

# SGIII Basic Guidelines for Vehicle Modifications

Modifications and after-market accessories must meet specific standards. Below are some basic guidelines on popular vehicle modifications and aftermarket accessories. Rev.10.2019

Accessory	Legislation	Rule / Interpretation	Rationale
Can I display a novelty plate on the front of my vehicle?	<i>The Licence Plate Display Regulations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2004 Saskatchewan discontinued the requirement to display a front licence plate on passenger vehicles.</li> <li>With some *restrictions novelty, souvenir, collector and vanity plates may be displayed on the front of a vehicle.</li> <li>Licence plate must be firmly secured, visible &amp; legible at all times.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Requirements &amp; restrictions can be accessed at <a href="http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca">www.qp.gov.sk.ca</a></li> <li>Select "Freelaw" and then select "The Licence Plate Display Regulations"</li> <li>Plates that are reflectorized are recommended. If a vehicle is stranded or disabled on a highway the plate will reflect the lights of an oncoming vehicle.</li> </ul>
Are neon license plate lamps permitted?	<i>The Vehicle Equipment Regulations, 1987</i> §38(2) & 6(e)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>License plate lamp must emit a white light.</li> <li>No additional lamp or equipment that impairs the effectiveness of the required lamps are permitted.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>License plate must be able to be seen from a distance of 100 metres.</li> <li>White light enhances the visibility of the license plate during low light conditions.</li> </ul>
Are license plate covers permitted?	<i>The Traffic Safety Act</i> §192	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No obstruction (covers) permitted that prevents any character from being accurately photographed or captured by a red light camera system or a speed monitoring device.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Red light camera system or a speed monitoring device may not be able to accurately photograph a license plate that has a cover. Glare etc from the cover may have an affect.</li> </ul>
When are bumpers required?	<i>The Vehicle Equipment Regulations, 1987</i> §50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requires passenger cars to be equipped with front &amp; rear bumpers.</li> <li>Requires trucks less than 4500 GVWR to be equipped with front bumper only.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bumpers are placed a specific heights to help protect pedestrians if hit by a vehicle.</li> <li>Front and rear bumpers absorb some of the crash impact and reduce intrusion, thus reducing collision damage and personal injury.</li> <li>Bumper width must be equal to the vehicle track. Full width tire to tire of vehicle.</li> </ul>
What are legal bumper heights?	<i>The Vehicle Equipment Regulations, 1987</i> §50 (1), (2) & (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On passenger cars bumper height must be between 380 and 560 mm above the road surface.</li> <li>On trucks the lowest part of the bumper cannot be more than 750 mm above the road surface.</li> <li>Bumpers must have a vertical surface of at least 100 mm.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bumpers are placed a specific heights to help protect pedestrians if hit by a vehicle.</li> <li>Bumpers absorb some of the crash impact thus reducing collision damage and personal injury.</li> <li>Bumper height standards increase the likelihood of bumpers contacting when two vehicles collide.</li> </ul>
Can the height of a vehicle be raised or lowered?	<i>The Vehicle Equipment Regulations, 1987</i> § 3, 21, 22, 25, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, & 44  *Contact Vehicle Standards and Inspection, 1-800-667-8015 ext. 6188 for additional info.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer to bumper height requirements above, and lamp height requirements as follows:</li> <li>Headlamps must be between 535 and 1400 millimeters from the road surface to the centre of the lamp.</li> <li>Brake, Signal and Tail lamps must be between 350 and 2110 millimetres from the road surface.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must also maintain steering geometry within manufacturer's range.</li> <li>If raising or lowering a vehicle it must be done in accordance with industry accepted practice. i.e. hockey pucks between the frame and body mounts are not acceptable, nor are extended spring shackles.</li> </ul>
Are front and rear suspension tower braces permitted?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These bolt-on accessories are permitted, they are commonly used to enhance (beef-up/stiffen) the suspension/unibody structure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides additional stability in unibody vehicles when high load in corners.</li> <li>Does not effect other vehicle safety systems.</li> </ul>
Are tail light and headlamp covers permitted?	<i>The Vehicle Equipment Regulations, 1987</i> § 6 (e) & 31  Canadian Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (CMVSS) also apply.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head lamp and tail lamp covers of any type are not permitted.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Covers reduce the size and impair the effectiveness of the lamps and reflectors required by the regulations.</li> <li>Covers reduce the amount of light transmitted in some cases by over 30%. Reduction of light decreases the amount of time a driver has to react to an object.</li> <li>Ensures optimum visibility to other road users.</li> </ul>

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Are clear tail lamp lenses permitted?	<i>The Vehicle Equipment Regulations, 1987</i> § 34, 35, 37, & 72  CMVSS also apply.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Signal lamps</u> must emit either amber or red light.</li> <li>• <u>Brake lamps</u> must emit a red light.</li> <li>• Tail lamps and the required retro-reflective reflectors (usually a part of the red lamp lens) must be red.</li> <li>• <u>Side marker lamps</u> (rear) and rear side retro-reflective reflectors must be red. Clear tail lamp covers only permitted where all of the above requirements are met.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Usually the clear tail lamp lens does not include side marker lamps or any red retro-reflective reflectors as required.</li> <li>• Identifies the rear of the vehicle.</li> <li>• Ensures optimum visibility to other road users.</li> <li>• Red lamps and retro-reflective reflectors are international standards and must be distinguishable at specific distances.</li> </ul>
Are colored (blue, green etc.) or high intensity headlamp bulbs permitted?	<i>The Vehicle Equipment Regulations, 1987</i> § 6 & 31  CMVSS also apply.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All headlamps must be WHITE in colour as defined by Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE). White lamps have been tested to meet all headlamp requirements.</li> <li>• Maximum wattage allowed in a headlamp is 70 watts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blue and green lamps are designated for use on emergency vehicles only.</li> <li>• Red lamps to front are reserved for emergency vehicles and school bus warning lamps.</li> <li>• High intensity bulbs may assist the driver of the vehicle but are blinding to oncoming traffic.</li> <li>• Colored bulbs give a distorted headlamp pattern, which may prevent the driver from seeing a person or object at the road edge or starting to cross the road.</li> </ul>
Are under-car glow lamp kits permitted?	<i>The Vehicle Equipment Regulations, 1987</i> § 6  *Includes colours within this colour spectrum. Contact Vehicle Standards and Inspection. 1-800-667-8015 ext.6188.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No vehicle driven on a highway shall be equipped with:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) a lamp that emits a white light facing to the rear;</li> <li>(b) a lamp that emits a *red light facing to the front;</li> <li>(c) a lamp that emits a *blue or green light.</li> <li>(d) equipment that detracts from required lighting.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White light shining to the rear could be mistaken by a motorist as approaching the front instead of the rear of another vehicle.</li> <li>• Red light shining to the front could be mistaken by a motorist as approaching the rear instead of the front of another vehicle.</li> <li>• Lamps that emit a blue or green light are for use on emergency vehicles only.</li> </ul>
Are forward facing fog and auxiliary driving lamps permitted?	<i>The Vehicle Equipment Regulations, 1987</i> § 6, 7, 31, & 33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must be focused at least as low and as far to the right as the low beam headlamps.</li> <li>• Must be mounted lower than the headlamps and be DOT approved, meeting SAE standards for fog or driving lamp use.</li> <li>• Lamps mounted above the headlamps are defined as <i>Stationary Lamps</i> and restricted to use on emergency vehicles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restricted use and proper aiming avoids reduction of visibility for oncoming drivers.</li> <li>• Must comply with permitted lamp colours (blue, green and red prohibited)</li> <li>• Stationary lamps (off-road) when fitted to a non-emergency vehicle are prohibited, but may remain affixed only if covered with an opaque cover when operating on-road.</li> </ul>
Does a windshield with cracks and damage need to be replaced?	<i>The Vehicle Equipment Regulations, 1987</i> § 64	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The laminated windshield shall not have any crack through one layer that extends more than 50 mm (2 in.) into the area swept by OEM windshield wipers.</li> <li>• If a damaged area is larger than 13 mm (½ in.) in diameter in area swept by OEM windshield wipers, the windshield must also be replaced.</li> <li>• The windshield shall not have any crack or chip through both layers of laminated glass anywhere on the windshield.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These standards ensure the driver's visibility is not obstructed and that the windshield is structurally sound, which is important in modern vehicles where the windshield is an integral part of the unibody design that directs forces (energy) away from the driver in a crash.</li> <li>• A damaged windshield reduces load carrying capacity of the windshield. Important in roll over situations.</li> <li>• If applicable allows air bag to deploy properly.</li> </ul>
Is after-market window tinting or decals permitted on a window?	<i>The Vehicle Equipment Regulations, 1987</i> § 64 - 66	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After market window tinting, sunscreen or reflective material is not permitted on the windshield or the front side windows of the vehicle.</li> <li>• Window tinting is permitted on any window located behind the driver's head providing outside mirrors provide the driver with a clear view to the rear of the vehicle.</li> <li>• The windshield must be free of decals greater than 13 millimetres in diameter in the area swept by the windshield wipers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After market material may lower the level of light transmission through the windshield which could affect a driver's ability to see unlit objects and pedestrians in low light conditions and increase the probability of a collision.</li> <li>• The application of a film the glass changes the characteristics of automotive glass, including how the glass shatters.</li> <li>• Dark film on the windows of a vehicle may jeopardize a police officer's safety.</li> <li>• Decals larger than this may obstruct the driver's view.</li> </ul>

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Is one windshield wiper permitted?	<i>The Vehicle Equipment Regulations, 1987</i> § 68	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vehicle must have at least one windshield wiper that sweeps at least 70% of the total area of windshield.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Required to provide clear view to the driver when operating in poor weather conditions.</li> <li>In order to cover 70% 2 wipers are usually needed</li> </ul>
Are hood scoops or cool air intakes permitted?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May be permitted, provided that driver visibility and vehicle energy management system is unaffected.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Driver's visibility must not be obstructed.</li> <li>The hood structure is designed to react in a specific manner during a collision to protect occupants.</li> </ul>
Are less restrictive flow (loud) mufflers / exhaust systems or noise enhancing attachments permitted?	<i>The Vehicle Equipment Regulations, 1987</i> § 18  <i>The Traffic Safety Act</i> § 215  CMVSS 1106	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vehicle must be equipped with a muffler and exhaust system that reduces noise level to national standards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emission of any loud or unnecessary noise from a motor vehicle is prohibited.</li> <li>Less restrictive exhaust systems may not meet exhaust emission standards.</li> <li>Permitted dB levels vary according to engine size. The maximum dB level allowed for any passenger vehicle, motorcycle, or truck engine is 84 dB.</li> </ul>
Are after-market exhaust headers permitted?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Headers are permitted providing the rest of the exhaust system, including legal mufflers, is in compliance.</li> <li>An unrestricted exhaust system is not permitted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Less restrictive exhaust systems may not meet exhaust emission standards.</li> <li>Permitted dB levels vary according to engine size. The maximum dB level allowed for any passenger vehicle, motorcycle, or truck engine is 84 dB.</li> </ul>
Can a vehicle be equipped with a nitrous oxide system?	<i>The Traffic Safety Act</i> § 75	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The nitrous oxide system must be sealed and vented to the exterior of the vehicle. The vent must be located at a point that is higher than the nitrous oxide container.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nitrous oxide poses a high risk of suffocation. If not vented properly a leak could result in suffocation and death. Inhaling impairs a person's motor control and co-ordination, can cause nausea, vomiting, disorientation, and reduced fertility.</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: Insurance coverage can be denied if it is established that the vehicle was racing at the time of a collision</i></p>
Are wide tires or smooth slicks permitted?	<i>The Vehicle Equipment Regulations, 1987</i> § 52 & 71	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A fender, mudflap or body overhang that reduces the rearward projection of gravel, mud, water and snow from each tire is required. This must extend the full width of the tire.</li> <li>A tire on a passenger vehicle must have 2/32nds of tread depth across the face of the tire, and the tire must be approved for highway use, slicks are not.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protects motorist visibility that could otherwise be reduced from spray from another vehicle.</li> <li>Tread depth on the tire provides traction during adverse weather conditions, and dissipates heat, water, snow etc.</li> </ul>
Are vehicles required to have door handles?	<i>The Vehicle Equipment Regulations, 1987</i> § 55	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Doors must have a means of being opened from the inside and the outside, but this does not necessarily have to be a door handle. A remote release or switch is acceptable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the event of collision or emergency there must be a method of escape from the vehicle.</li> </ul>
Can the shift handle be changed on a manual transmission?	<i>The Vehicle Equipment Regulations, 1987</i> § 19 (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If more than 3 forward gears, the shift pattern must be displayed in view of the driver.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reverse and first gears are not always in the same position in all vehicles. An operator could put the vehicle in the wrong gear and cause an accident. i.e. forward instead of reverse.</li> </ul>
Can a smaller steering wheel be installed?	<i>The Vehicle Equipment Regulations, 1987</i> § 25 (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A steering wheel must be at least 330 mm (13 inch) in diameter. Horn must be maintained and be in the reach of the driver. SRS (airbags) must not be altered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must maintain the mechanical advantage of the steering wheel. A small steering wheel could cause a delay in a turn resulting in a vehicle crash.</li> <li>Most steering wheels now contain airbags.</li> </ul>
Can I install an interior lamp kit? (neon bulbs etc.)	<i>The Traffic Safety Act</i> § 214	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interior lamps are not specifically addressed but distractions (lights that may distract other road users) are not permitted.</li> <li>If a lamp kit is installed the emitted light should not reduce the driver's vision.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lights that reduce the driver's vision, or are a distraction to other motorists may contribute to an accident.</li> </ul>

### Notes:

\*For additional information please contact SGI, Vehicle Standards and Inspection at 775-6188 or toll free 1-800-667-8015 and ask for extension 6188.

\*There are some special allowances for vintage vehicles (predates current year by 30 years or more), and modified vintage vehicles (manufactured before 1958). For information on either of these two vehicle types please contact Vehicle Standards and Inspection at the numbers shown above.