



UNION COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

BEHIND THE STAR

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Slow Moving Vehicle Laws and Rules

This is part four in a series of articles written to help explain different types of vehicles and the Ohio Laws that govern their use. In part's one and two, we discussed the definitions of what is and is not a golf cart and a utility vehicle and the operational rules of each. In part three, we learned about all-purpose vehicles (APV), how they are licensed, and where they can be legally operated. In part four, we will explain slow moving vehicles (SMV) and use of the familiar SMV orange triangle.



Slow moving vehicles are considered to be all boat trailers, farm machinery, and other machinery, including all road construction machinery, that operate on a street or highway...., which is designed for operation at a speed of twenty-five miles per hour or less and displays a triangular slow-moving vehicle emblem (SMV). Because SMV signs are most often associated with farm machinery, we need to know that definition also. Farm machinery is considered to be all machines and tools that are used in the production, harvesting, and care of farm products, and includes trailers that are used to transport agricultural produce or agricultural production materials between a local place of storage or supply and the farm, agricultural tractors, threshing machinery, hay-baling machinery, corn shellers, hammermills, and machinery used in the production of horticultural, agricultural, and vegetable products.

Farm machinery that operates on the roadway at a speed of twenty-five miles per hour or less must have a slow-moving vehicle emblem displayed. If farm machinery operates at a speed above twenty-five miles per hour on the roadway, it must also display a speed identification symbol (SIS) that meet the requirements of the American Society of Agricultural Engineers. The speed identification symbol must signify the maximum speed at which the machinery is designated to operate. SMV and SIS emblems or symbols must be mounted so that they are visible at a distance of five hundred feet to the rear of the machinery. An important point to note is that the use of the SMV emblem is restricted to animal drawn vehicles and slow-moving vehicles as defined above. Often times, deputies observe residents operating other types of vehicles (golf carts, all-terrain vehicles, all purpose vehicles, etc.) on the roadway with an SMV sign attached and these vehicles are not farm related and are not recognized by the Ohio Revised Code as a vehicle that can utilize the SMV emblem. In addition, vehicles that qualify for using the SMV and SIS symbols and that travel at a speed greater than twenty five miles per hour, may be equipped with a red flashing light

that faces the rear of the implement which must be visible from a distance of not less than one thousand feet at all times. You are not required to have an Ohio driver's license to operate an agricultural tractor and/or implement on a street or highway, if it is driven at a speed of twenty-five miles per hour or less. If the agricultural tractor and/or implement is driven at a speed greater than twenty-five miles per hour, the person driving must have a current valid drivers license.

On a side note, in June 2017, the Ohio Legislature modified the law concerning utility vehicles. As discussed in a previous article, vehicles that meet the definition of a utility vehicle can be inspected, registered, and operate on certain roadway's in Ohio. According to the 2017 law change, utility vehicles may also use the SMV emblem, but only when traveling from one farm field to another for agricultural purpose. Utility vehicle's using an SMV emblem may be operated on any public road or the right of way, except for a freeway, when traveling from one farm field to another. This is good news for farmers that utilize utility vehicles for only agricultural purposes.

We hope this series of articles helps our citizens understand the laws and rules that govern golf carts, utility vehicles, all-purpose vehicles, and slow-moving vehicles. If you should have any questions about this information, you are encouraged to contact the Sheriff's Office at 937-645-4110.

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