

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2007**

**SESSION LAW 2007-455  
HOUSE BILL 976**

**AN ACT TO CLARIFY THE DEFINITION OF PUBLIC VEHICULAR AREA IN  
MOTOR VEHICLE LAW AND TO REQUIRE ACCESS TO GATED  
COMMUNITIES FOR EMERGENCY SERVICE VEHICLES.**

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** G.S. 20-4.01(32) reads as rewritten:

**"§ 20-4.01. Definitions.**

Unless the context requires otherwise, the following definitions apply throughout this Chapter to the defined words and phrases and their cognates:

- (32) Public Vehicular Area. – Any area within the State of North Carolina that meets one or more of the following requirements:
- a. The area is used by the public for vehicular traffic at any time, including by way of illustration and not limitation any drive, driveway, road, roadway, street, alley, or parking lot upon the grounds and premises of any of the following:
    1. Any public or private hospital, college, university, school, orphanage, church, or any of the institutions, parks or other facilities maintained and supported by the State of North Carolina or any of its subdivisions.
    2. Any service station, drive-in theater, supermarket, store, restaurant, or office building, or any other business, residential, or municipal establishment providing parking space whether the business or establishment is open or closed.
    3. Any property owned by the United States and subject to the jurisdiction of the State of North Carolina. (The inclusion of property owned by the United States in this definition shall not limit assimilation of North Carolina law when applicable under the provisions of Title 18, United States Code, section 13).
  - b. The area is a beach area used by the public for vehicular traffic.
  - c. The area is a road used by vehicular traffic within or leading to a gated or non-gated subdivision or community, whether or not the subdivision or community roads have been offered for dedication to the public.
  - d. The area is a portion of private property used by vehicular traffic and designated by the private property owner as a public vehicular area in accordance with G.S. 20-219.4."

**SECTION 2.** Part 10 of Article 3 of Chapter 20 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

**"§ 20-158.3. Emergency entry to controlled access roads.**

Any person, association, or other legal entity having responsibility for a controlled access system on a road that is a public vehicular area shall provide a means of immediate access to all emergency service vehicles, which shall include law

enforcement, fire, rescue, ambulance, and first responder vehicles. This section shall not apply to any entity where federal regulations and requirements on its activities preempt application of State regulations or requirements."

**SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective December 1, 2007.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 26<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2007.

s/ Beverly E. Perdue  
President of the Senate

s/ Joe Hackney  
Speaker of the House of Representatives

s/ Michael F. Easley  
Governor

Approved 8:07 p.m. this 28<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2007