

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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121st MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2003

Legislative Document

No. 493

H.P. 382

House of Representatives, February 4, 2003

**An Act Regarding the Use of Lights and Sirens on Personal Vehicles
Used by Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Medical Services
Personnel**

Reference to the Committee on Transportation suggested and ordered printed.

Millicent M. MacFarland
MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND
Clerk

Presented by Representative GLYNN of South Portland.

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

2
3 **Sec. 1. 29-A MRSA §2054, sub-§1, ¶B,** as amended by PL 2001, c.
4 360, §5, is further amended by amending subparagraphs (17) and
5 (18) to read:

6
7 (17) A vehicle operated by a qualified deputy sheriff
8 or other qualified individual to perform court
9 security-related functions and services as authorized
10 by the State Court Administrator pursuant to Title 4,
11 section 17, subsection 15; or

12
13 (18) A Federal Government vehicle operated by a
14 federal law enforcement officer;

15 **Sec. 2. 29-A MRSA §2054, sub-§1, ¶B,** as amended by PL 2001, c.
16 360, §5, is further amended by enacting subparagraphs (19) and
17 (20) to read:

18
19 (19) A personal vehicle operated by an active member
20 of a municipal or volunteer fire department, only when
21 the member is en route to or at the scene of a fire or
22 other emergency; or

23
24 (20) A personal vehicle operated by an active member
25 of an emergency medical service, only when the member
26 is en route to or at the scene of an emergency.

27
28 **Sec. 3. 29-A MRSA §2054, sub-§2, ¶A,** as enacted by PL 1993, c.
29 683, Pt. A, §2 and affected by Pt. B, §5, is amended to read:

30
31 A. Only an ambulance; an emergency medical service vehicle;
32 a fire department vehicle; a police vehicle; a Department of
33 Conservation vehicle used for forest fire control; a
34 Department of Corrections vehicle as described in subsection
35 1, paragraph B, subparagraph (6); a personal vehicle
36 operated by an active member of a municipal or volunteer
37 fire department or an emergency medical service, only when
38 the member is en route to or at the scene of a fire or other
39 emergency; and a highway maintenance vehicle may be equipped
40 with a device that provides for alternate flashing of the
41 vehicle's headlights.

42
43 **Sec. 4. 29-A MRSA §2054, sub-§2, ¶F,** as amended by PL 1995, c.
44 22, §1, is further amended to read:

45
46 F. Only vehicles listed in this paragraph, rural mail
47 vehicles as provided in paragraph C, subparagraph (5) and
48 school buses may be equipped with, display or use a red
49 auxiliary or emergency light.
50

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
14 municipal or volunteer fire department to use a
16 ~~flashing-red-signal-light-not-more-than-5-inches-in~~
18 ~~diameter~~ siren and any combination of flashing red,
20 white and amber lights on a vehicle. The ~~light~~ lights
22 and siren may be displayed but may be used only while
the member is en route to or at the scene of a fire or
other emergency. ~~The-light-must-be-mounted-as-near-as~~
~~practicable-above-the-registration-plate-on-the-front~~
~~of-the-vehicle-or-on-the-dashboard.~~ The lights may be
mounted on the roof, rear deck, front grille or
dashboard of the vehicle. A light mounted on the
dashboard must be shielded so that the emitted light
does not interfere with the operator's vision.

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

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

34 **10. Use of lights or sirens; requirements; revocation.**
36 Active members of a municipal or volunteer fire department or an
38 emergency medical service as listed under subsection 1, paragraph
A, subparagraphs (19) and (20) must meet the following
requirements:

40 A. Be at least 21 years of age;

42 B. Have completed 3 years of active service in a municipal
44 or volunteer fire department or an emergency medical
service; and

46 C. Have completed a state-certified emergency vehicle
48 operators or emergency ambulance operators course prior to
exercising the privilege of using lights and sirens.

50

2 The privilege of using a light or siren may be revoked at any
3 time with the approval of the fire chief or the chief official of
4 the emergency medical service for misconduct by a municipal
5 officer or a municipal official designated by the municipal
6 officers.

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SUMMARY

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This bill permits municipal and volunteer firefighters and emergency medical services personnel to use sirens and flashing red, white and amber lights on personal vehicles while en route to or at the scene of fires or other emergencies. It also provides 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 a siren and flashing light on a personal vehicle.