

121 W. Broadway St.  
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# NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 4, 2010

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## Police urge ATV operators and drivers to exercise caution

PROSPER (November 4, 2010) The proliferation of ATVs (All-terrain Vehicles) on property within Prosper has increased dramatically, and the Prosper Police Department has been fielding calls regarding the use of the motorized vehicles on or near Town thoroughfares, according to Assistant Police Chief Gary McHone.

“There are certain restrictions and regulations that ATV drivers must adhere to, most especially those that deal with the driver’s and passenger’s safety,” he said.

All-terrain vehicles are described as any motorized vehicle that is propelled with three or more tires in contact with the ground; designed for off-highway use; not designed primarily for farming or lawn care; and equipped with a saddle for the use of the rider, and a passenger if the vehicle is designed by the manufacturer to carry a passenger.

Sometimes referred to as “off-road four-wheelers,” ATVs must be registered with the State, just like any other motorized vehicle driven on public property.

“Before riding an ATV on public property, owners must obtain an OHV (Off Highway Vehicle) decal from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and place it on the vehicle. Decals are available from most reputable ATV dealers,” he added. “In addition, drivers and passengers must wear a properly-fastened helmet and eye protection gear. Whether pleasure riding, hunting, camping, playing in the sand dunes or riding in the forest, you must wear safety gear while riding on public land.”

Also, the driver should be familiar with Texas ATV laws and complete an ATV Safety Course. Course dates and locations can be obtained by calling the All-Terrain Vehicle Safety Institute at 1-800-887-2887.

Depending on the size of the ATV engine, operators can be as young as 6 years old. However, operators younger than 14 years of age must be under the direct supervision of a parent or guardian.

“Off-roading is not without its limitations. For example, if you ride on public property, your ATV must be equipped with an effective brake system; a muffler system in good working condition; a U.S. Forest Service qualified

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spark arrester; and an effective headlight and taillight to be displayed one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise, and when visibility is reduced,” said the Chief.

The greatest numbers of violations, though, occur as a result of trespassing on private property. Penalties for trespassing can be severe and result in fines up to \$4,000 and jail time up to one year. Trespassing can include entering a posted area; an area noting crop for harvest; a fenced area; or remaining after being asked to leave.

“Riders need to understand that ATVs are not exempt from trespassing laws. When riding, operators should check the entrance to lands where you want to ride and look for chains, rope or wire that may span the entryway, indicating that no ATVs are allowed,” he said. An offense of the ATV laws is a Class C misdemeanor.

Above all, operators must be aware that ATV’s are not allowed on roads, streets, thoroughfares, public highways, bridges, shoulders of roads and the grassy areas along the roadway.

“The laws are there for the safety of the riders and passengers, and they must be followed. These are citable offenses based on State law,” concluded the Chief.

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**ABOUT THE TOWN OF PROSPER** – The Town of Prosper is a fast-growing suburb with small town charm, located 30 miles north of Dallas at the crossroads of U.S. 380, Preston Road and the Dallas North Tollway in Collin and Denton Counties. Prosper sits on 27 square miles and is home to more than 9,000 people. A home-rule municipality, governed by a council-manager form of government, the town has full-time fire and police departments, including its own dispatch service. As the Town grows to its projected build-out population of 90,000 residents, Prosper’s vision is to remain a “Place Where Everyone Matters.”