

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Subject: Safety at emergency vehicle site

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Overview

This bill makes various changes with regard to the law requiring persons to adopt an "appropriate reduced speed" when approaching or passing an emergency vehicle. It clarifies what is meant by "appropriate reduced speed," increases the surcharge for failure to reduce speed when emergency vehicle warning markers have been set out, allows citations for violations within four hours of the violation, and requires information on emergency vehicle safety in driver education programs and the Minnesota driver's manual.

Section

- 1** **Reduced speed.** Amends the law that requires an appropriate reduced speed when approaching or passing an emergency vehicle, by specifying that an appropriate reduced speed when approaching or passing an emergency vehicle stopped on a highway is a speed that allows the driver to control the vehicle enough, up to and including stopping, to prevent a collision, avoid injury and property damage, and avoid interference with emergency personnel.

Increases from \$25 to \$75 the minimum surcharge on violations of the law requiring appropriate reduced speed near a stopped emergency vehicle, to apply only if illuminated or reflective markers have been set out within 1,000 feet of the scene of the emergency.
- 2** **Driver education.** Requires the Department of Public Safety to require that students in school driver education programs and in commercial driver training schools are given instruction as to responsibility of drivers when approaching emergency scenes.

Section

- 3** **Arrest within four hours.** Allows a peace officer to arrest a person for failure to drive at an appropriate reduced speed when approaching or passing an emergency vehicle if the arrest is within four hours of the violation. Provides that the owner of a vehicle that commits such a violation is guilty of a petty misdemeanor. Exempts stolen vehicles and instances where another person is convicted of the offense.
- 4** **Driver's manual.** Requires the Minnesota driver's manual to contain a section on responsibility of drivers when approaching emergency scenes.