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Ontario increasing on?road access for ATVs

Ontario is enhancing on-road access for more types of off-road vehicles (ORVs) and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) while increasing safety requirements for riders.

Beginning July 1, 2015, the province is implementing the following changes to ensure that ORV and ATV riders safely reach their destination:

? More types of ORVs and ATVs, including two-up ATVs, side-by-side ATVs and utility-terrain vehicles (UTVs), will be allowed to use the shoulder of public roads

? All riders ? including drivers and passengers of all ages ? will have to wear a helmet and use a seatbelt or foot rests, where applicable

This month, the province is promoting the new rules before they come in force July 1, 2015, to ensure municipalities have enough time to make necessary bylaw amendments and to remind riders and drivers about the change.

The province is also allowing an education period to take place between July 1 to Sept. 1, 2015, before violation tickets are issued. However, during this time police officers may still lay a charge through a summons.

Ontario is home to thousands of kilometres of recreational trails making it a popular destination for riders from across Canada and the world. The province consulted with a wide array of trail, municipal, industry, enforcement, as well as health and safety stakeholders to ensure the rules strike the right balance.

Enhancing Ontario's tourism and recreational opportunities is part of the government's plan for Ontario. The four-part plan includes investing in people's talents and skills, making the largest investment in public infrastructure in Ontario's history, creating a dynamic, innovative environment where business thrives, and building a secure retirement savings plan.