

Vehicle Size, Weight, and Load Regulations Summary Tables

The following tables summarize many of the motor vehicle size and weight regulations contained in Minnesota Statutes. The tables reflect four general parts that the regulations can be divided into: (1) limits on vehicle dimensions; (2) basic vehicle weight limits; (3) adjustments that raise or lower the weight limits under some situations; and (4) special permits allowing increased weights under specific circumstances. Note that most of the regulations identified in the tables carry additional requirements and details. Also, the summary does not discuss some related regulations (such as for load securement and record keeping).

Maximum Dimension Limits¹

| Dimension Limit | Limitations ² | Comments | Citation |
|---|--------------------------|---|--|
| Height | 13 ft., 6 in. | Exceptions for double-deck buses, implements of husbandry ³ , certain farm vehicles transporting baled hay | 169.81, subd. 1; 169.862, subd. 2 (f) |
| Width | 8 ft., 6 in. | Exceptions for certain vehicles transporting sewage sludge, certain low bed trailers or dollies, passenger buses, implements of husbandry, certain farm vehicles transporting baled hay | 169.80, subd. 2; 169.862, subd. 2 (f) |
| Length of single vehicle | 45 ft. | Exception for mobile cranes | 169.81, subd. 2 |
| Length of vehicle combinations ⁴ | 75 ft. | Exceptions for transporting certain poles and pipes, certain vehicle combinations operated on divided highways, certain saddlemount combinations | 169.81, subd. 3; 23 CFR § 658.13 (e) (1) (iii) |
| Length of various trailers | 45 – 53 ft. | Length limit depends on type of trailer; certain trailers in three-vehicle combinations can not exceed 28 ½ ft. | 169.81, subds. 2-3; 169.86, subd. 1 |
| Length of recreational vehicle combination | 70 ft. | | 169.81, subd. 3c |
| Notes | | | |
| ¹ Table does not identify various requirements and details associated with the dimension limits. | | | |
| ² Limitations do not account for various special permits. | | | |
| ³ “Implements of husbandry” are self-propelled or towed vehicles used for farming, timber, horticultural, or livestock operations (such as a tractor or combine harvester). Minn. Stat. § 169.011, subd. 35. | | | |
| ⁴ “Vehicle combinations” are sets of vehicles transported together, with a towing unit and one or more trailers. | | | |

Basic Vehicle Weight Limits¹

| Type of Limit ² | Limitations | Comments | Citation |
|----------------------------|--|---|------------------|
| Per set of tires | Lesser of (1) manufacturer’s rating, or (2) 500 or 600 pounds per in. of tire width ³ | Weight on all adjacent tires at each end of an axle | 169.823, subd. 1 |

| Type of Limit ² | Limitations | Comments | Citation |
|---|--|--|------------------|
| Per wheel | 9,000 lbs. on unpaved roads; 10,000 lbs. on paved roads | Weight on all adjacent tires at each end of an axle | 169.823, subd. 1 |
| Per axle | 18,000 lbs. on unpaved roads; 20,000 lbs. on paved roads | Weight on an axle | 169.824 |
| Per axle grouping | Varies with number of axles and distances between axle groups | Different limits apply to all groupings of consecutive axles | 169.824 |
| Gross vehicle weight | Varies with number of axles and distances between axle groups; examples: (1) 40,000 lbs. on a two-axle vehicle, (2) 80,000 lbs. on a five-axle vehicle | Total vehicle weight limit on all axles | 169.824 |
| Notes | | | |
| ¹ Table does not identify various weight limit adjustments and special permits. | | | |
| ² A vehicle must comply with each type of weight limit listed. | | | |
| ³ Tire weight limit of 600 pounds per inch of tire width only applies to the foremost and rearmost steering axles. | | | |

Weight Limit Adjustments

| Type of Adjustment | Description of Change | Applies To | Citation |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|-----------------------|
| Winter load increase | 10% weight limit increase during winter dates set by MnDOT in six zones | All vehicles generally | 169.826, subd. 1 |
| Harvest season increase | 10% weight limit increase from beginning of harvest to Nov. 30 | Certain vehicles transporting sugar beets, carrots, or potatoes; permit required | 169.826, subd. 2 |
| Spring load restrictions | Weight limit decrease on unpaved roads during spring, to (1) 5 tons per axle, and (2) 5/9ths of original weight limits for all axle groupings | All vehicles generally; exceptions for certain school buses, vehicles transporting milk, utility vehicles, and garbage and recycling vehicles | 169.87, subds. 2, 3-6 |
| Optional route restriction | Weight limit reduction on routes to prevent roadway damage, if set and posted by a road authority | All vehicles generally; exceptions for certain school buses, vehicles transporting milk, utility vehicles, and garbage and recycling vehicles | 169.87, subds. 1, 3-6 |
| Idle/emissions reduction technology | Weight limit increase up to 400 lbs. for idle-reduction or emissions-reduction technology | All vehicles generally | 169.824, subd. 2 |
| Tow truck exemption | Weight limits not applicable | Certain tow trucks with urgent movements | 169.829, subd. 2 |
| Utility vehicle exemption | Weight limits not applicable | Certain utility vehicles not exceeding 20,000 lbs. per axle | 169.829, subd. 3 |

Special Permits¹

| Type of Permit | Allows | Applies To | Citation |
|--|--|--|----------------------------|
| Oversize/ Overweight | General oversize or overweight transport | Various vehicles transporting non-divisible loads | 169.86, subd. 1 [pre-1980] |
| Livestock hauling | 88,000 lbs. gross vehicle weight on six-axle (or more) vehicles | Exclusive non-interstate transport of livestock | 169.824, subd. 2 [2005] |
| Forest products | 90,000 lbs. gross vehicle weight on six-axle (or more) vehicles | Certain vehicles transporting unfinished forest products or lumber | 169.8261 [2004] |
| Pulpwood vehicle | Various increased tire weights and 82,000 lbs. gross vehicle weight on six-axle vehicles | Certain vehicles transporting pole-length pulpwood | 169.863 [1989] |
| Paper products vehicle: 3-unit | 108,000 lbs. gross vehicle weight | Certain three-vehicle combinations on specific trunk highways | 169.864, subd. 1 [2005] |
| Paper products vehicle: 2-unit | 90,000 lbs. gross vehicle weight, or 97,000 lbs. on seven-axle vehicles | Certain vehicle combinations | 169.864, subd. 2 [2005] |
| Farm products: six-axle | 90,000 lbs. gross vehicle weight on six-axle (or more) vehicles | Vehicles transporting raw or unprocessed agricultural products | 169.865, subd. 1 [2008] |
| Farm products: seven-axle | 97,000 lbs. gross vehicle weight on seven-axle (or more) vehicles | Vehicles transporting raw or unprocessed agricultural products | 169.865, subd. 2 [2008] |
| Canola hauling vehicle | 105,500 lbs. gross vehicle weight | Certain three-vehicle combinations on specific trunk highways | 169.866 [2008] |
| Baled farm products | Up to 12 ft. width and 14 ½ ft. height to transport baled hay, straw, or cornstalks | All vehicles generally | 169.862 [1979] |
| Snow plows | Up to 10 ft. width | Vehicles with a snow plow blade | 169.86, subd. 1b [1997] |
| Tow trucks | Exceed length and weight limits | Tow trucks | 169.86, subd. 8 [2008] |
| Note | | | |
| ¹ Table does not identify various requirements and details associated with the special permits. | | | |