



SAFETY DIRECTOR BULLETIN



LOW-SPEED VEHICLES BEST PRACTICES

Low-Speed Vehicles (LSV) are four-wheeled vehicles with an attainable speed of more than 20 miles per hour but not more than 25 miles per hour on a paved surface. They cannot be powered by gas or diesel fuel. An LSV is a street-legal golf cart with headlights, seatbelts, and turn signals, and it must comply with federal safety standard 49 CFR 571.500. They also have vehicle identification numbers (VIN). In contrast, typical golf carts are designed for recreational use on golf courses.

This bulletin will discuss the implications of LSV for municipal leaders, police agencies, and departments who wish to use these vehicles in their operations.

Municipal Leaders

Municipalities may elect to permit or ban the use of LSV within their jurisdictions. Consult with your local attorney and police department to determine if and where LSV will be allowed. Generally, LSV may not drive on roadways with speed limits that exceed 25 mph, though if deemed appropriate by a municipality, LSV may be permitted on streets with speed limits that do not exceed 35 mph.

Police Agencies

Train officers on the ordinance governing the use of LSV on your streets. Significant points to cover from the [NJMVC Low-Speed Vehicle](#) page include:

- Operators must have a valid driver's license to operate an LSV.
- LSVs are subject to the same moving violations as other vehicles (except for State vehicle inspections).
- Child restraints in LSVs must meet the same standards as those used in passenger vehicles.
- All LSVs will have a safety information decal provided by the manufacturer on the rear of the vehicle.
- If there is only one license plate, it must be displayed on the rear of the LSV.
- LSV must meet Federal and State requirements. Requirements are available on the [NJMVC LSV page](#).

Departments Using or Considering Using an LSV

LSV offer certain benefits to departments such as public works, utilities, or recreation. These and other departments may decide to add these vehicles to their fleets. When making that decision, department leaders should consider the following implications:

- LSV must be titled with the New Jersey Department of Motor Vehicles and the instructions are on the [NJMVC LSV](#).
- LSV must be insured. Contact your Risk Manager.
- LSVs are exempt from State inspections, but the owner must maintain the vehicle properly. Follow manufacturer recommendations and document your service and repair activities.
- While a driver's license is required to operate an LSV, the handling characteristics between the LSV and a typical car are significantly different. Agencies should implement a comprehensive training program for their operators, including access to and a review of the vehicle manufacturer owner's manual.