

CONTEMPORARY HISTORICAL VEHICLE ASSOCIATION, INC.

OLD CARS AND NEW LAWS

WHAT'S UP HERE AND THERE



By Larry Becker

The U.S. EPA has issued a final rule to ban the use of HFC-134 as a motor-vehicle air-conditioning system refrigerant starting with the model-year (MY) 2021 new models. The rule would not apply to the use of HFC-134a in vehicles already in use or the ability to continue servicing those vehicles with the refrigerant.

The average age of the nation's 607,380 bridges is 42. The average age of cars on U.S. roads is 11.5 years.

Even though Chrysler has reached an agreement with the feds over slow recall of vehicle problems, there is confusion about the buy-back program and how it works, especially with the allowance for depreciation clause.

In the third week of July, 800 engineers, software developers, transportation experts and other technical folks met in Detroit to discuss "driverless" cars and decided that several questions must be answered: cybersecurity and privacy, how much will these vehicles cost, ethical considerations -how software developers write codes that stops the vehicle as soon as possible in a way that could injure the driver, motor vehicle safety codes, convenience vs performance and how do sensors perform in snow and rain. Still, many more questions need to be answered.

According to Consumers Reports, your credit score helps to determine your auto insurance rate. California, Hawaii and Massachusetts have enacted laws prohibiting this use, but the insurance companies just raised the rates for everyone in these states. According to radio talk show host, Tom Sullivan, insurance companies charge young single female drivers more than they do for young single male drivers. They also charge widowed female drivers more than single young female drivers. Rates for female drivers vary from state to state and company to company. A single female driver in Boston, Mass, with a 2005 Honda Civic, employed by a bank would pay from \$1200 to \$2100 per year, in Florida - \$800 to \$1200 and in Chicago, \$600 for the same coverage. In Minneapolis, the cost would be \$1200. One company may have a high rate in one area and a lower rate somewhere else, but another company may have the opposite rates.

President Obama has signed into law a bill to continue current federal highway spending through the end of October. It is the 34th short-term extension since 2009. While Congress has traditionally passed six-year laws for investing in transportation projects, declining gas tax collections and divisions over how to raise revenue has resulted in the patchwork approach. With another short-term solution in place, the Senate passed a transportation bill which may serve as a blueprint for the next showdown in October. The Senate bill has been referred to the House of Representatives, where it is expected to be considered in September. The bill includes a provision requiring tire retailers not owned or controlled by a manufacturer to register tires at the point of sale. Currently, the customer is responsible for voluntary registering their tires. The National Highway Traffic safety Administration (NHTSA) would also be required to establish an online tire recall database, enabling the general public to search for recalls using the Tire ID (TIN), and several other provisions related to tires. (Thanks to SEMA for providing the above information).

Not all of following state bills are laws at this time. They have recently been introduced and are currently under consideration by the respective legislatures.

ARIZONA

A Tucson resident has said the city's 1500 newly installed parking meters are too tall, making them hard to use for people in wheelchairs.

Over the last year, tourism is up by 25% at the Grand Canyon National Park, which gets about 4.5 million visitors a year.

CALIFORNIA

SB 350 which is about what measures the California Air Resource Board could take to reduce petroleum use. The ARB has long required onboard diagnostic equipment to monitor emission control on cars and trucks, and now are considering expanding the kind of data collected to measure fuel consumption. Some groups say this gives the ARB the power to raise gasoline and diesel taxes, increase surcharges on cars, trucks and minivans purchased prior to 2007. There is lots of confusion about what SB 350 actually does. It is opposed by the California Drivers Alliance.

A group of San Diego residents are studying the feasibility of adding a barrier to the city's iconic Coronado Bridge to prevent people from jumping to their deaths. Since the bridge to the populated Coronado Island in 1969, about 300 people have committed suicide there, jumping from the 200 foot span in the San Diego Bay.

A California utility is paying drivers of BMW electric cars to delay charging their vehicles when the power grid is under pressure. Nearly 100 owners of BMW's 13 hatchbacks are receiving \$1,000 upfront to participate in Pacific Gas & Electric Company's 18 month trial, which is confined to the San Francisco Bay Area. The PG&E & BMW pilot program is one of myriad experiments underway world wide as utilities try to anticipate what will happen if (or when) millions of electric vehicles pour onto city streets and neighborhoods. No information was given as to why only BMW's were selected.

DMV is cracking down on drivers who improperly apply for disability parking placards so they can use specially marked parking spots.

Fill it up and win \$10,000,000! A pilot program by the California State Lottery will allow gamblers to buy lottery tickets at gas pumps. The program which started last year has spread to 86 locations in the Sacramento area and southern California. Motorists can buy up to \$20 worth of Quick-Pick tickets when they pay with a credit card or debit card at the gas pump. Only California and North Carolina have this program, but other states are considering it.

State DMV employees allegedly provided at least 100 commercial truck drivers with licenses without taking or passing the required tests. DMV officials have launched an investigation to determine how many licenses were issued to commercial drivers who did not take or pass the test. The dept. has since revoked or cancelled an additional 602 licenses “that appear to have been obtained through fraudulent means”. Since driver’s licenses can be used as IDs for airline flights and also for entrance to federal buildings and other places requiring ID, Homeland Security has joined the investig

D.C. – WASHINGTON

Construction work at the Arlington Memorial Bridge, whose support beams are corroding and “no longer meet load-bearing standards” was started in August. The repairs are expected to be completed in three years.

HAWAII

Hawaii County has called for restoration of a road near Pahoia. Lava crossed the road on Oct. 25th as it stormed through Pahoia and began threatening homes.

IDAHO

If you are looking for milepost 420, you won’t find it in Idaho. Idaho transportation officials say the mile marker has been replaced with 419.9 signs to curb thieves eager to own a number associated with marijuana enthusiasts. Washington and Colorado have also replaced their 420 signs with 419.9 signs.

INDIANA

On August 14th, the Dept. of Transportation announced that northbound Interstate 65 will remain closed “for the foreseeable future” while a damaged bridge over Wildcat Creek is repaired. The bridge was closed August 4th after inspectors found structural problems that make it unsafe.

KENTUCKY

Jeopardizing hundreds of drunken-driving cases, a former breath test operator for the Louisville Metro Corrections center has been suspended after allegations that she lied on a report and in testimony under oath.

Louisville Metro Police, who have been giving warnings to jay walkers at targeted intersections in recent months, are about to start issuing citations with fines ranging from \$20 to \$100.

LOUISIANA

The state is running out of number and letter combinations for license plates. Probably next year, the Dept. of Public safety will reverse the three-letter, three-number format and go to three numbers followed by three letters (123ABC) instead of (ABC123), the Times-Picayune reports.

MICHIGAN

Legislation to increase the initial registration and transfer tax by \$100 has been introduced. Under the bill, the increase would apply only to the first registration and the first registration after a transfer sale. The \$100 tax increase would apply according to the vehicle’s list price with more costly vehicles being taxed at a higher rate.

Legislation has been introduced to require the state to charge and collect a user fee from each registrant of a motor vehicle. The fee, in addition to the vehicle registration tax. The use fee would be \$50 for each 10,000 miles driven by the registrant during the one-year period

immediately preceding a registration renewal. The bill would require that a vehicle registrant appear in person at an office of the Secretary of State at the time of vehicle registration to allow the state to verify the current mileage of the vehicle, calculate and collect the user fee.

NEBRASKA

Road construction work will hamper travelers on state Highway 12 in northern Nebraska. The 9.4 mile project will run from the U.S. Highway 281 intersection east to Lynch. The work is projected to be finished by early November.

NORTH DAKOTA

A new study shows that \$243 million in road improvement projects is needed to alleviate traffic on the Interstate 94 corridor, near the city of Bismarck, The Bismarck Tribune reports.

Construction has begun on a \$30 million bypass to route truck traffic around the city of Killdeer, which is referred to as “oil patch town”.

OKLAHOMA

State officials estimate that \$7.4 billion is needed over the next 25 years to fund needed repairs and improvements to the state’s transportation system, The Oklahoman reports.

SOUTH DAKOTA

A Rapid City local group wants \$1 million to upgrade the road considered the gateway to the Black Hills and Mount Rushmore National Memorial. The city’s Public Works Committee will discuss the project at its September meeting.

The number of traffic fatalities tied to the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally has risen to nine. The record for rally-related fatalities is believed to be 11 during the 50th anniversary rally in 1990. This year’s event is the 75th anniversary.

VIRGINIA

Expect detours in and around Richmond in September when the UCI Road Championships start next month (September).

Richmond reports that cameras at traffic lights have helped reduce crashes by 83% at one of the worst intersections in the area.

WASHINGTON

A new zigzag line on Highway 9 near Stanwood, was not a mistake by highway maintenance workers. The line was painted on purpose to catch the attention of motorists and warn them that a Centennial Trail crossing is near. Two spots on Highway 20 in Concrete will get the zigzags next.

WHATSUP HERE AND THERE

A GREAT PARTY!! On July 23rd, The Redneck Games began in Hebron, Maine with such competitions as toilet seat horse shoes and bobbing for pigs feet. Sponsors of the event had wanted to hold it in a city in Florida, but the city refused to issue a permit, saying that it would cause traffic congestion and would draw a rowdy crowd.

According to a survey by Hankook Tire Company, people most often leave coffee and shopping bags atop their cars, but 6% misplace something important there, their car keys.

GM is close to becoming the first automaker to sell a China-made vehicle in the U.S. Industry analysts expect the automaker will import the compact crossover Buick Envision from a plant in China to U.S. dealerships by the end of 2016.

Ford is considering re-entering the small pickup truck segment by bringing the Ranger back to the U.S. and may also reintroduce the Bronco sport-utility vehicle.



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