

# Wisconsin Dept. of Transportation: Frozen road law expands to entire state

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## NEWS

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

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### **Frozen road law expands to entire state**

*Law affects log haulers, transport of road salt/sand*

Effective Saturday, January 6, 2018 at 12:01 a.m., Wisconsin's frozen road law will expand to include the entire state. The frozen road declaration applies to all numbered state and federal highways, but does not apply to Interstate highways except for portions of I-39 and I-41 as specified in state law (348.01(2)(bc) and (bd)). Regions designated by WisDOT as Zones 1 and 2 in northern Wisconsin were declared frozen last month.

The frozen road law allows heavier loads for trucks carrying peeled or unpeeled

forest products cut crosswise (not including woodchips), and salt and sand for winter maintenance for a period of time determined by weather conditions. WisDOT and county highway personnel monitor temperature forecasts, along with frost tubes – liquid-filled devices under pavement – to help determine when roads are adequately frozen to accommodate heavier loads.

The declaration is issued once the ground under highway pavement is frozen to a depth of at least 18-inches, allowing the maximum gross weight for trucks hauling logs or salt and sand for maintaining roads in winter to go up to 98,000 pounds on vehicles with a minimum of five axles (from the normal 80,000 pounds). Special permits for hauling the increased weights are not required in Zones 1 and 2, however, vehicles must be legally licensed at 80,000 pounds to handle the increased weights. The higher weight limits do not apply to county or local roads unless authorized by the local agency having maintenance authority. Also, higher weights may not be transported on any highways or bridges specifically posted for lower weight limits.

The [“Motor carrier/trucker” section of the WisDOT website](#) contains comprehensive information impacting commercial motor vehicle operators including the [frozen road declaration](#). Customers can also check a recorded message on the Frozen Road Hotline at [608/266-8417](#). Haulers with specific questions can contact WisDOT’s Oversize/Overweight Permits Unit at [608/266-7320](#).