New Study Finds that ATVs Should Not be Operated on Paved or Unpaved Roads. If Riding ATVs this 4th of July Weekend, Ride Safely and Stay Off the Road.

Washington, D.C. (July 2, 2015)—A new study published online in Traffic Injury Prevention, *All-Terrain Vehicle Fatalities on Paved Roads, Unpaved Roads, and Off-Road: Evidence for Informed Roadway Safety Warnings and Legislation*, makes it clear that riding ATVs on roads is unsafe whether the roads are paved or unpaved.

An earlier study found that over 60% of all U.S. ATV-related fatalities involved roadway crashes. ATV roadway deaths also increased at twice the rate of off-road deaths from 1998-2006, making on-road ATV riding a deadly behavior.

This latest study shows that from 1982 through 2012, 42% of the total 6,625 roadway deaths occurred on unpaved roads.

"Many of the warnings on ATVs specifically mention the hazards of riding ATVs on paved roads," noted Dr. Gerene M. Denning PhD, co-author of the study. "But we found twenty three states with half or more of their ATV roadway deaths on unpaved road surfaces."

ATVs are not designed for on-road use as manufacturers and advocates make clear and this study reinforces that ATVs on roads are dangerous no matter the surface type.

"The narrow track, relatively high center of gravity, lack of rear differential on most models of ATVs, and tires designed specifically for off-road use all contribute to extremely complex rider-ATV-roadway surface dynamics," stated Dr. Jennissen, co-author of the study, "and these dynamics appear to significantly increase the risk of ATV crashes and resulting injuries on both paved and unpaved roads."

The study finds that safety warnings should explicitly state the dangers of roadway riding regardless of the road surface type and supports the need for laws and ordinances restricting ATV riding on all types of roadways.

"The Consumer Federation of America leads a coalition of individuals and organizations dedicated to reducing deaths and injuries caused by ATVs with a focus on keeping ATVs off of roads" stated Rachel Weintraub, Legislative Director and General Counsel for Consumer

Federation of America. "The data identified in this study clarifies that ATVs should not be on any road whether the surface is paved or not. Some laws and ordinances allow ATV use on unpaved roads but that is not a safe alternative to paved road riding."

In response to this study, manufacturers and regulators should alter their warnings and safety language to state that ATVs are not safe to ride on any road surface because of:

- Design elements that make ATVs suitable for an off-road environment but unsuitable for roads of any surface;
- Higher attainable speeds on roads;
- Bumps and ruts on unpaved roads that might lead to loss of control when hit at high speed;
- Increased risk of ATV-vehicle collision (37% of paved roadway deaths; 16% of deaths on unpaved roads).

"If riding an ATV this 4th of July weekend, stay off paved and unpaved roads and use ATVs off-road where they were designed to operate," stated Michael Best, Senior Policy Advocate at Consumer Federation of America.

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The Consumer Federation of America is an association of nearly 300 nonprofit consumer organizations that was established in 1968 to advance the consumer interest through research, advocacy, and education. ***www.consumerfed.org***

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