

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE *Motor Vehicle Dealer Plates*Inter-Departmental Memorandum Date August 12, 1976

To Linwood F. Ross, Deputy Dept. Secretary of State  
From Leon V. Walker, Jr., Assistant Dept. Attorney General  
Subject Use of dealer plates on wreckers

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You have asked two questions regarding use by a car dealer of his dealer plates on equipment he operates as wreckers.

The applicable statute - 29 M.R.S.A. § 354, sub-§ 3, - provides:

"Anyone issued vehicle dealer or equipment dealer registration plates shall have the right to operate his motor vehicle wrecker in connection with his business on such dealer plates."

1. You ask whether he may use his dealer plate on his wrecker to do wrecker service for hire.

The answer is no. Although § 354, sub-§ 3, (above) states that the dealer plate may be used by the dealer on his motor vehicle wrecker in connection with his business, § 354, sub-§ 1, limits the conditions under which dealers may use dealer registration plates. The list of conditions therein stated does not include the use of any of the dealer's vehicles for hire.

2. You ask if the dealer may use his plate on a car carrier, claiming it to be a wrecker since it is equipped with a winch and is capable of lifting a vehicle onto it.

The answer is no. A wrecker is defined in the dictionary as a vehicle that salvages or clears away wrecks. Although "car carrier" is not defined, its purpose is to transfer vehicles from the car manufacturer to the car dealer, or from dealer to dealer. It is in no sense a wrecker.

*Leon V. Walker, Jr.*  
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