



**Highway Maintenance Manual**  
**Chapter 06 Winter Maintenance**  
**Section 05 Road Classifications**  
**Subject 15 Seasonal Posted Roads**

**Bureau of Highway Maintenance**  
**January 2018**

### **1.0 Authority**

The department may impose special seasonal weight restrictions on any state 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. s. [349.16](#).

Seasonal road postings usually apply only during those times when the roadbed is becoming unfrozen. The seasonal posted limits normally are six tons per single-axle and ten tons for any two axles less than 8 feet apart. The gross weight of a vehicle or vehicle combination, with any combination of axle groups, is 24 tons. All single-trip and most annual overweight travel is not permitted during this time on seasonal posted road sections, in accordance with Wis. Stats. s. [348.17](#).

The department may exempt vehicles carrying certain commodities. These vehicles may be exempted if such exemption is reasonable and necessary to promote the public health, safety and welfare according to Wis. Stats. s. [349.16\(3\)](#).

Exemptions or limitations may also be granted for only emergency or exceptional situations as determined by region maintenance personnel.

### **2.0 Raw Forest (RS) and Potato Seed (PS) Permits**

Vehicles transporting raw forest products under the RS permit or Potato Seeds under the PS permit are exempt from seasonal posted road restrictions. However, Permit holders may not exceed posted limits on any bridges or culverts on State or US routes or other roadway weight restrictions that are not seasonal posted roads.

Additional RS and PS permit information and restrictions can be found on the [Multiple trip permits](#) web page.

### **3.0 Imposition of Special Weight Limitations**

Signs shall be erected on or along the highway section on which seasonal weight restrictions 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 seasonal 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.

### **4.0 Procedure**

1. Prior to the start of the seasonal road postings, the State Freight Engineer in the Bureau of Highway Maintenance shall contact the regional maintenance supervisors and request a listing of the highway sections within their respective regions that will be posted for seasonal weight restrictions. The list shall include the state highway number and the limits of the affected highway section.

The Bureau of Highway Maintenance will update the list and map as necessary, based on written reports submitted by region maintenance supervisors.

2. When temperatures begin to rise, the meteorologist in the Bureau of Highway Maintenance will use weather forecasts and the MnDOT frost model to estimate when seasonal posted road restrictions need to be put in place.
3. As the estimated date approaches, the Meteorologist will review Roadway Weather Information Systems data and request frost tube readings from regional maintenance supervisors. Frost tube should be checked on Mondays and Thursday and reported to BHM until seasonal posted roads restrictions are declared in each zone.

4. Seasonal posted roads will be declared on a zone by zone basis when thaw depth reaches 6 inches below the pavement surface in the zone.
5. When conditions warrant declaring a zone or zones as thawing, the Bureau of Highway Maintenance Freight Engineer shall publish a declaration of Seasonal Posted Roads. Each declaration shall be given a 24-hour notice prior to becoming effective. Seasonal Posted Roads cannot be declared until Class II road restrictions are declared.
6. Regional maintenance supervisors shall monitor roadways weekly for weeping and pumping and shall advise the Bureau of Highway Maintenance Freight Engineer when Seasonal Postings shall end for each zone. When conditions warrant the ending of Seasonal Posted Roads, the Bureau of Highways Maintenance Freight Engineer shall publish a declaration ending Seasonal posted roads. Each declaration shall be given a 24-hour notice. Seasonal Posted Roads must end before Class II road restrictions are ended.
7. All declarations to Seasonal Posted Roads shall be issued as a press release by the Department's Office of Public Affairs and be available via a recorded message at (608) 266-8147. Additionally, the Bureau of Highway Maintenance will compile a list and map of all Seasonal Posted Roads and post notice on the Department's Internet [web site](#).
8. Additional information on this procedure can be found in the [Decision Process](#) document.