

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

BI12-1

SAFETY INSPECTION BULLETIN

FEBRUARY 2012

TOPIC(S) IN THIS BULLETIN:

CHANGE TO DEFINITION OF MOTORCYCLE - ACT 129 OF 2011

CHANGE TO DEFINITION OF MOTORCYCLE - ACT 129 OF 2011

The Pennsylvania Legislature passed an amendment to the definition of the term “motorcycle” contained in the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code, Section 102. The new definition accommodates the addition of stabilizing wheels to the rear of a two-wheeled motorcycle. The new definition, which becomes effective on February 21, 2012, states:

"Motorcycle." A motor vehicle having a seat or saddle for the use of the rider and:

- (1) designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground; *or*
- (2) *designed to travel on two wheels in contact with the ground which is modified by the addition of two stabilizing wheels on the rear of the motor vehicle.*

The configurations of stabilizing wheel systems vary. Some stabilizing wheel systems are designed to be in contact with the road at all times; other systems are designed to be lowered only at slower speeds (usually less than 18 mph) to provide stability when the motorcycle is slowing or stopped. Some stabilizing wheel systems have an active suspension system while others are stationary. Additionally, some stabilizing wheel systems are equipped with braking systems and integrated towing systems.

Although this change will not affect most motorcycles presented to you for inspection, the following questions and answers are being provided so that you can properly determine the pass/fail criteria related to those motorcycles which are equipped with stabilizing wheels. The information below should be used by inspection stations until such time as the Department adopts changes to the safety inspection regulations (Pa. Code, Chapter 175) to address this equipment.

- Q1. Are stabilizing wheels added to the rear of a two-wheeled motorcycle required to be equipped with brakes?
- A1. No, stabilizing wheels added to the rear of a two-wheeled motorcycle are not required to be equipped with brakes. However, stabilizing wheel systems that are equipped with brakes are subject to the inspection criteria relating to braking systems.
- Q2. If the original (single) rear wheel has been removed from a motorcycle and replaced with two wheels, are the two replacement wheels required to be equipped with brakes?
- A2. Yes, since the replacement wheels are not considered stabilizing wheels added to the rear of a two-wheeled motorcycle, brakes are required to act on all wheels.
- Q3. Are stabilizing wheels added to the rear of a two-wheeled motorcycle required to meet the inspection criteria related to tires and wheels?
- A3. Yes.

- Q4. Are stabilizing wheels permitted to be equipped with non-pneumatic tires?
A4. No. Section 4525 (b) of the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code prohibits the operation of a vehicle equipped with traction or road contact surfaces other than pneumatic tires unless specifically permitted under Department regulation and used only under specific conditions.
- Q5. Is the presence of stabilizing wheels cause for rejection during an inspection because the tires extend beyond the body line of the motorcycle?
A5. No.
- Q6. Is the presence of stabilizing wheels cause for rejection during an inspection because the tires are smaller than the manufacturer's recommended size?
A6. No. If the stabilizing wheels were not original equipment, the vehicle manufacturer's recommended tire size(s) do not apply to the stabilizing wheels.
- Q7. Are suspension components on stabilizing wheels added to the rear of a two-wheeled motorcycle required to meet the inspection criteria related to the suspension system?
A7. Yes, if suspension components are present on the stabilizing wheel system, they are subject to the inspection procedure. Additionally, stabilizing wheel systems designed to be raised and lowered must function as designed.
- Q8. Are stabilizing wheels required to be equipped with fenders?
A8. Yes, all wheels, including stabilizing wheels, must be equipped with fenders.
- Q9. Are there additional lighting requirements for motorcycles equipped with stabilizing wheels?
A9. No. The addition of stabilizing wheels on the rear of a two-wheeled motorcycle does not require additional lighting, such as, tail lamps, stop lamps, or turn signal lamps. However, if additional lighting is present, it is subject to the inspection criteria related to lighting.

If you have any questions, please contact the Vehicle Inspection Division at (717) 787-2895.

Anita M. Wasko, Director
Bureau of Motor Vehicles

Kristen A. Singer, Manager
Vehicle Inspection Division
Bureau of Motor Vehicles