WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §17A-6-10D

§17A-6-10d. Special plates for nonprofit corporations engaged in research and development.

(a) Notwithstanding any of the other provisions of this article, a nonprofit corporation engaged in research and development using motor vehicles pursuant to §18B-12-1 *et seq*. of this code and affiliated with institutions of higher education may operate or move a vehicle, either owned or in the possession of the nonprofit corporation upon the highways of this state for purposes of transporting or testing that vehicle without first registering or titling the vehicle and displaying, in a manner prescribed by the commissioner, a special plate issued to the nonprofit corporation as provided in this section.

(b) Any nonprofit corporation as prescribed in subsection (a) of this section may make application to the commissioner upon a form prescribed by him or her for a certificate containing a general distinguishing number and for a special plate or plates. The applicant shall verify that it is a Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, nonprofit corporation and submit sufficient information, as may be required by the commissioner, that it is engaged in research and development of vehicles, special fuels, or equipment for motor vehicles.

(c) The commissioner, upon approving an application, may issue without charge to the applicant, a certificate containing the nonprofit corporation's name and address and its general distinguishing number. The commissioner may also issue without charge, a special plate or plates, as determined by the commissioner as necessary, that must be displayed on the vehicle. Each plate shall also contain a number or symbol distinguishing it from other plates bearing the same general distinguishing number.

(d) The nonprofit corporation that is issued a special plate pursuant to this section must keep written records as required by the commissioner concerning the operation of the vehicle. The records shall be open to inspection by any law-enforcement officer or division employee.

(e) This section does not apply to the use of any other vehicles owned, leased, or operated by the nonprofit corporation.

(f) A nonprofit corporation that has been issued a special plate is not required to comply with the bond or dealer recovery fund otherwise required under this article for that vehicle.

(g) A nonprofit corporation that has been issued a special plate shall furnish information, satisfactory to the commissioner, that the vehicle is covered by an appropriate insurance policy or proof of financial responsibility in amounts not less than the requirements of §17D-4-2 of this code.

(h) Vehicles operated by a nonprofit corporation pursuant to this section are exempt from

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the periodic motor vehicle inspection and the displaying of the certificate of inspection otherwise required by §17C-16-1 *et seq*. of this code. However, a vehicle that has been issued a special plate pursuant to this section must be safe and may not, in any manner, endanger the driver, other vehicle occupants, other motorists, pedestrians, or the general public.

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