

Keep your vehicle team in top shape

Your utility vehicles take on a lot of responsibility. Whether you have one UV that does it all, or you have a fleet taking care of your towing, hauling, and transport needs, chances are you depend on UVs more than you realize. With that in mind, think about where their upkeep falls on your list of priorities. Is it an afterthought? A once-a-season effort? A regular, proactive maintenance program for your utility vehicle can not only keep your operation running more smoothly, but also save money in the long run-in both maintenance costs and lost work time.

Regularly maintaining your utility vehicle begins with the one component most often ignored--the operator's manual. Each manufacturer and model of vehicle needs specialized care that is detailed in the manual, ranging from the recommended fuel type to the air filter replacement schedule. Most importantly, the manuals contain safety information that is essential to keeping your team of operators safe and productive.

After becoming familiar with the operator's manual, set up a regular maintenance log to record your efforts for each specific vehicle. By doing so, you can keep track of the maintenance schedules as well as log any problems that may occur during the season.

While performing maintenance, pay attention to several key areas. First on that list should be the engine. It needs to be clean and free of debris to operate at maximum efficiency. Also, it is the one part of the vehicle that all other systems depend on.

The next few items--oil, coolant, and the air filter--should be placed on a schedule and monitored according to the operator's recommendations. Be sure not to overfill or underfill, which can reduce power and cause fuel pump and breather problems. Look for warning signs like contami-

nants or a burnt smell that could indicate overheating.

If your UV has a liquid-cooled engine, check the manual to be sure that you are using the correct antifreeze and flushing the radiator at proper intervals. If you have an air-cooled engine, check the prescreen and cooling fins to make sure they are free of debris and dirt.

Try to check the air filter only as often as your operator's manual recommends. When it is time to open the system, wipe down the area around the intake hose and filter canister to prevent contaminants from entering the system. If the filter appears dirty, replace the filter rather than cleaning it.

Check Daily

There are a few things that can be done every day. Checking for leaks below the parked equipment and inspecting the electrical system are things that should become a habit each day before the machine is turned on. Make sure the wiring is neither worn nor frayed. Check the spark plugs to make sure that the electrodes have brown or gray/tan deposits on them. Darker deposits indicate that the engine is using more oil than necessary, and lighter deposits show an air fuel mixture that is too lean.

It seems obvious to check the fuel, but keep in mind that new, clean fuel keeps the vehicle running smoothly. Fuel breaks down in about 30 days, so be sure to drain any fuel that is left sitting over time. In addition, check the lubricants in the drive train because they act as cleaners within the machine.

Every so often, check the belts in the vehicles for wear and fraying. If they are not in excellent condition, change them and inspect further for rubbing or pulleys that are out of



align-
ment.

Some utility vehicles on the market run on batteries. Caring for this energy system is essential to extending its life. Be sure to charge batteries after each use, but do not charge the batteries if the utility vehicle has not been used that day. Also, be sure the batteries are fully charged before using the vehicle each day. The typical charge time is 10 to 12 hours, but as much as four additional hours of charging may be required when they are more than 80 percent discharged.

Finally, have your dealer service your utility vehicle once a year for a good bill of health. It's the last step in the process that keeps your most versatile piece of equipment in top shape for the season.

This article was contributed by Bob Laveau, marketing manager, John Deere Vehicle Group.



Yamaha G-21A Utility Vehicle

From transmission to tires, the G-21A is the ultimate utility vehicle. It's bigger. It's better. It's tougher. The 357 cc engine with 11.4 horsepower is larger than previous models. Which is necessary now that the G-21A's cargo box can carry up to 800 pounds. With the support of heavy-duty rear suspension, 6-ply tires and a redesigned seat, you'll get a smooth, comfortable ride out of a rugged vehicle. Plus, with low gear ratio, the G-21A transmission makes climbing hills easier. Meanwhile, heading back down the other side, you're still in control thanks to front and rear mechanical brakes. It's everything you need to get the job done. But then, would you expect anything less?

Yamaha's G21A

This utility vehicle sports a 357 cc engine with increased hp of 11.4, which allows you to haul up to 800 lbs. in its cargo box. Users benefit ergonomically from a redesigned seat, 6-ply tires, and a heavy-duty rear suspension that smooths out the ride.

The G21-A also features a low gear ratio transmission for hill-climbing as well as front and rear mechanical brakes.

Yamaha Golf-Car Co.

1-866-747-4027

www.yamahagolfcar.com

For more information, circle 142



E-Z-GO's Workhorse 1200 LX

The Workhorse 1200 LX is a multi-purpose utility vehicle designed to handle a wide variety of grounds maintenance tasks reliably. A gasoline-powered unit, the Workhorse LX features a 13-cubic-ft. cargo bed, a 1,200-lb. payload capacity and an 11-hp, 350-cc overhead cam engine. Other features include a cargo bed liner, a truck-like cowl made of unbreakable RIM plastic with steel rear body panels, differential scuff guards, tubular front bumpers, and Halogen headlights.

E-Z-GO

1-800-241-5855

www.ezgo.com

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John Deere's Turf Gator

The John Deere Turf Gator is designed for quiet operation, a larger cargo bed and faster speeds (maximum speed 18 mph). It is equipped with a 44- x 49- x 9-in. cargo bed with a 500-lb. payload capacity. Noise levels on the Turf Gator have been reduced through: an engine and exhaust system that are isolated from the frame and chassis; a new large volume muffler designed to reduce noise; new barriers and sound absorbers; and the ground speed governor and starter generator. And marks on turf are minimized due to the vehicle's low ground pressure and a low center of gravity.

John Deere

1-800-537-8233

www.johndeere.com

For more information, circle 144



Toro's Workman® 1100

The Toro Co.'s new Workman 1100 (12 hp) offers improved traction and ride provided by a unique Active In-Frame™ suspension, which allows all vehicle tires to remain on the ground and to twist easier over rough terrain. The Workman 1100 is the second of Toro's mid-duty vehicles and combined with the Workman 2100 (16 hp) the duo are the most powerful mid-duty vehicles in their class, says Toro.

Additional features include corrosion and dent resistant hood and bed, multiple integrated storage areas, and a 12-hp pedal start Kohler® Command Pro™ engine. Floatation tires come standard on the Workman and it offers the highest payload capacity of its class.

The Toro Company

1-952-888-8801

www.toro.com

For more information, circle 146



Club Car's Carryall 2 Plus

This unit sports a 351cc, 11-hp gasoline, key-start engine that can do 18 mph and hauls up to 1,200 lbs. total vehicle load. Durability. Versatility. Power. Club Car vehicles make a wide range of chores easier to perform in less time because of their durability, versatility, and power, says the manufacturer. They can haul practically anything, from lumber and piping to plants and shrubs. The lightweight aluminum construction enables users to work in rugged sites while not damaging turf.

Club Car, Inc.

1-800-258-2227

www.clubcar.com

For more information, circle 145



Smithco's Red Rider

The Smithco Red Rider is ideal for transporting mowers, equipment, and people, says the manufacturer. It can accommodate up to six workers, and that space is low to the ground and accessible via an "easy load" tailgate design, says Smithco. The Red Rider can hit 10 mph with its 8-hp Kohler electric start engine, offers a choice of hitch options, and has a 1,000-lb. load capacity.

Smithco

1-610-688-4009

www.smithco.com

For more information, circle 147



Kawasaki's Mule 520

The Mule™ 520 utility vehicle is larger than a full-sized ATV but smaller than a compact pickup truck; it has a bench seat for two and a tilting rear cargo bed. The vehicle is powered by an air-cooled 286cc OHV four-stroke single-cylinder engine and features a dual-mode differential. Kawasaki's continuously variable belt-drive automatic transmission transmits power to the rear wheels, which simplifies driver operation and increases both engine and powertrain life, says the manufacturer.

With a cargo capacity of 350 lbs. and a towing capacity of 900 lbs., the Mule 520 rides on broad, smooth-tread tires to minimize damage to delicate surfaces.

Kawasaki

1-877-529-6853

www.kawasaki.com

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