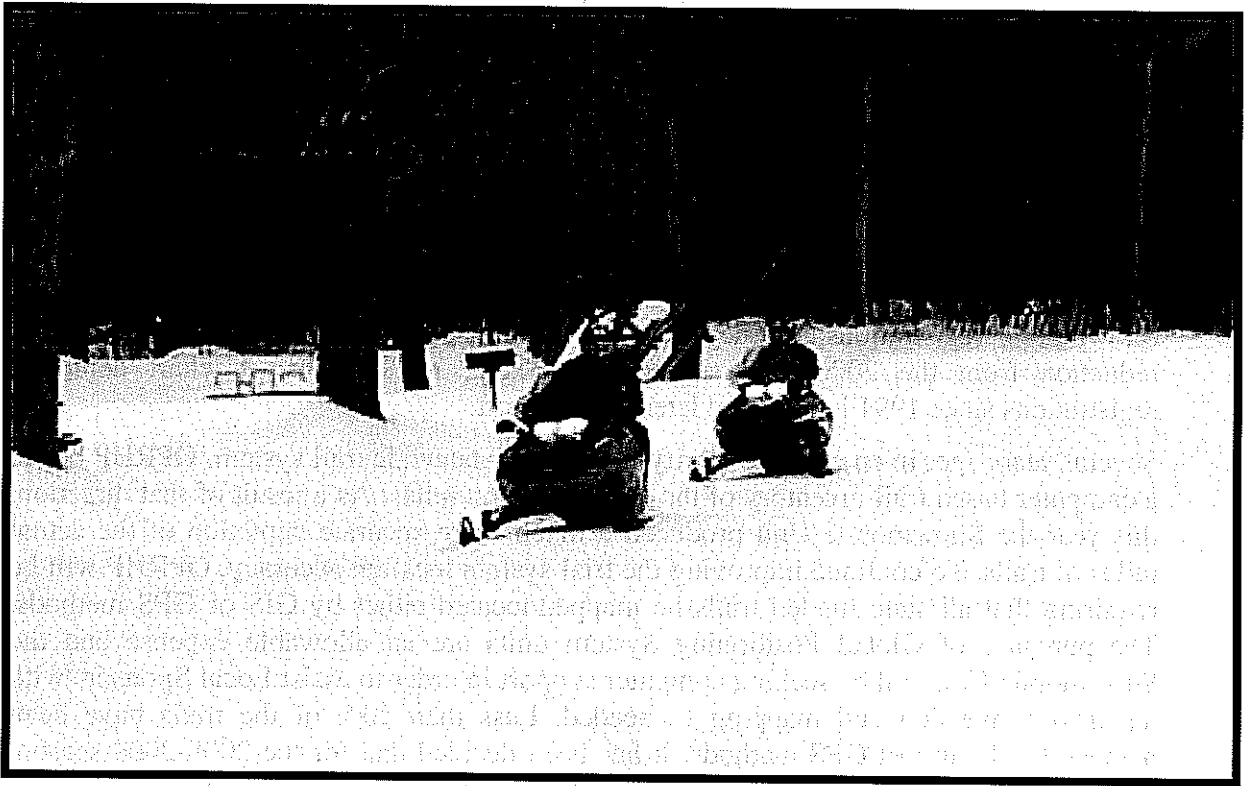




2007-2008 New York State OPRHP's Snowmobile Unit Season Report



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2008
REPORT OF THE
NEW YORK STATE SNOWMOBILE PROGRAM

The New York State Snowmobile Program exists by mandate from the Legislature. The Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) has been given the responsibility to plan for the development, maintenance and oversight of a statewide snowmobile program. The program responsibilities are found within OPRHP Law, Title D, articles 21 thru 25. Additional program guidance comes from the New York State Code of Rules and Regulations.

Program funding is obtained through snowmobile registrations. With the exception of the first ten dollars collected, the registration fees are exclusively used to support snowmobiling in New York State. These fees are deposited into a State Special Revenue Snowmobile Account that provides financial support to accomplish what was mandated. OPRHP has established programs for snowmobile trail grants, a law enforcement grant, a law enforcement snowmobile school, safety education, special event permits, accident reporting, snowmobile publications, grooming education, and trail signage guidelines, as well as a trail inspection oversight. This past year, 2007-2008, \$4.475 million was budgeted to provide financial support for approximately 11,000 miles of trails. This figure included \$3.095 million for the maintenance of the statewide trail system, \$150,000 for law enforcement assistance, \$300,000 for DEC and State Park trail developments, \$380,000 for staffing, printing, equipment, computer licensing and a statewide trail insurance cost of over \$550,000. The majority of this revenue is returned to local areas as grants-in-aid for snowmobile trail development and maintenance.

The Statewide Trail System traverses 45 counties and is maintained by approximately 200 clubs funded through 52 municipal sponsors. This vast trail network is comprised of lands under the jurisdiction of OPRHP, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), NYS Canal Corporation, local governments and many private landowners who have increasingly opened their property to snowmobiling with insurance coverage provided by the state snowmobile program.

Snowmobile registrations for the 2007-2008 season totaled 128,283. This is a slight reduction from the 2006-2007 season of 130,502 registrations. A chart depicting registrations since 1991 is provided later in the report.

Several years ago, in an effort to clarify the overall statewide trail system, OPRHP began a computer based trail inventory of the trail types and miles. As a result of that direction, this year the Snowmobile Unit produced a much more accurate depiction of the actual miles of trails. To continue improving the trail system location accuracy, OPRHP will be requiring that all state funded trails be mapped/located either by GIS or GPS methods. The purchase of Global Positioning System units are an allowable expense and the Snowmobile Unit will be seeking computer support in order to assist Local Sponsors with the data conversion and mapping as needed. Less than 20% of the trails have been mapped by the use of GPS methods. It has been decided that for the 2008-2009 season, no new trail miles will be added, and that trail reroutes and connections will only be approved if the miles are verified through GPS or GIS methods. The Phase I application

for mileage approval will outline in detail the requirements for attaining funding for any trail miles approved. The Phase I application will be available by the end of April, 2008.

The control and supervision of the Statewide Snowmobile Program is the responsibility of the Snowmobile Unit of OPRHP. Some of the major responsibilities of OPRHP's Snowmobile Unit are outlined below.

Major Areas of Responsibilities:

Snowmobile Trail Grants

Local governments contact OPRHP's Snowmobile Unit for information and applications to participate in the snowmobile trail grants program. The local governments can do the trail work or sub-contract with snowmobile clubs or organizations for the maintenance of the trails. There are over fifty local governments and more than two hundred snowmobile clubs that participate in this program. Trail mileage gets added to the statewide snowmobile trail system after review and approval from the Snowmobile Unit. Once the grant amounts are finalized and funds are available, 70% of the amount is sent out and the remaining 30% is sent out at the end of the season.

TRAIL GRANT/MILEAGE 2007 – 2008

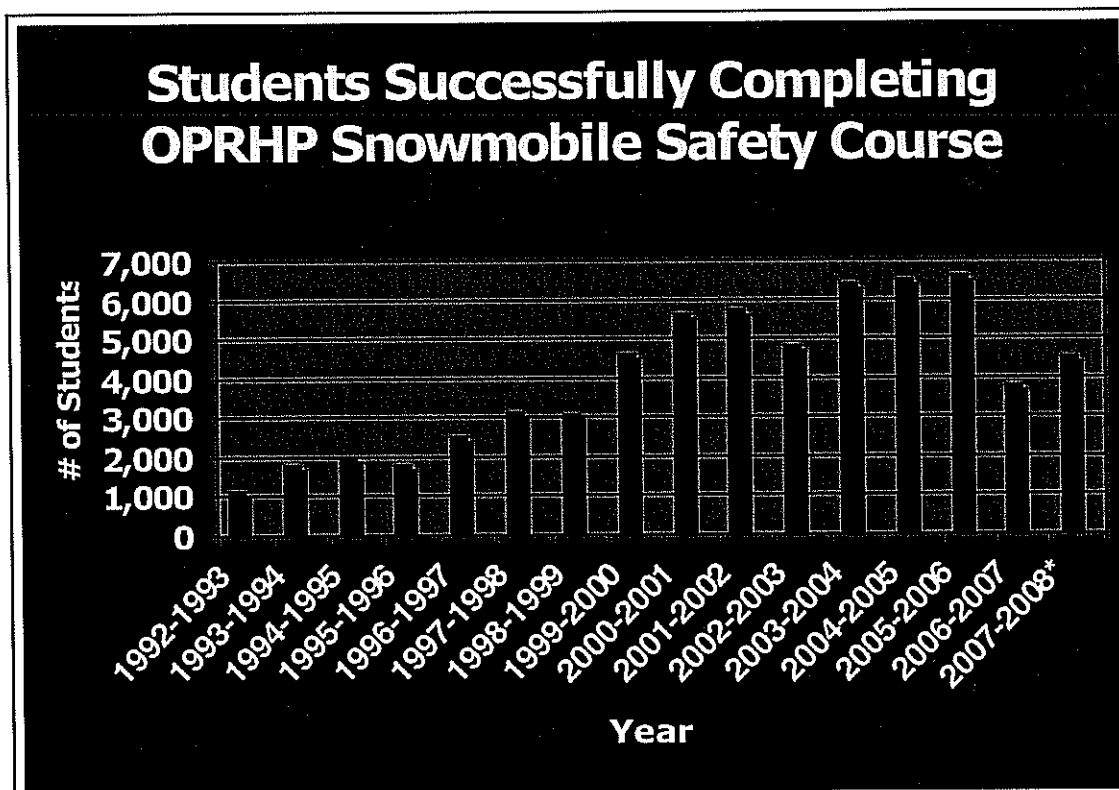
Trail Type	Mileage	Rate	Funding
Corridor A	5,546 miles	\$325	\$1,802,450
Corridor B	957 miles	\$200	\$191,400
Secondary A	2,930 miles	\$125	\$366,250
Secondary B	852 miles	\$100	\$85,200
Totals	10,285 miles		
High Snow	2,771 miles	\$150	\$415,650
<u>Grand Total</u>	10,285 miles		<u>\$2,860,950</u>

Snowmobile Safety Education Courses

Anyone who is at least 18 years old may operate a snowmobile in New York State without any other qualification except as defined by state and local laws regulating that operation. However, it is recommended that all operators complete a recognized snowmobile safety course.

Beginning at age 10, courses are available for any individual interested in taking a snowmobile safety education course. Youth ages 14 through 17 years old may operate a snowmobile, on lands upon which snowmobiling is allowed, without adult or other supervision if they have completed a snowmobile safety training course recognized by the State of New York and have their snowmobile safety certificate in their possession. If youth ages 14 through 17 years have not completed the training course, they may operate a snowmobile if accompanied by (within 500 feet of) a person who is at least 18 years of age. Youth ages 10 through 13 may operate a snowmobile, on lands which snowmobiling is allowed, if they have completed a snowmobile safety training course recognized by the State of New York and are accompanied by (within 500 feet of) a person who is at least 18 years of age. The law requires that youth ages 10 through 13 have their snowmobile safety certificate in their possession while operating a snowmobile. Children less than 10 years old or less than age 14 without a safety certificate may operate a snowmobile only on lands owned or leased by their parent or guardian.

Throughout New York State, hundreds of active volunteer instructors, certified by OPRHP, offer snowmobile safety courses. Individuals interested in taking a course should visit www.nysparks.com during the fall and winter in order to see a listing of courses being offered throughout New York State. As of April 2, 2008, it is estimated that more than 200 courses were taught and over 4,500 students will be certified for the 2007-2008 season.



Law Enforcement Program

OPRHP is the lead agency that conducts an annual snowmobile law enforcement training program for all Snowmobile Law Enforcement officers from state, county, and local agencies. The Snowmobile Law Enforcement Development School (SLEDS) started in 1994 and was redeveloped this past season to provide actual field situation instruction covering snowmobile law, patrol procedure, accident investigation, field operations, and ice rescue training. There are two levels of instruction: a basic course for first time attendees, and an advanced course for those who have already passed the basic course. This program is open to officers from all enforcement agencies throughout the state of New York and has included officers from other states and Canadian Provinces, as well. Training consists of both classroom instruction and field exercise situations. This training course is held each year in January.

The training received is relevant in addressing the particular needs of each enforcement agency with the goal of achieving an effective and uniform snowmobile law enforcement policy across NYS.

Law Enforcement Funding

During the 2007-2008 season, there were 17 participating counties with approximately 7,800 patrol hours. This resulted in 694 arrests, 33 for unsafe speed and 15 for alcoholic involvement.

With our Snowmobile Law Enforcement Grant program, OPRHP offers up to 50% reimbursement for costs incurred by municipal police agencies in the enforcement of snowmobile rules and regulations with a program total maximum payout of \$150,000. Funding is provided from state snowmobile registration fees.

Snowmobile Trail Mapping

The Snowmobile Unit approves all funded trails included in the statewide snowmobile trail system. Using quadrangle maps, provided by OPRHP, or GPS gathered data, Local Sponsors delineate changes and/or updates to their trail system. Local Sponsors are being encouraged to use GIS software to send trail data to us. Decisions are made, by the Snowmobile Unit, regarding mileage approval and allocation of funds based on the maps and information provided. Those miles that would enhance the existing statewide trail system receive funding approval. Funding is based on four classes of trails, with a range of \$325 per mile to \$100 per mile. There is also a provision for paying an additional sum for trails in the high snowfall areas.

Snowmobile Special Events

A "special event" is an organized rally, race, exhibition, or demonstration of limited duration, which is conducted according to a prearranged schedule and in which general public interest is manifested. The sponsor of a snowmobile special event must secure a permit from OPRHP's Snowmobile Unit. This permit must be secured **at least 15 days** prior to the snowmobile special event. Appropriate law enforcement agencies must be notified of the event and written permission from the landowner must also be secured. It is the responsibility of the person in charge and the sponsor of the event to give the utmost care to safety for the participants and spectators. When the application is approved, the permit will be issued.

Snowmobile Accident Reports

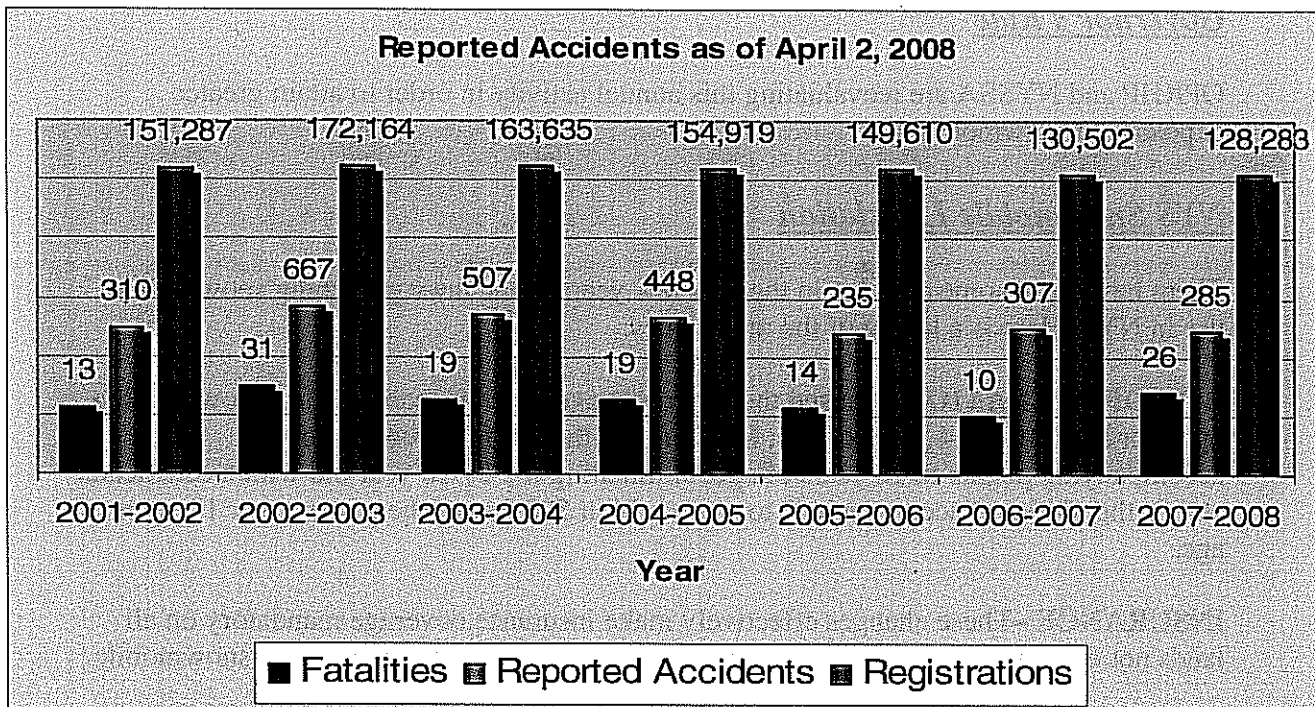
The operator of any snowmobile involved in any accident resulting in injuries to or death of any person, or in which property damage in the estimated amount of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or more is sustained, must report such accident to both an appropriate law enforcement agency and OPRHP. That law enforcement agency will in turn submit to OPRHP their original snowmobile accident report. OPRHP compiles the accident reports into a yearly statistical report containing such information as: total accidents, total injuries, fatalities, location, collision with, primary cause, age of operator, engine displacement, and if the helmet is worn.

Unsafe speed is the primary cause of snowmobile accidents. Most accidents continue to be collisions with fixed objects, such as trees. While we believe that all of the fatal accidents and most of the injury accidents are reported, it is likely that there are many other accidents that go unreported.

Accident Reports Received as of 4/2/08 for 2007-2008 Snowmobile Season

Month	Total	Fatalities
September	0	0
October	0	0
November	0	0
December	51	9
January	62	3
February	135	11
March	37	3
TOTAL TO DATE	285	26

Official Fatality Reports 21
Unofficial Reports 5



Snowmobile Publications

Statewide snowmobile corridor trail maps are published on a two-year cycle. The maps are given away free of charge and do not have advertisements but rather information that may be useful to the snowmobiler. The map shows all of the state funded trails (corridor and secondary). The back side also contains lots of useful information for the snowmobiling public.

Safety education publications are created for use by instructors and/or students participating in the New York State Snowmobile Safety Course.

Publications available to the public via the OPRHP Snowmobile Unit include the Snowmobile Guide, Snowmobile Trail Manual, Snowmobile Signing Manual, and the Snowmobile Trail Grooming Manual, as well as various law enforcement materials.

Snowmobile Trail Groomer Training

The Snowmobile Unit has developed a Groomer Operator Training Program. Using the guidelines from the International Association of Snowmobile Administrators (IASA) Grooming Manual, input from experienced groomers, and past OPRHP publications, the training includes technical information and advice in the art of grooming snowmobile trails. OPRHP is constantly working on more detailed and updated training. Through the cooperation of OPRHP, NYSSA, and local snowmobile clubs, many groomer operators have attended grooming workshops held in various locations throughout the state. Over 1,800 students have been trained since 2006.

Governor's Ride

OPRHP and NYSSA are reevaluating this annual activity in order to attain greater exposure to snowmobiling.

NYS Snowmobile Legislation

There have been some changes in the past few years to the laws governing snowmobile use in NYS. Here is a listing of the major ones:

AGE OF OPERATION— Raised the minimum age of an unaccompanied snowmobile operator from 10 to 14 years of age. It also raises the age requirements of the accompanying person to 18 years of age, eliminating the 14-18 year old with a certificate, and further defines “accompanied” to mean within 500 feet of the person over 18 years of age.

INSURANCE —These changes effectively make insurance coverage mandatory on all lands not owned, leased or held in easement by the owner or operator of the snowmobile.

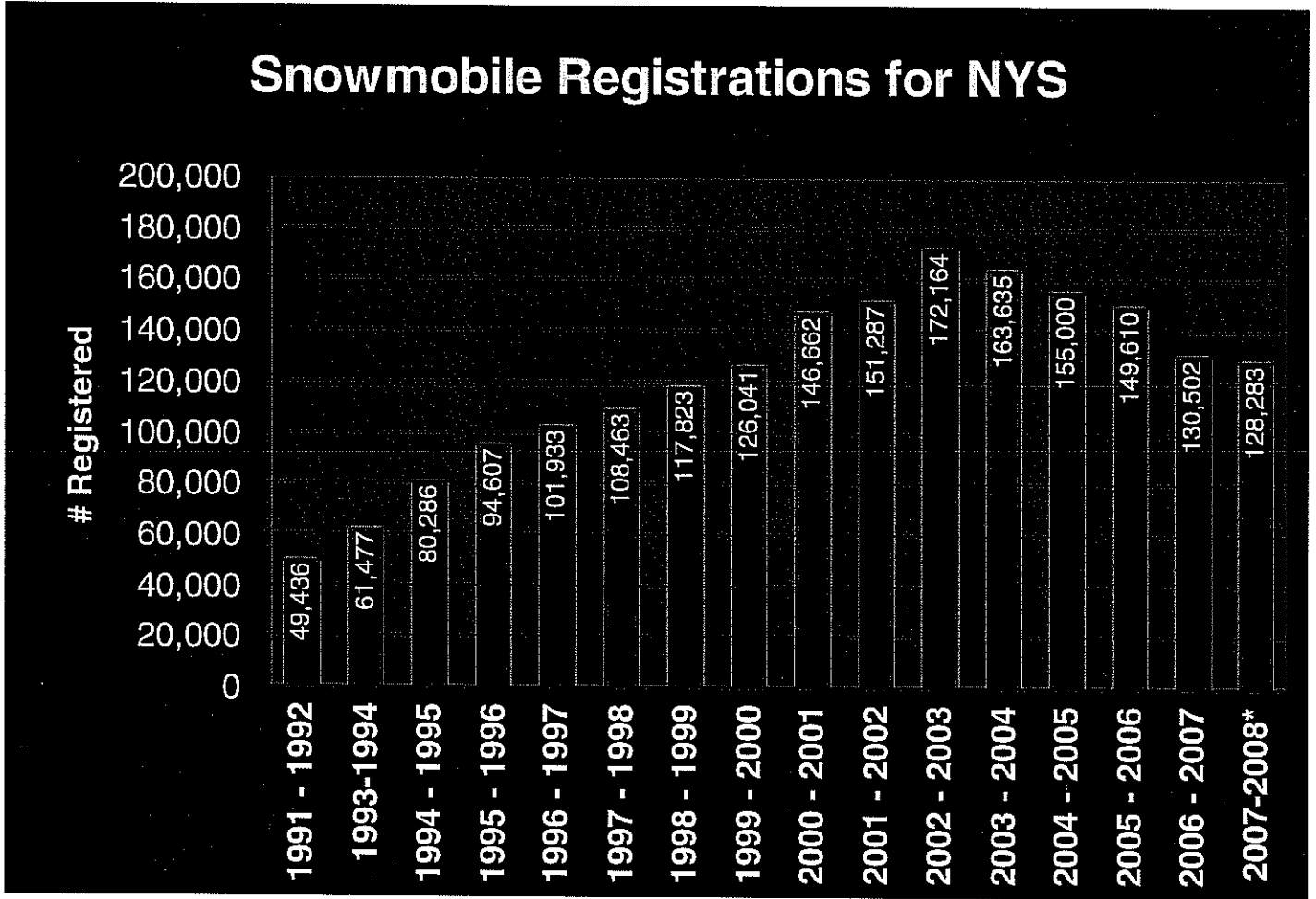
SPEED- The change in law effectively establishes a 55 MPH statewide speed limit on public trails and lands except as specified.

ACCIDENT REPORTING THRESHOLD – Legislation increased the dollar amount of repair costs incurred from an accident. Previous amount was \$100.00; current amount is any damage totaling \$1,000.00 or more.

SAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAM – OPRHP will be proposing to redevelop the program and recommend that the number of classroom hours be reduced from 10 to 8.

NIGHT SNOWMOBILING PERMITS IN STATE PARKS – OPRHP will be seeking to remove the current requirement that directs snowmobilers to obtain a free permit in order to go snowmobiling within a state park at night.

NYS Snowmobile Registrations since 1991



* Registrations as of April 2, 2008

Registrations by County

County	Originals	Renewals	Processed
Albany	477	1723	2200
Allegany	223	565	788
Bronx	3	28	31
Broome	329	1020	1349
Cattaraugus	456	1379	1835
Cayuga	479	1505	1984
Chautauqua	633	2226	2859
Chemung	92	234	326
Chenango	323	1054	1377
Clinton	458	1378	1836
Columbia	176	607	783
Cortland	295	928	1223
Delaware	300	1243	1543
Dutchess	376	1362	1738
Erie	1837	6181	8018
Essex	245	874	1119
Franklin	371	1339	1710
Fulton	587	1797	2384
Genesee	384	1253	1637
Greene	159	509	668
Hamilton	170	717	887
Herkimer	852	2749	3601
Jefferson	628	1699	2327
Kings	4	40	44
Lewis	410	1548	1958
Livingston	225	659	884
Madison	614	1913	2527
Monroe	1264	3590	4854
Montgomery	351	1317	1668
Nassau	140	656	796
New York	13	50	63
Niagara	550	1638	2188

County	Originals	Renewals	Processed
Oneida	1663	5203	6866
Onondaga	1407	4531	5938
Ontario	300	1037	1337
Orange	422	1819	2241
Orleans	264	682	946
Oswego	996	2995	3991
Otsego	355	1163	1518
Putnam	93	351	444
Queens	27	99	126
Rensselaer	418	1248	1666
Richmond	34	121	155
Rockland	70	352	422
Saratoga	943	3194	4137
Schenectady	375	1123	1498
Schoharie	217	906	1123
Schuyler	58	217	275
Seneca	102	319	421
St. Lawrence	952	2687	3639
Steuben	242	642	884
Suffolk	457	1774	2231
Sullivan	216	991	1207
Tioga	129	369	498
Tompkins	207	564	771
Ulster	375	1247	1622
Unknown	34	152	186
Warren	538	1742	2280
Washington	432	1456	1888
Wayne	668	1986	2654
Westchester	128	645	773
Wyoming	383	1498	1881
Yates	61	218	279

Totals by County

Originals	25,990
Renewals	85,112
Processed	111,102

FINAL Total Registrations: County & Out of State

Originals	30,686
Renewals	97,597
Processed	128,283

Out of State Registrations

State	Originals	Renewals	Processed
AK	0	1	1
AZ	2	3	5
CA	2	7	9
CN	1	6	7
CO	1	1	2
CT	311	1226	1537
DE	41	99	140
FL	28	100	128
GA	2	12	14
ID	0	1	1
IL	5	4	9
IN	18	4	22
KS	0	1	1
KY	1	5	6
LA	2	1	3
MA	99	251	350
MD	92	209	301
ME	5	4	9
MI	16	11	27
MO	1	2	3
MT	2	1	3
NC	22	59	81
ND	0	1	1
NF	1	0	1
NH	20	38	58
NJ	870	3892	4762
NM	1	0	1
NT	3	4	7
NV	0	3	3
OH	394	777	1171
OK	1	1	2
ON	21	33	54
OR	0	1	1
OT	0	1	1
PA	2638	5519	8157
PQ	1	2	3
RI	4	16	20
SC	4	15	19
TN	1	2	3
TX	4	13	17
UT	0	1	1
VA	16	62	78
VT	52	80	132
WA	0	1	1
WI	2	0	2
WV	12	15	27
Totals	4,696	12,485	17,181

