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The original Fire Suppression System guidance letter was issued 03/09/2017. This 12/18/2019 revision removed the requirement for the system to be solely a Water Based Fire Suppression System.

Question 1: May a school bus contractor install a Fire Suppression System in their fleet of school buses?

A school bus contractor shall follow the steps required by Trans 300.80 to obtain approval prior to the installation, but in general, if the guidance below is followed it will be allowed.

Guidance: The Division of State Patrol approves the install of a Fire Suppression System with the following requirements:

- If any items required to operate the system are to be installed in the interior of the school bus they must be installed and secured in the driver's compartment. "Driver's compartment" is defined in Trans 300.02(2) and means the area forward of the rearmost portion of the driver's seat across the entire width of the bus. Securement of the items behind the driver's seat, but in front of the two most forward barriers, is permissible. All applicable items secured in the driver's compartment must be in a tamper proof housing to prevent damage and accessibility by the passengers.
- All items to operate the Fire Suppression System which are installed under the hood in the engine compartment shall not interfere with any OEM installed items.
- No exposed wires to operate the system will be allowed. Wires must be installed behind panels, channels or conduit.
- Any items such as operating handles, buttons, and system monitoring devices may be installed on the interior of the school bus in the driver's compartment if they do not interfere or obstruct any required items required by Trans 300.
- Any propellant used to extinguish the fire must not be harmful or toxic to the driver, passengers, or the environment.

If these requirements are not met place the school bus out of service until such time that it is in compliance with this guidance.

Sincerely,

Lieutenant Karl L. Mittelstadt
Division of State Patrol – Motor Carrier Enforcement Section