

In association with

Low Volume Vehicle Technical Association (inc)

FOUR-WHEEL DRIVE STRUT SPACER WARNING

One of the most common questions currently being asked of the Low Volume Vehicle Technical Association (LVVTA) is the legality of coil spring strut spacers being fitted to late model utes and four-wheel drives.

These types of spacers are usually between 25-40mm in height and bolt in between the top of the front strut platform and the vehicle structure, to raise the ride height of the vehicle.

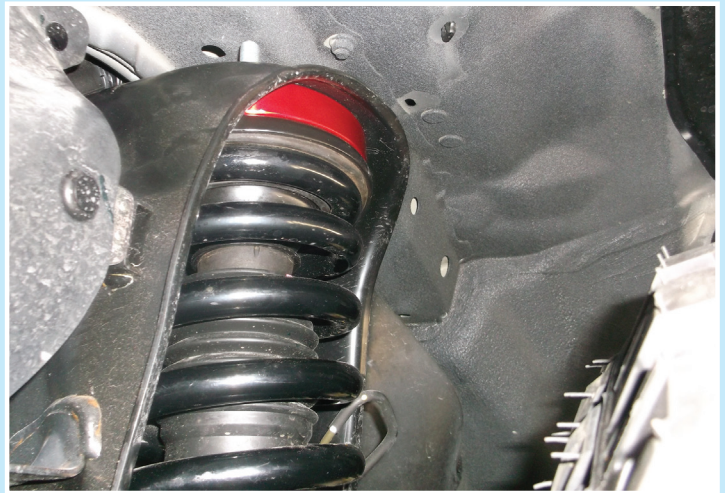
There's always much debate when the topic is mentioned on LVVTA's Facebook page, with many AVIs, vehicle owners and modifiers incorrectly assuming that spacers do not require LVV Certification. The reality is that all strut spacers such as this, do require Low Volume Vehicle (LVV) Certification. The clarification of this is on the 'tables and images' tab of the Steering and Suspension section of the VIRM. This page lists all suspension modifications that are permitted without LVV Certification. Strut spacers are not listed, which in turn means that LVV Certification is required.

LVV inspectors around the country have found multiple issues on vehicles fitted with spring spacers, ranging from ball joint bind through to brake hose and wheel speed sensor wiring problems. LVVTA are also concerned about the number of brand new vehicles that have been fitted with spring spacers by the dealer, resulting in not only a dangerous modification going unchecked but also in a nasty surprise when the vehicle receives its first Warrant of Fitness inspection in three years time.

Ball joint spacers, which are also commonly being added to these types of vehicles to correct the top suspension arm angle due to the added spacers, are also a cause for concern due to the added loads they transfer to the suspension arms. LVVTA have seen multiple cases of cracked and in the worst cases, completely failed upper suspension arms due to ball joint spacers. As such, they would like to remind AVIs that these modifications not only require LVV Certification but may provide a real danger to road users.

Vehicle owners should also be made aware that by not certifying vehicles for these types of modifications, their insurance may be void should a claim arise — a risk that is increased, should the modification be deemed to be the cause of the accident.

If presented with a vehicle which you're unsure about the legality of for a WoF inspection, LVVTA encourages inspectors to contact their tech team by phone on 04 238 4343 or email on tech@lvvta.org.nz.



Strut spacer.



Ball joint spacer.



Failed arm.