



Highway Maintenance Manual
Chapter 06 Winter Maintenance
Section 05 Road Classifications
Subject 10 Class II Roads

Bureau of Highway Maintenance
March 2012

1.0 Authority

In accordance with Wisconsin Administrative Code chapters TRANS 254.06(2) and TRANS 255.06(2) and Wis. Stats. Sections 348.26(2) and 348.27(2), the department may restrict travel of vehicles with overweight permits on certain (Class II) roads due to the unstable condition of the roadway subgrade during the period when frost is leaving the ground.

Typically, restrictions on travel include:

1. Restrictions on maximum weight allowed for **single-trip** movement over Class II roads.
2. Travel under annual non-divisible permits becomes more difficult because holders of overweight annual permits must avoid the Class II roads.
3. Travel with single-trip or annual non-divisible overweight permits is not restricted on local or state roads in Milwaukee County or any part of the Interstate Highway System. In the remainder of the state, travel is not restricted under non-divisible annual permits on Class I roadways.

Also during this period, other travel restrictions apply:

1. Suspension of all divisible load permit types on all state highways for the duration of the thaw period.

2.0 Class II Weight Restriction Map

1. Definitions

- a. "Annual or Multiple-Trip Overweight Permit" means any of the permits which may be issued under Wis. Stats. Section 348.27.
- b. "Single-Trip Overweight Permit" refers to any of the permits which may be issued under Wis. Stats. Section 348.26.
- c. "Class I Road" includes all state highways not classified as Class II.
- d. "Class II Road" includes all state highways that are judged to have unstable condition of the roadway subgrade during the period when frost is leaving the ground such that the travel of vehicles with overweight permits would cause undue damage to the highway. District Chief System Operations Managers shall determine which road sections are in this category each year.
- e. "Statutory Load Limits" are those established by Wis. Stats. Section 348.15.
- f. "Divisible Loads" are those which could be transported in two or more loads not overweight, such as loads of aggregate, salt, coal, etc.
- g. "Non-Divisible Loads" are those which cannot be separated and transported as two or more loads, such as heavy, equipment, mobile homes, etc.

2. Procedure

- a. Approximately on February 15th of each year, the Bureau Of Highway Maintenance will request the Region System Operations Managers to provide a list of state highway sections that the district has determined are Class II roads, based on their judgment of the roadway and sub-base conditions.
- b. These listings will be combined to provide a statewide list of Class II highways. A state map showing Class I and Class II highway sections will be produced by the Bureau of Highway Maintenance.

- c. The map and the list will be posted on the department's Internet web site and linked to from the Division of Motor Vehicles - Permits Section web page.
(<http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/travel/truck/class2roads.htm>)
- d. The restriction of single-trip overweight permits for travel on Class II roads and annual divisible overweight permits for travel on all state highways normally begins around March 1st and extends to approximately mid-May depending on the weather conditions and the area of the state.
- e. The lifting of the suspension in late April or early to mid May, depending on temperatures and roadway conditions, will be publicized by notice on the department's Internet web site and a telephone recorded message at (608) 266-8417.

3.0 RS Permits

- a. Only WisDOT may issue the permit authorized by section 348.27(9m)(a)4.- the Raw Forest Permit, also known as the "98k on six axles permit" or the "RS Permit". The commodity authorized for transport is raw forest products (as defined in s.348.01(2)(bt); this is a divisible commodity. RS Permits are valid on public streets and highways except Interstate highways. Permit holders may not exceed posted weight limits on any street or highway except for seasonal postings on marked State or US routes. Permit holders may not exceed posted limits on State or US routes that restrict weights on pertain to bridges, culverts, or restrictions that are not related to the thawing of frozen highways. RS permits do authorize exceeding posted weight limits only on State or US highways that are posted in connection with the thawing of frozen highways.
 - The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) is the only agency that may issue a "Raw Forest Products Permit (RS Permit) per Wis Statute 348.27(9m)(a)4.
 - The RS Permit authorizes transport of "raw forest products" up to 98,000 lbs gvw on vehicles or vehicle combinations with six or more axles; no axle may exceed the axle weights set in the statute.
 - During the spring thaw period established by WisDOT, the RS Permit allows transport on any highway that is a marked State or US route including those posted to limit weights seasonally in connection with thawing of frozen roads. RS permits also remain valid during spring thaw on all other public roads but are subject to pall posted weight limits, including seasonal limits.
 - RS Permits are not valid on Interstate highways.
 - RS permits do not authorize exceeding posted weight limits, except for seasonal limits on marked State or US routes in connection with thawing of frozen roads.

4.0 Posted Roads

Some roads are posted for less than the legal weight limit. These limitations may apply periodically throughout the year or only during the springtime freezing and thawing period. Refer to HMM 06-05-10, Posted Roads. A permit, either annual or single-trip, does not allow travel at a weight exceeding the posted limit.

5.0 Local Roads

Annual (multiple-trip) permits are not valid on local roads during the springtime freezing and thawing period unless the carrier obtains a single-trip permit from the local road maintenance authority.