

Memorandum



To: All School Bus Drivers

Re: STROBE LIGHT

The question has come up, by a few of you, regarding strobe light usage on your school bus. As you can read below, the law clearly states when a strobe light may be used. (Basically at the drivers' discretion.)

The issue is when it is used all the time for no reason. The intent of this device is to warn surrounding motorists of your deviation from normal practices. i.e. – any time you are decreasing your speed because of fog, heavy rain, snow storm, etc, or need extra attention, like backing up.

Think of it this way – If all the police cars, fire trucks, and ambulances drove around with their lights and sirens on all the time, when there was a real emergency, **NO ONE** would take notice and could care less. The school bus industry does not want that to happen to school buses. As we all know motorists don't like, nor pay attention to school buses anyway, and we need any device available to use in these unusual situations.

Use your strobe light accordingly. - NOT ALL THE TIME!

(625 ILCS 5/12815) (from Ch. 95 1/2, par. 12815)

Sec. 12815. **Strobe lamp on school bus.**

(a) A school bus manufactured prior to January 1, 2000 may be equipped with one strobe lamp that will emit 60 to 120 flashes per minute of white or bluishwhite light visible to a motorist approaching the bus from any direction. A school bus manufactured on or after January 1, 2000 shall be equipped with one strobe lamp that will emit 60 to 120 flashes per minute of white or bluishwhite light visible to a motorist approaching the bus from any direction. The lamp shall be of sufficient brightness to be visible in normal sunlight when viewed directly from a distance of at least one mile.

(b) The strobe lamp shall be mounted on the rooftop of the bus with the light generating element in the lamp located equidistant from each side and either at or behind the center of the rooftop. The maximum height of the element above the rooftop shall not exceed 1/30 of its distance from the rear of the rooftop. If the structure of the strobe lamp obscures the light generating element, the element shall be deemed to be in the center of the lamp with a maximum height 1/4 inch less than the maximum height of the strobe lamp unless otherwise indicated in rules and regulations promulgated by the Department. The Department may promulgate rules and regulations to govern measurements, glare, effectiveness and protection of strobe lamps on school buses, including higher strobe lamps than authorized in this paragraph.

(c) The strobe lamp may be lighted only when the school bus is actually being used as a school bus and:

1. is stopping or stopped for loading or discharging pupils on a highway outside an urban area; or

2. is bearing one or more pupils.

(Source: P.A. 95319, eff. 82107.)