



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

Bureau of Highway Maintenance
January 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

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" at gwv of 98,000 lbs on vehicles or vehicle combinations with six or more axles none of which may exceed the axle weights set in the statute.

During the spring thaw period established by WisDOT highway maintenance engineers, the RS Permit is suspended on local roads, but the permit authorizes transport on the State Trunk Highway System and connecting highways as defined in state law. The authorized routes include numbered State and US routes except any Interstate route and any route marked as a "Business Route."** All "connecting highways" are marked as State or US routes.

Vehicles and vehicle combinations operating with the RS Permit may transport over "Class II" highways, but may not exceed posted limits for bridges or culverts.

Local maintenance officials wishing to allow operation of vehicles hauling "raw forest products" on roadway within their jurisdiction may issue a "General Permit" per s.348.27(3). When operating under this permission, the permit must be carried on the vehicle, per s.348.28.

**The sole exception is the highway signed as Business 51 between exit 171 and Grand Avenue in Rothschild because this roadway is still State maintained.

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.