



FROM THE DESK OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

ATVs ARE A PROBLEM ON ROADWAY

With the summer season coming up fast, I want to touch on an issue that is a problem in Lake Tansi each year. It is a problem that involves public safety as well as public peace. During the summer months, people want to enjoy ATVs such as four wheelers, side by sides and dirt bikes. These vehicles are illegal to operate on public roads. When people operate such vehicles on the road, they often drive them too fast, and they are usually very loud and cause a disturbance as well as a safety concern. It is a violation of the law for these vehicles to operate on public roads and if such vehicles are caught on the roads within Lake Tansi by Lake Tansi Police officers, citations and tow away are very likely.

Another issue we have with ATVs is that of them being operated on private property not owned by the ATVs operators. This is also a violation of state law. A person can be fined up to \$250.00 and have their driver's license suspended if found guilty of this offense. I have attached a copy of both laws for your reading. If you have any questions about this issue, please reach out to me at the Tansi Police Department phone number (931-788-6388)

55-8-185. Use of off-highway motor vehicles on highways.

(a) No off-highway motor vehicle as defined in § 55-3-101(c)(2) shall be operated or driven upon a highway unless the vehicle is registered as a medium speed vehicle pursuant to §§ 55-8-101 and 55-4-136; is registered as a Class I or Class II off-highway vehicle pursuant to chapter 4, part 7 of this title, and operated on county roads pursuant to § 55-8-203; is operated or driven pursuant to subsection (c) or (e); or is operated or driven for the purpose of crossing a highway as follows:

(1) On a two-lane highway, only to cross the highway at an angle of approximately ninety degrees (90°) to the direction of the roadway and at a place where a quick and safe crossing may be made;

(2) With respect to the crossing of a highway having more than two (2) lanes, or a highway having limited access, off-highway motor vehicles may cross these highways, but only at a place designated by the department of transportation or local government authorities with respect to highways under their respective jurisdictions as a place where such motor vehicles, or specified types of such motor vehicles, may cross the highways, and these vehicles shall cross these highways only at those designated places and only in a quick and safe manner; and

(3) The department and local government authorities with respect to highways under their respective jurisdictions may designate, by the erection of appropriate signs of a type approved by the department, places where these motor vehicles, or specified types of these motor vehicles, may cross any highway having more than two (2) lanes or having limited access.

(b) Off-highway motor-driven cycles defined in § 55-3-101(c)(2) may be moved, by nonmechanical means only, adjacent to a roadway, in a manner so as to not interfere with traffic upon the highway, only for the purpose of gaining access to, or returning from, areas designed for the operation of off-highway vehicles, when no other route is available. The department or local government authority may designate access routes leading to off-highway parks as suitable for the operation of off-highway vehicles, if such access routes are available to the general public only for pedestrian and off-highway motor vehicle travel.

55-10-206. Off-road vehicles — Prohibited acts — Penalties.

(a) For the purposes of this section, “motor vehicle” means any motor vehicle as defined in § 55-1-103, which possesses a four-wheel drive capability and that is designed and suitable for operation off the highway on natural terrain.

(b) It is unlawful for any person to operate a motor vehicle on private property for the purposes of testing or demonstrating driving skills or ascertaining certain vehicle endurance factors, unless the consent of the owner or person in control of the property has been granted for the activities. The driving skills and vehicle endurance factors include, but are not limited to, cross-country driving, drag racing or testing the motor vehicle's capabilities over natural, rough, or muddy terrain.

(c) Any person found guilty of a violation of this section shall be fined not less than fifty dollars (\$50.00) nor more than two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) and, in the discretion of the court, the person's driver license shall be subject to suspension for six (6) months.

Anthony Brown, Chief of Police