

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2007 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

House Bill 1367

(Delegate Conway, *et al.*)

Environmental Matters

Judicial Proceedings

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**Vehicle Laws - Emergency Vehicles - Green Flashing Lights**

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This bill authorizes a stationary emergency vehicle serving as a mobile command unit to be equipped with or display a flashing, blinking, or oscillating green light or signal device to designate the vehicle as a command post.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Minimal general fund revenue increase to the extent the lighting equipment addressed by this bill is installed and displayed by a nonemergency vehicle in violation of the bill's provisions (maximum \$500 fine). Enforcement of the bill's provisions could be handled with existing resources.

**Local Effect:** Enforcement could be handled with existing resources.

**Small Business Effect:** Potential minimal.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** An "emergency vehicle" is a vehicle of a governmental law enforcement agency; volunteer fire company, rescue squad or other medical emergency vehicle; a State vehicle used to respond to a hazardous materials spill; a vehicle designated for emergency use by the Commissioner of Correction; an ambulance; and special vehicles provided by government and used for emergency purposes. Every emergency vehicle must be equipped with a siren, exhaust whistle, or bell that is capable of giving an audible signal, in addition to any other equipment and required distinctive markings. These vehicles must also be equipped with signal lamps mounted as high as practicable, with a

flashing red light or lights to the front and rear. The lights must be visible for 500 feet in normal sunlight.

Service vehicles, rural letter carrier vehicles, slow moving farm vehicles, and tow trucks may be equipped with or display yellow or amber lights or signal devices. A school vehicle has to be equipped with alternately flashing warning lights.

The authorized lighting devices and colors for different types of emergency vehicles are specified in statute. A person may not drive or move any vehicle or equipment onto a highway that is equipped with or displays any light or signal device designed to emit an oscillating, rotating, blinking, or other type of emitting light unless authorized by the MVA. The use of signal equipment imposes on the drivers of other vehicles the obligation to yield the right-of-way and stop as required by law. A person who violates the provisions regarding authorized visual signals is guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to a maximum fine of \$500. The District Court has established a prepayment penalty of \$50. In addition to the misdemeanor penalty, the MVA may suspend the driver's license of any person convicted of violating these provisions for 30 days and the vehicle registration may be suspended for 30 days.

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## **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Charles County, Somerset County, Montgomery County, Department of State Police, Maryland Department of Transportation, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 19, 2007  
ncs/ljm

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