

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
1993 SESSION

CHAPTER 71
HOUSE BILL 621

AN ACT REGARDING COUPLING DEVICES FOR TRAILERS AND TOWED
VEHICLES.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1. G.S. 20-123 reads as rewritten:

"§ 20-123. Trailers and towed vehicles.

(a) No motor vehicle shall be driven upon any highway drawing or having attached thereto more than one trailer or semitrailer: Provided that this provision shall not apply to trailers not exceeding three in number drawn by a motor vehicle used by municipalities for the removal of domestic and commercial refuse and street rubbish, but such combination of vehicles shall not exceed a total length of 50 feet inclusive of front and rear bumpers: Provided that this provision shall not apply to a combination of vehicles coupled together by a saddle mount device used to transport motor vehicles in a driveaway service when no more than two saddle mounts are used and provided further that equipment used in said combination is approved by the safety regulations of the Interstate Commerce Commission and the safety regulations of the North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles and the Department of Transportation. Nothing herein shall prohibit the towing of farm trailers not exceeding three in number nor exceeding a total length of 50 feet during the period from one-half hour before sunrise until one-half hour after sunset provided that a red flag at least 12 inches square shall be prominently displayed on the last vehicle. The towing of farm trailers and equipment as herein permitted shall not be applicable to interstate or federal numbered highways.

(b) No trailer or semitrailer or other towed vehicle shall be operated over the highways of the State unless such trailer or semitrailer or other towed vehicle be firmly attached to the rear of the ~~motor vehicle drawing same,~~ towing unit, and unless so equipped that it will not snake, but will travel in the path of the vehicle drawing such trailer or semitrailer or other towed vehicle, which equipment shall at all times be kept in good condition.

(c) In addition to the requirements of subsections (a) and (b) of this section, the towed vehicle shall be attached to the towing unit by means of safety chains or cables which shall be of sufficient strength to hold the gross weight of the towed vehicle in the event the primary towing device fails or becomes disconnected while being operated on the highways of this State if the primary towing attachment is a ball hitch. Trailers and semitrailers having locking pins or bolts in the towing attachment to prevent disconnection, and the locking pins or bolts are of sufficient strength and condition to hold the gross weight of the towed vehicle, need not be equipped with safety chains or

cables unless their operation is subject to the requirements of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations. Semitrailers in combinations of vehicles that are equipped with fifth wheel assemblies that include locking devices need not be equipped with safety chains or cables."

Sec. 2. This act becomes effective December 1, 1993, and applies to offenses occurring on or after that date.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 24th day of May, 1993.

Dennis A. Wicker
President of the Senate

Daniel Blue, Jr.
Speaker of the House of Representatives