

AUTOMOTIVE

# Mercedes-Benz automated drives now allowed turquoise marker lights, where approved

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*In a first for the auto industry, the manufacturer's approved exterior fixtures will give those on the road in California and Nevada the ability to identify its self-driving vehicles from afar. Image credit: Mercedes-Benz*

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By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

German automaker Mercedes-Benz has received permits for visible identifiers of automated vehicles (AVs).

Becoming the first manufacturer to get the go-ahead, California and Nevada have approved the company's use of turquoise-colored marker lights on SAE-Level 3 Drive Pilot system-equipped cars operating within the states. The brand's bulbs give those on the road the ability to identify Mercedes-Benz's self-driving vehicles from afar, carrying the potential to enhance safety for all.

"With the development of automated driving marker lights, Mercedes-Benz is once again setting new industry standards," said Markus Schfer, member of the board of management and chief technology officer of development and purchasing at [Mercedes-Benz Group AG](#), in a statement.

"We are the first automaker in the world to receive such approvals in the U.S., specifically in California and Nevada," Mr. Schfer said. "The more automated driving vehicles populate the road, the more important communication and interaction between the vehicle and the environment become."

## **Cruise control**

The turquoise fixtures signal the status of its corresponding automobile from afar. With the permits secured, Mercedes-Benz can learn more about the interactions that AVs have with other vehicles when in motion.

The simple update also leaves governing bodies involved with traffic law enforcement to decide whether or not AV drivers can participate in other activities in transport.



*The lights allow other drivers to identify which cars around them are AVs. Image credit: Mercedes-Benz*

Designed in line with SAE J3134 Recommended Practices -- the set of guidelines apply to automated driving systems -- California has requested the bulbs be placed on the front and rear lights, as well as the two outside mirrors of Mercedes-Benz testing cars.

In the sunny state, the exemption permit is limited to two years. Additionally, the special beams will only be placed on trial vehicles that have Drive Pilot, a SAE-Level 3 system for conditionally automated driving with globally valid type approval ([see story](#)).

In Nevada, the permit applies to Mercedes-Benz Model Year 2026 production vehicles and will be valid until the state legislature achieves statutory modification.

The company is working to standardize turquoise as a symbol for the automated driving state.

Though there is no such framework from the United States, China or the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, for instance, the shade's visibility levels offer added appeal.

According to findings from multiple test studies, it proved to be the "optimal color" for AVs, with results stating that psychological and physiological factors "attest to higher values in almost all areas with turquoise" as compared to other hues.

The development and finalization of the marker lights were progressed collaboratively by an interdisciplinary team of compliance managers, ethics experts, data protection experts and engineers.

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