



Planning Commission

Wisconsin Road Signage Regarding Weights and Agriculture

Introduction

This document is intended to provide an introduction to Wisconsin local road signage relevant to weight limits and agriculture. It is not a comprehensive or detailed overview of the many complex issues involved. A primary source of relevant information is Wis. Stats. Ch 348 Vehicles – Size, Weight and Load.

<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/348/>

In Wisconsin, agricultural vehicles and implements of husbandry (IoH) are generally subject to a number of weight limits and restrictions, including:

Weight limits

The maximum gross weight for an IoH or agricultural commercial motor vehicle (Ag CMV) on a highway without a permit is 23,000 pounds per axle or 92,000 pounds gross vehicle weight (GVW) 348.15(10)(b) The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT) can issue overweight permits for vehicle combinations transporting certain agricultural products.

Seasonal weight restrictions

There are three seasonal weight restriction programs that apply to the Wisconsin state highway system. These include a frozen road declaration, Class II roads, and a seasonal posted roads program. Seasonal weight restrictions are typically in place from mid-March to the end of April. <https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/dmv/com-drv-vehs/mtr-car-trkr/ssnl-wt-rsrctns/default.aspx>

348.17 Special or seasonal weight limitations

(5)

(a) From August 1 to December 31 of each year, no permit shall be required for the transportation of corn, soybeans, potatoes, vegetables, or cranberries from the field to storage on the grower's owned or leased land, from the field to initial storage at a location not owned or leased by the grower, or from the field to initial processing in a vehicle or combination of vehicles that exceeds the weight limitations under s. [348.15](#) by not more than 15 percent and that satisfies all of the following:

1. Has a registered gross weight of 50,000 pounds or more.
2. Is a motor truck, farm truck, road tractor, truck tractor, or farm truck tractor or such a vehicle combined with a semitrailer, trailer, or farm trailer, when the vehicle or combination is a commercial motor vehicle operated on a highway.

(6)

(a) From September 1 to December 31 of each year, no permit shall be required for the transportation of manure to or from a farm in a vehicle or combination of vehicles that exceeds the weight limitations under s. [348.15](#) by not more than 15 percent and that satisfies any of the following:

1. Has a registered gross weight of 50,000 pounds or more.
2. Is a motor truck, farm truck, road tractor, truck tractor, or farm truck tractor or such a vehicle combined with a semitrailer, trailer, or farm trailer, when the vehicle or combination is a commercial motor vehicle operated on a highway.

Special weight limitations

Special weight limitations may be imposed on certain highways, highway structures, or portions of highways. Signs must be erected to notify drivers of these limitations. 348.175

Exemptions

Some vehicles may be exempt from weight limitations if it is reasonable and necessary to promote public safety, health, and welfare. For example, Ag CMV Category 1 vehicles that distribute feed to livestock or apply fertilizer to a farm field are exempt from axle weight limits on local roads. S. 348.15(9)(c)2.(d)

Local weight limits

Local weight limits override all special permits in the statutes.

Class B Roads

The weight limit for Class B roads is 80,000 lbs. Weight limitations on class “B” highways are 60% of class “A” highway weight limitations. Class “B” highways include those county trunk highways, town highways and city and village streets or portions thereof, which have been designated as class “B” highways by local authorities.

Overweight Limit Permits

These permits apply to vehicle combinations that have six or more axels and that are transporting certain agricultural products to a farm or from a field or farm to a storage facility or processor. The agricultural products that may be transported under the permit include fruit, vegetables, grain, distillers’ grain and livestock, but exclude milk, animal waste and raw forest products. Overweight loads cannot exceed 90,000 pounds. [2011 Wisconsin Act 56](#)
<https://wfbf.com/governmentrelations/state/weight-limits-for-agricultural-products/>

Signage

The Wisconsin Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (WMUTCD) provides guidance on signage as shown in the Standard Highway Signs and Markings book. <https://wisconsindot.gov/dtsdManuals/traffic-ops/manuals-and-standards/wmutcd/mutcd-ch02a.pdf>

When weight limit signs are posted, vehicles must not operate in violation of the weight limitations unless they have a permit to do so. 348.175



Also seen in Wisconsin are posted weight limits with additional text stating:

“LOCAL DELIVERIES EXCEPTED”

