



## Tech Tip 15-0217-1

### TIRE SIZE CHANGES FOR VEHICLES IN SERVICE

As a dealer we receive calls from operators requesting to change tire sizes on their Type C and Type D school buses. Previously we were able to contact Blue Bird and if the change was permitted from the original spec of the vehicle new FMVSS tags were made and we would need to change them on the vehicle.

Recently Blue Bird responded that “The tire sizes and PSI’s are “suitable” which is neither minimum nor maximum and that the customer could legally install any tire that would provide the front and rear and total weight ratings (e.g. 10000 front, 21000 rear, 31000 total) per NHTSA interpretation. As this was new information to us, we contacted Rusty Seastrum at NYSDOT to get his interpretation so we would not have issues should we direct customers to just change tires “at will”.

Rusty Responded:

The tag on school buses and other vehicles, especially those built in two or more stages, indicate a “suitable” tire for the chassis as it comes off the assembly line. However, the characteristics and capacity of the body that is installed later determines the tire that is necessary to be used for safe operation of the vehicle. The proper tire for the application is best determined by engineers from the tire manufacturers.

Upsizing and downsizing of tires may be done if the tire will provide acceptable performance according to the manufacturer’s documentation and no operational issues such as body/chassis interference, unequal loading of dual wheel tires etc. are presented by the change.

Several references have indicated that replacing the 10.00R22.5 with the 11.00R22.5 is acceptable if for all practical purposes the change can be made. However, a blanket statement cannot be made that this is the case for all vehicles. Therefore, if an operator or distributor wishes to make a change and provides documentation from the tire manufacturer stating that the change is acceptable and no issues stated above are presented then the change can be made.

As you can read in the underlined portion of Rusty’s response, the tire manufacture should be contacted to receive documentation as to tire size changes.

**PLEASE NOTE:** You should also be aware that with today’s electronics that there are various settings that may need to be changed if tire sizes are changed.

**For more information contact our nearest Service Department**

**Chittenango: 315-687-3969 or 1-800-962-5768**

**Rochester: 585-424-3320 or 1-800-463-3232**

**Ravena: 518-756-1111 or 1-866-867-1111**

**Daryl Wallace or Brian Lamaitis**

**Gary Chichester or Dave Schaub**

**Ben Reiling**

**Customer Service Representatives**

**Eastern Region Gary Bigness 845-500-3707**

**Central Region JJ Richmond 315-559-3999**

**Western Region Mike Panzica 716-908-3186**