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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY  
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FIRE DEPARTMENT

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Raymond Rugh, Chief, Equipment Division  
Department of Transportation  
17<sup>th</sup> and Arsenal Boulevard  
Harrisburg, PA

January 5, 2006

**SUBJECT: PROPOSED REGULATION #18-404 (#2510) "FLASHING OR REVOLVING LIGHTS ON EMERGENCY AND AUTHORIZE VEHICLES"**

Sir:

I respectfully submit the following comments on the proposed regulation referenced above.

**173.3 Display Requirements. (a) (3) Blue Lights.**

This section refers to specifics in Title 75 which states that ambulance personnel are authorized to utilize blue lights on their personal vehicles. This should state that ambulance personnel must receive approval from their local EMS Council to utilize emergency lights on their private vehicles. There are for-profit ambulance businesses which provide routine transport services but are not part of the local 9-1-1 emergency response system. The personnel in these services should not be authorized to use emergency lighting.

**173.3 Display Requirements. (a) (6) White or Clear Lights.**

This section states that "an emergency vehicle may be equipped with a flashing headlamp system and no more than one flashing, revolving or oscillating white or clear light, except that an emergency vehicle may be equipped with a light-bar assembly containing no more than three flashing, revolving or oscillating white clear lights."

It should be clarified as to whether an ambulance may have a flashing white light on the ambulance "AND" three flashing white lights on the light bar. This often becomes an issue when ambulances are being inspected for Pennsylvania ambulance licensure.

Thanks you very much for considering these comments.

Sincerely

Ralph A. Halper, Director  
Philadelphia Regional EMS

cc: John R. McGinley, Jr., Chairman, IRRC  
Joseph Schmider, Director, PA Department of Health EMSO  
Robert Gaumer, Ambulance Coordinator, PA Department of Health EMSO

(i) Under 75 Pa.C.S. § 4571 (relating to visual and audible signals on emergency vehicles), an emergency vehicle, as defined in 75 Pa.C.S. § 102 (relating to definitions), shall be equipped with one or more flashing or revolving red lights.

(ii) Under 75 Pa.C.S. § 4571, Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission vehicles used for the enforcement of 66 Pa.C.S. Chapters 23 and 25 (relating to common carriers; and contract carrier by motor vehicle and broker) may be equipped with flashing or revolving red lights.]

(3) *Blue lights.* [Under] A vehicle may display blue lights as provided for by 75 Pa.C.S. § 4572(a) (relating to visual signals on authorized vehicles)[, ambulance personnel, owners and handlers of dogs used in tracking humans, and volunteer firefighters may each equip one personal vehicle with no more than two flashing or revolving blue lights or one light-bar assembly containing no more than two blue lights. Only blue lights may be used on the light-bar assembly]. Vehicles described in 75 Pa.C.S. § 4572(a) may be equipped with a light-bar assembly using only blue lights. See Figure 3.1.

(4) *Combination red-and-blue lights.* [Under] Vehicles listed under 75 Pa.C.S. § 4571 (b)[, police, sheriff, coroner, medical examiner or fire police vehicles may be equipped with flashing or revolving blue lights in addition to red lights--combination red-and-blue lights] may display combination red-and-blue lights. The privately-owned vehicles [of a police chief, assistant police chief, fire police captain and fire police lieutenant] listed under 75 Pa.C.S. § 102 (relating to definitions of an emergency vehicle) shall be equipped under [paragraph (2)] 75 Pa.C.S. § 4571(a).

(5) *Yellow or amber lights.* A vehicle may display yellow or amber lights as follows:

(i) Under 75 Pa.C.S. § 4572(b), an authorized vehicle as defined in 75 Pa.C.S. § 102 and designated in Chapter 15 (relating to authorized vehicles and special operating privileges) may be equipped with [no more than two] flashing or revolving yellow or amber lights or one or more light-bar [assembly] assemblies containing [no more than two] only yellow or amber lights. [Only yellow or amber lights may be used on the light-bar assembly.] See Figure 3.1.

\* \* \* \* \*

(ii) An authorized vehicle which is used in the construction, repair or maintenance of a bridge or highway may be equipped with traffic control emergency directional light assemblies.

(iii) Emergency vehicles may be equipped with [no more than two] yellow or amber lights, in addition to [one] traffic control emergency directional light [assembly] assemblies. Yellow or amber lights shall be mounted on the rear of the vehicle or shall face rearward.

(6) *White or clear lights.* In addition to flashing or revolving red or combination red-and-blue lights, an emergency vehicle may be equipped with a flashing headlamp system and no

contract carrier by motor vehicle and broker) may be equipped with revolving or flashing red lights in accordance with subsection (a).

(d) **Vehicles prohibited from using signals.**—Except as otherwise specifically provided in this part, no vehicle other than an emergency vehicle may be equipped with revolving or flashing lights or audible warning systems identical or similar to those specified in subsections (a) and (b).

(e) **Authorized period of use.**—The lights and warning systems specified by this section may be used only during an emergency or in the interest of public safety and by police officers, sheriffs and deputy sheriffs in enforcement of the law. An ambulance which is transporting a patient may use either the lights or the audible warning system, or both, as determined by the driver of the ambulance.

(f) **Conformity with department regulations.**—All equipment authorized or required by this section shall conform to department regulations.

(Feb. 15, 1980, P.L.12, No.8, eff. imd.; July 10, 1981, P.L.250, No.82, eff. imd.; July 9, 1984, P.L.671, No.142, eff. imd.; May 9, 1986, P.L.158, No.51, eff. 60 days; Dec. 11, 1986, P.L.1530, No.166, eff. 60 days; Mar. 13, 1990, P.L.69, No.14, eff. 60 days; Dec. 18, 1992, P.L.1411, No.174, eff. 60 days)

**1992 Amendment.** Act 174 amended subsecs. (b) and (e).

**1990 Amendment.** Act 14 amended subsec. (d).

**1986 Amendments.** Act 51 amended subsec. (e) and Act 166 added subsec. (c.1).

**1984 Repeal Note.** Act 142 repealed subsec. (c).

**1980 Amendment.** Act 8 amended subsecs. (a) and (b).

**Cross References.** Section 4571 is referred to in section 4306 of this title.

### § 4572. Visual signals on authorized vehicles.

(a) **Flashing or revolving blue lights.**—Ambulance personnel, volunteer firefighters and owners and handlers of dogs used in tracking humans may each equip one motor vehicle with no more than two flashing or revolving blue lights.

(1) In order to be eligible to display lights on their vehicles under this subsection, the names of the ambulance personnel and volunteer firefighters shall be submitted to the nearest station of the Pennsylvania State Police on a list signed by the chief of the ambulance or fire department or company and each dog owner and handler shall register at the nearest Pennsylvania State Police station.

(2) The manner in which the lights are displayed and their intensity shall be determined by regulation of the department.

(3) The lights shall be operable by the driver from inside the vehicle.

(4) The lights may be used only while en route to or at the scene of a fire or emergency call.

(5) The lights shall be removed from the vehicle within ten days of receipt of notice from the chief of the ambulance or fire department or company to remove the lights upon termination of the person's status as an active volunteer firefighter or ambulance person or upon termination of the person's active status as a dog owner or handler, or when the vehicle is no longer used in connection with the person's duties as a volunteer firefighter or ambulance person or dog owner or handler.



**blue lights] may display combination red-and-blue lights. The privately-owned vehicles [of a police chief, assistant police chief, fire police captain and fire police lieutenant] listed under 75 Pa.C.S. § 102 (relating to definitions of an emergency vehicle) shall be equipped under [paragraph (2)] 75 Pa.C.S. § 4571(a).**

(5) *Yellow or amber lights.* A vehicle may display yellow or amber lights as follows:

(i) Under 75 Pa.C.S. § 4572(b), an authorized vehicle as defined in 75 Pa.C.S. § 102 and designated in Chapter 15 (relating to authorized vehicles and special operating privileges) may be equipped with **[no more than two] flashing or revolving yellow or amber lights or one or more light-bar [assembly] assemblies containing [no more than two] only yellow or amber lights. [Only yellow or amber lights may be used on the light-bar assembly.]** See Figure 3.1.

\* \* \* \* \*

(ii) **An authorized vehicle which is used in the construction, repair or maintenance of a bridge or highway may be equipped with traffic control emergency directional light assemblies.**

(iii) Emergency vehicles may be equipped with **[no more than two] yellow or amber lights, in addition to [one] traffic control emergency directional light [assembly] assemblies. Yellow or amber lights shall be mounted on the rear of the vehicle or shall face rearward.**

(6) *White or clear lights.* In addition to flashing or revolving red or combination red-and-blue lights, an emergency vehicle may be equipped with a flashing headlamp system and no

more than one flashing [or], revolving or oscillating white or clear light, except [that] an emergency vehicle may be equipped with a light-bar assembly containing no more than [two] **three flashing [or], revolving or oscillating white or clear lights. This section does not include preemptive traffic control devices.**

(i) **When the light-bar assembly contains three flashing, revolving or oscillating white or clear lights, the center light must be mounted to flash white or clear light only to the front.**

(ii) **When the vehicle is stationary, the light-bar assembly may not display white or clear light to the rear.**

(iii) **Flashing [or], revolving or oscillating white or clear lights and flashing headlamp systems may only be used in conjunction with the flashing or revolving red or combination red-and-blue lights. Flashing [or], revolving or oscillating white or clear lights and flashing headlamp systems that are not used in conjunction with flashing or revolving red or combination red-and-blue lights do not constitute visual signals under 75 Pa.C.S. § [§ ] 3325 [and 4571] (relating to duty of driver on approach of emergency vehicle[; and visual and audible signals on emergency vehicles]) and 75 Pa.C.S. § 4571.**

**[(ii) Flashing headlamp systems are to be used under 75 Pa.C.S. § 4306 (relating to use of multiple-beam road lighting equipment).]**