



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SAE CLASS I, II, & III



The Society for Automotive Engineers (SAE) has established a standardized classification system for vehicle warning lights. There is some confusion as to what the different classifications mean, and what class of product is best for a particular application. This article explains in basic terms the difference between the three SAE classifications for warning lights.

What is the difference between SAE Class 1, SAE Class 2 and SAE Class 3 Warning Lights?

The SAE classification system for warning lights is a classification of light intensity designed to help determine the best application for the lighting unit.

Class III Warning lights in the Class 3 designation have approximately 40% of the minimum intensity of Class 2 warning lights. Class 3 products are typically used inside of buildings where there is little or no ambient sunlight. An example of a Class 3 warning light application is a forklift strobe light.

Class II Warning lights in the Class 2 designation have a minimum of approximately 2.5 times the light intensity of a class 3 warning light. Examples of Class 2 warning light applications include utility vehicles that work along roadsides.

Class I Warning lights in the Class 1 designation have a minimum of 4 times the light intensity of a Class 2 warning light. Examples of Class 1 warning light applications include emergency vehicles such as police, fire and ambulance.

The requirements for warning light classification requirements vary based upon the jurisdiction and application. We recommend that you consult with your local jurisdiction to determine which classification of lights is appropriate for your application.