

Safety Talk

Segway Use

A Segway is a relatively new form of transportation having been introduced in December of 2001. Although it has been mainly used for recreation at theme parks and touring cities like Washington D.C., Segways are finding their way into the workplace and on to jobsites. This two-wheeled vehicle is self-balancing and powered by a battery electric motor that is located in the base. Computer sensors, also in the base, keep it upright and adjust to a body's movement when someone is standing on it. This combination allows a Segway to reach top speeds of up to 12.5 mph.

One of the main ways the Segway Company looks to keep individuals safe while riding a Segway is for the rider to be thoroughly trained on the proper use of the vehicle and how it works. There are different settings used to operate the vehicle, including Beginner, depending on your comfort level and expertise at using a Segway. It is recommended that you not try the other settings until you can ride in the Beginner setting with the same precision as you are able to walk.

Once you're comfortable riding on a Segway there are still some safety guidelines that you need to be aware of to safely drive this type of vehicle.

- Always wear a properly fitted helmet with the chin strap in place. There aren't dedicated Segway helmets but an approved bicycle or skateboard helmet that protects the back of your head will get the job done. Depending on your riding expertise, it may be a good idea to use gloves, eye protection, wrist guards and knee pads as well.
- The Segway has very specific weight restrictions that should never be exceeded. The maximum weight limit for rider and any cargo is 260 lbs. Exceeding this limit puts you at greater risk of falling and injury as well as damaging the Segway. There is also a minimum rider weight limit of 100 lbs. Below this weight, you may not be able to safely shift your weight enough to slow down and stop the Segway.
- Avoid riding on slippery surfaces, loose materials and steep slopes. These hazards are potentially dangerous surfaces to ride a Segway on. If they are unavoidable, you must get off the Segway and use the Power Assist Mode to move it across the hazard.

- Be aware that riding up, down or across a slope will require an adjustment in your weight. It will be necessary to lean uphill to maintain your balance and the balance of the Segway.
- Be sure to maintain proper air pressure in the tires. The proper tire pressure is stated on the label that is attached to the wheel and not the pressure that may be listed on the tire sidewall. Exceeding the correct tire pressure can increase the likelihood of losing control, collisions and falls. Tire pressure that is too low will reduce the battery range of the Segway and could result in tire and wheel damage.
- When charging the battery of the Segway be sure that the Charge Port, Power Cord or AC Power outlet are dry before plugging in any part of the charging system. Be sure that the outlet is properly grounded.

A Segway can be a very handy and quicker way to move around a large workplace or jobsite, but like any type of vehicle it isn't without its hazards. By being aware of its limitations and using proper safety equipment, you can stay safe while using this new type of transportation.

Discussion Questions

What can happen if you exceed the weight limitations of the Segway?

Why is it dangerous to ride a Segway up or down a steep incline?

MEETING / TRAINING ATTENDANCE ROSTER

COMPANY: _____

_____ SAFETY MEETING

JOB/DEPT: _____

_____ SAFETY TRAINING

DATE: ___/___/___

TIME: _____

TOPICS ADDRESSED: _____

EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURES

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
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EMPLOYEE SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: _____

ACTION TAKEN: _____

Supervisor's Signature

_____/_____/_____
Date

_____/_____/_____

Safety Coordinator's Signature

Date