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Window Tinting Fact Sheet

The purpose of this fact sheet is to inform and educate the public on the laws pertaining to sun screening within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Effective September, 28, 1996, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation adopted new regulations pertaining to the use of sun screening (window tinting). Operation of a vehicle with illegal sun screening is a summary traffic offense in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

FACTS:

1. Window tinting is not a part of the annual vehicle safety inspection criteria. If your vehicle passes an annual safety inspection, this does not indicate that your tinting is legal for use upon the highways of Pennsylvania.
2. Laws pertaining to window tinting can vary from state to state. If your vehicle was previously registered in a state with laws differing from the laws in Pennsylvania, you must bring your vehicle into compliance with Pennsylvania law when you register the vehicle in Pennsylvania.
3. There is no exemption for colored sun screening for medical purposes. There are exemption certificates for medical purposes, however these exemptions only allow for COLORLESS (clear) sun screening that filter incoming ultra violet light.
4. Exemptions are available after application and approval by Penn DOT for vehicles which were already equipped with colored sun screening and were Pennsylvania registered prior to September 8, 1984.
5. Most vehicle windows have a small amount of tinting already in the glass. Factory glass typically has light transmittance levels between 70% and 85%.
6. Federal law prohibits auto manufacturers from manufacturing passenger cars with light transmittance levels lower than 70%. (Reference: Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 205 (49 C.F.R. 571.205) which refers to American National Standard "Safety Code for Safety Glazing Materials for Glazing Motor Vehicles Operating on Land Highways," Z26.1-1966, July 15, 1966 which states 70%.)
7. Some auto dealerships equip new vehicles with tinting prior to selling the new vehicle. This is not factory tinting and they are still required to meet these requirements.
8. The below table is designed to assist in determining the law as it pertains to different vehicles. The transmittance level means that of the 100% of the light hitting the outside of the window, at least 70% of that light must pass through the window to the inside of the vehicle. Effectively, the 70% light transmittance requirement means that you cannot put any tinting on the window, as even the lightest tinting that you can buy will cause the transmittance level to drop below 70%.

VEHICLE TYPE	WINDSHIELD	FRONT SIDE & WING WINDOWS	REAR SIDE & WING WINDOWS	REAR WINDOW
Pre-1998 Passenger Cars	70%	70%	70%	VESC-20 (1)
1998 & Newer Passenger Cars	70%	70%	70%	70%
Trucks & Multi-Purpose Passenger Vehicles (2)	70%	70%	No Requirement	No Requirement
Medium/Heavy Trucks & Buses	70%	70%	No Requirement	No Requirement
All Other Vehicles	70%	70%	No Requirement	No Requirement

- (1) Must display a label, permanently installed between the sun screening material and the window to which it is applied, containing the name of the material manufacturer or a registration number and the statement, "Complies with VESC-20."
- (2) For the purpose of this fact sheet, multi-purpose passenger vehicles are defined as vehicles that are built on a truck chassis or specifically designed for occasional off-road use.



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