

Memo

To: The Registration Section
Cc: Catherine Curtis, Director of Vehicle Services
Susan Harris-Pomerleau, Dianne Harrington, Clarissa Hurley, Lucy Taylor, Roger Hawkins, Linda Chasse, Andrew Seaman, James Belanger, Garry Hinkley, Francis Fox, Louise Whitten
From: Richard Nickless, Senior Section Manager, Registration & Title Sections
Date: May 12, 2006
Re: Off-Road Vehicle, Motorized Scooter, Moped, and Motorcycle Information

On April 13, 2006, new laws became effective that more accurately define off-road vehicles, motorized scooters, mopeds, and motorcycles.

In the past, numerous customer questions have surfaced about the registration and operation of off-road vehicles such as pocket bikes. Based on these new laws, this memo and attached handout is an attempt to clarify the issues and provide you with information that will enable you to answer these types of customer questions.

As shown in the handout, Title 29-A provides accurately defined criteria for motorized scooters, mopeds, and motorcycles. If a vehicle is similar in appearance, but does not meet all criteria for motorized scooters, mopeds, and motorcycles then it is considered an off-road vehicle.

Off-Road Vehicle

An "off-road" vehicle means a motor vehicle that, because of the vehicle's design and configuration, does not meet the inspection standards in Title 29-A, Chapter 15 and that is not a moped or motorcycle. An off-road vehicle can not be registered and some common types include Pocket Bikes, Mules, Gators, and Terminal Tractors.

The Manufacturer's Certificate of Origin may state "OFF-ROAD USE" because off-road vehicles are not designed for use on a public road or highway. Their operation on a public way may increase the risk of injury or collision and violate State or Federal laws.

It is not possible to modify an off-road vehicle to meet inspection and safety standards in order to comply with State and Federal laws. On the other hand, motorcycles are manufactured to meet safety standards that comply with state and federal laws allowing them to be operated safely on public highways.

Motorized Scooters, Mopeds, and Motorcycles

In addition to the information found in the handout, a motorized scooter can not be operated at a speed of more than 20 miles per hour and a moped at not more than 30 miles per hour. Both vehicles must be operated as far as practicable to the right side of the way, except when making a left turn. Motorcycles are subject to the same speed limits as automobiles and can make full use of a lane on public streets and highways.