

ALL OFFICIAL INSPECTION STATIONS
QUALITY ASSURANCE OFFICERS
AND
PENNSYLVANIA STATE POLICE

Safety Bulletin
BI01-5
October 2001
Station #

SUBJECT: IGNITION INTERLOCK DEVICES:

Effective October 1, 2001, PENNDOT will begin issuing Ignition Interlock Licenses. Since inspection personnel may begin seeing an increased number of vehicles equipped with ignition interlock devices, the following questions and answers are being provided. Please share this information with all inspection personnel.

WHAT IS THE IGNITION INTERLOCK LAW?

Effective September 30, 2000, Pennsylvania enacted the Ignition Interlock Law in an effort to reduce the number of drunk drivers on our highways. Under the law, an individual convicted of a second or subsequent offense of driving under the influence will be required to have an ignition interlock system installed on each motor vehicle they own for one year before they are eligible for an unrestricted driver's license. This follows a mandatory suspension of at least one (1) year.

WHAT IS AN IGNITION INTERLOCK SYSTEM?

Ignition interlock is a device that is installed on motor vehicles to prohibit individuals under the influence of alcohol from operating the vehicle. Individuals are required to blow into the device before starting the vehicle. If the device detects alcohol, it will prevent the vehicle from starting. In addition, at periodic times during the operation of the vehicle, the driver will be prompted to blow into the device to ensure they are not under the influence.

HOW DOES THIS AFFECT INSPECTION STATIONS?

Although ignition interlock systems have been available for several years, because of the recent enactment of the Ignition Interlock Law, inspection stations may experience increased numbers of vehicles equipped with the device.

ARE VEHICLES WITH IGNITION INTERLOCK SYSTEMS SERVICED DIFFERENTLY?

No. The ignition interlock device will not affect normal maintenance and inspections. However, vehicles equipped with the device will not start unless properly activated. Although this is an easy procedure, it is important to receive instructions from the vehicle owner.

DOES THE OWNER NEED TO BE WITH THE VEHICLE WHILE IT IS BEING SERVICED?

No. Although the vehicle will not start unless it is properly activated, the procedure is easy. Instructions should be given by the vehicle owner, accompanied by a brochure.

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WHAT ABOUT HEALTH CONCERNS?

All ignition interlock devices come equipped with disposable mouthpieces. It is the vehicle owner's responsibility to provide you with a mouthpiece.

To further assist you, the following steps are recommended:

1. Ask if the vehicle has an ignition interlock device installed in it when setting an appointment or post a sign in your customer reception area that would remind customers to alert you if a vehicle is presented for inspection or service that has an ignition interlock device installed.
2. If a vehicle presented has an ignition interlock device installed ask for the ignition interlock vendor's name and telephone number-these are toll free or local numbers.
3. Make sure the ignition interlock brochure is with the vehicle-to be kept in glove box.
4. Make sure a disposable mouthpiece is provided-also to be kept in glove box.
5. If you are unable to start the vehicle, vendors or service providers should be contacted.

Please note that it is the vehicle owner's responsibility to provide you with this information, however, asking for this information when setting the appointment may save time and labor.

If you have any questions, or need more information, please contact PENNDOT's Vehicle Inspection Division at (717) 787-2895.

Kurt J. Myers, Director
Bureau of Motor Vehicles