

## New Law Applies To Certain Private Commercial Carriers

The 1983 General Assembly recently modified existing legislation pertaining to highway safety rules for private motor carrier vehicles engaged in commerce in North Carolina, officials in the North Carolina Department of Transportation's (NCDOT's) Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) have announced. This legislation became effective December 1, 1983.

Previously, federal safety regulations only applied to the following classifications: (1) for-hire motor carrier vehicles engaged in interstate and intrastate commerce on North Carolina's highways, private motor carriers operating in interstate commerce on North Carolina's highways, and private motor carriers engaged in interstate and intrastate transportation of hazardous waste and radioactive waste materials.

Federal safety requirements pertain to the equipment on the vehicle as well as any hazardous materials it may carry. The operation of the vehicle itself must also satisfy certain safety rules. These safety requirements have been extended to the following classifications of private motor carrier vehicles used in the commercial transportation of passengers or cargo:

1. If the vehicle has a gross weight rating of 10,000 pounds or more.
2. If the vehicle is designed to transport more than ten passengers including the driver.
3. If the vehicle is used in the transportation of hazardous materials as defined in the Federal Hazardous Materials Transportation Act.

DMV Commissioner R.W. Wilkins, Jr., explained, "Since the federal safety rules are rather complex and now are extended to certain classes of private carriers, we want to work closely with each operator of a private carrier so that we can familiarize him with the laws and thereby avoid costly penalties for him and to protect the public."

These specific safety requirements are defined in a book called **The Code of Federal Regulations: Parts 390-398** (applied to operation and equipment rules) and **Parts 170-178** (applied to the transportation of hazardous material). This book can be purchased through the government printing office bookstore in Atlanta, Georgia.

Wilkins suggested; however, to avoid costs to the private operator that DMV's License Theft and Weight Enforcement section be consulted. Wilkins said, "We are here to help and we want to help. Questions can be directed to us at (919) 733-4077 or write us at Motor Carrier Safety Regulation Unit, Division of Motor Vehicle, 1100 New Bern Avenue, Raleigh, NC 27697."

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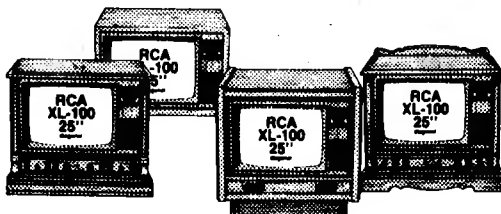
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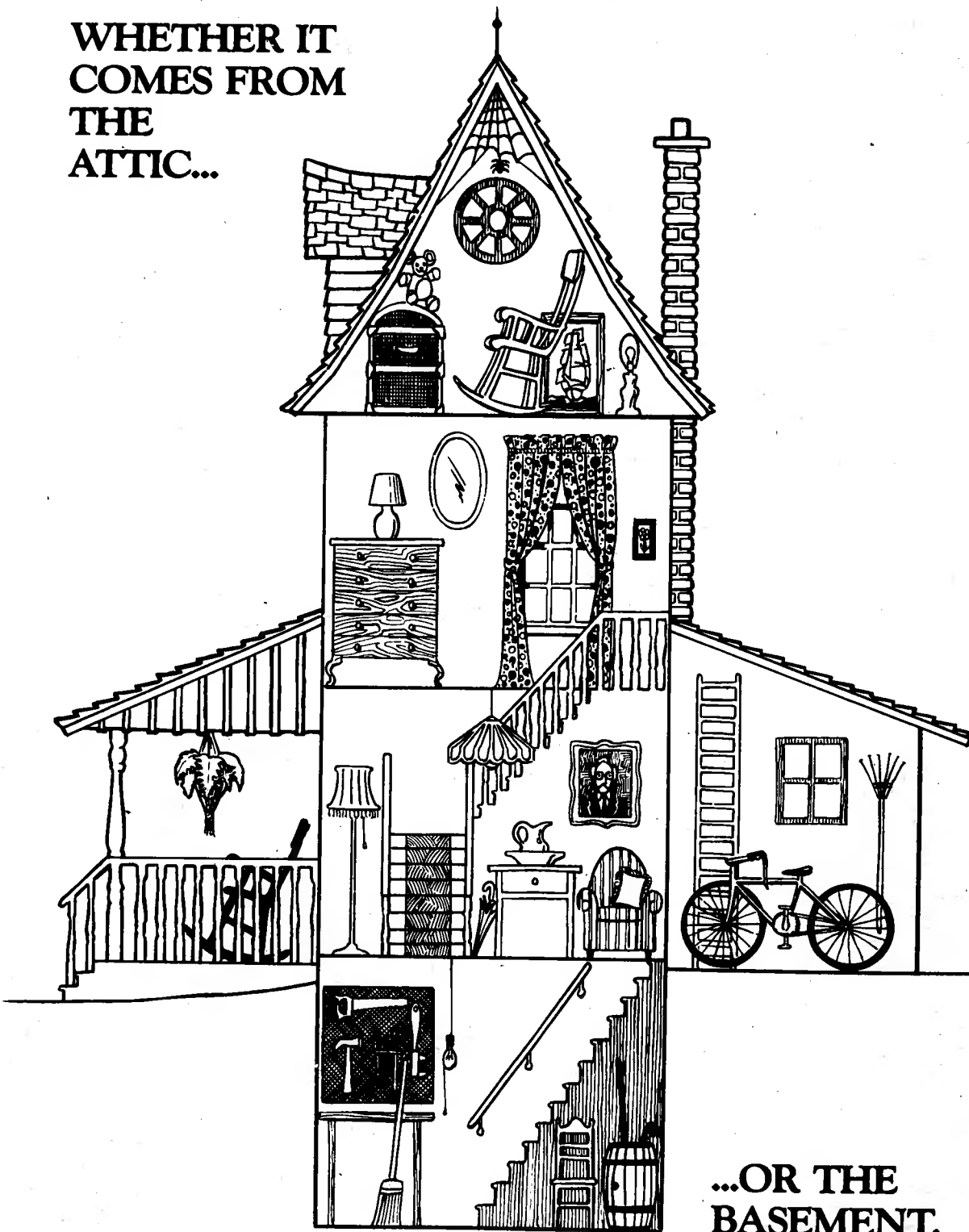
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