

STATE OF MAINE

**IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND AND FIFTEEN**

S.P. 71 - L.D. 196

An Act To Ensure the Safety of Public Service Vehicles

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

Sec. 1. 29-A MRSA §2054, sub-§1, ¶I-1 is enacted to read:

I-1. "Public service vehicle" means a vehicle used to assist members of the public or law enforcement officers with disabled vehicles or to remove debris from a roadway, or a vehicle used to construct, maintain, inspect or repair utility infrastructure, including, but not limited to, electricity, water, sewer, cable, telephone, gas and natural gas infrastructure. "Public service vehicle" includes a wrecker.

Sec. 2. 29-A MRSA §2054, sub-§2, ¶C, as amended by PL 2013, c. 462, §4, is further amended to read:

C. The use of amber lights on vehicles is governed by the following.

(1) A vehicle engaged in highway maintenance or in emergency rescue operations by emergency management and public safety agencies and a public utility ~~emergency~~ service vehicle may be equipped with auxiliary lights that emit an amber light.

(1-A) A Department of Labor motor vehicle operated by a workplace safety inspector may be equipped with auxiliary lights that emit an amber light.

(2) A wrecker must be equipped with a flashing light mounted on top of the vehicle in such a manner as to emit an amber light over a 360° angle. The light must be in use on a public way or a place where public traffic may reasonably be anticipated when servicing, freeing, loading, unloading or towing a vehicle.

(3) A vehicle engaged in snow removal or sanding operations on a public way must be equipped with and display an auxiliary light that provides visible light coverage over a 360° range. The light must emit an amber beam of light and be equipped with a blinking or strobe light function and have sufficient intensity to be visible at 500 feet in normal daylight. When the left wing of a plow is in operation and extends over the center of the road, an auxiliary light must show the extreme end of the left wing. That light may be attached to the vehicle so that

the beam of light points at the left wing. The light illuminating the left wing may be controlled by a separate switch or by the regular lighting system and must be in operation at all times when the vehicle is used for plowing snow on public ways.

(4) A vehicle equipped and used for plowing snow on other than public ways may be equipped with an auxiliary rotary flashing light that must be mounted on top of the vehicle in such a manner as to emit an amber beam of light over a 360° angle, or an amber strobe, or combination of strobes, that emits at a minimum a beam of 50 candlepower and provides visible light coverage over a 360° range. The light may be in use on a public way only when the vehicle is entering the public way in the course of plowing private driveways and other off-highway locations.

(5) A rural mail vehicle may be equipped with auxiliary lights.

(a) The lights used to the front must be white or amber, or any shade between white and amber.

(b) The lights used to the rear must be amber or red, or any shade between amber and red.

(c) The lights, whether used to the front or rear, must be mounted at the same level and as widely spaced laterally as possible.

(d) The lights, whether used to the front or rear, must flash simultaneously.

(e) The lights must be visible from a distance of at least 500 feet in normal daylight.

(6) A vehicle used or provided by a contract security company to assist in traffic control and direction at construction or maintenance sites on a public way may be equipped with amber auxiliary lights.

(7) A Department of Public Safety vehicle operated by a motor carrier inspector or motor vehicle inspector may be equipped with auxiliary lights that emit an amber light.

(8) A vehicle used by an animal control officer appointed pursuant to Title 7, section 3947 may be equipped with auxiliary lights that emit a flashing amber light.

(9) A refuse, garbage or trash business vehicle used by an individual to transport refuse, garbage and trash may be equipped with auxiliary lights that emit a flashing amber light.

(10) A vehicle used by an individual to transport and deliver newspapers may be equipped with auxiliary lights that emit a flashing amber light.

Sec. 3. 29-A MRSA §2054, sub-§2, ¶G, as enacted by PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 and affected by Pt. B, §5, is amended to read:

G. A vehicle may be equipped with a spotlight. Only spotlights on authorized emergency vehicles, highway maintenance vehicles and public utility service vehicles

may be used on a public way, except any vehicle may use a spotlight in cases of necessity when other lights required by law fail to operate.

Sec. 4. 29-A MRSA §2054, sub-§9, as amended by PL 2007, c. 348, §20, is further amended to read:

9. Stationary vehicles. The operator of a vehicle passing a stationary authorized emergency vehicle using an emergency light or a stationary ~~wrecker~~ public service vehicle using its authorized lights, with due regard to the safety and traffic conditions, shall:

- A. Pass in a lane not adjacent to that of the authorized emergency vehicle or ~~wrecker~~ public service vehicle, if possible; or
- B. If passing in a nonadjacent lane is impossible or unsafe, pass the emergency vehicle or ~~wrecker~~ public service vehicle at a careful and prudent speed reasonable for passing the authorized emergency vehicle or ~~wrecker~~ public service vehicle safely.

A violation of this subsection is a traffic infraction for which a minimum fine of \$250 must be adjudged.