MICHIGAN

SNOWMOBILE and SAFETY GUIDE

Winter 2011

STATE SENATOR

MIKE GREEN

Serving the 31st District

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Dear Michigan Snowmobiler:

Michigan offers more ways to have snowmobile fun than just about anywhere! Where else can you find exciting terrain, natural beauty and a network of 6,300 miles of groomed trails?

With the season upon us, I want to send along some snowmobile news and safety information. You can find more safety tips, along with updates on rules, regulations, permits, trail maps and safety classes at **www.michigan.gov/dnr**.

Of course, the sport not only is great family fun, it is good business, too. While the effects of our slumping economy have taken a toll, snowmobiling still pumps hundreds of millions of dollars into Michigan and sustains many "mom and pop" businesses. So enjoy a great winter adventure while helping spark the local economy!

I hope you and your family have a safe and exciting snowmobile season. If my office can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me toll-free at **866-305-2131** or by e-mail at **senmgreen@senate.michigan.gov** .

Happy Trails!

Mike Green
State Senator

Green applauds boost to snowmobile tourism

Snowmobile tourism should get a shot in the arm under a new law to create a registration for "historic" snowmobiles.

PA 371 of 2010 allows for a special, one-time $50 registration for snowmobiles more than 25 years old that are not used for regular riding but for exhibitions, vintage shows, and occasional rides. It also exempts historic snowmobiles from the annual trail permit requirement.

Modern snowmobiling is now over 40 years old and there is growing nostalgia for older snow machines. Along with numerous hobby groups, vintage snowmobile shows and swap meets, there's even a snowmobile museum in Naubinway in the Upper Peninsula!

The new law will help boost an important niche in Michigan's snowmobile tourism.

Michigan = Winter Fun

Along with snowmobiling, active outdoor families can enjoy snowboarding, skiing, skating, ice fishing, snowshoeing, even dog sledding. And don't forget, select Michigan State Parks offer winter camping. Find out more at **www.michigan.org/Things-to-Do/Outdoors/**.

Outdoor thrill-seekers can also catch the Olympic spirit close to home at the luge run at Muskegon State Park. Call 1-877-TRY-LUGE or visit **www.msports.org** for more information.

With so many ways to have fun, you'll wish Michigan winter would never end!

Hands on for safety!

Communication is an important part of safe sledding, especially when traveling in groups or approaching an intersection. Every snowmobiler should learn and use hand signals to increase safety on the trails. Remember these basic signals when you head out:

- **Left Turn:** left arm extended straight out
- **Right Turn:** left arm out, forearm raised, with elbow at 90-degree angle
- **Stop:** left arm raised straight up
- **Slow:** left arm out and angled toward the ground

Learn about these and other hand signals approved by the American Council of Snowmobile Associations at **www.snowmobilers.org**.

Green provides update on citizen input

I am pleased there is once again an active public voice in policy matters affecting Michigan snowmobilers.

The Citizen Snowmobile Advisory Workgroup, a subcommittee of the new state Snowmobile and Trails Advisory Council, is now up and running. The group provides recommendations on issues like allocating funds for snowmobile trails, and developing training programs and rules for snowmobile use.

As you may remember, an executive order last year eliminated the highly-touted snowmobile advisory committee, folding it into the multi-use trails council.

Michigan snowmobile trail users are fully self-funded and have made the sport an economic force.

Keep up-to-date! Visit the state website at www.michigan.gov and type in the keywords *Snowmobile and Trails Advisory Council*

"I want to make sure snowmobilers continue to have a prominent seat at the table."

— Senator Mike Green

Free ice fishing weekend

Circle it on your calendar! February 19-20, 2011 is Michigan's free ice fishing weekend!

All fishing license fees are waived for residents and out-of-state visitors alike on both inland and Great Lakes waters. All fishing regulations will still apply. Visit **www.michigan.gov/dnr** for more information about ice fishing and shanty regulations.

Follow general fishing conditions across the state via the Weekly Fishing Report at www.michigan.gov/dnr; click on Fishing on the left sidebar, or call 517-373-0908.

Green reminds sledders to follow the rules of the snow!

There were 26 snowmobile fatalities in Michigan last season, a significant increase over the previous year. That's a loss of life both tragic and preventable.

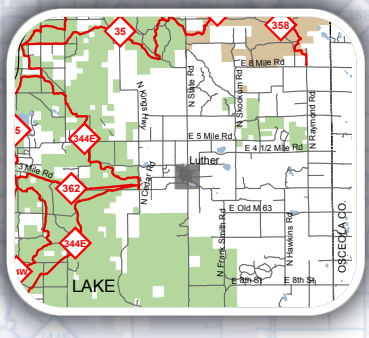
Excess speed and alcohol were contributing factors in many of the accidents. Any amount of alcohol impairs perception and slows reaction time. Always operate your machine at safe and reasonable speeds.

I want to pass along more safe riding hints:

- Keep your machine in top mechanical condition.
- Wear insulated boots and clothing, including a helmet and gloves.
- Never ride alone. Always leave a travel plan.
- Avoid, when possible, crossing frozen bodies of water.
- Be alert to avoid fences and low-strung wires.
- Never operate on a street or highway (unless specifically allowed in your community).
- Look for depressions in the snow.
- At an intersection, come to a complete stop, raise off the seat and look for traffic.
- Check the weather before you go.

Keep the sport fun and family-friendly – sled with safety in mind!

Snowmobile trail maps upgraded



Michigan's more than 6,200-mile designated snowmobile trail system promises some of the best sledding around. Take a look at the statewide network by region or county at **www.michigan.gov/dnr**.

The snowmobile trail maps are Global Positioning System (GPS) quality and accurately show the system's signed and groomed trails. The maps are updated regularly as new trail additions, re-routes, and closures are completed.

Stay Alert to Hypothermia

When heading out in winter weather, remember to dress appropriately and in layers to help prevent hypothermia. The condition occurs as the body loses heat faster than it can produce it. Cold air or water and wind chill, even condensed perspiration, can contribute to this potentially serious state. In addition, alcohol increases the susceptibility to cold and hypothermia.

Symptoms can include:

- shivering
- cold or pale skin
- poor judgment
- slurred speech
- numb hands
- confusion
- even loss of consciousness

It's important to treat a person with hypothermia promptly and seek medical advice if available.