

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

An Act To Promote Fuel Conservation by Allowing the Use of Mini-trucks on Public Ways

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 29-A MRSA §101, sub-§33-A is enacted to read:

33-A. Mini-truck. "Mini-truck" means a 4-wheeled motor vehicle that:

- A. Is able to attain a speed of at least 25 miles per hour but not more than 60 miles per hour;
- B. Does not exceed 2,000 pounds in unloaded weight;
- C. Is powered by a 2-cylinder, 3-cylinder or 4-cylinder gasoline engine; and
- D. Meets or exceeds the motor vehicle inspection requirements of chapter 15, subchapter 1.

"Mini-truck" does not include a low-speed vehicle.

Sec. 2. 29-A MRSA §102, sub-§3 is enacted to read:

3. Limited operation of mini-trucks; beginning October 1, 2009. The registration and operation of mini-trucks in accordance with section 501, subsection 12 and section 2093 are authorized beginning October 1, 2009. A municipality may prohibit the use of mini-trucks by municipal ordinance or restrict the use of mini-trucks in accordance with section 2093, subsection 2.

Sec. 3. 29-A MRSA §501, sub-§12 is enacted to read:

12. Mini-trucks. The Secretary of State may issue a registration for a mini-truck upon application and payment of an annual fee of \$35. The registrant must provide a certificate of title required by section 651, proof of financial responsibility required by section 1601 and evidence of payment of the excise tax required by Title 36, section 1482. A mini-truck registered under this section is issued a registration plate with the word "mini-truck" instead of "Vacationland." The Secretary of State may issue a facsimile plate for a 60-day period.

Sec. 4. 29-A MRSA §652, sub-§13, as repealed and replaced by PL 1999, c. 470, §9, is amended to read:

13. Certain automobiles, commercial vehicles and vehicles. Automobiles and all over-the-road commercial vehicles and vehicles, including mini-trucks, that are more than 15 years old, except when the Secretary of State determines it is in the best interest of the State and the applicant to issue a title to a vehicle more than 15 years old;

Sec. 5. 29-A MRSA §2093 is enacted to read:

§ 2093. Operation of mini-trucks

A person operating a mini-truck on a public way shall comply with the provisions of this chapter as they apply to the operator of an automobile and with this section.

1. License required. A person operating a mini-truck must possess a valid Class A, Class B or Class C driver's license pursuant to section 1252.

2. Distance and road restrictions. A mini-truck may be operated only on a highway, road or street within 100 miles of the address at which the vehicle is registered. The department may prohibit the operation of a mini-truck on any highway or segment of highway under its jurisdiction if it determines that the prohibition is necessary in the interest of public safety. A municipality may prohibit the operation of a mini-truck on any road under its jurisdiction if it determines that the prohibition is necessary in the interest of public safety.

3. Violation. A person who operates a mini-truck in violation of subsection 2 commits a traffic infraction.

4. Rulemaking. The Secretary of State, in consultation with the Commissioner of Transportation and the Commissioner of Public Safety, may adopt routine technical rules in accordance with Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A to implement this section, monitor the registration and use of mini-trucks and provide for the safe operation of mini-trucks.

SUMMARY

This bill permits mini-trucks to be operated on public ways, but only within 100 miles of the address at which the mini-truck is registered. The mini-truck, a 4-wheeled motor vehicle with a maximum speed of 60 miles per hour and a maximum weight of 2,000 pounds, must be registered and meet the same inspection standards as other motor vehicles in order to be operated on a public way.