

## **Beware potential buyers and current owners of mini-trucks**

AMES, Iowa – June 1, 2007 – The Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) is warning potential buyers and current owners of mini-trucks (also called min-cabs) that the vehicles cannot be legally operated on the public roadways and streets in Iowa. The DOT offers the following additional information.



### **What are mini-trucks?**

Mini-trucks are lightweight and similar in size to a golf cart (approximately 10 feet long by 5 feet high by 4 feet wide). Mini-trucks are imported used from Japan and are manufactured by familiar companies, such as Honda, Suzuki, Daihatsu, Mitsubishi, and Subaru. The mini-trucks were principally manufactured between the years of 1989 and 2004. Although mini-trucks appear road-worthy they are not. They are not legal for highway use in the U.S. because they do not meet the federal vehicle standards established by the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) and environmental standards established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards

### **Why are mini-trucks making their way to the United States?**

In Japan, mini-trucks are often used for regular travel. However, the cost of owning an older model mini-truck increases significantly. The Japanese government imposes high taxes and fees on older models because the emissions increase considerably. There is little to no market for used or older mini-trucks in Japan because of the high costs of owning one.

Recent changes in U.S. Customs and Border Protection regulations now permit used Japanese-made mini-trucks to be imported to the United States, if they have a permanently-installed engine and/or transmission governor limiting their speed to 25 miles per hour. There are no approved registered importers of new mini-trucks or used mini-trucks legal for on-road use in the United States.

### **Can a mini-truck be titled and registered in Iowa?**

No, since a mini-truck cannot be legally operated on public roadway or street in the Iowa.

### **Where can mini-trucks legally operate?**

Mini-trucks can be operated off-road in Iowa. They are commonly used as farm utility vehicles, off-road trail vehicles for hunters, wholesale nursery stock transporters, and in parking facilities, stadiums, warehouses, orchards, stables, cemeteries, public grounds, campgrounds, theme parks, etc.

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