§ 117-a. Hazard vehicle. Every vehicle owned and operated or leased by a utility, whether public or private, used in the construction, maintenance and repair of its facilities, every vehicle specially equipped or designed for the towing or pushing of disabled vehicles, every vehicle engaged in highway maintenance, or in ice and snow removal where such operation involves the use of a public highway, vehicles driven by rural letter carriers while in the performance of their official duties, and every sani-van and waste collection vehicle while engaged in the collection of refuse and/or recyclable materials on a public highway.