



Stephen F. Austin State University
Motorized Utility Vehicle Safety Program



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Table of Contents

I.	BACKGROUND.....	3
II.	SCOPE	3
III.	DEFINITIONS	3
IV.	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITES	3
V.	TRAINING	4
VII.	PROCEDURES.....	5
VIII.	HAZARDS/ACCIDENTS.....	7
IX.	MAINTENANCE / INSPECTION	8
X.	COMPLIANCE.....	8

I. BACKGROUND

Carts are traditionally used to traverse campus common areas quickly and quietly. It is a common practice for them to be used not only for the transportation of persons but for utility purposes as well. They are of significant value to the University for efficiency and economic transportation. Recognizing that a cart is a moving vehicle, Stephen F. Austin State University (SFA) has established a program for the safe operation of these vehicles.

II. SCOPE

The scope of this program is to support the SFA policy 13.10 Health and Safety, by providing procedures and guidelines for use of electric or gas-powered carts and/or similar utility type vehicles on all non-public roads of all locations owned by or pertaining to the Stephen F. Austin State University (SFA) campus. The intent is to establish proper safety procedures and practices, as well as to promote and provide for a safe environment for students, employees, and visitors.

III. DEFINITIONS

A. Motorized Utility Vehicle (MUV) – This program applies to, but is not limited to all electric, gas and diesel powered golf carts, all-terrain vehicles (ATV's), off road utility vehicles (UTV's), low speed vehicles (LSV's), neighborhood electric vehicles (NEV's), etc. Here on campus the list includes vehicles produced by: Kawasaki, Club Car, EZ-Go, Cushman, John Deere, Polaris, Kubota, Exmark, and others.

B. Campus – All university owned and leased property and outlying areas. Includes areas not owned by the university but traversed on by a university representative on official SFA business and operating a university MUV.

C. EHSRM – Environmental Health, Safety and Risk Management Department, includes the Director of EHSRM and Safety Officers.

D. UPD – University Police Department. First responders in an accident and will determine the urgency of medical attention necessary, the extent of damage to all parties and property involved, and will gather pertinent information to forward on to EHSRM for filing any insurance and/or worker's compensation injury claims if necessary.

E. Authorized Drivers – SFA employees, SFA approved contractors, and SFA approved student driver's operating University owned MUV's who have completed the required training and received a MUV certification card.

IV. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. The Director of Environmental Health, Safety, and Risk Management (or designee) has primary responsibility for enforcement and compliance of all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations. The EHSRM Department also provides the required MUV Safety Training Program online. Located on the EHSRM website (www.sfasu.edu/safety).

B. Deans, Chairs, Directors and Supervisors:

- Ensure that all operators receive training prior to driving a MUV by a SFA EHSRM Safety Officer or online training, located on the EHSRM website, and have received a certification card authorizing them to operate an MUV.
- Ensure that operators review the MUV owner's manual.
- Take appropriate disciplinary action when operators who fail to comply with this program.
- Ensure compliance with the provisions of this program.

C. Operators:

- Must operate MUVs in a responsible and safe manner in accordance with this program.
- Should familiarize themselves with the MUVs owner's manual.
- Must report any accidents to their supervisor immediately and to the UPD.
- Are prohibited from operating MUVs outside the boundaries of the University.
- Are prohibited from operating MUVs on grass lawns or other landscaped areas. Stay on paved surfaces as much as possible to prevent damage to landscaping.
- Are to be diligent and pay particular attention to the needs of disabled persons, as limitations in vision, hearing or mobility may impair their ability to see, hear, or move out of the way.
- Are responsible for ignition keys for the period of time in which they are using the vehicle. Keys shall not be left in cars. Failure to comply with this procedure may result in disciplinary action.
- Authorization to operate a University MUV is contingent on the possession of a valid Texas driver's license, completion of the EHSRM MUV Safety Training Program and possession of the MUV authorized operator certification card. Operators shall immediately notify their supervisor if and when their driver's license is suspended or revoked.

V. TRAINING

Before any employee is allowed to operate a University MUV the EHSRM MUV Training Program must be completed, an acknowledgment statement must be signed, and a MUV authorized operator certification card be issued by EHSRM. The training is located on the EHSRM website (www.sfasu.edu/safety) and the acknowledgement when submitted will be sent directly to the EHSRM Department. A certification card will be issued within 3-5 working days and will be sent to the operator through campus mail. The MUV authorized operator certification card will be valid for 3 years at which time the operator will need to take the training again. All employee training, with the exception of temporary or casual employees will be tracked through webfocus and notifications will be sent. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring their temporary and casual employees are current with their training as these employees are not tracked through webfocus.

RECORDKEEPING

It is the responsibility of the MUV operator to carry the certification any time they are operating a MUV. Should the operator lose the certification card they will need to retake the training and be reissued another certification card. MUV Training is required every 3 years at which time a new certification card will be issued.

VI. PROCEDURES

The following are basic rules and guidelines of operating and maintaining carts used for transportation on the campus and properties owned and leased by SFA. University MUVs are solely to be used by authorized MUV operators engaged in official SFA business. Transportation of students and guests is prohibited unless on official university business. Personally owned carts are prohibited from operating on the SFA campus.

A. Driving the Vehicle –

- Always check for people or obstructions behind the vehicle before backing up.
- Never shift gears while the vehicle is in motion.
- Never exceed the maximum occupancy designated by the available seats in a MUV.
- All occupants in the cart shall keep hands, arms, legs and feet inside the cart at all times when the cart is in motion.
- MUVs should be operated on campus at a speed equivalent to a well-paced walk. This maximum speed is subject to the terrain over which it is being driven, the weather conditions, and the total weight of the cart and passengers along with any equipment being carried.
- Do NOT drive the MUVs on landscaped lawns and avoid driving on grass when possible.
- Use extreme care at building entrances and upon entering/exiting enclosed areas.
- Remain seated and hold on while the vehicle is in motion. Do not exit until the MUV has

come to a complete stop.

- Only MUVs with headlights may be used at night.

B. Parking or Leaving the Vehicle Unattended –

- Come to a complete stop, place the control lever in the park or neutral position and engage the parking brake.
- Turn the key to the “OFF” position, remove it and take it with you, never leave the key in the MUV ignition unattended.
- When parked, MUVs must be properly secured and locked if possible.
- When the MUV is not in use such as overnight, the unit will be secured in a garage, behind a locked fence, or with a chain and lock or other equivalent locking mechanism.
- Never block entrances to buildings, stairways, disability ramps or other main pathways.

C. Pedestrians –

- On the SFA campus, pedestrians always have the right-of-way. Operators of MUVs will permit this right-of-way. It is the responsibility of the MUV operator to ensure the safety of the occupant as well as any pedestrians in the area.
- Be aware and yield to physically challenged, blind, deaf or hard of hearing pedestrians as they may be unable to move quickly or hear the presence of a MUV.
- Operators shall NEVER attempt to intimidate pedestrians or cyclists to move or get out of the way, maintain a distance of at least ten (10) feet behind any pedestrian or cyclist.

D. Passengers –

- Passengers and Operators must keep their head, legs, and arms within the cab of the MUV. Under no circumstances is anyone to ride standing in or on the back of the MUV.
- Occupancy shall not exceed the passenger limit based on the available seating limit designated by the MUV instruction manual.
- No standing up in a moving MUV.
- No passengers are to be carried in the bed of a MUV.
- No reckless behavior or horseplay of any kind is allowed!

E. Operators –

- The use of cell phones while the MUV is in motion is not allowed. Additionally, the operator is strictly prohibited from writing, reading, or sending any text-based communications while operating a MUV.
- Operators will not drive the MUV while under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or medications that cause drowsiness.
- Operators must stop the vehicle to make an observation that distracts them from their driving duties.

- MUV's should be operated in a safe and controlled manner so that operators, passengers, and those encountered by the carts are safe.
- No towing trailers or other MUV's, unless equipment is specifically designed for that purpose.
 - Cargo must be loaded and secured so it will not cause a hazard by shifting or falling off the MUV.
 - Loads that extend more than three feet from the rear of the cart must be flagged with a brightly colored material, usually red or orange.

F. Loads –

- Loads must not extend more than 3 inches from the driver's side or 6 inches from the passenger's side of the MUV. Loads extending more than three feet from the rear of the cart must be flagged with brightly covered material.
- All loads shall be securely fastened and not weigh more than the load capacity recommended in the manufacturer's manual.

G. Battery Recharging –

- Batteries can be dangerous when charged improperly. Follow these precautions when charging batteries to avoid personal injury or damage to electrical components in the vehicle:
 - Do not smoke! Batteries can emit explosive hydrogen gases when charging. Keep sparks and flames away from the battery area of the vehicle. Tools, wires and metal objects can cause sparks when shorted across a battery. Follow all instructions carefully when dealing with batteries.
 - Only an approved battery charger will be used to recharge the batteries (designed to shut off automatically when the batteries are fully charged).
 - Charge batteries in a well-ventilated area only.
 - Batteries contain acid, which causes severe burns. Pour baking soda on all spilled battery acid before cleaning up the spill and call the EHSRM Department at extension 6034.
 - Some electrolyte can leak from damaged or defective batteries. Wear the necessary personal protective equipment such as safety glasses and gloves. Wash skin thoroughly with cold water if skin comes in contact with battery acid. Report all injuries to your supervisor and the EHSRM department at extension 4514 or through the Accident/Injury 24-hr Quick Link at: <https://forms.sfasu.edu/safety/injury.asp>. Avoid contact with skin, eyes, or clothing.

VII. HAZARDS/ACCIDENTS

- MUV's may not be modified without the approval of the Departmental Supervisor and the Director of EHSRM, any modifications done without approval will be dismantled and returned to its original condition at the expense of the department or individual.
- All accidents shall be reported immediately, within 24 hours, to UPD and his/her supervisor(s) and an accident report generated and a copy given to EHSRM. Each department will be held liable for the insurance deductible and/or the uninsured costs of property damage or bodily injury resulting in negligent operation of or failure to properly secure any MUV owned or operated by such department.
- Adjust driving speed to account for environmental conditions such as slippery roads due to bad weather, wet grass, sand or oil. Slowdown in heavy pedestrian traffic, when approaching intersections, blind spots, or if visibility is reduced.
- Approach sharp turns, blind corners and other potentially hazardous areas with caution. Operators should warn possible pedestrians vocally or by politely tapping the horn.
- Avoid traveling over steep grades. If driving over steep grades is necessary, drive slowly straight up or straight down - never at an angle.

VIII. MAINTENANCE / INSPECTION

All MUVs shall be properly maintained in accordance with the owner's manual. All safety devices must also be maintained in proper working order. Should a MUV have any maintenance issues or faulty safety devices then it is the operator's responsibility to take the MUV out of service until it is properly repaired. All MUV operators are responsible for adhering to the maintenance procedures outlined in this program.

EQUIPMENT AND SAFETY CHECKLIST

Before operating the cart, the operator will check the following items:

- Check all MUV governors that restrict speed to 25 mph road and 15 mph turf to make sure they are working properly
- Check for proper tire condition and inflation
- Inspect for fluid leaks, i.e., battery, brakes
- Test brakes for proper operation
- All MUVs must be equipped with a slow-moving vehicle triangle
- Be sure all extra equipment is properly secured and travel-ready

IX. COMPLIANCE

It is imperative that SFA employees comply with federal, state, and local environmental health, safety, and risk management regulations. In addition, it is essential that employees observe industry best practices and comply with SFA safety policies and procedures.

Failure of SFA employees to comply with this program will result in disciplinary action and possible permanent loss of MUV driving privileges.

The recommended consequences are as follows:

- First Violation – driving privileges suspended for 30 Days
- Second Violation – driving privileges suspended for 90 days
- Third Violation – driving privileges suspended for 1 year

Violations beyond this may be a permanent revocation of driving privileges. Recommended consequences may be different contingent upon the severity of the violation, the task being performed, and danger caused to other SFA employees. This action will be determined by the Director of EHSRM in consultation with the appropriate department supervisor.