

Wheelchair lift alarms on paratransit buses

Information compiled January 9, 2006

The Question: A member has a new cutaway van with a wheelchair lift. When the door for the wheelchair lift is open a loud grating buzzer is activated the entire time the door is open. They were told by their maintenance staff that a new law became effective on either June 1st or July 1st making it mandatory for the buzzer to go off when the door is open. If that is the case, can the buzzer be changed from the flat grating sound it now emits to a more pleasant beeping tone?

FYI - This question is being asked to maintenance managers and paratransit managers.

Clallam Transit says... I believe the buzzer must have 85dBA with a visual warning lamp of 1 to 2 Hz. But, I don't believe the buzzer is required to sound when the door is open? I had trouble finding final language but I believe if the lift has moved 1 inch from floor height and a person (or weight is detected via sensitive matt) is within 18 inches of the wheelchair opening a warning buzzer and lamp must then go off. I would ask the wheelchair manufacturer what is required. The dealer may be going with the cheapest method which very well may exceed the actual requirement.

Grays Harbor Transit says... We have not received any vans after June of this year. On our vans prior to that, the buzzer only activates if the doors is opened with the ignition switch in the off position.

Intercity Transit says... I have not been advised of this law. However, if it is true I can't imagine that you could not have any type alarm that you want as long as it meets the decibel requirements of the new law.

Link Transit says... In regards to your question....our wheelchair doors have both a visual and audible indicator. This is tied into the cutaway interlock system (emergency brake) and when the brake is depressed the buzzer goes off....sounds like this system has a wiring defect in the bus electrical. All this falls under 403-404 guidelines. [Click here](#) for more information on the law.

Whatcom Transit says... This is the first time I've heard of a "new law" about this. Sure would like to know more. I can't imagine this particular buzzer tone is mandated by law.