

From Chris Haller (Utah State Parks) on their OHV Licensing Program:

“... we did not do a study, however here is some information that I hope will assist.

A State law was passed, in 2004, made each ATV display a numbering system that could be viewed from a distance of at least 50 feet. This law did not include snowmobiles or off highway motorcycles. This numbering system, which included letters, had to be a least one-inch high. This determination was made by a study in which the average human being can detect letter and numbers at a certain height and distance.

After a year the State law was removed because our legislative representatives felt that it served no real solutions and we concur with their reversal.

Letters and numbers are often times read incorrectly by those reporting the violation, similar to a vehicle license plate on a highway, when they are reported to law enforcement. Also, the mounting of a plate on an off-highway motorcycle (OHM) can be especially difficult. Street legal and enduro bikes offer a place for plate mounting, however on OHMs it is difficult to find a location to mount a plate or place indentifying numbers. Sharps edges of worn plates, could cause harm to those dismounting machines as well. Any of us who use trailers now that normal wear on a trailer plate, sometimes cause the trailer plate not to be legible.

In addition, ATVs are sometimes operated in muddy/dusty environments and thus the numbering system may not be viewed clearly because of the environment. Also the terrain in which OHVs are operated upon can be difficult for the average human eye to properly identify numbers or plates characters from certain distances.

Lastly, in Utah, a violation can only be written to a person, not an OHV, meaning that the numbering system was assigned to the ATV, not a person. So, if a violation was reported to law enforcement they could make the tie back to the owner of the ATV, however unless the owner confesses there is no ability to cite the person operating, unless law enforcement is present at that exact moment in time when the violation occurred.”