

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 121st MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2003

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Legislative Document

No. 111

H.P. 120

House of Representatives, January 21, 2003

### **An Act To Allow Volunteer Firefighters To Use Red Flashing Lights when Responding to a Fire**

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Reference to the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety suggested and ordered printed.

*Millicent M. MacFarland*  
MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND  
Clerk

Presented by Representative GOODWIN of Pembroke.

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

**Sec. 1. 29-A MRSA §2054, sub-§1, ¶B,** as amended by PL 2001, c. 360, §5, is further amended by amending subparagraphs (17) and (18) to read:

(17) A vehicle operated by a qualified deputy sheriff or other qualified individual to perform court security-related functions and services as authorized by the State Court Administrator pursuant to Title 4, section 17, subsection 15; ~~or~~

(18) A Federal Government vehicle operated by a federal law enforcement officer; ~~or~~

**Sec. 2. 29-A MRSA §2054, sub-§1, ¶B,** as amended by PL 2001, c. 360, §5, is further amended by enacting subparagraph (19) to read:

(19) A personal vehicle operated by an active member of a municipal or volunteer fire department, only when the member is en route to or at the scene of a fire or other emergency.

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

A. Only an ambulance; an emergency medical service vehicle; a fire department vehicle; a police vehicle; a Department of Conservation vehicle used for forest fire control; a Department of Corrections vehicle as described in subsection 1, paragraph B, subparagraph (6); and a highway maintenance vehicle may be equipped with a device that provides for alternate flashing of the vehicle's headlights.

A personal vehicle operated by an active member of a municipal or volunteer fire department may be equipped with a device that provides for alternate flashing of the vehicle's headlights, but the devices may be used only when the member is en route to or at the scene of a fire or other emergency.

**Sec. 4. 29-A MRSA §2054, sub-§2, ¶F,** as amended by PL 1995, c. 22, §1, is further amended to read:

F. Only vehicles listed in this paragraph, rural mail vehicles as provided in paragraph C, subparagraph (5) and school buses may be equipped with, display or use a red auxiliary or emergency light.

2 (1) Emergency lights used on an ambulance, an  
4 emergency medical service vehicle, a fire department  
6 vehicle, a fire vehicle or a hazardous material  
response vehicle must emit a red light or a combination  
of red and white light.

8 (2) The municipal officers or a municipal official  
10 designated by the municipal officers, with the approval  
12 of the fire chief, may authorize an active member of a  
municipal or volunteer fire department to use a  
14 flashing red signal light not more than 5 inches in  
diameter on a vehicle. The light may be displayed but  
16 may be used only while the member is en route to or at  
the scene of a fire or other emergency. The light must  
18 be mounted as near as practicable above the  
registration plate on the front of the vehicle or on  
the dashboard. A light mounted on the dashboard must  
be shielded so that the emitted light does not  
interfere with the operator's vision.

20 (3) Members of an emergency medical service licensed  
22 by Maine Emergency Medical Services may display and use  
on a vehicle a flashing red signal light of the same  
24 proportion, in the same location and under the same  
conditions as those permitted municipal and volunteer  
26 firefighters, when authorized by the chief official of  
the emergency medical service.

28 **Sec. 5. 29-A MRSA §2054, sub-§10** is enacted to read:

30 **10. Use of lights; requirements; revocation.** Active  
32 members of a municipal or volunteer fire department must meet the  
following requirements prior to exercising the privilege of using  
34 flashing red lights on personal vehicles:

36 A. Be at least 21 years of age;

38 B. Have completed 3 years of active service in a municipal  
or volunteer fire department; and

40 C. Have completed a state-certified emergency vehicle  
42 operators course.

44 The privilege of using a light may be revoked at any time for  
misconduct by a municipal officer or a municipal official  
46 designated by the municipal officers, with the approval of the  
fire chief.

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## SUMMARY

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6           This bill permits municipal and volunteer firefighters to  
8           use a flashing red light on personal vehicles while en route to  
10           or at the scene of a fire or other emergency. It also provides  
12           that such vehicles are covered by the rules of operation applying  
          to authorized emergency vehicles. The bill also adds  
          requirements that must be met before a person may use flashing  
          lights on personal vehicles.

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