



**St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office**  
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# NEWS RELEASE

## **St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Reminds Motorists Operating Unregistered Vehicles on Highways is Illegal and Unsafe**

**LEONARDTOWN, MD** (March 18, 2026) – The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office is reminding residents that operating unregistered vehicles, including all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), dirt bikes, and other off-road motorcycles, on public roadways is illegal and unsafe. These vehicles are built for off-road use and are not equipped with the safety features required for travel on public streets.

Under Maryland law, operating an unregistered motor vehicle on a public roadway can result in a \$290 citation, and the vehicle may be towed. Individuals who allow someone else to operate an unregistered or uninsured vehicle on a roadway may also face charges.

Off-road vehicles may only be used on private property with the property owner's permission or in designated riding areas. They are not permitted on public roads, bicycle lanes, sidewalks, or trails such as the Three Notch Trail. They are also prohibited in St. Mary's County parks, except in designated areas.

The Sheriff's Office encourages riders to use proper safety gear, including a Department of Transportation-approved helmet, eye protection, gloves, and protective footwear. Information about legal riding locations is available through the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

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