or in shorter sessions covering the same amount of time. Optional sessions may be offered which include presentations by the Maine Warden Service in snowmobile law and a certified First Aid Instructor or Emergency Medical Technician in first aid practices.

There is no time like the present to get started making snowmobiling in Maine a safer winter activity. So do your part and spread the word, safe snowmobiling is everyone's responsibility!

**Remember-Ride Right, Ride Smart in Maine.**

**T**he Ride Right, Ride Smart program is funded in part by the Brian Wass Safety Fund of the Maine Snowmobile Association. The fund was established by Brian's family following his death in a snowmobiling accident, with moneys dedicated to promoting snowmobile safety in Maine. Donations to support the work of the Brian Wass Snowmobile Safety Fund may be sent care to: Brian Wass Safety Fund, c/o MSA, PO Box 80, Augusta ME 04332. Through the cooperative efforts of the Maine Department of Inland



*Brian Wass*

Fisheries and Wildlife and the MSA, additional funding has been provided through the National Recreational Trail Grant Program for safety and education.

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*Photographs by Alan Swett*

*"Thanks to the Landowner" reprinted with permission of author Bonnie Steeves*

# Section One

## Program Introduction and Objectives

### Know Before You Go

### Suggestions On What To Carry

## **Program Introduction and Objectives**

This snowmobile safety education presentation was designed for snowmobilers, young and old, experienced and inexperienced, throughout the state of Maine and beyond. This sport is growing and along with the growth is an increased need for safe riding. The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife (IF&W) developed a snowmobile safety course many years ago to educate beginning snowmobilers in safety, basic machine operation, survival skills, and riding to enjoy. Over the years instructors certified through the department have offered that course at locations throughout the state. As the sport has grown and safety has become a priority of many associated with it, so has come a need for another education tool. The MSA has been working to develop an educational tool for snowmobile clubs and club members to use to encourage safe snowmobiling.

This presentation has one important thought in mind, riding safely. The information has been designed to be presented in approximately two hours. It will cover being familiar with a snowmobile, basic needs, safety issues and practices, snowmobilers' responsibilities to landowners, nature, other riders and themselves, as well as additional course information available to those interested. Suggestions for persons interested in setting up this presentation and materials will be available through the MSA.

As this presentation was in the development stages one main theme was expressed many times by snowmobilers when asked what they would like to see: keep it short and keep the information pertinent to snowmobiling. Grouping information into segments incorporated this theme. These sections can be delivered in any order or way the presenter feels will work, as long as all material is covered. The material can be presented by anyone willing to do so, with minimal pre-instruction. Club safety officers or members of a snowmobile club may be briefed by the MSA on presentation of this material. There is a short written test to complete and it is expected that you will participate in all segments.

It is the hope of the MSA that more snowmobilers will take advantage of this presentation to review and improve their safe riding skills. Snowmobilers are a caring, dedicated alliance of persons committed to their sport. The more people this program reaches, the safer the riding becomes. This program is not intended to replace a certified snowmobile safety course such as the one IF&W sponsors. That course covers in depth areas of safety for all snowmobilers. The ideal situation would be for participants to take part in both programs to further their education and promote safe riding. Contact the Recreational Safety Office at IFW for information about their comprehensive snowmobile safety course.

# Know Before You Go

Before anyone goes out on a snowmobile for the first time, whether a first time owner or the first ride of a season, there are some things you should know. All new snowmobiles come with an owner's manual and, in some cases, a video about the machine you are buying. If you buy a used sled you should ask the current owner if they have the manual. The owner's manual will be a guide for you to learn about your machine. You should read it carefully before you begin to snowmobile.

Knowing your snowmobile and how it operates is the beginning of safe snowmobiling. The basics are important to assure that you have a positive snowmobiling experience. Just like when you buy a new vehicle, you need to know the basics before you go. This applies not only to your first snowmobile but also at the beginning of each season. Before you start any snowmobile there are steps you should follow to insure safe riding. Snowmobiles, being a seasonal machine, need to be checked thoroughly before the first ride. Either you or a professional should look over all areas of the sled closely. This means the belts and track should be checked for breaks. The throttle and brake handle should be free moving and not sticking. All parts of the engine should be examined. Once you are sure it is safe to start the snowmobile then check the lights. All lights should be visible from the distances required by state law. These are the basic areas to check. As with any machine, a thorough examination before you start assures safe riding.

Proper clothing and basics of what to carry with you are also areas of safety to be considered. Clothing choices are as varied as the riders, but all should have the same theme, protection. Maine weather can change quickly in a day so you should be prepared for the elements when you leave. It is a good idea to overdress before you go and remove clothing if you get warm as the day goes on. Having more clothes is better than getting many miles from home and not having enough clothes.

All survival courses teach a person to dress in layers. These layers serve as insulation from the elements, especially the cold and wind. Frostbite is a concern when outside in the winter, so all exposed parts of the body should be covered well. Each snowmobile manufacturer carries a complete line of clothing to consider, but

## What To Carry

- Personal identification
- Snowmobile registration
- Tool kit
- Spare belt
- Spare spark plugs
- Tow rope
- Knife
- Map
- Money
- First aid kit
- Food and water
- Waterproof matches and fire starter material (paper etc. in a waterproof bag)
- Flashlight
- Necessary personal medical information
- Paper and something to write with
- Candle
- Hand warmer packs
- Extra key to your snowmobile
- Extra dry gloves and socks
- A wool hat
- Cell phone
- Duct or electrical tape
- Compass
- Emergency blanket

***Knowing your snowmobile and how it operates is the beginning of safe snowmobiling.***



there are just as many non-brand products out there that work just as well. Remember to include feet, hands and your face in the areas to be protected well, as these body parts are the most susceptible to frostbite.

While the law in Maine does not require helmets, they are the best safety feature you can use. Not only

do helmets protect your head from injury, they can also protect your face from the cold, raw wind if you purchase one with a full-face protector or a face shield. If you decide to use an open face helmet, don't forget some type of eye protection. Flying pieces of ice and snow from the snowmobile ahead of you or a branch sticking out in the trail can cause serious eye injury if you don't have them covered. Any helmet you choose should have a DOT or Snell seal on the back stating it is an approved helmet.

So now you are ready to ride! You are fully protected from the elements by dressing in layers, you have your helmet and some type of face protection and you have checked your machine thoroughly before you leave. Have you forgotten anything? The answer to that is, "Yes"! Did you tell anyone where you were going? Do you have some emergency basics with you just in case? The answer to these questions many times is, "No".

It is very important that you let people know where you are going. If you are going alone (which isn't the safest way to go) or in a group, you should tell someone and leave a note stating where you intend to go. The information should include when you left and what time you expect to be back. It should also serve as a trip itinerary, which will let people know what direction you started in and where you expect to go.

The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife has developed a trip itinerary form, which you can leave in your house, on your windshield (inside on the dash), at your motel/hotel room, or any place you start from. Leaving this information will save valuable time if something happens and someone needs to find you. If something happens, such as you change your plans, stay out later than you expected or decide to spend the night someplace other than you indicated in your plan, call someone! Remember, someone is going to become concerned if you

don't return.

If your plans change and you aren't where you stated, unnecessary time may be spent looking in the wrong places.

What about emergency basics to carry with you? It is a good idea to keep a few basics in your snowmobile or on your person when you are gone. The obvious pieces

***Riding with a group is safer than riding alone. Group members can provide assistance when problems arise.***



are the extra parts and a tool kit for your machine. Spare belt, spark plugs and a tool kit should be standard safety equipment. A spare key for your sled, a small section of rope to use as a starter rope and a tow rope, flashlight, and a pocket knife would also be useful tools. Basic survival courses teach you to be prepared for any emergency. A list of other basics included below will assist you in what you should carry. If you are just going for a short ride from your house not all of these items would be necessary. If you are planning a longer trip and know you will be miles from contact with residences or phones, the other items are important to have for survival in case something happens.

Basic survival should be an important part of your trip planning every time you decide to go for a ride. Just as with any motor vehicle, you never know what might happen. There are many possibilities that can occur, so the more prepared you are the better chance you have of being rescued and surviving. Riding with a group gives you a better opportunity than if you ride alone, so try to go with a friend or friends when you go.

# Section Two

Know How To Ride Responsibly  
Know The Riding Techniques  
Thanks To The Landowners  
Groomer Safety  
Basic First Aid Information

## **Know How To Ride Responsibly**

Riding responsibly means many things to a snowmobiler. Using hand signals, riding correctly, not using alcohol or drugs, respecting landowners and wildlife, following the laws and using common sense are all practices that show responsible riding.

In order for snowmobile trails to be safe all snowmobilers must act responsibly when they ride. Accidents can and do occur even when a person is riding responsibly, but not as frequently. Remember, you are not the only person on a trail and you must stay alert and in control.

As when you operate a motor vehicle in the State of Maine there are laws for snowmobilers as well. These laws are in place to encourage safe snowmobiling and to protect those who ride. The laws are enforced through patrols on the trails, response to accidents and being visible in trouble areas. Maine game wardens also hold trail check details and have many other responsibilities in an attempt to keep the trails safe for all. To assure that you know the laws and are familiar with any changes made, you should obtain a new law book each year when you register your snowmobile, then take the time to read the laws.

The Maine Snowmobile Association endorses “zero tolerance” towards alcohol and drug use on snowmobile trails. Through the years alcohol use on the trails has decreased due to intense law enforcement. Alcohol is still an issue in accidents and fatalities throughout this state, however. Maine’s OUI law has a .08 level if caught riding under the influence.

Laws pertaining to age and operating snowmobiles are in effect in Maine. In order for a child to operate a snowmobile on property other than that owned by their parents the child has to be over 10 years of age, unless accompanied by an adult. For a child to cross a public way on their own they have to be 14 years of age. Also parents are responsible for the cost of damages caused by their child while operating a snowmobile if the child is under the age of 18 years old.

Accident reporting laws state that any accident resulting in death or an injury requiring the services of a physician must be reported to the nearest law enforcement agency by the quickest means possible. Property damage accidents resulting in \$1000 in damages or more must be reported within 72 hours using a self reporting form provided by the Maine Warden Service.

Along with the laws keeping the trails safe, there are other practices all snowmobilers should follow. Maine has been promoting the use of hand signals by sup-

plying snowmobile clubs with signs and handouts that illustrate the signals. By using hand signals you are letting others on the trail know what you are doing so they can react and avoid danger. All snowmobilers in a group should know the signals and use them at all times. The American Council of Snowmobile Associations has approved the hand signals.

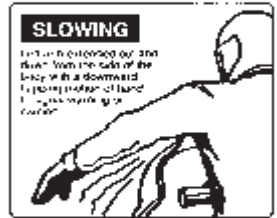
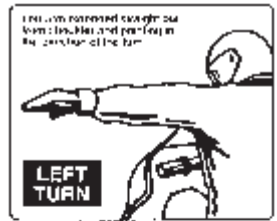
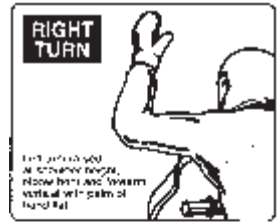
One difference which was put in place at the June 2001 International Snowmobile Congress was the change in the last sled in line signal. The published one has been a down slashing motion of the left hand. This sign was changed to a closed left fist raised at a 90-degree angle in the air.

Another sign that has been readily used by snowmobilers but is not in print form is the raised left hand holding up a number of fingers, if the rider is wearing a glove. This number of fingers is a sign of how many snowmobiles are behind the rider in that group. It does not indicate a number of sleds outside that group as the leader of the next group should indicate to the oncoming snowmobiler there is a group behind him/her as well.

The printed version of the sleds following sign is the left arm up with the thumb pointing back to indicate that you have sleds behind you. The last person in a group can indicate that there is another group following by also using this signal. It is important that the last person in line checks occasionally to see if there are sleds behind him/her so that an accurate hand signal can be given to the oncoming sleds.

The other hand signals are in print form and have been published in many areas. The right turn sign is a raised left arm in a 90-degree angle with the palm open. The left turn is a straight out left arm. The slowing sign is left arm out and motioning downward and back. The stop hand signal is a raised left hand with arm extended over the head with the palm flat.

Trail signs are also supplied to snowmobile clubs by the Snowmobile Division of the Maine Department of Conservation. Snowmobile clubs are responsible for ordering the signs and putting them in place. The trail





Stop-Come to a complete stop before proceeding



Stop Ahead-Prepare for an upcoming stop sign



Object Marker - Be alert to fixed object beside the trail, narrowing passage



Directional arrow - Be prepared for a change in trail direction



Caution-Slow for a present or upcoming hazard



Trail Blaze - Consistent marking of designated snowmobile trail

signs are used to inform, warn and caution snowmobilers as they proceed down the trails.

The standard set of signs include caution, arrows, stop ahead signs, stop signs, snowmobile trail marker signs, and an informational sign in which clubs can write what they want for information.

It is important that snowmobilers heed the signs that are in place and proceed with caution when they are seen. A stop sign at a road crossing is very important to snowmobilers and possible oncoming traffic. Motor vehicles are not always warned that there is a snowmobile trail crossing the highway and therefore the drivers are not on the lookout for a snowmobile coming across the road. In some cases there may be a high snow bank which obstructs the driver's as well as the snowmobiler's vision. It is extremely important that snowmobilers come to a complete stop and look both ways, then look again, before crossing a highway. It is also as important that all snowmobile clubs mark these crossings on the trails with stop ahead and then stop signs so that snowmobilers are aware there is a road crossing.

## Know The Riding Techniques

Each situation you may encounter as you travel the extensive Maine trail system requires you to be alert and know how to adapt your style to the terrain you are on. In the course of a given day a snowmobiler in Maine may travel wide-open spaces, logging roads, narrow trails through heavily wooded areas, hills and ice. Knowing how your snowmobile responds in each of these situations and how you should handle your snowmobile is necessary for safe riding.

There are also occasions when you will be riding at night, which presents a different set of driving techniques.

There is an old saying, "If you don't like the weather in Maine, wait a minute." which all snowmobilers should remember before they go. Snowstorms with white out conditions, freezing rain or just plain rain, not to forget the changes in temperatures, also are conditions snowmobilers should be prepared for.

The main theme of all these conditions should be "Ride Right, Ride Smart". If you are in control of your snowmobile and riding to the right of the trail, constantly being alert to the changes in the trail, you will be much safer and

ready for what may happen. At all times a snowmobiler should be on the defense for the unexpected and know how to remain calm and handle the situation so that safety is the key.

Snow conditions can also change in the course of a ride. A snowmobiler may come to a section where there is deep, fluffy snow. Your machine will respond differently

to these conditions and may sink deeper than you expect. Know that it takes more power in these situations to keep your snowmobile from becoming stuck. If you do get stuck it is the same as a car, don't spin. The techniques for getting unstuck with a snowmobile are basically the same as with a motor vehicle.

Also be prepared for snowdrifts, which can cause a snowmobile to jump in the air. Even though the snowmobile clubs in this state do a wonderful job of grooming the trails, there are still going to be bumps or dips that cannot be groomed out. Watch for these and slow down while warning any other snowmobiles traveling with you of your intentions by using a hand signal.

Ice is a deadly condition that should be avoided if possible. If you find yourself at the edge of a seemingly frozen body of water don't assume it is safe and travel out there. Look for signs and clues that it is indeed safe and if at all possible find an alternate route. If you are unfamiliar with the area and there appears to be a house near by, ask! Locals will be able to tell you about the ice and give you any directions on how to stay safe. If you do find yourself on ice of any kind, even if it is an icy trail, remember your snowmobile reacts differently to this condition. Slowing down is always the best advice, and try not to make any quick turns.

As with any riding always be on the lookout for objects in the trail. Even though snowmobile clubs work very hard at brushing the trails a sudden wind or ice storm can play havoc on a clean trail. Fallen branches, ruts, stumps, rocks and other obstacles can seem to appear out of nowhere. This is also true of wildlife. Maine has numerous animals that enjoy the groomed trails as much as snowmobilers do. You should not always assume that the sound of a snowmobile would cause animals to leave the trail before you reach them. If you notice tracks around the trail you are on, remain on the lookout for any animal to jump out in front of you or be standing in the trail around the next corner. If you do encounter an animal on the trail, slow down or stop and let it move away from the trail. When it has moved

***Fallen branches, ruts, stumps, rocks and other obstacles can seem to appear out of nowhere.***



away proceed with caution as it may return to the trail at any moment.

Night riding means that you are the mercy of the distance of your headlight. You cannot see what might be beyond that and therefore you need to slow down. Oncoming snowmobiles are easier to see at night as their lights will also be working, but that doesn't tell you what else might be there and that only works when you can see ahead.

Remember also that many trail groomers work late in the night and meeting one of them on a trail is quite possible. These large pieces of equipment cannot yield the trail as easily as you can, so give them the respect they deserve.

One of Maine's most valuable assets is our landowners. Without them snowmobile trails and access to many areas of this state would be greatly reduced and in some areas nonexistent.

Snowmobile clubs work very hard to establish landowner permission and they take pride in maintaining a working relationship with their landowners. Snowmobilers need to keep this in mind as they travel the state; the land you are on belongs to someone! Respect means you obey the wishes of the landowner and stay on the marked trails. Leaving the trail may mean you are jeopardizing a landowner's winter crop or a tree plantation and you are in violation of the law by trespassing on their land. Respect also means not leaving behind your garbage or destroying their property. If snowmobilers do not respect the landowners, the next time they attempt to ride that trail, it may be closed.

Snowmobilers need to realize that private landowners own the trails in Maine. In fact, 94% of the time we snowmobile we are on private land. You may cross many different landowners' properties in a small stretch of trail or travel on the land of a single owner for miles, but the bottom line is still the same, it is private land.

In the course of a season snowmobilers face many obstacles and encounter different challenges to do what they enjoy, ride the trails of Maine. As you travel the state, safety should and must be a major concern. Changes can and do happen in seconds, therefore it is important to stay alert at all times. Respect the trails, the people who own them, the snowmobile club members who work them and the other people you will meet on them.

*The following is a poem written by Bonnie Steeves a snowmobiler from Aroostook County for her club's landowner recognition ceremony. It is reprinted with her permission.*

## **THANKS TO THE LANDOWNER**

When Webster set out to define the word "land"  
Many a meaning he found  
A "natural resource" a "solid piece of earth"  
A section of "dirt, soil and ground".

The word "owner" he said described those who have  
As opposed to those who have not.  
Which describes those invited to be here tonight  
As a room of landowners we've got.

But with owning comes work as everyone knows  
And bills that each year you must pay.  
So while **YOU** use your land to plant and to reap  
**WE** use your land just to play.

For the sledding we do is not like the days of old  
Which some here no doubt recall.  
When a "trip" was defined as 20 miles  
And even that was a long haul.

Trails were not heard of back in those days  
When sledding really began to take hold.  
But hasn't it changed in the years we've been 'round  
And to **YOU** a great debt we owe.

We've come on your land seeking trails for our sleds  
We've brushed and we've built and we groom  
And when the snow melts and our playing is done  
Your land we hope we've improved.

The generous use of your land has allowed  
Connecting the north, east and west  
A whole highway of trails now intersect  
And ours in Maine are the best!

Now it's easy for us to get there from here  
But without all you owners we wouldn't  
We'd still be trying to travel cross country  
And some of us still probably couldn't.

So we invited landowners to join us tonight  
To take these few hours to say  
**Thank You!** We appreciate all that you've done.  
**You** make us what **WE** are today!!

## Groomer Safety

Great trail riding in Maine as well as anywhere in the country depends on many issues. Snow conditions are the most important aspect of good snowmobiling. Once there is enough snow then the job of trail maintenance falls on the snowmobile clubs and most specifically the trail groomers. These men and women spend many hours out there making sure the trails are in the best condition possible as well as making them as safe as possible. We all know the trails don't magically groom themselves.

In order to do this tremendous task, clubs purchase equipment to drag the trails. This equipment can vary from snowmobiles hauling pipe drags or more complex mogul drags to large track trucks, Pisten Bullys, and /or Tuckers hauling much larger drags. They all have certain things in common: they take up the entire trail, they can't be seen from behind because of snow dust, they travel at extremely low speeds and they can't get off the trail. There has not been a reported fatal collision between a groomer and a snowmobile in the state of Maine as this is written and all people should work to keep it that way.

Groomers try to pick the time when there will be less traffic on the trails to do their job. This usually means late at night and into the early morning hours. Unfortunately they can't always accommodate snowmobilers and at times do have to groom during daylight and more heavily traveled times. Because of the number of miles they cover in those hours it is almost impossible to warn snowmobilers where exactly on the trails they are. That is why it is important to take note of the surroundings and always ride with the thought in mind there could be a large piece of equipment coming at you or just ahead of you at any time. By noticing the trail itself you can sometimes guess it has just been groomed or is being done at that time. We all know what a newly groomed trail looks and feels like. Keep in mind as you think about pushing the throttle down a little more because the trail is so smooth, "How did it get this way? Where is the groomer?" If you ride with this in mind you may avoid the unfortunate surprise of finding the equipment filling the trail and you with no place to go.

What should you do if you meet a groomer on the trail?

In the evening hours you may be able to see the groomer coming from quite a distance as visibility allows. Many are equipped with large headlights and even the smaller sled versions are putting some type of warning light on them. As soon as you determine a groomer is coming at you there are things you can do to remain safe. The first thing you should do is slow down or stop, depending on the width of the trail. Pull as far to the right of the trail as you can. Depending on the size of the groomer and the width of the trail it may be necessary to pull completely off the trail. Choose a spot where you can do this safely and remain stopped until the groomer goes by. It is easier to get unstuck with a snowmobile than it is to get a groomer and drag unstuck.

Always be courteous to the people operating the equipment, as many are volunteers trying to make your ride more enjoyable.

What should you do if you come up behind a groomer in the trail?

Remember these pieces of equipment are designed to cut off the moguls then pack it back down smoothly.

Depending on snow conditions this could mean a large amount of snow dust in the trail ahead of you. If you see this condition ahead of you slow down and warn others in your group that

*The best type of warning system you have at your disposal is your own common sense.*



are behind you to do the same. As soon as you can see the groomer, follow at a safe distance until the operator can see you. Once they establish you are there they will indicate when you can pass. Remember they have greater visibility than you at that time and can judge when to move over to allow you by or indicate there is an area wide enough to pass with nothing coming. The larger drag equipment sits much higher in the air so their visibility is much greater than yours.

Your sled is no match for a large Mogul Master or other type of drag. It is also no match for another sled coming in the opposite direction if you decide to pass and the trail is not clear but you can't see due to snow dust.

The popularity of communications systems between snowmobilers in a group has increased in the past few years. Many of these communicator systems come with a radio frequency that is designed to warn snowmobilers of a grooming operation in the immediate area. If you have one of these communicators and hear the signal follow the suggestions given for both instances. It will warn you, but not indicate in which direction the groomer is, so be prepared for either circumstance. Keep in mind that this is a mechanical device and is subject to failure.

The best type of warning system you have at your disposal is your own common sense. Use it to stay safe on the trail and keep others safe as well.

Trail safety is everyone's responsibility with groomers and riders sharing the trails. Ride by staying alert and you can avoid an incident or accident when groomers are out.

## Basic First Aid Information

Although no one ever wants to be in a position where they have to give first aid to someone, the possibility exists when you are snowmobiling that someone may be injured. Since many snowmobiles travel in remote areas, the chances are that if any injury occurs someone will have to give the best care they can until trained help arrives. Since help can be miles and much time away it will be up to the people at the scene to aid the injured person as much as your training allows until the next help arrives.

It is advised that you take a certified first aid course to learn the procedures needed to give assistance to injured people wherever you are. For this presentation first aid information will be limited to the simple facts. In certified courses techniques are given in depth and more details are provided. These courses are offered through local Red Cross and American Heart Association agencies, whom you can contact to find out when and where their courses are offered.

If you find yourself in the position that someone is injured the first thing you should do is remain calm. Your attitude and reactions will influence how the injured person reacts and responds.

The next thing anyone can do is assess the situation. The more information that can be relayed to advanced medical care personnel the better. The placement of Rescubogans throughout the state has allowed many remote areas to have fully equipped units ready to go when notified. The information given to the authorities will assist the rescue staff to be prepared.

Anyone, trained or not, can check a situation and the scene. In order to do this you just need to use common sense and your senses to observe what is happening. The first step is to check to make sure the situation is safe for you to proceed. Do not proceed if the situation can also put you in danger.

### The Basic First Aid Kit

- Band Aids- various sizes
- 2" and 4" gauze compresses or gauze pads
- 1- triangular bandage (sling)
- Roll of gauze
- Roll of 1" adhesive tape
- Rubber gloves or plastic wrap to use as a fluid barrier
- Antibacterial cream or soap
- Antibiotic first aid cream
- Aspirin
- Protective face shield or mask

*\*\* Do not carry any liquids that may freeze or break open\*\**

From this point, remember the one basic rule, do not move an injured person unless they are placed in more danger by staying where they are.

Once you have established that it is safe for you to proceed, then look for these two things to report to advanced help. Is the person conscious? Is there any noticeable severe bleeding? If you are not first aid trained, from this point do nothing further except to get emergency help and help the victim remain still and calm. Just answering these two questions will assist the rescuers in being prepared for the victim when

they arrive. It is up to you to assist an injured person to remain calm and keep them comfortable until more advanced medical care reaches the scene. The person will look to you to aid them and reassure them that more advanced help is coming. Treat the person to the best of your ability and stay with them until more trained people arrive.

***The placement of Rescueboggans throughout the state has allowed many remote areas to have fully equipped units ready to go when notified.***



If you have to leave an injured person to get more advanced assistance, leave a note telling others which way you went and when you left. This way if someone else happens to come along they will know that help is being sought. This could be very important if you aren't familiar with the area. Someone else more familiar with the area may come along and know a quicker route to get medical assistance allowing the injured person to get medical attention as soon as possible.

If you spend time outside in the winter it is important you learn first aid basics from trained personnel. Minor injuries, such as cuts and scrapes are ones we all have learned to treat. However, more advanced injuries such as frostbite, broken bones, and life threatening situations such as unconsciousness, breathing difficulties, hypothermia, and heart attacks require more training. Know how to treat these situations and you may save a person's life.

Carrying a first aid kit should be a must in all snowmobiles since any injury can occur at any time and you won't be able to reach in the medicine cabinet like you do at home. There are commercial first aid kits you can purchase, but you can also make a simple one that will fit in your snowmobile. Whichever one you carry is up to you, but make sure it is in a durable waterproof container that can withstand being carried in a snowmobile and bounced around on the trails. See the list of basic supplies in this first aid information section.



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