

MAFES Dawg Tracks



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Safety Means – Use the SMV Emblem



Moving agriculture equipment across public roads can be very dangerous. Statistics tell us that about 20% of all traffic accidents involving agriculture equipment results from rear-end collisions. The problem occurs when vehicles come up on a tractor, combine, or other types of agriculture equipment at high speeds and can't slow down. The best protection that a tractor or implement driver has is a **Slow Moving Vehicle** emblem to avoid this type of accident. Even then there is a great risk, as we have seen here in north Mississippi, where a right-of-way mower was within two feet of the edge of the asphalt with a **SMV** and flashing lights; and a semi came up on the tractor too fast and the driver was killed. It probably would have happened anyway, **SMV** or not, as the truck was driving at a speed that wouldn't allow him to react to the tractor.

If the tractor and/or implements have the **SMV** attached, it does give approaching vehicles time to slow down before they get too close. If the implement doesn't have the highly visible **SMV** attached to the unit, the motorist has very little time to adjust their speed.

Most all states that I have checked require that all tractors or other farm implements traveling over public roads at speeds of 25 miles per hour or less must have the **Slow Moving Vehicle Emblem (SMV)** attached to the back of the implement. The law states that this includes tractors, tractors with mowers attached, combines, construction equipment, and even horse-drawn carriages.

The emblem must be displayed on the rear of any slow moving vehicle used on public roads. As an example, if a tractor is towing a wagon, the wagon must have a clearly visible **SMV**, as well as the tractor or other vehicle that is doing the towing.

A statute or law for specific dimensions designs the shape, color, and placement of the **SMV**. The emblem is an equilateral that is 14 inches high (variance is plus or minus .03 inches). It must have fluorescent orange material with a border of red retro-reflective material. The fluorescent design is highly visible in the daylight, and the lights of approaching vehicles illuminate the red retro-reflective border. The American Society of Agricultural Engineers, the American Standard Institute, and the Society of Automotive Engineers designed the **SMV** emblem.

These institutes require a strict placement of the emblem on vehicles. It should be mounted as close to the center of the rear of the vehicle as possible, with the point of the triangle pointing upward. It should be at a right angle or perpendicular to the direction of travel so that it can be seen by vehicles approaching from the rear. The lower edge of the emblem should be at least two feet and not more than six feet above the ground.

OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES:

- The emblem must be maintained. The sun will fade the finish, so it will have to be replaced, as it gets real dim.
- It should be kept clean, free of mud and debris.
- Check the emblem mountings periodically to make sure that the sign is secure.

**SAFETY IS A STATE OF MIND—
ACCIDENTS ARE AN ABSENCE OF
MIND!**

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**YOUR SAFETY GEARS ARE
BETWEEN YOUR EARS!!**