

ATTENTION: ALL OFFICIAL INSPECTION STATIONS  
QUALITY ASSURANCE OFFICERS AND PENNSYLVANIA STATE POLICE

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SAFETY INSPECTION BULLETIN

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**School Bus Exhaust Systems**

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) amended their regulations requiring all school buses rolling off the assembly line in 2007 to be 95 percent cleaner than previous models. To accomplish this reduction in emissions, engine manufacturers had to make changes to their products and, in turn, school bus manufacturers had to develop strategies to integrate these new technologies into their product designs. The end result is that all school bus manufacturers are offering models with upgraded features to accommodate new engine/exhaust packages.

After examining these changes, the Department has determined that all school buses originally manufactured with exhaust systems meeting the new EPA standards meet the requirements of both Chapter 171 (School Buses and School Vehicles) and Chapter 175 (Vehicle Equipment and Inspection) as related to exhaust systems. The reverse side of this bulletin contains illustrations of two of the configurations you may encounter.

**Automatic Brake Adjuster Advisory**

All airbrake vehicles manufactured since October 20, 1994, are required to have automatic brake adjusters (ASAs). ASAs should not have to be manually adjusted except when performing maintenance on the brakes and during the installation of the brake adjusters. In a vehicle equipped with ASAs, when the pushrod stroke exceeds the legal brake adjustment limit, it is an indication that a mechanical problem exists in the adjuster itself, a problem with the related foundation brake components or that the adjuster was improperly installed.

The manual adjustment of an ASA to bring a brake pushrod stroke within legal limits is generally masking a mechanical problem and is not fixing it. Further, routine adjustment of most ASAs will likely result in premature wear of the adjuster itself. It is recommended that when brakes equipped with ASAs are found to be out of adjustment, the driver take the vehicle to a repair facility as soon as possible to have the problem corrected. The manual adjustment of an ASA should only be used as a temporary measure to correct the adjustment in an emergency situation, as it is likely the brake will soon be back out of adjustment since this procedure usually does not fix the underlying adjustment problem.

(Note: ASAs are made by different manufacturers and do not all operate the same. Therefore, the manufacturer's Service Manual for the specific ASA being used should be consulted prior to troubleshooting a brake adjustment problem.)

Anita M. Wasko, Director  
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Shoehorn shape of tailpipe used to diffuse and cool exhaust.



Venturi type system draws cool air into tailpipe to cool exhaust.