

CHAPTER 230

(HB 443)

AN ACT relating to motor vehicle titles.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

SECTION 1. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 186A IS CREATED TO READ AS FOLLOWS:

- (1) *The provisions of KRS 186A.500 to 186A.550 notwithstanding, the owner of a motor vehicle that has been damaged solely by hail shall have the regular title of the vehicle branded as follows "Hail Damage" if:*
 - (a) *The vehicle is in a condition that it can be legally operated on the highway;*
 - (b) *The total estimated or actual cost of parts and labor to rebuild or reconstruct the vehicle to its pre-hail condition exceeds seventy-five percent (75%) of the retail value of the vehicle, as set forth in a current edition of the National Automobile Dealer's Association price guide; and*
 - (c) *The owner intends to retain ownership of the vehicle.*
- (2) *A person seeking to have the title of a vehicle branded for hail damage under subsection (1) of this section shall present the sheriff with a statement from the person's insurance company that the damage exceeds seventy-five percent (75%) of the retail value of the vehicle and is solely the result of hail damage, and shall have the vehicle inspected by the sheriff of the county in which the vehicle is registered. Upon completion of inspection of the vehicle, the sheriff shall indicate on the vehicle transaction record form if he or she has received a statement from the person's insurance company that the damage to the vehicle is the result of hail damage and if the total estimated or actual cost of parts and labor to rebuild or reconstruct the vehicle to its pre-hail condition exceeds seventy-five percent (75%) of the retail value of the vehicle, as set forth in a current edition of the National Automobile Dealer's Association price guide. The sheriff shall be paid a fee of five dollars (\$5) to conduct an inspection under this subsection.*
- (3) *Upon completion of the inspection required under subsection (2) of this section, a person shall take the vehicle transaction record form and the title to the vehicle to the office of the county clerk in the county in which the vehicle is registered. If the sheriff has certified on the vehicle transaction record form that the damage to the vehicle is the result of hail damage and if the total estimated or actual cost of parts and labor to rebuild or reconstruct the vehicle to its pre-hail condition exceeds seventy-five percent (75%) of the retail value of the vehicle, as set forth in a current edition of the National Automobile Dealer's Association price guide, the title shall not be surrendered to the clerk, but the clerk shall stamp on the face of the title "Hail Damage". The clerk shall also enter into the Automated Motor Vehicle Registration System (AVIS) the information that the title has been branded in the clerk's office "Hail Damage". The county clerk shall be paid a fee of three dollars (\$3) to carry out the provisions of this subsection.*
- (4) *A title branded "Hail Damage" under the provisions of subsection (3) of this section shall retain the brand for as long as the person holds title to the vehicle, and upon the sale or transfer of the vehicle, the new title issued shall continue to carry the brand "Hail Damage".*

- (5) ***An insurance company shall not render payment on a vehicle damaged solely by hail in excess of seventy-five percent (75%) of the retail value of the vehicle until the title has been branded "Hail Damage".***

Section 2. KRS 186A.520 is amended to read as follows:

- (1) ***Except as provided in Section 1 of this Act***, a salvage title shall be obtained by the owner of a motor vehicle that meets the following definition of a salvage vehicle:
- (a) A vehicle which has been wrecked, destroyed, or damaged, to the extent that the total estimated or actual cost of parts and labor to rebuild or reconstruct the vehicle to its preaccident condition and for legal operation on the roads or highways exceeds seventy-five percent (75%) of the retail value of the vehicle, as set forth in a current edition of the National Automobile Dealer's Association price guide.
 - (b) The value of repair parts for purposes of this definition shall be determined by using the current published retail cost of the parts equal in kind and quality to the parts to be replaced or the actual retail cost of the repair parts used in repair.
 - (c) The labor costs of repairs for purposes of this section shall be computed by using the hourly labor rate and time allocations which are reasonable and customary in the automobile repair industry in the community where the repairs are performed.
- (2) The owner or an authorized agent of a motor vehicle that meets the definition of a salvage vehicle as set forth in subsection (1) of this section shall, within fifteen (15) days from the loss or settlement of the loss, submit an application to the county clerk, on a form prescribed by the Department of Vehicle Regulation, for a salvage title, accompanied by a properly endorsed certificate of title and any lien satisfactions, if any appear, as may be required.
- (3) The county clerk shall retain a copy of each salvage title application received and shall forward the original and its supporting documents to the Department of Vehicle Regulation in a manner similar to that for handling of an application for a title.
- (4) The Department of Vehicle Regulation shall process the salvage title application in a manner similar to that used in processing a title application and the salvage title shall be delivered in a like manner of a title. Salvage titles shall be construed as proof of ownership of a vehicle in a state as to be unusable upon the highways of the Commonwealth. A vehicle shall not be issued a registration for highway use as long as a salvage title is in force.
- (5) The only time a vehicle with a salvage title may be operated upon the highways of the Commonwealth is when it is in route to or from an inspection by the certified inspector prior to obtaining a certificate of title after having been rebuilt as per KRS 186.115.

Section 3. KRS 186A.530 is amended to read as follows:

- (1) The owner of a motor vehicle that meets the definition of a salvage vehicle as set forth in KRS 186A.520(1) and has been issued a salvage certificate of title in Kentucky, or the equivalent thereof by another licensing jurisdiction, and has been rebuilt, may make application for a new certificate of title pursuant to KRS 186.115. The Transportation Cabinet may promulgate administrative regulations pursuant to KRS Chapter 13A governing the form of application.
- (2) Upon receipt of a salvage certificate of title issued pursuant to KRS 186A.520 or subsection (5) of this section, or similar title issued by another state, and proof of passing the inspection required by KRS 186A.115, the cabinet shall issue a new certificate of title with the words

"rebuilt vehicle" printed on the face of the title. The brand shall be carried forward and printed in the appropriate section on the face of all titles issued thereafter for that motor vehicle.

- (3) If ownership of a motor vehicle has been transferred to an insurance company through payment of damages, the insurance company making the payment of damages shall be deemed the owner of the vehicle.
- (4) The owner of a water damaged vehicle shall make application to the cabinet for a salvage certificate of title as provided for in KRS 186A.520. The owner of a vehicle with a brand from another jurisdiction identifying the vehicle as water damaged or other similar designation who is making application for a Kentucky title shall be issued a title with the words "water damaged" printed on the face of the title.
- (5) A Kentucky salvage certificate of title may be issued from an out-of-state junking certificate or other ownership document bearing a designation of "junk," "unrebuildable," or other similar classification with the following provisions:
 - (a) The out-of-state junking certificate of title or other ownership certificate shall be an original, secure document.
 - (b) The applicant shall submit a minimum of two (2) photographs of the motor vehicle showing the damage to the motor vehicle. The photographs shall be included in the application for a salvage certificate of title.
 - (c) The applicant shall submit a minimum of two (2) estimates of damage verifying that the condition of the vehicle which has been issued the junking certificate constitutes less than seventy-five percent (75%) of the retail value of the vehicle, as set forth in a current edition of the National Auto Dealers' Association N.A.D.A. price guide.
- (6)
 - (a) When an insurance company makes a claim settlement on a vehicle that has been stolen and recovered, if the vehicle meets the definition of a salvage vehicle as set forth in KRS 186A.520, the company shall apply for a salvage certificate of title as provided for in KRS 186A.520. Upon receipt of this information, the cabinet shall issue the company a certificate of title to replace a salvage certificate of title. The cabinet shall promulgate administrative regulations pursuant to KRS Chapter 13A regarding the forms and any additional information which insurance companies shall be required to obtain and submit when seeking a certificate of title to replace a salvage certificate of title.
 - (b) In claim settlements that do not involve transfer of the vehicle to the insurance company, an insurer shall not render payment on a damage claim for a vehicle whose damage meets or exceeds seventy-five percent (75%) of the value of the vehicle, until the insurer has received proof that the owner has surrendered the title or has applied for a salvage certificate of title as set forth in KRS 186A.520. The owner shall apply for a salvage certificate of title within three (3) working days of the agreed settlement. ***This subsection shall not apply to hail-damaged vehicles under Section 1 of this Act.***
 - (c) An insurance company shall not refuse coverage to, and shall not reclassify coverage of, a vehicle that has been issued a rebuilt title pursuant to the provisions of this section.
- (7) A motor vehicle owner or a motor vehicle dealer licensed in this state who offers for sale, trade, or transfer a motor vehicle which carries a title brand, as set forth in subsection (2) of

this section, shall disclose the nature of the brand to any prospective buyer or transferee, prior to the sale, and according to the following:

- (a) Dealer disclosure shall be located on the previous consumer-owner sticker provided for in KRS 190.080. The sticker notification shall appear in a color different from that of the previous consumer-owner sticker and shall be set apart from other information required by KRS 190.080. The sticker wording shall be printed in at least ten (10) point, bold face type, on a background of obviously different color, and shall include the following: "THIS IS A REBUILT VEHICLE." This disclosure information shall not appear on previous consumer-owner stickers for vehicles that do not have a branded title. Dealer disclosure shall also be located on a buyer's notification form to be approved by the Transportation Cabinet. The form shall inform the buyer that the vehicle is a rebuilt vehicle and may include any other information the cabinet deems necessary.
 - (b) Nondealer disclosure shall be made in accordance with the procedures provided for in KRS 186A.060. The Department of Vehicle Regulation shall ensure that disclosure information appears near the beginning of the application for title and informs the buyer that the vehicle is a rebuilt vehicle.
- (8) Failure of a dealer to procure the buyer's acknowledgment signature on the buyer's notification form or failure of any person other than a dealer to procure the buyer's acknowledgment signature on the vehicle transaction record form shall render the sale voidable at the election of the buyer. The election to render the sale voidable shall be limited to forty-five (45) days after issuance of the title. This provision shall not bar any other remedies otherwise available to the purchaser.
 - (9) The notification provisions of this section shall not apply to motor vehicles more than ten
 - (10) model years old.
 - (10) The Transportation Cabinet shall promulgate administrative regulations pursuant to KRS Chapter 13A, regarding the administration of the title branding procedure within ninety (90) days from July 15, 1994. The administrative regulations may include designation of additional brands which provide significant information to the owner.

Approved March 29, 2000