

Portage County
Highway Department



800 Plover Road
Plover, WI 54467

Nathan Check, PE
Commissioner

Phone: 715-345-5230
Fax: 715-345-5356

Portage County Highway Department Seasonal Weight Limit Variance Permit Policy

Fee

To offset the costs involved in seasonal weight limit variance permit review, the following fees are established:

1. Single Trip Perishable and Public Health Emergency - \$25.00
2. Multiple Trip Perishable and Public Health Emergency - \$75.00
3. Single Trip Review Required by Highway Committee- \$50.00
4. Multiple Trip Review Required by Highway Committee - \$150.00

Statement of Purpose

The Portage County Highway Department will provide a safe and economical transportation system for the traveling public and the taxpayers of Portage County. In order to protect the County's valuable infrastructure, seasonal weight restrictions are imposed during times when the roadbed experience weakness due to their existing conditions and deterioration during climatic conditions. In the absence of these postings, the County's infrastructure would likely be seriously damaged or destroyed.

Authority

The Portage County Highway Commissioner may impose special seasonal weight restrictions on any county trunk highway that, because of weakness of the roadbed due to deteriorating or climatic conditions or other special or temporary conditions, would likely be seriously damaged or destroyed in the absence of such special limitations. This is done in accordance with Wis. Stats. Section 349.16.

Seasonal weight restrictions usually apply only during those times when the roadbed is becoming unfrozen. The posted limits normally are six tons gross load for single-axle vehicles and ten tons for tandem-axle vehicles. All annual or single-trip overweight travel is not permitted during this time on posted road sections, in accordance with Wis. Stats. Section 348.17.

Imposition of Special Weight Limitations

Signs shall be erected on or along the highway section on which special weight limitations are imposed. Reasonable notice that a special weight limitation is in effect and the nature of that limitation shall be given at both ends of the highway section. The limits of posted highway sections should be chosen so as to allow vehicles to choose an alternate route without having to perform a u-turn. All signs and their installation should be in accordance with the rules of the department and should be standard with other weight-limitation signage.

The following county trunk highways are not posted with seasonal weight restrictions as they have been constructed to Class A standards:

Assistant Highway Commissioner / County Engineer – Jesse Rintala
Business Manager – Stacy Zerby Assistant Business Manager – Kristen Wallis
County Patrol Superintendent - Ken Gliszinski State Patrol Superintendent – Todd Makuski
Assistant Patrol Superintendent – Jason Kirslenlohr Parts Room/Shop Superintendent – Corey Giese



1. CTH P (Wood County Line to CTH HH)
2. CTH HH(CTH P to CTH R)
3. CTH B (STH 54 to CTH KK)
4. CTH R (USH 10 to Commons Circle)
5. CTH Q (STH 161 to CTH KK)
6. CTH KK (USH 10 to CTH A)
7. CTH BB (STH 54 to Waushara County Line)
8. CTH D (I-39 to CTH A)
9. CTH J (STH 66 to Burr Oak Road)

Procedure

1. Prior to the start of the spring thaw period, the effective date of the seasonal weight restrictions will be publicized by notice at the department's Internet web site by the Portage County Highway Commissioner. Press releases will also be sent to local media outlets by the Commissioner.

2. The lifting of posted road restrictions will depend on roadway temperature and road conditions, will be publicized by notice at the department's Internet web site. Press releases will also be sent to local media outlets by the Commissioner.

Exemptions

The department has exempted certain vehicles from the seasonal postings since such exemptions are reasonable and necessary to promote the public health, safety, or welfare. These exemptions include:

1. School buses
2. Tow vehicles
3. Government Public Works vehicles
4. Vehicles used to transport materials pumped from a septic or holding tank may be declared exempt from posted road restrictions by the Department if, because of health concerns, materials need to be removed from a septic or holding tank within 24 hours after the vehicle operator is notified. Within 72 hours after operating such a vehicle, the operator of the vehicle shall notify the Department that the vehicle traveled over a posted road.

Variance Permits

The department may grant seasonal weight limit variance permits for vehicles carrying certain commodities. When considering approval of permits, the applicant shall provide reasonable explanation on why the commodities are not divisible and the shortest route utilizing county trunk highways shall be followed.

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The Highway Commissioner has the authority to approve and issue variance permits for perishable¹ goods and for public health emergencies. The Highway Committee has the authority to define which items are perishable and non-perishable. These items include:

1. Milk
2. Cucumbers
3. Potatoes – production and seed
4. Refrigerated food products and ingredients
5. Animal Feed
6. Paper Rolls
7. Cattle hauled to market

Items not considered perishable and not eligible for a variance permit include:

1. Potato waste product
2. Seed
3. Fertilizer
4. Liquid Propane and Bulk Fuel
5. Construction materials and equipment

All perishable items must be transported from origin to destination.

The Highway Commissioner also has the authority to approve and issue permits in cases of public health emergencies such as emergency utility repairs.

The Highway Committee has the authority to approve seasonal weight limit variance permits for all other items not considered perishable or a public health emergency. These items include:

1. Raw and Finished forest products
2. Single Trip, non-divisible loads less than 2 miles in length

Policy Approved by Portage County Highway Committee, February 14, 2017, amended at February 28, 2017 and February 6, 2018 meetings

¹Perishable as defined by Merriam- Webster's dictionary shall be: *liable to perish : liable to spoil or decay <such perishable products as fruit, vegetables, butter, and eggs>*.