



OFF-HIGHWAY MOTOR VEHICLE RECREATION DIVISION INFORMATION BULLETIN



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Senate Bill 234 Update Recreational Off-Highway Vehicles (ROV)

Senate Bill 234 (Walters) was signed by Governor Brown on August 27, 2013. This bill was introduced in February 2013 to amend California Vehicle Code (CVC) sections 38603 and 38604 as passed by Assembly Bill 1595 and Assembly Bill 1266 which apply to ROVs. SB 234 and amended sections took effect immediately upon signing.

SB 234 “grandfathers” in 2013 or earlier manufactured ROVs with aftermarket seats, as long as the seats are fully contained inside the ROV and covered by rollover protection. SB 234 prohibits model year 2014 or later ROVs from being modified to accommodate additional passengers in areas not designed by the manufacturer.

These amended sections now read:

CVC 38603

- (a) *A person operating a recreational off-highway vehicle with a model year of 2014 or later shall not allow a passenger to occupy a separate seat location not designed and provided by the manufacturer for a passenger.*
- (b) *Seats that are installed in a separate seat location not designed and provided by the manufacturer for a passenger in vehicles with model year of 2013 or earlier may be occupied by a passenger if the occupant of the seat is fully contained inside of the vehicle’s rollover protection structure at all times while the vehicle is being operated.*

CVC 38604

- (a) *A person operating a recreational off-highway vehicle shall not ride with a passenger, unless the passenger, while seated upright with his or her back against the seatback, can grasp the occupant handhold with the seatbelt and shoulder belt or safety harness properly fastened.*
- (b) *For purposes of this chapter, “occupant handhold” means any factory or aftermarket device grasped by an occupant to provide support and to assist in keeping arms and hands within the recreational off-highway vehicle. The steering wheel shall be considered an occupant handhold for the recreational off-highway vehicle operator.*
- (c) *Occupant handholds shall be designed to allow the recreational off-highway vehicle passenger to exit the vehicle without interference from the handholds.*

The passage of new laws regulating ROVs has generated many questions from enthusiasts. The most common questions have been addressed in the Frequently Asked Questions for ROVs webpage located at: <http://ohv.parks.ca.gov>. For additional questions and comments about this or any other OHV related questions please email ohvinfo@parks.ca.gov or call (916) 324-4442.