

FAQs on Flashing Lights on Vehicles

RSA

What is the law regarding the use of flashing blue lights on vehicles? Only certain vehicles can have flashing lights and the colour permitted depends on the type of emergency. See table below for further information.

Where should flashing lights be located on an emergency vehicle? Under road traffic law the flashing lamp should where possible be fitted on the roof of the vehicle on a point on its longitudinal axis and no part of the illuminated surface of the lamp should be less than 1.27 metres from the ground.

Are emergency vehicles required to have reflective or high visibility markings? No.

Is it legal to drive a personal vehicle with amber strobe lights? If your vehicle is being used in the performance of a duty it can be fitted with flashing amber lights. Otherwise it is illegal. See table on Page 3 of this document for further information on colour of flashing lights.

Are amber flashing lights legal over cabs on heavy commercial vehicles (HCVs)? If your vehicle is being used in the performance of a duty listed in the table below it can be fitted with flashing amber lights. Otherwise it is illegal.

Does a forklift truck require a blue beacon to be fitted to the front and a red to the back? No. Only an amber flashing light may be used and only in the course of duty.

Is it mandatory that a flashing amber beacon is lit when a tractor is operating on the public road? Yes. All tractors and self propelled machines are required to be fitted with a flashing amber beacon and have it switched on when in use.

Do all emergency vehicles require roadworthiness testing?

Yes. The only vehicles exempt from testing are vehicles which are owned or operated by An Garda Síochána and the Defence Forces.

All other emergency vehicles must be roadworthiness tested under the following regulations:

[S.I. No. 415 of 2017](#) - The Road Traffic National Car Testing Regulations. [S.I. No. 347 of 2013](#) - Commercial Vehicle Roadworthiness Vehicle Testing (No. 2) Regulations 2013.

Vehicle being used*	Description	Type of flashing light permitted
By a member of the Garda Síochána		Blue (Maximum 50 watts)
As a fire brigade vehicle	Includes a vehicle used by senior fire officers in the performance of their duty as such officer. A 'senior fire officer' means a fire officer not below the grade of Assistant Fire Officer (Prevention) but including the grades of second and third officer	Blue (Maximum 50 watts)
By persons providing an ambulance service		Blue (Maximum 50 watts)
By the Irish Prison Service		Blue (Maximum 50 watts)
As an Irish Coast Guard vehicle, with or without a trailer	Used by a senior managers in the Irish coast guard in the performance of their duty as such officer. A 'senior manager in the Irish coast guard' means an officer of the Irish coast guard not below the grade of Divisional Officer	Blue (Maximum 50 watts)
For the delivery or collection of human transplant organs, human blood or human blood products		Blue (Maximum 50 watts)
As a marked military police vehicle	A mechanically propelled Defence Forces vehicle used by a member of the Military Police Corps	Blue (Maximum 50 watts)

Vehicle being used*	Description	Type of flashing light permitted
As a breakdown vehicle	A vehicle used for towing broken down mechanically propelled vehicles, trailers or semi-trailers to the nearest convenient place of safety or repair and includes a vehicle used in connection with and in the immediate vicinity of a breakdown	Amber (Maximum 36 watts)
As a road clearance vehicle	A vehicle used for dealing with frost, ice or snow on roads and includes a vehicle used for cutting of roadside hedges or grass verges or in the sweeping of roads	Amber (Maximum 36 watts)
As a road works vehicle	A vehicle used in connection with the construction, maintenance and improvement of roads or in connection with the provision and maintenance of water supplies, sewerage and drainage services	Amber (Maximum 36 watts)
By a local authority or other person authorised by a local authority in the collection and disposal of refuse		Amber (Maximum 36 watts)
In the provision or maintenance of telephone services or of gas or electricity supply	A vehicle must be lit only if it is in use at the scene of operations	Amber (Maximum 36 watts)
As a Customs and Excise patrol vehicle	A Customs and Excise patrol vehicle means a mechanically propelled vehicle used by officials of customs and excise in the performance of their duty as such officials	Amber (Maximum 36 watts)