

Survey – April 1999

The following is the portion of the survey pertaining to Altered Height Vehicles:

Responding Jurisdictions (20):

Alaska
 Arizona
 California
 Connecticut
 Florida
 Indiana
 Kansas
 Louisiana
 Minnesota
 Missouri

Montana
 New York
 North Dakota
 Oklahoma
 Oregon
 Texas
 Utah
 Vermont
 Washington
 Wyoming

4. Does your state have a law addressing altered suspension systems (low-riders or ultra-height vehicles)?

Comments:

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| Alaska | Yes |
| Arizona | Yes, low riders may not raise/lower at more than 15 mph. Raised pick up trucks need splash guards and headlights can't be over 54" from road. Other body types are not restricted except for headlights. |
| California | We limit both maximum vehicle height, based on manufacturer's GVWR (Section 24008.5 VC) and minimum vehicle height (Section 24008 VC). |
| Connecticut | Our laws do address altered suspension systems. |
| Florida | Yes, state statute 316.251 - Maximum Bumper Heights Allowable. |
| Indiana | Yes, pickup trucks cannot have bumpers higher than 30 inches. Passenger vehicles cannot be modified more than 3 inches from manufactured height. |
| Kansas | We do not have a law that specifically addresses altered suspensions. We do, however, have statutes that establish height limitations on lighting equipment that would make some of these vehicles that you reference illegal to operate on the highways/streets. |
| Louisiana | The LA State Regulatory Act (L.R.S. 32:297) states, "It shall be lawful to operate 'low rider' vehicles on the streets and highways in this state, if the vehicle meets the following requirements: (1) the vehicle complies with the minimum and maximum requirements for height of headlamps. |

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| | <p>This means that the height measured from the center of the headlamp is not more than 54" nor less than 24 ".</p> <p>(2) The vehicle has operational shock absorbers and springs and has at least 3" of suspension travel.</p> <p>(3) The vehicle has at least 4" of ground clearance measured from the frame with the vehicle on a level surface.</p> <p>(4) The vehicle complies with the general requirements for motor vehicles.</p> |
| Minnesota | Ultra-height vehicles are controlled through our bumper height law which defines "suspension system" to "include both the front and rear wheels and tires of a vehicle." The law prohibits a "suspension system or body so modified that the height of the vehicle or any bumpers varies more than six inches from the original manufactured height for the vehicle." The law goes further to establish maximum bumper height (measured to the bottom of the bumper) of 20 inches for a passenger vehicle and 25 inches for an SUV, van or pickup truck. |
| Missouri | MO has a bumper height law: Regular vehicle – 22" front and rear Commercial vehicle up to 4500# – 24" front 26" rear Commercial vehicle 4501-7500# – 27" front 29" rear Commercial vehicle 7501-9000# – 28" front 30" rear |
| Montana | Yes, dealing with the height of mounting headlights and taillights. |
| New York | No, but we do address bumper heights. (text below) (b) No person shall operate a passenger car registered in NY unless it is equipped with both a front and rear bumper, each securely fastened and with some part of the bumper located between sixteen inches and twenty inches above the ground. This provision shall not apply to a vehicle registered as an historical vehicle. |
| North Dakota | Yes, they need front and rear bumpers. Bumper height has a max of 27", on a pickup the bed has a max height of 42" (1) 4" lift kit is allowed on vehicles. |
| Oklahoma | Yes, regulating the height of its headlights. |
| Oregon | Yes, state law requires that wheel covers be in place to cover the entire width of the tire down to within 20 inches of the ground on trucks. Also, there are statutes governing the mounting height for headlamps. I think they must be within 50" of the ground and properly aimed. As for low riders, hydraulics are OK, however, there is a statute that requires all motor vehicles to be a minimum height off the ground. The law specifies that if the vehicle was sitting on flat pavement with no tires mounted on the wheels, no part of the underside of the car can touch the ground (other than the four bare wheels). |
| Texas | [faxed statutes to Mike Farnsworth] |
| Utah | Yes, vehicles over 100 inch wheelbase may have 4" mechanical lift (maximum 2" body lift), and 4" increase in height with oversized tires. Vehicles under 100 inch wheelbase may have a mechanical lift of 2" and increase height 2" with oversized tires. Lowered vehicles may not have any part of the vehicle lower than 1" above the lowest part of any wheel. Vehicles with hydraulic suspensions are not permitted on highways and can not be legally registered. We have been unable to find a hydraulic suspension system that meets the minimum federal motor vehicle safety standards. |
| Vermont | VT requires annual safety inspections – bumper heights, suspension heights; relative = to wheel height |

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| Washington | No. We still use height of headlamps from the ground for highrise vehicles and a law that states that no part of a vehicle can be below the lowest part of a wheel rim. With the low rise tires this doesn't help much. |
| Wyoming | No |

5. If they are allowed in your state, do you have any data concerning their crash involvement or other enforcement/safety concerns?

Comments:

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| Alaska | To my knowledge, we do not have statistics as they relate to crash involvement. We relied on IACP statistics and policy when we adopted a regulation setting limitations of height and alteration of a vehicle. Alaska's regulation for alteration of equipment reads: 13AAC 04.005 (b) No person may operate a motor vehicle upon a public roadway which violates the following limitations or prohibitions: (1) a motor vehicle may not be modified or altered from the original design so that any portion of the vehicle, other than the wheels, has clearance from the surface of a level roadway than the clearance between the roadway and the lower portion of any rim of any wheel in contact with the roadway; (2) a motor vehicle may not be modified to position the lowest portion of the body floor more than 3" above the top of the frame, or to result in a maximum frame height or body floor height greater than 24" for a vehicle of up to 4,500 pounds GVWR, or 26" for 4,501-7,000 pounds, or 28" for 7501-10,000 pounds GVWR. |
| Arizona | No crash data available. |
| California | I am not aware of any particular safety problems with vehicles that adhere to VC height limitations. |
| Connecticut | No data to support crash involvement. |
| Florida | Enforcement data (statewide): 1995 – 627 UTC's issued; 1996 – 693 UTC's issued; 1997 – 659 UTC's issued. |
| Indiana | No data. |
| Kansas | No data available. |
| Louisiana | We do not have any data concerning their crash involvement or other enforcement/safety concerns pertaining to these types of vehicles. |
| Minnesota | |
| Missouri | No crash data readily available – contact Capt. S.R. Johnson, (573) 751-3012 |
| Montana | Not aware of any problems |
| New York | None that I am aware of. The NYS DMV has just added "SUV" to the accident reporting system, but no data is yet available. |
| North Dakota | No data. |
| Oklahoma | Crash data is not separated by type of vehicle. |
| Oregon | No data. |
| Utah | Unfortunately, we do [not] have any data. |
| Texas | No data captured on low-rider or golf carts. |
| Vermont | Not frequent enough to present a significant problem. The off-roaders are a problem for property trespass/damage to private and public roads. Again, it may be a local problem from time to time, but not significant enough to raise major concern statewide. |

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| Washington | We do not have accident statistics on these vehicles, in fact we have no accident statistics on any kind for the past two years as we are in a conversion from a manual system to an automated reader system for accident reports. |
| Wyoming | For 1997, the latest year for which statistics are available, we had three crashes which reported "altered suspensions" as a factor in the crash out of a total of 16,635 crashes. |

6. Please provide contact information for any follow-up/clarification.

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| Alaska | Juanita Hensley Juanita_hensley@admin.state.ak.us |
| Arizona | J.W. (Pete) Peterson, Manager Research and Planning Arizona Department of Public Safety Tel: (602) 223-2632 |
| California | Jack Schwendener Tel: (916) 445-1865 Jschwendener@chp.ca.gov |
| Connecticut | Lt. Ben Pagoni Pagoni8@aol.com |
| Florida | John Knox Florida Highway Patrol Office of Program Planning Tel: (850) 488-7414 Knox.john@hsmv.state.fl.us |
| Indiana | Sgt. Jerry Berkey Indiana State Police Jberkey@isp.state.in.us |
| Kansas | Sgt. Mark Bruce mbruce@khphq.wpo.state.ks.us |
| Louisiana | Trooper Jason Jacob Louisiana State Police Operational Development Research Section Tel: (225) 922-0836 Jjacob@dps.state.la.us |
| Minnesota | Capt. Brian Erickson Minnesota State Patrol 444 Cedar Street, Suite 130 St. Paul, MN 55101-5130 Tel: (651) 296-6579 FAX: (651) 296-5937 Brian.erickson@state.mn.us |
| Missouri | Ernie Raub Eraub01@mail.state.mo.us |

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| Montana | Sgt. Craig Palmer Montana Highway Patrol Cpalmer@mt.gov |
| New York | Sgt. Jim Halvorsen NYSP Traffic Services Tel: (518) 457-6885 Jhalvors@troopers.state.ny.us |
| North Dakota | Gordon La France Tel: (701) 328-4252 Glafranc@state.nd.us |
| Oklahoma | Jelliott@dps.state.ok.us |
| Oregon | Sgt. Al Hageman Patrol Services Division Tel: (503) 378-3725 ext. 4210 |
| Texas | David Shafford David.shafford@txdps.state.tx.us |
| Utah | Sgt. Dennis Platt Utah Highway Patrol Safety Inspection Section Supervisor 4501 South 2700 West Salt Lake City, UT 84114 Tel: (801) 965-4547 FAX: (801) 965-4495 Psmain.dplatt@state.ut.us |
| Vermont | Capt. Marc Metayer Vermont State Police Tel: (802) 229-9191 Mmetayer@dps.state.vt.us |
| Washington | Dan Pemerl Dpemerl@msmail.wsp.wa.gov |
| Wyoming | Lt. Dan Zivkovich Tel: (307) 777-4310 FAX: (307) 777-4282 |