

## Bus Inspection Forward

Inspection and maintenance is necessary to provide safe, economical transportation. A new Bus should be inspected for compliance, before being placed in service. OAR 581-053-0008 requires certain items to be inspected daily.

Inspection of the bus and all equipment is required at least annually.

Transportation providers should develop preventative maintenance inspection program for their individual fleets.

The purpose of this manual is to provide information on areas that should be inspected and repaired during the annual inspection. During day-to-day operations and during a Department of Education bus inspection, items are identified on the bus, which are deficient. This inspection manual indicates areas in which the bus should be repaired within a certain time frame or removed from service. Transportation providers may use the manual to assist them in making those decisions.

The Department of Education does not disassemble buses or lift them during an inspection.

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## **Legal Basis for Required Inspections and Maintenance**

### **School Vehicles 820.100**

**Adoption of safety standards for construction and equipment of school vehicles; rules.**

(1) The State Board of Education shall adopt and enforce such reasonable standards relating to school bus and school activity vehicle construction and school bus and school activity vehicle equipment as the board deems necessary for safe and economical operation.

(2) The State Board of Higher Education may adopt and enforce separate rules of the type described under this section for school buses and school activity vehicles that are under its jurisdiction.

(3) The State Board of Education shall adopt and enforce standards for school bus stop arms authorized by ORS 820.105.

(4) Rules adopted under this section:

(a) Must be consistent with requirements established by statute or by rule adopted under statutory authority that relate to the same subject.

(b) Shall be consistent with minimum uniform national standards, if such standards exist.

(c) May include different requirements for different classes or types of school buses or school activity vehicles.

(d) May include any exemptions determined appropriate under ORS 820.150. [1983 c.338 §747; 1985 c.16 §358; 1985 c.420 §12; 1987 c.654 §6; 1989 c.491 §71]

**School Bus Registration**  
**820.130**

The Department of Transportation shall issue registration for a school bus when notified that the vehicle conforms to applicable rules under ORS 820.100 to 820.120 and that the vehicle is safe for operation on the highways. Notification required by this section shall be from:

- (1) The State Board of Education or its authorized representative regarding vehicles under its regulatory authority.
- (2) The State Board of Higher Education or its authorized representative regarding vehicles under its jurisdiction. [1983 c.338 §752; 1985 c.420 §17; 1999 c.39 §11]

**Illegal Display of School Bus Markings; Penalty**  
**820.160**

- (1) A person commits the offense of illegal display of school bus markings if the person displays the words "School Bus" on any vehicle unless the vehicle:
  - (a) Is used in transporting school children to or from school or an authorized school activity or function; and
  - (b) Complies with the applicable requirements under rules established under ORS 820.100 to 820.120.
- (2) The offense described in this section, illegal display of school bus markings, is a Class B traffic violation. [1983 c.338 §750; 1985 c.393 §52; 1995 c.383 §98]

**Unsafe School Vehicle Operation; Penalty**  
**ORS 820.180**

- (1) A person commits the offence of unsafe school vehicle operation if:
  - (a) The person operates or owns and causes or permits to be operated a school bus or school activity vehicle in a manner that is in violation of any rules applicable to the vehicle that are adopted under ORS 820.100 to 820.120; or
  - (b) The person owns or leases and permits to be operated for school purposes a school bus or activity vehicle containing more passengers than the vehicle is designed to transport.
- (2) A person is not in violation of subsection (1) (b) of this section if a bus or vehicle contains more passengers than it is designed to transport due to unforeseen or unusual circumstances.
- (3) The offence described in this section, unsafe school vehicle operation, is a Class B traffic infraction.

**Annual Inspection**  
**OAR 581-053-0008**

- (1) Transporting districts shall have all vehicles used in transporting pupils inspected annually, and certify to the Oregon Department of Education that all deficiencies have been corrected before September 1 of each year.

**820.120 Rules for school vehicle inspection.** (1) The State Board of Education shall adopt and enforce rules to provide for the inspection of school buses and school activity vehicles to assure that the vehicles are in compliance with requirements under rules established under ORS 820.100 and 820.110, as applicable, and that the vehicles are safe for operation. The rules may include intervals of inspections.

- (2) The State Board of Higher Education may adopt and enforce separate rules of the type described under this section for school buses and school activity vehicles that are under its jurisdiction.

(3) The rules adopted under this section:

(a) Are subject to any other statute or regulation relating to the safety of vehicles for operation and the inspection of vehicles.

(b) May include different requirements for different classes or types of school buses or school activity vehicles.

(c) May include any exemptions determined appropriate under ORS 820.150. [1983 c.338 §749; 1985 c.420 §14; 1989 c.491 §73]

### **Annual Vehicle Certification Report**

The Annual Vehicle Certification Report (Form 541-2256) shall be completed and signed by the District Administrator verified by the Annual Vehicle Inspection and Maintenance Reports (Form 581-2255). Form 581-2256 is to be sent to the Department of Education by September 1 annually. A copy should be kept in district records.

Accuracy is important when designating vehicle type. The letter “S” should be used to identify each vehicle that has the words “School Bus” on the front and rear and that is equipped with amber and red Safety Lights.

The letter “O” should be used to identify all other vehicles used to transport students.

This form must be returned to the Department of Education, Pupil Transportation Section by September 1 annually.

## **Guidelines for Conducting the Annual Vehicle Inspection**

The following inspection guide offers an inspection procedure and lists conditions requiring repair for each item as it relates to the required Annual Vehicle Inspection (Form 581-2255).

The inspection manual is not intended to be a substitute for good preventative maintenance program. Each facility must have a maintenance program that meets the needs of its fleets. Quality of repairs should be consistent with professional shop standards.

A preventive maintenance program, accurate records, and common sense should enable an operator to comply with the intent of this requirement.

Follow recommended maintenance procedures outlined in applicable manuals that pertain to each component of the bus. Manufacturer's specifications and recommendations should be followed when making repairs and adjustments.

The Annual Vehicle Inspection and Maintenance Report forms (Form 581-2255) are to be completed in duplicate by the transportation supervisor, mechanic or contractor. This form must be signed and dated when the Annual is completed.

One copy will be filed in the school district administration office with the inspecting agency also retaining a copy. These reports are to be kept in permanent vehicle maintenance files for a period of not less than three years and must be available to the Oregon Department of Education personnel upon request. Do not send this report to the Oregon Department of Education.

Operators of small fleets generally do all of the required vehicle annual inspection during the summer months when school is not in session. This is usually impractical for large fleets or in areas where school is in session year round. If fleets complete their Annuals on a year round basis, then the Annual inspection needs to be completed within a year of the previous years inspection date, or the vehicle is out of service.

Components of the vehicle that require disassembly, that have been inspected or repaired within 6 months prior to the Annual inspection, do not need to be re-inspected at the time the Annual is completed.

No attempt is made here to discuss Minimum Standards for construction and equipment. This is covered in the Minimum Standards for Oregon School Buses manual.

**Maintenance Personnel**  
**OAR 581-053-0002 (9)**

- (9) Vehicle maintenance records shall be kept for each vehicle used to transport students. These records shall be available to Department of Education personnel upon request. The following minimum information shall be kept for each vehicle by date and mileage at the time of service, adjustment or repair:
- (a) Chassis lubrications;
  - (b) Engine oil and filter changes;
  - (c) Major engine tune-ups and repairs;
  - (d) All adjustment, service and repair of brake system;
  - (e) All adjustment, service and repair of steering mechanism and other related parts;
  - (f) Tires; and
  - (g) Drive train components.

**Reporting Vehicle Defects**

It is the driver's responsibility to report any mechanical malfunction, needed adjustment, or repair of the bus or equipment immediately.

It is recommended that the forms be made available to drivers for making bus defect reports in writing and that drivers be notified in writing when the defects have been repaired. This method establishes a line of communication between the driver and employer that reflects reporting of defects and completion of necessary repairs. It also provides a written record that substantiates reporting for the repair on the part of the employer. Forms should be kept for existing school year.

In the event of a mechanical failure or an accident, these are the types of records requested immediately for the follow-up investigation. This is just one indication of the importance for maintaining these records.

## **Daily Inspection & Driver Responsibilities**

### **OAR 583-053-0008 (7)**

(7) The school bus driver shall inspect the following daily, unless the inspection is performed by other designated employees:

- (a) Windshield and wipers;
- (b) All outside lights;
- (c) Service door;
- (d) Tires and wheel lug nuts;
- (e) Battery, belts, oil and coolant level;
- (f) Horns;
- (g) Brakes;
- (h) Steering;
- (i) Exhaust system;
- (j) See that lights, windshield, mirrors, and warning sign is clean;
- (k) Emergency equipment;
- (l) Emergency exits and audible warning devices.

### **OAR 583-053-0008 (8)**

8) The school activity vehicle driver shall inspect the vehicle as required by OARs 581-053-0545, 581-053-0550, or 581-053-0555, whichever is applicable.

### **OAR 583-053-0008 (9)**

(9) The driver shall report as soon as possible to the proper official any deficiency or malfunction of any equipment or component of the vehicle.

### **OAR 583-053-0008 (10)**

(10) The driver shall not transport students unless the vehicle is safe to operate.

## **School Bus Driver Pretrip Checklist**

The use of a checklist of the items to be inspected is helpful to the driver. The list may be posted inside the bus. A checklist should be designed that will give assurance items to be inspected will not be overlooked.