Vehicle Equipment and Inspection Regulations Definitions
175.2. Definitions.
The following words and terms, when used in this chapter, have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

**ASME Code** - The American Society of Mechanical Engineers Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code; Section VIII, Division I, and Section IX of the 1971 and later editions.


**Acute Area of the Windshield** - The center of the critical area on the driver’s side of the vehicle directly in the driver’s normal line of vision 8 ½ inches wide and 5 ½ inches high.

**Allowable Working Pressure** - The pounds per square inch for which the container was constructed, or if conditions have changed, the maximum pressure at specified temperatures permitted at the most recent inspection by a certified inspector.

**Alteration** - A change in the construction, design, or installation of a container that affects the strength or safety of the system.

**Antique motor vehicle** - A motor vehicle, but not a reproduction thereof, manufactured more than 25 years prior to the current year which has been maintained in or restored to a condition which is substantially in conformance with manufacturer specifications.

**Auxiliary driving Lamp** - A lighting device mounted to provide illumination in front of the vehicle and to supplement the upper beam of a standard headlamp system; it is not intended for use alone or with the lower beam of a standard headlamp system.

**Back-Up Lamp** - A lamp used to provide illumination behind the vehicle and to provide a warning signal when the vehicle is in reverse gear.

**Bead** - The part of the tire made of steel wires wrapped or reinforced by ply cords that is shaped to fit the rim.

**Belt** - A layer made of fabric or other material located under the tread area.

**Bureau** - The Bureau of Motor Vehicles of the Department.
Bus -

(1) A motor vehicle designed to transport 16 or more passengers, including the driver; or

(2) a motor vehicle, other than a taxicab or limousine, designed to transport not more than 15 passengers, including the driver, and used for the transportation of persons for compensation.

The term does not include a vehicle used in a ridesharing arrangement, as defined in the act of December 14, 1982 (P.L.1211, No.279), entitled "An act providing for ridesharing arrangements and providing that certain laws shall be inapplicable to ridesharing arrangements," or a school bus.

CGA - The Compressed Gas Association, Inc.; 500 Fifth Avenue; New York, New York 10036.

Cargo Lamp - A lamp mounted on a multi-purpose passenger vehicle, truck or bus that provides illumination to load or unload cargo.

Certified Inspection Mechanic - A person who holds a valid certification card issued by the Bureau certifying that the person is qualified, has passed all requirements to inspect specific vehicles and holds a valid driver’s license for the correct class of vehicle.

Certified Inspector - A person who holds a certificate issued by the Boiler Division in the Bureau of Occupation and Industrial Safety within the Department of Labor and Industry certifying that the person is qualified to inspect unfired pressure vessels.

Classic motor vehicle - A motor vehicle, but not a reproduction thereof, manufactured at least 15 years prior to the current year which has been maintained in or restored to a condition which is substantially in conformity with manufacturer specifications and appearance. Any classic motor vehicle registered under section 1340 (relating to antique and classic plates) on the effective date of the amendment to this definition which fails to qualify as a classic motor vehicle pursuant to these provisions may retain such classic registration unless another type of registration is applied for and issued for the vehicle.

Clearance Lamps - Lamps which show to the front or rear of a vehicle to indicate overall width and height of a vehicle—on trucks and buses 80 inches or more in width.

Collectible motor vehicle - A reconstructed or modified motor vehicle substantially modified from the manufacturer's original specifications and appearance and maintained in a collectible condition as determined by the Department of Transportation.

Combination - Two or more vehicles physically interconnected in tandem.

Commonwealth Inspection Station - An inspection station appointed to inspect all types of vehicles, space permitted, owned by and engaged exclusively in the performance of the official
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duties of the Federal Government, the Commonwealth, or a political subdivision of the Commonwealth.

**Cord** - The strands forming the plies in the tire.

**Critical Area of the Windshield** - The part of the vehicle windshield cleaned by the sweep of the windshield wiper system.

**DOT** - The United States Department of Transportation.

**Department** - The Department of Transportation of the Commonwealth.

**Designated Area** - The geographic area which the Department, in conjunction with the Department of Environmental Resources, and the United States Environmental Protection Agency, has identified as an Emission I/M Program designated area. A copy of the Department’s designation is available upon request from the Department.

**Drive-a-way-tow-a-way operation** - Any operation in which any motor vehicle, trailer, or semitrailer, singly or in combination, constitutes the commodity being transported, when one set or more of wheels of the vehicle are on the highway during the course of transportation, whether or not the vehicle furnished the motive power.

**Emergency vehicle** - A county emergency management vehicle, fire department vehicle, police vehicle, sheriff vehicle, ambulance, advanced life support squad vehicle, basic life support squad vehicle, emergency canteen support service organization vehicle, blood delivery vehicle, human organ delivery vehicle, hazardous material response vehicle, armed forces emergency vehicle, one vehicle operated by a coroner or chief county medical examiner and one vehicle operated by a chief deputy coroner or deputy chief county medical examiner used for answering emergency calls, a vehicle owned by or leased to a regional emergency medical services council that is used as authorized by the Department of Health to respond to an actual or potential disaster, mass casualty situation or substantial threat to public health, a vehicle owned by a county or regional police association and operated by a police officer that is used for police transport or victim extraction, any vehicle operated by a special agent, special agent supervisor, narcotics agent or narcotics agent supervisor while performing official duties as employees of the Office of Attorney General, any vehicle owned and operated by the Philadelphia Parking Authority established in accordance with 53 Pa.C.S. Ch. 55 (relating to parking authorities) and used in the enforcement of 53 Pa.C.S. Ch. 57 (relating to taxicabs and limousines in first class cities), or any other vehicle designated by the State Police under section 6106 (relating to designation of emergency vehicles by Pennsylvania State Police), or a privately owned vehicle used in answering an emergency call when used by any of the following:

1. A police chief and assistant chief.
(2) A fire chief, assistant chief and, when a fire company has three or more fire vehicles, a second or third assistant chief.

(3) A fire police captain and fire police lieutenant.

(4) An ambulance corps commander and assistant commander.

(5) A river rescue commander and assistant commander.

(6) A county emergency management coordinator.

(7) A fire marshal.

(8) A rescue service chief and assistant chief.

(9) The chief or operations director of a county hazardous materials response team.

Essential parts - All major component parts of a vehicle of a type required to be registered under this title, the removal, alteration or substitution of which would tend to conceal the identity of the vehicle or substantially alter its appearance, model, type or mode of operation.


Farm vehicle - A truck or truck tractor determined by the Department of Transportation to be used exclusively for agricultural purposes.

Firefighting Vehicle - A vehicle used exclusively for fighting fires. The term does not include passenger cars, buses, and motorcycles.

Fleet Inspection Station - An inspection station appointed to inspect all types of vehicles, space permitting, leased by or owned and registered in the name of the person in whose name the certificate of appointment is issued.

Fleet owner - A person, Federal, State or local government agency or authority owning or leasing 15 or more vehicles who or which provides servicing and repair of the vehicles.

Fog Lamps - Lamps which are used with or in lieu of the lower beam headlamps to provide illumination under conditions of rain, snow or fog.

Foreign vehicle - A vehicle of a type required to be registered under this title brought into this Commonwealth from another state, territory or country other than in the ordinary course of business by or through a manufacturer or dealer and not registered in this Commonwealth.

Fuel Supply Container - A tank or cylinder installed on a vehicle to supply fuel for the propulsion system of the vehicle.
**Gross combination weight rating (GCWR)** - The value specified by the manufacturer as the loaded weight of a combination.

**Gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR)** - The value specified on the Federal weight certification label by the manufacturer as the loaded weight of a single vehicle.

**General Inspection Station** - An inspection station appointed to inspect all types of vehicles if the station is so equipped.

**Groove** - The space between two adjacent tread ribs.

**Gross weight** - The combined weight of a vehicle or combination of vehicles and its load excluding the driver's weight.

**Hazard Warning System or Emergency Signal System** - A driver-controlled system of flashing front and rear lights used to warn approaching motorists when a car has broken down or is traveling at a slow speed.

**Heavy Truck** - A truck having a registered gross weight in excess of 17,000 pounds or a truck tractor.

**House trailer** -

(1) A trailer which is designed, constructed and equipped as a dwelling place, living abode or sleeping place (either permanently or temporarily) and is equipped for use as a conveyance on streets and highways.

(2) A trailer containing a chassis and exterior shell designed and constructed for use as a house trailer, as defined in paragraph (1), but which is used permanently or temporarily for advertising, sales, display or promotion of merchandise or services, or for any other commercial purpose except the transportation of property.

**Human organ delivery vehicle** - Any vehicle which is used or intended to be used and is maintained or operated for the purpose of transporting human organs or human tissue on an emergency basis.

**Hybrid electric vehicle** - An electric vehicle which allows power to be delivered to the drive wheels solely by a battery-powered electric motor but which also incorporates the use of a combustion engine to provide power to the battery and which meets the applicable Federal motor vehicle safety
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standards. The primary source of power for the motor must be the electric battery or battery pack and not the combustion engine.

**ICC** - The Interstate Commerce Commission; now functionally superseded by DOT in matters relating to safety.

**Identification Lamps** - Lamps used in groups of three, in a horizontal row, which show to the front or rear, or both, on vehicles 80 inches or more in width.

**Implement of husbandry** - Farm equipment that meets all of the following criteria:

1. Is equipped with pneumatic tires except if prohibited by religious beliefs.
2. Is infrequently operated or moved upon highways.
3. Is used in agriculture for any of the following purposes:
   - (i) performance of agriculture production or harvesting activities for the farmer's agricultural operations;
   - (ii) transportation of agricultural products or agricultural supplies for the benefit of the farmer's agricultural operations.

The term also includes earthmoving equipment and any other vehicle determined by the department to be an implement of husbandry.

**Indicator Lights** - Lamps that are visible to the operator of a vehicle that indicate operation of appropriate electrical circuits, malfunction of vehicle performance and requirement for remedial action by the operator of the vehicle.

**Inspection Area** - The area of a station in which all inspections must be conducted.

**Inspection/Maintenance (I/M) Insert Tab** - A number tab, applied to the safety certificate of inspection, which indicates the month in which the safety certificate of inspection expires and that the vehicle is subject to the Emission Inspection Program.

**Inspection/Maintenance (I/M) Registration Indicator** - An indicator on the registration card which identifies the vehicle as a subject vehicle which shall be emission inspected annually.

**Inspection Station Supervisor** - Any person designated by the Department to investigate, inspect, and supervise the operation of inspection stations.

**Limousine** - A motor vehicle designed for carrying no more than nine passengers, exclusive of the driver, and used for the transportation of persons for compensation.
License Plate Lamp - A lamp used to illuminate the license plate on the rear of the vehicle.

Light Truck - A truck having a registered gross weight of 11,000 pounds or less.

Manufacturer - A person engaged in the business of constructing or assembling vehicles or motors or bodies of vehicles.

Mass transit vehicle - A self-propelled or electrically propelled device designed for carrying 15 or more passengers exclusive of the driver, other than a taxicab, designed and used for the transportation of persons for compensation, including but not limited to subway cars, buses, trolleys and trackless trolleys but excluding railroad passenger cars.

Material Which does Not Permit a Person to See or View the Inside of the Vehicle - A material which reduces the transmittance of light to below 70% or to a percentage which is less than the percentage permitted by FMVSS #205 in effect at the time of the vehicle’s manufacture.

Medium Truck - A truck having a registered gross weight from 11,001 to 17,000 pounds, inclusive.

Mileage - The actual distance that a vehicle has traveled.

Mobile home - A trailer designed and used exclusively for living quarters or commercial purposes which exceeds the maximum size limitations prescribed by this title for operation on a highway and is only incidentally operated on a highway.

Modified vehicle - A vehicle of a type required to be registered under this title materially altered by the addition, deletion, substitution or modification of the body, chassis or essential parts, new or used. The term does not include vehicles that have been repaired to the function and appearance of vehicles in their original condition or vehicles where final-stage or second-stage manufacturers provide a manufacturer statement of origin or a federally required certification label at the time of the original title and registration application.

Modular housing undercarriage - A trailer which is used to transport a modular housing unit.

Modular housing unit - A unit transported on a removable or non-removable frame designed for residential purposes which is wholly or in substantial part fabricated, formed or assembled in manufacturing facilities for assembly and installation on the building site.

Motor Carrier Vehicle - A truck, truck-tractor or combination having a gross weight or registered gross weight in excess of 17,000 pounds.
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.

Motorcycle Inspection Station - An inspection station appointed to inspect only motorcycles.

Motor-driven Cycle - A motorcycle, including a motor scooter, with a motor which produces not to exceed five-brake horsepower, and every pedal cycle with motor attached.

Motor home - A motor vehicle designed or adapted for use as a mobile dwelling or office, except a motor vehicle equipped with a truck-camper

Motorized pedalcycle - A motor-driven cycle equipped with operable pedals, a motor rated no more than 1.5 brake horsepower, a cylinder capacity not exceeding 50 cubic centimeters, an automatic transmission, and a maximum design speed of no more than 25 miles per hour or an electric motor-driven cycle equipped with operable pedals and an automatic transmission powered by an electric battery or battery pack-powered electric motor with a maximum design speed of no more than 25 miles per hour.

Motor vehicle - A vehicle which is self-propelled except an electric personal assistive mobility device or a vehicle which is propelled solely by human power.

Multi-Purpose Passenger Vehicle - A passenger car which is constructed on a truck chassis or which has special features for off-road use, in addition to highway use.


NFPA - The National Fire Protection Association; 470 Atlantic Avenue; Boston, Massachusetts 02210.

Ornamental Lamps - Lamps not required and not located as described in Tables III, IV and V of this chapter, unless available as original equipment. Flashing or revolving lights are not ornamental lamps. Flashing or revolving lights and their use are addressed in Chapters 15 and 173 (relating to authorized vehicles and special operating privileges; and flashing or revolving lights on emergency and authorized vehicles.)
Parking Brake System - A brake system used to hold and maintain a vehicle in a stationary position. A positive mechanical means is employed to hold the brake applied when the vehicle is unattended.

Parking Lamps - Steady-burning, low intensity lights used when a vehicle is stopped or parked.

Passenger car - A motor vehicle, except a motorcycle, designed primarily for the transportation of persons and designed for carrying no more than 15 passengers, including the driver, and primarily used for the transportation of persons. The term includes motor vehicles which are designed with seats that may be readily removed and reinstalled, but does not include such vehicles if used primarily for the transportation of property.

Pedalcycle - A vehicle propelled solely by human-powered pedals. The term does not mean a three-wheeled human-powered pedal-driven vehicle with a main driving wheel 20 inches in diameter or under and primarily designed for children six years of age or younger.

Person - A natural person, firm, co-partnership, association, or corporation.

Ply - A layer of rubber-coated parallel cords.

Pole Trailer - A trailer, including those with a variable wheelbase, attached to the towing vehicle by means of a reach or pole, or by being boomed or otherwise secured to the towing vehicle, and ordinarily used for transporting long or irregular-shaped loads, including poles, pipes or structural members capable of sustaining themselves as beams between the supporting connections.

Rake - On motorcycles, the angle, measured in degrees, of a motorcycle’s steering axis in relation to a line, which is perpendicular to the vehicle wheelbase; on passenger cars or trucks the ground clearance at the front or rear of a vehicle, reduced or increased, giving tilted appearance.

Reconstructed vehicle - A vehicle, other than an antique or classic vehicle, for which a certificate of salvage was issued and is thereafter restored to operating condition to meet the vehicle equipment and inspection standards under Part IV (relating to vehicle characteristics).

Recreational trailer - A trailer designed or adapted and used exclusively for recreational purposes.

Recreational and Utility Trailer Inspection Station - An inspection station appointed to inspect only recreational and utility trailers.

Reflex Reflectors - A reflective device used for reflecting light, usually built into a lens.
Registered Gross Weight -

(1) The maximum gross weight at which a vehicle or combination is registered in this Commonwealth to operate upon a highway, which shall include the weight at which a vehicle or combination is registered for operation in this Commonwealth under any system of proportional registration pursuant to Subchapter C of Chapter 61 (relating to reciprocity).

(2) For the purposes of Chapter 49 (relating to size, weight and load) and the definition of "motor carrier vehicle," if there is no registered gross weight as defined in paragraph (1), then the term shall mean the maximum gross weight at which a vehicle or combination registered in another state is registered or otherwise authorized to operate by such state.

Registration - The authority for a vehicle to operate on a highway as evidenced by the issuance of an identifying card and plate or plates.

Renewed Emissions Certificate of Inspection - An emissions certificate of inspection that remains valid for more than 90 days.

Safety Insert Tab - A numbered tab, applied to the Safety Certificate of Inspection, which indicates the month in which the Safety Certificate of Inspection expires.

School bus - A motor vehicle which:

(1) is designed to carry 11 passengers or more, including the driver; and

(2) is used for the transportation of preprimary, primary or secondary school students to or from public, private or parochial schools or events related to such schools or school-related activities.

The term does not include a motor vehicle used to transport preprimary, primary or secondary school students to or from public, private or parochial schools or events related to such schools or school-related activities, which is designed to carry 11 to 15 passengers, including the driver, and which is registered in this Commonwealth as a bus prior to March 1, 1993, or a motor vehicle which is designed to carry 11 to 15 passengers, including the driver, and which was titled to any public, private or parochial school on or before March 1, 1993, and which is registered to that public, private or parochial school in this Commonwealth as a bus prior to September 15, 1993.

Secretary - The Secretary of Transportation of the Commonwealth.

Semitrailer - A trailer so constructed that some part of its weight rests upon or is carried by the towing vehicle.

Service Brake System - A brake system used for retarding, stopping and controlling the vehicle under normal operating conditions.
Side Marker Lamps - Lamps located on the left and right sides, beamed and intended to indicate vehicle length.

Snow Plow Lamp - A lamp used in substitution of headlamps on vehicles equipped with snow plows.

Specially Constructed Equipment

(1) Vehicles not designed or used primarily for the transportation of persons or property, except for tools and parts necessary for the use and maintenance of the vehicle, and only incidentally operated or moved over a highway.

(2) Vehicles which have machinery permanently attached shall not carry a load, except for tools and parts necessary for the use and maintenance of the permanently attached machinery and are only incidentally operated or moved over a highway.

(3) Motor vehicles used primarily for road and bridge maintenance or repair which carry a load of asphalt emulsion or epoxy and aggregate material, that is applied as a finished product by the vehicle's equipment directly to a highway or trafficway for maintenance or repair of the road or bridge surface.

The term includes, but is not limited to, ditch digging apparatus, well boring apparatus; earth moving and road construction and maintenance machinery, such as asphalt spreaders, bituminous mixers, bucket loaders, snowplows, ditchers, graders, patchers, finishing machines, road rollers, scarifiers, earth moving carryalls, scrapers, power shovels and drag lines; and self-propelled cranes and tractors, other than truck tractors. The term does not include house trailers; dump trucks; or truck-mounted transit mixers, cranes or shovels.

Specially constructed vehicle - A vehicle not originally constructed under a distinctive name, make, model or type by a generally recognized manufacturer of vehicles.

Stop Lamp - A lamp at the rear of the vehicle which indicates the brake is being applied by the operator to slow or stop the vehicle.

Street rod - A motor vehicle, or a reproduction thereof, with a model year of 1948 or older which has been materially altered or modified by the removal, addition or substitution of essential parts and with a gross weight or registered gross weight of not more than 9,000 pounds.

Subject Vehicle - A gasoline powered vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating of 9,000 pounds or less, moved upon a highway and registered or titled in a designated area, as defined in Chapter 177 (relating to Emission Inspection Program), except any of the following:

(i) Special mobile equipment.
(ii) An implement of husbandry.
(iii) A motor vehicle being towed.
(iv) A motor vehicle being driven or towed by an official inspection station owner or employee for the purpose of inspection.

(v) A classic motor vehicle.

(vi) An antique motor vehicle.

(vii) A motorcycle.

(viii) A motorized pedalcycle.

(ix) A motor-driven cycle.

(x) A street rod.

(xi) A vehicle being repossessed by a financier or collector/repossessor through the use of a miscellaneous motor vehicle business registration plate.

(xii) A new vehicle while they are in the process of manufacture, including testing and not in transit from the manufacturer to a purchaser or dealer.

(xiii) A military vehicle used for training by a private, nonprofit, tax exempt military educational institution when the vehicles do not travel on public roads in excess of 1 mile and when the property on both sides of the public road is owned by the institution.

(xiv) A school bus over 11,000 pounds gross vehicle weight rating.

(xv) A bus, other than school bus, with a seating capacity of 27 or more.

Supply Line - The piping, tubing or hose, including all related fittings, through which vapor or liquid passes between the first shut-off valve at the container and the final stage regulator or vaporizer.

Suspend - To withdraw temporarily by formal action of the department any license, registration or privilege issued or granted by the department.

Tail Lamp - A steady burning low-intensity light used on the rear of a vehicle.

Taxi - A motor vehicle designed for carrying no more than eight passengers, exclusive of the driver, on a call and demand service, and used for the transportation of persons for compensation.

Temporary Inspection Approval Indicator - An adhesive insert affixed to the current certificate of safety inspection, as viewed from inside the vehicle, used to designate vehicles which have successfully passed a required periodic safety inspection, but do not display a renewed emission certificate of inspection.

Tire width - The linear distance between the exteriors of the sidewalls of an uninflated tire, excluding elevations due to labeling, decoration, or protective sidebands.
**Trail** - The distance measured in inches between the point at which the steering axis of a motorcycle intersects with the ground in front of the motorcycle and the point at which the forward limit of the wheel base intersects with the surface below the motorcycle.

**Trailer** - A vehicle designed to be towed by a motor vehicle.

**Trailer Inspection Station** - An inspection station appointed to inspect only trailers.

**Tread** - That portion of the tire that comes into contact with the road.

**Tread Rib** - The tread section running circumferentially around the tire.

**Truck** - A motor vehicle designed primarily for the transportation of property. The term includes motor vehicles designed with seats that may be readily removed and reinstalled if those vehicles are primarily used for the transportation of property.

**Truck tractor** - A motor vehicle designed and used primarily for drawing other vehicles and not so constructed as to carry a load other than a part of the weight of the vehicle and load so drawn.

**Turn Signals** - A lamp showing to front and rear for the purpose of indicating an intention to turn either to the right or left or for pulling into traffic or changing lanes.

**UL** - The Underwriter's Laboratories, Inc.

**Utility trailer** - A trailer, except a recreational trailer, which does not have air brakes.

**Vehicle identification number” or "VIN** - A combination of numerals or letters or both which the manufacturer assigns to a vehicle for identification purposes, or, in the absence of a manufacturer-assigned number, which the department assigns to a vehicle for identification purposes.

**Vehicle** - Every device in, upon or by which any person or property is or may be transported or drawn upon a highway, except devices used exclusively upon rails or tracks. The term does not include a self-propelled wheelchair or an electrical mobility device operated by and designed for the exclusive use of a person with a mobility-related disability.

**Vehicle Inspection Division** - The area of the Bureau which administers vehicle equipment and inspection matters.