

Off-road vehicles

New regulations into effect Feb. 1

Ontario's Transportation and Communications Minister James Snow recently outlined new regulations covering the operation of off-road vehicles which come into effect February 1.

An off-road vehicle is any two or three-wheeled vehicle, plus specific types with four or more wheels designed primarily for recreational use. Those licensed for on-road use or exempted by regulation are not included.

Exempted off-road vehicles include: golf carts; road-building machines and motorized wheelchairs.

Off-road vehicles participating in rallies or exhibitions sponsored by a motorcycle club or association with a membership of 25 or more are exempt if used solely for such events.

All off-road vehicle owners must register their vehicles with MTC by June 1. Such vehicles cannot be registered to anyone under 16 years of age.

The one-time registration fee is \$25. On registration, owners will be supplied with a vehicle permit and licence plate, the permit to be carried by the driver at all times.

Licence plates for such vehicles go on sale Feb. 1 and can be obtained at any motor vehicle licensing office.

For two and three-wheeled vehicles, the licence plate is to be mounted on the front of the vehicle, in plain view, facing forward.

The plate is to be mounted on the rear of four or more wheeled vehicles.

The new regulations also specify that as of Feb. 1, drivers, passengers and riders on a conveyance towed by an off-road vehicle must wear regulation helmets. Helmets are not required when operating on land owned or occupied by the vehicle owner.

In addition, as of Aug. 1, 1984, vehicle liability insurance will be required for all off-road vehicles driven anywhere other than land owned or occupied by the vehicle owner. Proof of insurance must be carried by the driver.

Any collision resulting in personal injury or damage to property apparently exceeding \$400, must be reported to the police.

Persons under 12 are not permitted to drive an offroad vehicle except on land owned or occupied by the vehicle owner.

The vehicles may be driven directly across selected highways only if the driver has a valid driver's licence.

Vehicles with three or more wheels may be driven along a highway by a farmer when used for a farming operation if in possession of a valid driver's licence. Off-road vehicles cannot be driven along a highway in any other circumstances.

As well, the owner of the vehicle, and/or driver, is responsible for violations of the Off-Road Vehicles Act and is liable for any loss or damage to property caused.



Jason Grasman gets a pull from Jim Dieroff as they take a break from shovelling after last week's blizzard. They didn't mind the work, though because school was cancelled Wednesday because of the storm. Roy Barton looks on in behind. Halton Hills had plenty of the white stuff to play on by the weekend.

Phone for legal advice

Ontario's highly-successful Dial-a-Law program will expand February 1 to enable it to serve about 5 million people in South-western and Central Ontario.

On that date, callers living outside Metro Toronto, but within the 416 Area Code, will be able to call into the program Toll Free at 1-800-387-2920.

Dial-A-Law, which opened in Metro Toronto in March, 1983, has already assisted over 50,000 people to obtain free general legal information through its library of 75 pre-recorded tapes covering 12 areas of law. A free tape guide (available to the public) is enclosed for your information.

By calling the toll free number, callers from Hamilton and the Golden Horseshoe, as well as from east and north of Metro Toronto, will reach an operator who assists in determining the most appropriate tape to play.

So far, the most-requested tapes deal with wrongful dismissal, separation and separation agreements and small claims court.

"Many people don't know how to find out about the law and this program can help them," said Burke Doran, Q.C. Chairman of the Law Society Public Information Committee. "While we can't give legal advice on a person's specific problem, callers tell us that the general information on the tapes goes a long way in letting them know if they have a legal problem and, if so, what they can do about it," he said.

Preserving the past subject

"Uncle Fred can tell the greatest stories about his younger days!" Have you often heard remarks like this and wished the precious memories of the past could be preserved?

The Esqueping Historical Society would like to show people how to record oral history for the benefit of generations to come. They are sponsoring a bicentennial workshop on oral history with the Ontario Historical Society on Saturday, April 1, 1984.

Learn how to interview, prepare for interviews, classify, transcribe, the legal implications and much more. The all day workshop will be held at the Georgetown Public Library.

Individuals and institutions are urged to attend so that today's stories can be turned into tomorrow's history. Registration fee is \$20 for history society members and \$25 for non-members. Registration forms are available at the library or by sending your name, address and telephone number with payment to the Esqueping Historical Society, Box 51, Georgetown, Ont. L7G.

The deadline for registration, Wednesday March 14 at the monthly society meeting in Knox Church, Georgetown.

Flat tax rate favored by Halton constituents

Many taxpayers living in the federal Halton riding want to see a flat tax rate implemented.

Recently, through a householder mailing, MP Otto Jelinek asked his constituents how they'd like to see tax legislation changed. Recommendations from local taxpayers are being presented by Jelinek to the Tory task force on tax simplification.

"The overall consensus was that a large portion of the Halton population would prefer a fixed tax rate of between 10 and 25 per cent of their gross income, with absolutely no deductions," Jelinek reported.

He said constituents perceive a flat tax rate more equitable because it would prevent individuals and business from "claiming excessive and indeed questionable deductions" to reduce or eliminate entirely taxable income. "It would also replace the continual taxation that is currently in place, wherein one is charged income tax, federal and provincial sales tax, as well as taxes on capital gains and interest income."

The largest number of complaints he received dealt with the "unrealistic complexity" of the present tax form and the inability of laymen to complete it without fearing he

or she has missed claiming all possible deductions.

"Furthermore, people are annoyed that they are compelled to seek out the services of tax professionals and that they must, in essence, pay for this service in order to pay their taxes. The majority of individuals would like to see a drastically simplified tax form that would allow the average taxpayer to complete his return without undue difficulties."

Tax shelters are needed for people over 71 years of age and no taxes should be paid on old age security income, constituents told Jelinek.

The government isn't accountable to the people for spending of tax dollars, Halton voters said, and loopholes which permit tax evasion are a "major flaw."

Many Halton constituents reported they'd like to see reasonable increases in child care expense deductions and want to be able to decide which spouse declares the family allowance income, regardless of which spouse claims the child care expenses. Halton voters also expressed interest in a joint husband-wife tax return.

Retraining may suffer

Women hoping for a new life off the welfare rolls may have their hopes shattered in Halton by a lack of subsidized day care.

According to a report presented to members of the region's health and social services committee last week, Halton has filled all the spaces it has for subsidized day care, meaning women with children hoping to enrol in retraining programs operated by Sheridan College and other institutions may not be able to take part.

Social services director Debbie Oakley said women involved in programs such as Focus for Change, Women in Trades and Technology and Introduction to Non-Traditional Occupations are paid a small allowance while involved in the training program, but they frequently need the low cost day care services available through Halton's subsidized program.

"At this time we have reached our maximum level of subsidized day care service and new applications are being placed on a waiting list," she reported.

Miss Oakley added seven such retraining courses are due to start in the first two months of 1984, but Halton women may not be able to take part.

As many as 50 requests for day care subsidies would normally be made at this time of the year, she added.

In order to provide all the services which will be requested, she said, as much as \$52,000 in extra provincial money will be needed.

Meetings have been held with officials of the provincial Ministry of Community and Social Services, she said, "and to this date no funds have been allocated to Halton to cover the cost of Day Care."

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