

Effective: December 17, 2008	37.00 Winter Operations - Winter Weight Restrictions
Supersedes: October 1, 2004	37.05 Frozen Road Declaration
By: Director, Bureau of Highway Operations	
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A. Authority

Under Wis. Stats. Section 348.175, when the department determines that the state highways are frozen to the extent that no damage to them may result by the transportation of peeled or unpeeled forest products cut crosswise (excluding woodchips) or abrasives or salt for highway winter maintenance in excess of the limitations under Wis. Stats. Section, 348.15, the Department shall declare that particular highways or highways within areas of the state are eligible for increased weight limitations.

It is the responsibility of the officers or agencies in charge of maintenance of highways to make such a declaration, according to Wis. Stats. Section, 348.175. The Bureau Of Highway Operations can make this declaration only with regard to the state maintained highway system. The Frozen Road Declaration for county or local roads must be made by the local agency having maintenance authority of those roadways.

B. Frozen Road Declaration

To comply with Wis. Stats. Section 348.175 as amended, the department shall make the following declaration. (When it is implemented statewide):

Pursuant to Section 348.175, Wisconsin Statutes, the Department of Transportation declares that all highways of the state maintained highway system only are eligible for increased weight limitations from December XX, 20YY until March ZZ, 20YY. The declaration may be revoked earlier or later when conditional warrant. All state trunk highways are included, except the national system of interstate and defense highways (NOTE: I-39 from Wausau to the I-90/94 interchange near Portage is a part of this declaration and subject to the 98,000 pounds gross weight) and any state maintained highways where special weight restrictions have been imposed.

Eligibility for increased weight limitations is restricted to vehicles hauling peeled or unpeeled forest products cut crosswise (excluding wood chips) or abrasives or salt for highway winter maintenance. For legally licensed vehicles hauling these loads, no special permit is required during this period.

The gross weight imposed on the highway by the wheels of any one axle shall not exceed 23,000 pounds, or for two axles less than seven feet apart, 38,000 pounds, or for groups of three consecutive axles not less than nine (9) feet or more than thirteen (13) feet apart, a weight of 12,000 pounds more than

permitted in Section 348.15(3)(c), stats. This 12,000 pounds includes the 4,000 pounds provided for in Section 348.15(3)(br), Stats.

The gross weight imposed on the highway by all axles of a vehicle or combination of vehicles shall not exceed 98,000 pounds.

* Footnote: The dates listed for the starting and ending of this declaration should be reviewed annually based on the forecasted weather conditions. Dates should be adjusted to correspond to a Monday, closest to December 15, starting date and a Sunday, closest to March 1, ending date of the declaration.

When it is deemed to be appropriate, the starting and ending dates of the Frozen Road Declaration may be staggered from south to north or north to south within the state depending on local road conditions. A map showing the highways designated as the east/west dividing line shall be developed and posted at the Department's Internet web site.

<http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/travel/truck/frozenroad.htm>

C. Procedure

1. By mid to late December of each year, the Bureau Of Highway Operations shall post the Frozen Road Declaration on the department's internet web site as far in advance of the effective date as is practical, usually about a week.
2. If at any time that the Frozen Road Declaration is in effect, the department determines that the period should be ended, extended or reduced, official notice of the change should be published as far in advance of the effective date as is practical at the Department's internet web site.
3. The Frozen Road Declaration typically ends March 1st – 8th of each year.

D. Distribution of the Frozen Road Declaration

The following should be notified by the Division of Transportation System Development, Bureau Of Highway Operations of the declaration on an annual basis:

1. Division Administrator
2. Division Operations Director-Statewide Bureaus
3. Division Operations Director - Regions
4. County Highway Commissioners and County Sheriff s Department
5. Department Office of Public Affairs

6. State Safety Engineer for Highways
7. Division of Motor Vehicles - Motor Carrier Services Section
8. Division of State Patrol
9. Timber Producers Association of Michigan and Wisconsin (T.P.A.)
10. Wisconsin Professional Loggers Association
11. Forest Industry Safety Training Alliance (F.I.S.T.A.)
12. Wisconsin Motor Carriers Association

A copy of the declaration shall be posted on the department's Internet site at:

<http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/travel/truck/frozenroad.htm>

A recorded message concerning the status of the declaration shall be available at a Bureau of Highway Operations telephone number. (608) 266-8417.