



**Document:** Golf Cart Best Practices

**Date:** September 2005

---

Following are risk management recommendations that should be considered for the use of golf carts at Special Olympics activities:

- Do not allow unauthorized individuals to borrow the cart.
- Do not allow minors to operate the golf cart under any circumstance.
- Golf cart operators should have a valid driver's license.
- Golf cart operators should familiarize themselves with the controls – key starter, accelerator, brakes, reverse, and steering.
- The number of passengers allowed on the cart should be restricted to the number of seats available on the cart. Most carts are designed for a driver and one passenger
- Do not allow anyone taking medication that causes drowsiness or inability to concentrate to operate the golf cart.
- Do not allow individuals under the influence of alcohol to operate the golf cart.
- The operator should familiarize themselves with the current weather conditions. In the event of inclement weather, the operator should adjust his/her speed accordingly. The operator should allow for extra stopping distance on wet or icy surfaces.
- The operator should always drive the cart in a defensive manner. The operator should never assume that he/she has the right of way. Pedestrians should be approached with caution and should be made aware of the operator's presence – a horn or bell may be appropriate. The operator should be aware of and react properly to bicyclists and motor vehicles.
- The cart should never be operated on public roads, unless state/local laws allow limited use on public roadways (for example, to cross a public road). All traffic rules should be obeyed. All turns should be properly signaled and all directions checked before a turn is made or before entering an intersection.
- When approaching public roads, the operator should slow down and stop before entering or crossing the road. All approaches to an intersection should be checked twice before crossing. The operator should be aware that the cart does not accelerate as quickly as most vehicles. Extra time should be allowed when crossing an intersection.
- Caution should be used when going downhill; reduce the speed, be prepared to brake, and avoid sharp turns.
- Equipment or supplies should not be carried unless secured properly to prevent objects from falling from the cart.
- Caution should be used when reversing. Operators should make sure that there are no persons or obstructions behind the golf cart.
- The keys should always be removed, brakes set, and cart secured when it is unattended. Parking on inclines should be avoided whenever possible.

Each individual who receives a cart for use during a Special Olympics event has a responsibility to assure that the cart is operated and maintained in a safe manner. Responsible operation of the cart requires concentration, sound judgement, and common sense by the operator. Cart operators should never compromise their safety or the safety of others by operating the carts irresponsibly. By observing the aforementioned guidelines, accidents and injuries can be reduced dramatically.

These guidelines should be copied and given to the operator prior to assigning the golf cart. The operator should signify that he/she has read and is willing to abide by the guidelines for proper cart operation by signing and dating the guidelines page.

If you have any questions, please contact Rene Waterson or Jina Doyle at 800-245-2744.