

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Forest Preserve reminds public that ATVs are not permitted

GENEVA, IL — The Public Safety department of the Forest Preserve District of Kane County would like to remind the public that all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), recreational golf carts and other motorized vehicles are not permitted in the forest preserves.

Aside from the ruts made by drivers who illegally operate vehicles in the preserves, such activity can destroy plants, flowers and wildlife, and make the preserves less enjoyable for others.

The penalty for illegally operating vehicles in preserves includes a fine and possibly a mandatory court appearance. Anyone issued a citation for destruction of natural resources is required to appear in court. The mandatory appearance prompts a stiffer fine and requests a judgment against the driver to recover costs for repairing damage to the natural resource. Damages may include labor, equipment and replacement materials. In some instances, these damages have been in the thousands of dollars. Parents should also be aware that they can be held responsible for a minor child's conduct.

“We take these offenses very seriously,” said Chief Mike Gilloffo, director of public safety for the Forest Preserve District. “Driving ATVs or other motorized vehicles in the preserves is illegal because of the damage to all of our natural resources. These vehicles also create public safety issues on trails and properties that are designed for multiple uses: walkers, joggers, bicyclists. The bottom line is that we need to show courtesy to each other in these multiple-use areas. Our goal is to create a family-friendly environment,” he said.

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“We want everyone to come out and enjoy our beautiful natural areas ... but please leave your ATVs at home,” Chief Gilloffo said.

He also encouraged those who live near preserves to keep a watchful eye and to immediately report any suspicious activity — including ATV use. “Please call 911 if you see someone riding an ATV in a forest preserve. That call will dispatch a Forest Preserve District or Kane County officer to the location,” he said.

For more information, the Forest Preserve District’s *Use Ordinance* is posted at each preserve. It is also available online at www.kaneforest.com.

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