
Wisconsin Legislative Council

ACT MEMO



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2021 Wisconsin Act 108
[2021 Senate Bill 437]

**Operation of Unregistered
Vehicles During an Emergency**

BACKGROUND

Subject to various exceptions, Wisconsin law generally prohibits a person from operating, or an owner from consenting to the operation of, various types of vehicles unless the vehicle is registered with the state. Under prior law, this prohibition did not apply during a state of emergency proclaimed under ch. 323, Stats., which authorizes the Governor to declare a state of emergency when an emergency resulting from a disaster, or the imminent threat of a disaster, exists.

2021 WISCONSIN ACT 108

2021 Wisconsin Act 108 repeals the exception for operation of unregistered vehicles during a state of emergency and creates a narrower exception for emergencies or disasters.

Specifically, under Act 108, the prohibition against operating unregistered vehicles does not apply to the operation of a vehicle that is caused by pressure of natural physical forces causing the owner or operator reasonably to believe that operation of the vehicle is the only means of preventing imminent death or great bodily harm to a person or imminent public disaster.

Effective date: December 5, 2021

AO:jal