



**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND
FIRE/EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER**

General Order Number: 02-44	Effective Date: January 3, 2019
Division: Apparatus and Maintenance	
Chapter: Utility Task Vehicles (UTV)	
By Order of the Fire Chief: Benjamin M. Barksdale	Issue Date: January 3, 2019

DR

POLICY

This General Order shall set forth a policy and procedure that defines the Utility Task Vehicles utilized by members of the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department.

DEFINITIONS

Utility Task Vehicle (UTV) – A specialty unit that is designed to operate “off-road” and in rural areas where normal vehicles will not be able to access. This unit does meet the vehicle specifications as listed in the transportation Code §11-176 and will be utilized for special events and off-road incidents as indicated.

PROCEDURES / RESPONSIBILITIES

I. General Provisions

- A. Prince George's County, Maryland has an array of trails, parks, and undeveloped tracts of land which creates unique access and response challengers for first responders. In response to this need, the Prince George's County Fire/Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Department has expanded its off-road vehicle fleet to provide the necessary tools for personnel to fulfil their mission during calls for service. While off-road vehicles are not new to the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department, advances in design and technology have increased their application in both fire and emergency medical services.
- B. UTVs are to be utilized by the Department to extend the Fire/EMS Department's mission on paths, park areas, and other designated areas where conventional Fire/EMS Department apparatus are not suited for travel. UTVs shall not be operated at more than 30 miles per hour. UTVs are primarily to be used off-road or during special events such as races and parades, and only at low speeds. The station supervisor in charge of the work location that is assigned the UTV is responsible to ensure the assigned equipment and UTV is maintained, as well as ensuring all personnel are certified before operating the vehicle in any capacity.

II. General Guidelines

- A. All operators and occupants must keep all body parts inside the vehicle. In off-road situations, passing brush, trees, or other fixed objects can create a pinch point between the vehicle and the object.



PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND FIRE/EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER

- B. Each passenger must ride in a seat. When a safety belt is present, it must be worn during transit.
- C. NEVER allow any unauthorized or non-certified personnel to operate a PGFD UTV.
- D. Operation of UTVs within the travel lanes of an open public roadway is not permitted. Operation of UTVs on a public road within the confines of a defined public event or incident area is acceptable where the road is not open to normal traffic.
 - 1. If an open roadway must be crossed, the crossing must be perpendicular to the road with the shortest possible exposure to traffic.
 - 2. Where a shoulder or non-travel lane is available, the UTV may travel adjacent to an open public roadway. The travel way must be wide enough that no portion of the UTV overhangs or impedes the open travel lanes. During this transit, all available warning and running lights will be illuminated to assist with visibility. Personnel in the UTV will wear approved high visibility traffic vests or jackets.
- E. Under normal conditions, UTVs will be transported via trailer to the special event/incident scene or as near as practical to avoid traveling on public roadways.
- F. All personnel riding in the UTV will wear, at a minimum, helmet and ANSI Z87.1 rated eye protection. Gloves, long pants, and a long-sleeve shirt or jacket will be worn when the UTV will be operated in an off-road environment. High visibility attire will be worn as described in *General Order 08-13, Personal Protective Equipment*.
- G. Vehicle speeds must be reasonable and match the conditions. Excessive speeds reduce reaction time and increase the potential for a rollover.
- H. Vehicle handling characteristics and driver behaviors change dependent upon the loading of the vehicle. Additional cargo, such as firefighting equipment or a patient change the vehicle's center of gravity, traction, and braking capabilities. All cargo, equipment, and personnel must be secured in the vehicle prior to transit on any type of surface. Operators must make an effort to ensure that UTVs are not overloaded.
- I. When operating off-road, all windshields and side screens or nets must be in place to protect the vehicle occupants against encroaching brush or tree branches. Operators must remain aware of vehicle accessories, such as warning or scene lights, that may be exposed or damaged by lack of clearance to fixed objects.
- J. Crews deployed on a UTV must have a portable radio to maintain communication and accountability with supervisors/PSCC at all times, whether they are on or off the vehicle. UTV crews should consist of at least two (2) personnel.



**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND
FIRE/EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER**

- K. Before personnel may operate a UTV, he/she must hold a valid driver's license and successfully complete the established PGFD certification training course.

- L. In the event a UTV is damaged or in need of repair during an event or call for service, it must be immediately reported to the Battalion Chief, who will document the issue in accordance with the procedure outlined in *General Order 08-05, Vehicle Accident and Loss Damage Reporting*.

REFERENCES

N/A

FORMS / ATTACHMENTS

N/A