

I. Introduction – Purpose & Scope

These guidelines are for the operation of electric or gas-powered carts, golf carts, utility carts, low-speed vehicles and/or similar type vehicles (hereafter collectively referred to as “Carts”) on Auburn University campus properties, including traveling to/from campus locations that may be separated by property owned by others or require travel on public roadways to reach the desired campus location. These guidelines establish proper safety procedures and practices, which will promote safe operations and provide a safe environment for our students, faculty, staff, alumni and visitors.

The acquisition and use of golf-utility carts and low speed vehicles at Auburn University is limited to University departments and operating units with valid business use. Valid business uses include, but are not limited to:

- Transportation of persons with physical disabilities or special needs
- Transportation of items long distances that are too large/bulky to be carried by hand
- Transportation of University guests or VIPs
- Emergency response
- Provide access to areas where a licensed vehicle may have difficulty navigating
- To avoid damage to sidewalks, landscaping or other property that may occur with traditional licensed road-use vehicles

II. Golf-Utility Cart and Low Speed Vehicle Guidelines

This section covers criteria that should be met before anyone drives a golf-utility cart or a low speed vehicle as well as descriptions, safety requirements and use of golf-utility carts and low speed vehicles.

A. Application and Use

All members of the Auburn University community are encouraged to follow these guidelines including students, staff, faculty and contractor/vendors. All operators of carts should meet the following criteria before operating a cart owned, leased, rented or borrowed by Auburn University:

- Possess a valid U.S. driver’s license and be at least 18 years of age. Approved operators shall immediately notify their supervisor if and when their driver’s license is suspended or revoked.
- Have knowledge and comply with the State of Alabama motor vehicle laws.
- Successfully complete the Golf/Utility Cart and Low Speed Vehicle Safety course, which is available through the Risk Management & Insurance website at <http://www.auburn.edu/administration/rms/rm.html>.

B. Golf and Utility Carts

Golf and utility carts are electric, gasoline or propane powered vehicles that are primarily manufactured and distributed for off road purposes and not intended for travel on regulated roadways such as golf carts, multi-seat golf carts, carts with cargo boxes or beds, heavy duty carts, off road carts, and 4X4

carts. (Examples include, but are not limited to: E-Z-Go, Club Cars, Gators, Mules and Cushmans). The top speed of these vehicles is typically 15-18 MPH.

1. Use of Golf and Utility Carts

Golf-utility carts should not be used on the public roadways except when crossing from one side to another or where no sidewalk exists.

C. Low Speed Vehicles

Auto/passenger vehicle manufacturers primarily manufacture these types of electric vehicles that are designed and distributed for both street and turf uses. (Examples include, but are not limited to: Global Electric Motorcars (GEM) Neighborhood Electric Vehicle and Ford Think.) The top speed of these vehicles is between 20-25 MPH.

1. Newly Acquired Low Speed Vehicles

For use on public roads, all low speed vehicles acquired after the effective date of these guidelines should meet the National Highway Safety and Traffic Administration (NHSTA) Standard 500 ([49CFR Part 571.500](#)). The Standard 500 requires the low speed vehicle be equipped with certain features including, but not limited to:

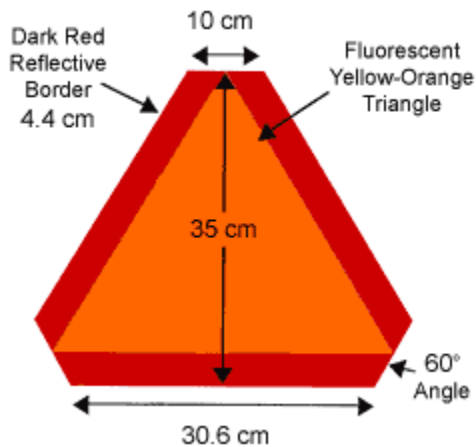
- Headlights (2)
- Front/rear turn signals
- Rear stoplights/ tail lamps
- Reflectors/reflective tape - 360 degree visibility
- Mirrors - rear view driver side and either a passenger side rear view or interior rear view
- Parking Brake
- Windshield - DOT AS-1 or AS-4 identification (i.e. tempered glass)
- Vehicle Identification Number – 17 Digit
- Seat Belts – Either Type 1 (lap belt) or Type 2 (lap and shoulder harness)
- Certification Label – To indicate the Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) not to exceed 1,361kg. or 3,000 lbs.
- In addition to the items listed above, certain safety equipment such as flashing hazard lights, a strobe/beacon light, doors, back up alarms, and steering wheel locks may be recommended by the University.

2. Existing Low Speed Vehicles

The minimum safety equipment/design specification on all non-Standard 500 low speed vehicles should include:

- No fewer than four wheels touching the ground/roadway at all times.
- All original equipment should be in good working order.
- The cart should be equipped with a “Slow Moving Vehicle” sign clearly visible from the front and rear. A slow moving vehicle sign is a reflective orange triangle bordered with red that warns other road users that the vehicle displaying the sign is traveling slower than the normal speed of traffic. (See below) These signs are available at many retail outlets including hardware stores. They are also available online.
- If operated after dusk and before dawn, headlights, taillights and brake lights (2 of each).

- A yellow or amber flashing light(s) visible from 360 degrees should operate while the vehicle is in motion. These lights are widely available at retail locations, auto parts stores and locations where low speed vehicles and golf-utility carts can be purchased. They are also available online.
- A horn with an activation button/switch within reach of the driver.
- The vehicle should have an ignition/on-off key to prevent unauthorized use.
- Parking-brake with adequate strength to hold the cart at least a 15 degree angle.
- An audible (at least 80 decibels at 10 feet) back-up alarm when placed in reverse. These alarms are available at certain retail locations and locations where low speed vehicles and golf-utility carts can be purchased. They are also available online.



Example of a Slow Moving Vehicle Reflective Triangle

In the event a non-Standard 500 low speed vehicle does not have the equipment listed above, the equipment should be installed within 90 days following the effective date of these guidelines or within 90 day after purchase of any new vehicles.

3. Purchase of Used, Remanufactured or non-Standard 500 Low Speed Vehicles

As of the effective date of these guidelines, the purchase of used, remanufactured or non-Standard 500 slow moving vehicles is discouraged.

4. Use of Low Speed Vehicles

The operation of Standard 500 low speed vehicles is limited to public roads with a speed limit of 35 miles per hour or less. It is recommended that all low speed vehicles that need to travel on public roads with a speed limit in excess of 35 miles per hour either receive an escort, or be towed. (Example would be if a low speed vehicle needed to be moved from campus locations separated by public roads such as from the Vet School to Main Campus)

Low speed vehicles meeting Standard 500 criteria may operate on University roadways and other public roads connecting the campus. The operators should adhere to posted speed limits and operate within established traffic laws.

D. Carts for Special Events

During certain special events (e.g., game day) and in preparation for certain events, the use of carts on public roads may become necessary to transport equipment, guests and other items/activities necessary for the event from various points on campus and areas adjoining the campus. In these situations, the carts must make every attempt to operate on streets that have been closed for the event or are restricted

to control or reduce the general flow of traffic. If possible, the carts should be operated behind traffic barricades or cones to stay clear of routes of travel used by traditional vehicles. In these situations, extra caution should be used.

Extra caution should be made when using a cart in high pedestrian and traffic areas during special events such as football game day. Drivers should yield to pedestrians and traffic at all times.

E. Cart Registration – Signage - Operator Approval

Payment and Procurement Services will advise Risk Management & Safety when a cart has been received. Risk Management & Safety & Safety will maintain a list of all carts used on campus. Each department is responsible for furnishing information on the sale or transfer of any cart as it occurs.

All carts used by any employee on campus must be registered with Risk Management & Safety to include details on serial numbers, department numbers, which must be kept current.

Each cart operated will be clearly marked with a “Cart ID Decal” which will be supplied by Risk Management & Safety when the car is registered. The decal will contain a uniquely identifiable number assigned to the cart.

Each department will be responsible for maintaining a list of persons authorized to operate the cart and other records as required.

III. Golf-Utility Cart and Low Speed Vehicle Operator Guidelines

While driving a golf-utility cart or low speed vehicle, the safety of yourself and others should be the top priority of the driver. Responsible driving requires concentration, sound judgment, and common sense on your part. Carts should be operated with the utmost courtesy, care and consideration for the safety and convenience of pedestrians and cart occupants. Carts must yield to pedestrians on sidewalks and in crosswalks.

Pedestrians shall be afforded the right-of-way at all times. Pedestrians as defined in this document refer to: persons walking, jogging, inline skating, skate boarding, bicycling, or those in wheelchairs or mobility assistance devices.

Carts should be operated in accordance with the following safety guidelines:

A. General Use

- Only authorized drivers are allowed to operate carts following approval by their supervisor. No one else is authorized to drive the cart. Do not allow anyone to borrow the cart without your supervisor’s approval.
- Each cart shall be operated in accordance to the manufacturers "Safety and Operation Instructions."
- Employees should not operate carts registered to other departments unless approval has been granted by the supervisor or the department to which the cart is owned.
- Carts should not be modified in any manner that affects the recommended mode of operation, speed or safety of the vehicle.

B. Pre-Trip

- Familiarize yourself with the controls used to start stop, park, accelerate, and backup the cart. If the cart is not operating properly, park in a safe location, remove the key and any valuables, and notify your supervisor immediately.
- Cart operators should not wear headphones, use cell phones or two-way radios or use/operate any other device that may cause a distraction or disrupt your ability to hear.
- Never operate the cart under the influence of drugs or alcohol that may impair your driving ability. If you are taking prescribed medication that makes you drowsy, dizzy or impairs you in any way, tell your supervisor and do not drive the cart.
- Smoking in a cart is not allowed, both when sitting idle or moving.

C. Occupants and Loads

- Never exceed the maximum load capacity recommended by the manufacturer, either by number of occupants or weight of the passengers and load. Follow manufacturer load ratings for carts equipped with a back carriage. Overloading decreases maneuverability and safe operation.
- You should not tow or pull any other equipment or trailers with your cart.
- One passenger is permitted per seat and all passengers are required to sit in seats. No riding on backs, front, or sides of carts is permitted.
- Do not move cart until all occupants are seated. Occupants should remain seated while the cart is in motion.
- All occupants in the vehicle should keep hands, arms, legs and feet within the confines of the vehicle while it is in motion.
- Warn your passengers of bumps in the road, obstacles, etc. that may cause the cart to bounce, swerve or react in a manner that could cause a passenger to be surprised.
- Secure and properly store all equipment and supplies to prevent objects from falling out or striking people.
- In the event a cart is decorated for a special event, the decorations should be securely attached in a manner that will not compromise safety or cause damage or obstruct the driver's vision in any direction.

D. Driving the Cart

- Carts should be operated in such manner that they do not impede or interfere with normal pedestrian or vehicular traffic flow on roadways, ramps, or sidewalks.
- *Other than certain carts (meeting Standard 500 criteria), operating a cart on public roadways except when crossing from one side of the street to the other is prohibited.* If you are uncertain if the cart you are operating is designed and approved for road use, always assume it is for off-road use only unless advised otherwise by your supervisor. Only cross roadways at designated crosswalks and obey traffic signals, signs and rules when crossing.
- Keep your arms, legs, and head inside the cart at all times, unless using your left hand and arm to indicate turn and stop signals. Warn your passengers of the same.
- Operators should avoid all walkways less than six feet wide. The recommended maximum speed on walkways and congested areas is not more than 5 miles per hour. However, the speed should be no faster than pedestrians walking in the same area.
- Special care should be taken while driving carts through parking lots to observe traffic and vehicles pulling in/out of parking spaces. Carts should be operated at speeds of less than 10 miles per hour in parking lots and other areas, unless operating on public roads in carts approved for on-road use.
- Carts are required to abide by orders/directions from the City of Auburn Police Department and the University's parking regulations.
- Obey all traffic regulations - observe all stop signs and traffic signals.

- Carts should be parked and/or operated in such manner that they do not impede or interfere with normal pedestrian or vehicular traffic flow on roadways, ramps or sidewalks.
- Carts should not be parked within 20 feet of the entrance or exit of any building, except at loading docks. Blocking entrances to buildings, stairways, fire exits, disability ramps or main thoroughfares is prohibited.
- Drive the cart only as fast as terrain and safety considerations allow. Always consider the total weight of the cart, passengers, equipment, terrain, existing vehicular and pedestrian traffic conditions, as well as environmental/weather factors that may affect your ability to operate the cart safely.
- Carts should operate or park only on hard surfaces unless the vehicle is specifically designed for and used for grounds maintenance.
- Use caution when driving downhill; reducing speed and avoiding sharp turns. To avoid tipping over, drive carts straight up and straight down slopes.
- Avoid sudden stops or change of direction that may result in a loss of control.
- Operators should stop carts at all blind intersections and sound their horns before proceeding.
- Operators of vehicles that are not equipped with turn indicators should use appropriate hand signals.
- Allow for extra travel time and stopping distance when roads are wet or slick from the weather.
- The key should be removed from the ignition before fueling the cart. Failure to do so may result in personal injury or property damage.

E. After the Trip

- When finished with the cart, remove the key and return it to the proper contact person so other employees can use the carts as needed.
- Make certain the parking brake is applied and whenever possible, park in a manner that will not allow the cart to move if the parking brake were accidentally released.
- Remove the keys when leaving the cart unattended.

F. Reporting an Accident

- All accidents or incidents involving golf carts/service vehicles should be reported immediately to the supervisor of the department to which the vehicle is registered and to the [Risk Management & Insurance](#). Police reports should be filed with the [City of Auburn Police Department](#), or other local law enforcement, for any accidents between a cart and another vehicle or a pedestrian.

IV. Operator Training

All cart operators must complete the Golf/Utility Cart and Low Speed Vehicle Safety course. Any person currently authorized to operate a cart as of the effective date of the policy will have 90 days to complete the required training. The training program is available on Blackboard through the [Risk Management & Insurance](#) website. New hires should take the training prior to using a cart on University business.

V. Maintenance, Repairs, Batteries and Storage

This section covers recommendations on cart maintenance and upkeep as well as safety recommendations for battery charging and proper cart storage.

A. Cart Maintenance and Repairs

- Refer to the owner's manual for inspection and maintenance recommendations.

- Cart operators should be responsible to provide timely notification of safety and maintenance concerns to the supervisor of the department to which the vehicle is registered who will contact the approved service facility for repairs.
- Records of all recommended maintenance and repair should be maintained by the department.
- Every cart should be checked prior to use each day to confirm the proper operation of critical equipment including:
 - Lighting – headlights, taillights, brake lights, turn signals, flashing strobe light
 - Brakes/Parking Brake
 - Reflector & Signage
 - Steering
 - Horn
 - Tire Inflation
- All original equipment safety features are to be maintained in good working order. In addition, all carts are to be maintained as recommended by the manufacturer’s service schedule at the department’s expense.
- In the event a cart has critical equipment that is not operational or is not functioning as intended, the cart should be placed “out-of-service” and the key kept by an authorized individual to prevent the use of the cart until repairs can be completed.
- Unless otherwise specified by the manufacturer, the cart should be taken to the Auto Shop at the Facilities Division or other local repair facility for a more extensive check and to provide routine preventative maintenance every year. In certain cases, carts used in more extreme operating conditions such as use in temperature extremes, operating in dusty/dirty areas, frequent starting, stopping or hauling loads that are near the manufacturer’s maximum rating may need to be placed on more frequent preventative maintenance routines to monitor wear and assure the cart receives adequate preventative maintenance.

B. Batteries and Charging

- Refer to the owner’s manual for correct charging procedures.
- The cart batteries should never be used to power other devices or removed for any reason other than to perform maintenance or replacement by a person trained and authorized to perform such work. Never attempt to check or add fluid/electrolyte to a battery.
- Chargers for low speed electric vehicles should be plugged directly into a ground fault interrupter receptacle.
- The use of extension cords is discouraged. The cart vehicle may not be used to jump-start other vehicles.
- Carts that are powered by rechargeable batteries shall have dedicated charging stations with a ground-fault electrical outlet designed and rated for such use. The recharging outlets must be designed to be locked when not in use. Just as with the cart, the keys to the charging should be controlled and only provided to persons authorized to operate a cart.
- In some cases, a quick charge station may be necessary to maintain battery power between routine charging. In these situations, the location and installation of the quick charge station shall be in accordance with the recommendations of the manufacturer and the location may not limit or restrict access to any building, sidewalk, walkway or exit route.
- If available, the carts should be ordered with sealed or gel batteries that do not have caps to allow the fluid to be checked. The fluid in a battery is acidic and will result in an injury if it comes in contact with the skin or eyes. Any batteries that can have the fluid check by removing the caps shall only be done by personnel that are familiar with proper procedure to check the fluid and personal protective equipment such as eye/face protection and acid-resistant gloves must be worn.

C. Cart Storage

- The storage of each cart will be the responsibility of the department to which the unit is registered.
- Whenever possible, the carts should be stored in an area to allow for battery recharging and to shield the cart from foul weather.
- Some unauthorized persons may find the cart enticing for a joy ride, and thus, a secured storage area and/or the use a chain and padlock or steering wheel lock should be considered.