

Chief – I recently purchased a car in Sioux Falls that had tinted windows. A few months after returning to Minnesota I was stopped by the police and told that my window tint was too dark and that it needed to be removed. Please explain why?

Minnesota State Statute limits the amount of tint that you can have on your window to 48%. This means that your window must allow more than 47% of visible light to pass through. Window tint laws vary from state to state and in South Dakota you can have your windows tinted as dark as you want. This often causes a problem for people who purchase a car in South Dakota and then bring it to Minnesota. While very dark tint is legal in South Dakota it is not in Minnesota and the legal / registered owner is responsible to make sure their vehicle complies with the laws of the state in which they register the vehicle. I advise people to be careful when buying vehicles out of state and if they find a vehicle they want that has too dark of tint for Minnesota; have the dealership or owner remove the tint before you make the purchase. Another thing to keep in mind when you go to tint your own windows is that all of the glass in a motor vehicle comes from the factory with a small amount of tint in it. It is normally around 75%, meaning that it is allowing 75% of light to pass through. This is important to remember because when you go to Walmart to buy “do it yourself tint” and it says 50% legal tint, it is intended for windows that have no tint. When you put 50% tint on a window that is already tinted the amount of tint is compounded. An additional concern with having your windows tinted is that it makes it very difficult for people to see through the windows at night and increases their chances of hitting something. To make my point I ask people why don't they wear their sunglasses at night. They laugh saying, because it is too dark. Dark window tint is no different than wearing sunglasses at night, except with sunglasses you can take them off....

Chief Bill Bolt