

GEORGE W. HICKS, P.E.**REHABILITATION INDUSTRY BACKGROUND:**

Mr. George W. Hicks became involved with conducting after checks of modified rehabilitation vehicles in 1987. These after checks were conducted with Memorial Hospital in South Bend, Indiana. In 1989, Mr. Hicks helped set up and conduct a pilot program of modified vehicle after checks in the state of Michigan for Michigan Rehabilitation Services. In 1991 and 1992, additional vehicle after checks were also conducted in the state of Ohio for the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation. In 1998, Mr. Hicks became one of three inspectors to do vehicle after checks for the state of Indiana. In 1999, he became the inspector for the State of Ohio and in 2000 the Western Pennsylvania inspector.

Mr. Hicks has investigated and inspected a number of modified vehicles and rehabilitation equipment that have been involved in accidents or vehicle fires. The investigation typically is to determine what role if any the modified vehicle systems played in the incident. Numerous cases of mechanical problems with adaptive devices have also been investigated to locate and determine the cause of the malfunctions. These malfunctions have ranged from faulty components to installation problems. These investigations have been conducted in the states of Indiana (IN Vocational Rehabilitation, Memorial Hospital & Westfield Insurance Co.), Michigan (MI Rehabilitation Services & AAA-MI) and Ohio (MetroHealth Medical Center & Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation).

Conducting these after checks and technical investigations has allowed him to become quite familiar with the numerous equipment and techniques utilized by vendors in modifying rehabilitation vehicles. In June of 1991 Mr. Hicks wrote an article covering the modification of rehabilitation vehicles. The article, "Safety Standards & the Rehabilitation Vehicle", was published in the Detroit Legal News. In May of 1992 he presented a talk at the Midwest Conference of ADED in Cleveland, Ohio. This talk, entitled "Quality, Why Have It, What Is It & How To Achieve It", presented concerns seen with the quality of the modifications on some rehabilitation vehicles. These rehabilitation vehicles had been modified at extreme cost but were not capable of being driven due to mechanical problems. Mr. Hicks has also consulted with MetroHealth Hospital in Cleveland, Ohio to instrument their generic quadriplegic evaluation van. The development of the van was presented in the SAE paper (#932880) written by Mr. Hicks, "Anatomy of an Instrumented Generic Quadriplegic Evaluation Van". In 2001 Mr. Hicks presented a seminar "Modified Vehicle Inspections" at the NMEDA conference in Daytona Beach, Florida. In 2004 Mr. Hicks presented a talk at the MATAI conference titled "What to look for - Vehicle Modifications for Handicapped Occupants".

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