

A salvage title is needed for all motor vehicles, motorcycles, recreational vehicles and semi-trailers that have sustained damage and fit any of the following conditions:

An insurance company has estimated that the cost to repair the vehicle is greater than 70% of the fair market value of the vehicle immediately before the damage occurred, and has a settlement in place with the insured person.

The owner of the vehicle is a business that insures its own vehicles and the cost of repairing the vehicle is greater than 70% of the fair market value immediately before the damage occurred.

The damage was caused by a flood.

The costs to repair the vehicle should include parts and labor. However, it should not include the costs to repair or replace air bags, sound systems and tires, or the tax on parts. If a determination of the fair market value cannot be made, the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) has the right to step in and give the assessment.

Salvage Title

If you wish to apply for a salvage title for your vehicle, go to any license agency and fill out State Form 49891, Salvage Title Affidavit, or you may download the form. Make sure to take the original title with you to the license agency, as you will need to surrender it.

Upon doing this and paying the \$9 fee, you will be given a "salvage" title.

Rebuilt Vehicle Title

If you've repaired your vehicle to the point where it can be operated on Indiana's highways, you may apply for a rebuilt vehicle title.

To do this, you will need to have:

Salvage State Form 44606, Affidavit of Restoration for a Salvage Motor Vehicle. You may also pick up a copy of the form at any license agency.

An Indiana police officer will need to complete a physical inspection of the vehicle, as well as check the vehicle and its components for theft.

Make sure to save all receipts, bills of sale and other ownership documents used in the purchase of major component parts. The police officer will need to examine all of this paperwork.

Additionally, all of the parts information (including name of the part, source vehicle identification number, name and address of the supplier, date of purchase and cost) will need to be recorded on the form. If everything checks out fine, the police officer will complete and sign the report.

Your next step will be to take the form back to the license agency. Bring along your salvage title, as you will need to surrender it. Once you have paid the \$9 fee, you will be given a "rebuilt vehicle" title.

Buyer Beware

Auto fraud takes on many forms and methods, but one of the more common types is trying to hide or misrepresent the condition or history of a vehicle.

Of course, this is illegal to do. Dealers and individuals are required to tell you before you buy if the vehicle has a "salvage" title or was in a serious accident. But, some will try to do so, anyway.

So, it's up to you as the potential buyer to also be a good detective. You may want to start by doing a title or lien search on the vehicle.

Also, check the vehicle over thoroughly. Many salvaged vehicles may look good, but have "hidden" problems like ineffec-

tive brakes, difficult handling and sloppy welding.

It's a good idea to have a trusted mechanic inspect the vehicle for you. The extra cost now may save you many hours of frustration later. If the seller refuses to allow your mechanic to take a look at the vehicle, just walk away from the sale.

If you have the slightest sense that the vehicle might have been in a flood, check for signs of water damage. Look under floor mats and in the trunk for dirt or mud. Check for dampness under the seats, in the trunk and under the hood. See if you can detect water stains anywhere.

If you suspect that the vehicle may have been in a serious accident, take a close look at the paint. Make sure it matches evenly throughout the vehicle, including on the inside of the door frame. Check for even spacing between the hood, trunk and doors.