

FAQs on Lighting and Visibility Laws for Agricultural Vehicles

What are the lighting and visibility requirements for agricultural tractors and self-propelled agricultural equipment? Agricultural tractors and self-propelled agricultural machines must be equipped with full lighting systems (i.e. side lamps, head lamps, rear lamps, stop lamps, direction indicators and number plate lighting) at all times, and not just during lighting up hours*. For further details please view section 4 of the [Revised Standards for Agricultural Vehicles](#) booklet.

What are the revised lighting and visibility requirements for agricultural trailers and interchangeable towed equipment?

- Agricultural trailers and interchangeable towed equipment must be equipped with side lamps, rear lamps, stop lamps, indicators and number plate lighting. They must also be fitted with a marker lamp on their right-hand side if, when coupled to an agricultural tractor, the overall length of the combination is **more than 10 metres**.
- Agricultural trailers with a **DGVW over 3,500kg** must also be fitted with reflective rear markings. If these trailers form part of a combination of vehicles that is **over 10 metres long**, they must also have reflective side markings.
- Finally, a rear 'LONG VEHICLE' marking must be fitted to a combination of vehicles **over 13 metres long**.
- The reflective and 'LONG VEHICLE' marking requirements do not apply to pieces of interchangeable towed equipment that can carry more than three times their own unladen weight. For example, slurry tankers, fertiliser or manure spreaders, grain chaser bins, and so on.

Are there any lighting/visibility exemptions for older tractors/trailers? Vintage tractors/machinery (i.e. manufactured or first registered 30 years ago) are exempt from having to be equipped with a full lighting system (i.e. side lamps, head lamps, rear lamps, stop lamps, direction indicators and number plate lighting) provided they are being used **during daylight hours only***. This applies to the trailers being towed by them as well.

Are all tractors required to be fitted with a flashing amber beacon? Yes, even vintage tractors unless they're only taking part in vintage rallies or being used for display purposes.

I have a pre-1980 agricultural tractor and I regularly use it on the public road. It has lights fitted. Do the new laws mean I am no longer required to have lights fitted or working? No. You must keep the lighting and reflectors fitted to your existing vehicles well maintained in a clean and efficient condition so they can be used at any time.

Do agricultural trailers and towed equipment require number plate lighting? Yes, unless they are vintage.

Can I fit 'modern UN/ECE' specification marker lamps and reflective markings to older trailers? Yes. Most people will choose to do this as it's more practical. For more detailed information on reflective markings please refer to section 4 of our [Revised Standards for Agricultural Vehicles](#) booklet.

How do I go about achieving compliance with the revised lighting and visibility standards? You should contact the original manufacturer or their authorised Irish distributor. If the original manufacturer is no longer in business, you could contact an alternative manufacturer of similar equipment. They may be able to examine the vehicle for you to see what work needs to be done (if any) to achieve compliance.

I have interchangeable towed equipment (e.g. a baler, crop sprayer, grass rake) that has no lights. Do the new laws apply to these types of vehicles? Yes. However, such equipment will only need lights if, when attached to a tractor or self-propelled agricultural machine, it blocks the lighting and reflectors fitted to the front or rear of the tractor or self-propelled agricultural machine itself.

Where can I get advice about how to maintain the lighting systems fitted to the agricultural trailers in my yard? You should consult a competent person e.g. a representative of the original manufacturer or one of their authorised distributors. You should never attempt to carry out repairs yourself if you haven't had appropriate training.

When should work lamps/ploughing lamps be used? Work lamps commonly referred to as 'ploughing lamps', are fitted to agricultural tractors and self-propelled agricultural machinery for off-road use only (e.g. farm yard or field) to give extra visibility to perform specific tasks. These lamps should be switched off when the vehicles are in use on a public road. The Regulations ban white lights being used on the rear of a vehicle on public roads as they can confuse and dazzle other road users.

*Daylight hours means any time outside 'lighting-up' hours. Lighting up' hours is a half hour after sunset until a half hour before sunrise the next day.