

Consumer Alert: NHTSA Cautions Buyers that Trailers Must Meet Federal Safety Regulations

An important notice from NHTSA to consumers, importers and trailer manufacturers

August 30, 2022 | Washington, DC

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration today warned that noncompliant trailers that may pose a safety risk are increasingly marketed and sold to small businesses throughout the United States. These trailers are often marketed as food trucks or vending stations.

These trailers are only permitted under U.S. law if they are certified as meeting Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards. In addition to the potential safety risk posed by noncompliant trailers, people attempting to import them into the country or title and register them with local authorities can incur significant expenses, only to face potential forfeiture of the noncompliant trailers.

NHTSA warns anyone purchasing a trailer to avoid falling victim to sellers of illegal trailers. Trailers that do not comply with Federal regulations may not be safe and are not allowed to enter the United States.

Please be aware that trailers must comply with Federal standards to ensure that they are equipped with appropriate critical safety components, such as lighting, tires and wheels. Only companies registered with NHTSA may manufacture trailers compliant with these standards.

Please use caution when shopping for these trailers, especially if you are considering online listings for trailers that must be imported into the United States. A compliant trailer will have an affixed label indicating it meets all applicable Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards.

In addition, potential trailer buyers should consult the Vehicle Product Information Catalog and Vehicle Listing [Manufacturer Portal](#) to determine whether the manufacturer is listed with NHTSA before purchasing a trailer.



Example of label indicating Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards

For more information, please contact NHTSA's Manufacturer Help Desk at manufacturerinfo@dot.gov or [888-399-3277](tel:888-399-3277). For information concerning the importation of trailers, please visit [NHTSA.gov/importing-vehicle](https://www.nhtsa.gov/importing-vehicle).

In addition, NHTSA encourages you to report any trailers that you believe may violate NHTSA's requirements. Please report these to importcertification@dot.gov.

Contact:

NHTSA

NHTSA Media NHTSAmedia@dot.gov 202-366-9550