



## WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ACT MEMO

**2011 Wisconsin Act 265**  
[2011 Assembly Bill 486]

**Definition of “Vehicle” and  
“Motor Vehicle”**

2011 Wisconsin Act 265 is remedial legislation, introduced by the Law Revision Committee at the request of the Department of Transportation. In general, the Act provides consistent treatment of snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), and electric personal assistive mobile devices in the definitions of “vehicle” and “motor vehicle” as they are used in various statutes.

Generally, “vehicle” means every device in, upon, or by which any person or property is or may be transported or drawn upon a highway, except railroad trains. Prior law specifically excluded snowmobiles and electric personal assistive mobile devices from this definition unless made specifically applicable by statute. Under the Act, ATVs are also specifically excluded from the definition of “vehicle” unless made specifically applicable by statute.

Additionally, in general, “motor vehicle” means a vehicle, including a combination of two or more vehicles or an articulated vehicle, which is self-propelled, except a vehicle operated exclusively on a rail. “Motor vehicle” includes, without limitation, a commercial motor vehicle or a vehicle which is propelled by electric power obtained from overhead trolley wires but not operated on rails. Prior law specifically excluded snowmobiles and ATVs from this definition unless made specifically applicable by statute. Under the Act, electric personal assistive mobile devices are also specifically excluded from the definition of “motor vehicle” unless made specifically applicable by statute.

Thus, under the Act, snowmobiles, ATVs, and electric personal assistive mobile devices are excluded from the definition of “vehicle” and “motor vehicle,” unless made specifically applicable by statute.

The Act also amends numerous statutes that create exceptions to these definitions in a manner that gives consistent treatment of snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, and electric personal assistive mobile devices.

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This memo provides a brief description of the Act. For more detailed information, consult the text of the law and related legislative documents at the Legislature’s Web site at: <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/>.