

Wisconsin Revised Code:

340.01 Words and phrases defined. In s. [23.33](#) and chs. [340](#) to [349](#) and [351](#), the following words and phrases have the designated meanings unless a different meaning is expressly provided or the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

(57) "Semitrailer" means a vehicle of the trailer type so designed and used in conjunction with a motor vehicle that some part of its own weight and that of its own load rests upon or is carried by another vehicle, but does not include a mobile home. A vehicle used with a ready-mix motor truck to spread the load is considered a semitrailer.

(67r) "Tractor-semitrailer combination" means a combination of 2 vehicles consisting of either a truck tractor and a semitrailer or a road tractor and a semitrailer.

(71) "Trailer" means a vehicle without motive power designed for carrying property or passengers wholly on its own structure and for being drawn by a motor vehicle, but does not include a mobile home.

(72) "Transporter" means any of the following:

(a) A person who is engaged in this state in the business of transporting and delivering motor vehicles, trailers, semitrailers or recreational vehicles in tow on their own wheels or under their own power from a distributor, a dealer, the manufacturer, or a branch of the manufacturer to the purchaser, or from any location to a distributor, a dealer, the manufacturer, or a branch of the manufacturer, and who is a 3rd party with no ownership interest in the vehicles.

(b) A person who manufactures or installs on previously assembled truck chassis special bodies or equipment which when installed form an integral part of the motor vehicle and which constitutes a major manufacturing alteration, or who is engaged in modifying or converting previously assembled or manufactured complete motor vehicles, but who is not the owner of the vehicles on which manufacturing operations were performed by that person, if incidental to manufacturing operations the person transports motor vehicles in tow on their own wheels or under their own power between the person's place of business and manufacturers, dealers and distributors, or delivers them to purchasers.

348.05 Width of vehicles.

(1) No person without a permit therefor shall operate on a highway any vehicle having a total width in excess of 8 feet 6 inches, except as otherwise provided in this section.

(2) The following vehicles may be operated without a permit for excessive width if the total outside width does not exceed the indicated limitations:

(a) No limitation for implements of husbandry.

NOTE: Par. (a) is amended eff. 11-1-15 by [2013 Wis. Act 377](#) to read:

(a) Subject to ss. 347.24 (3), 347.245 (1), and 347.25 (2g), no limitation for implements of husbandry.

(am) Ten feet for an agricultural commercial motor vehicle, except that, if the agricultural commercial motor vehicle is operated for purposes of spraying pesticides or spreading lime or fertilizer but not including manure application and has extending tires, fenders, or fender flares, the total outside width of the agricultural commercial motor vehicle may not exceed 12 feet.

(b) No limitation for snowplows operated by or for a governmental agency.

(d) Ten feet 6 inches for snowplows attached to motor vehicles normally used for the transportation of milk.

(f) Eight feet 8 inches for urban passenger buses and 8 feet 6 inches for interurban passenger buses.

(i) A realistic body width of 8 feet 6 inches for mobile homes, including recreational vehicles, and motor homes, and, for motor homes and for recreational vehicles used only as temporary or recreational dwellings, up to an additional 4 inches on the left side and 6 inches on the right side of such vehicles for appurtenances provided that, if any appurtenance extends the maximum 4 inches on the left side or 6 inches on the right side, the appurtenance is located at a height of not less than 8 feet from the ground. In this paragraph, "appurtenance" means any mechanical or other device, including retracted awning assemblies, vent grates, electrical outlet covers, and door handles, that is related to the structure of the vehicle and is installed upon the vehicle by a manufacturer or dealer.

(k) Nine feet for loads of tie logs, tie slabs and veneer logs, provided that no part of the load shall extend more than 6 inches beyond the fender line on the left side of the vehicle or extend more than 10 inches beyond the fender line on the right side of the vehicle. This paragraph does not apply to transport on highways designated as parts of the national system of interstate and defense highways under s. [84.29](#).

(L) Twelve feet for loads of hay in bales and, from September 15 to December 15 of each year, for loads of Christmas trees from the point of harvesting or staging to a Christmas tree yard or point of commercial shipment, if the total outside width of the loads do not exceed the width of a single traffic lane of any highway over which the loads are carried. This paragraph does not apply to vehicles on highways designated as parts of the national system of interstate and defense highways under s. [84.29](#).

(m) Nine feet for a vehicle or vehicle combination used by a pipeline company or operator, public service corporation, municipal utility, or cooperative association described in s. [196.01 \(5\) \(b\) 1.](#), or by a motor carrier operating under contract with a pipeline company or operator, public service corporation, municipal utility, or cooperative association described in s. [196.01 \(5\) \(b\) 1.](#), for transportation of poles, pipe, girders, and similar materials.

(2g) Subsection [\(2\) \(a\)](#) also applies to implements of husbandry while being operated or transported by an implement dealer or farmer for purposes of delivery, repair, or servicing of the implement of husbandry if the implement of husbandry is being operated or transported under either of the following circumstances:

(a) Directly from a farmer's owned or leased land to the business location of an implement dealer that is within a 75-mile radius of the farmer's owned or leased land.

(b) Directly from the business location of an implement dealer to a farmer's owned or leased land that is within a 75-mile radius of the implement dealer's business location.

NOTE: Sub. (2g) is affected eff. 11-1-15 by [2013 Wis. Act 377](#) to read:

(2g) (a) Subject to par. (b), subsection (2) (a) also applies to implements of husbandry while being operated or transported by an implement dealer or farmer for purposes of delivery, repair, or servicing of the implement of husbandry if the implement of husbandry is being operated or transported under either of the following circumstances:

1. Directly from a farmer's owned or leased land to the business location of an implement dealer that is within a 75-mile radius of the farmer's owned or leased land.

2. Directly from the business location of an implement dealer to a farmer's owned or leased land that is within a 75-mile radius of the implement dealer's business location.

(b) Paragraph (a) applies only if the person operating or transporting the implement of husbandry complies with ss. 347.24 (3), 347.245 (1), and 347.25 (2g), as applicable. For purposes of this paragraph, the requirements under ss. 347.24 (3), 347.245 (1), and 347.25 (2g) shall apply to an implement of husbandry being transported to the same extent as if the implement of husbandry were being operated.

(2m) The secretary, by rule, shall designate safety devices which may not be included in the calculation of width under subs. [\(1\)](#) and [\(2\)](#). The designation of safety devices under this subsection may not be inconsistent with the safety devices designated by the U.S. secretary of transportation under P.L. [97-369](#), section 321.

(3m)

(a) Subject to par. [\(c\)](#), implements of husbandry of any width may be transported by trailer or semitrailer, without a permit, on a highway from farm to field, from field to field, or from farm to farm, at times other than hours of darkness.

NOTE: Par. (a) is shown as amended eff. 11-1-15 by [2015 Wis. Act 15](#). Prior to 11-1-15 it reads:

(a) Implements of husbandry of any width may be transported by trailer or semitrailer, without a permit, on a highway from farm to field, from field to field, or from farm to farm, at times other than hours of darkness.

(b) This subsection does not apply to the national system of interstate and defense highways, except for that portion of I 39 between USH 51 and I 90/94.

(c) Paragraph [\(a\)](#) applies only if the person transporting the implement of husbandry complies with ss. [347.24 \(3\)](#), [347.245 \(1\)](#), and [347.25 \(2g\)](#), as applicable. For purposes of this paragraph, the requirements under ss. [347.24 \(3\)](#), [347.245 \(1\)](#), and [347.25 \(2g\)](#) shall apply to an implement of husbandry being transported to the same extent as if the implement of husbandry were being operated.

NOTE: Par. (c) is created eff. 11-1-15 by [2015 Wis. Act 15](#).

(4) Notwithstanding sub. [\(1\)](#), the secretary may restrict vehicles to a width of less than 8 feet 6 inches on any portion of any state or local highway if he or she deems such restriction necessary to protect the public safety. Any such restriction shall be indicated by official signs. If the secretary restricts vehicles to a width of less than 8 feet 6 inches on any local highway, the local authority in charge of maintenance shall be responsible for erecting the appropriate signs on the local highway.

History: [1975 c. 50](#); [1977 c. 26](#); [1977 c. 29](#) s. 1654 (9) (b); [1981 c. 22](#); [1983 a. 78, 508](#); [1985 a. 187](#); [1993 a. 353, 404](#); [1995 a. 7, 225, 348](#); [1999 a. 85](#); [2003 a. 213](#); [2011 a. 243](#); [2013 a. 369, 377](#); s. 35.17 correction in (2) (m); [2015 a. 15](#).

Cross-reference: See also s. [Trans 276.04](#), Wis. adm. code.

348.06 Height of vehicles.

(1) Except as provided in subs. [\(2\)](#) and [\(2m\)](#), no person, without a permit therefor, may operate on a highway any motor vehicle, mobile home, recreational vehicle, trailer, or semitrailer having an overall height in excess of 13 1/2 feet.

(2) Implements of husbandry, and 2-vehicle combinations transporting by trailer or semitrailer implements of husbandry from farm to field, from field to field, or from farm to farm, of any height may be operated upon a highway without a permit for excessive height. The operator of the implement of husbandry or 2-vehicle combination is responsible for ensuring that there is adequate height clearance between the implement of husbandry being operated or transported and any overhead structure or obstruction, other than a structure or obstruction that is any of the following:

(a) Any overhead utility line that does not satisfy the requirements of the state electric code promulgated by the public service commission.

(b) Any overhead electric line of a cooperative association that is organized under ch. [185](#) and that does not comply with the National Electrical Safety Code.

(2m)

(a) Double-decked buses having an overall height not exceeding 14 feet 5 inches may be operated without a permit for excessive height upon a highway, other than a state trunk highway, that has a speed limit of 45 miles per hour or less if the vehicle owner or operator has, prior to the vehicle's operation, obtained written approval for such operation and for the vehicle's route from the local authority with jurisdiction over the highway on any highway on which the vehicle will be operated. A local authority may not approve the operation of a vehicle under this subsection on a highway under its jurisdiction unless all of the following apply:

1. The local authority has received a copy of the vehicle's proposed route, inspected the route, and verified that there is at least 6 inches of height clearance between the vehicle and any overhead structure or obstruction, including any utility line, on all parts of the route.
2. The vehicle owner has agreed, in writing, to assume liability for any personal injury or property damage resulting from the vehicle's striking of any overhead structure or obstruction, including any utility line, regardless of whether the personal injury or property damage occurs on an approved route.
3. The local authority has inspected the vehicle and verified that the sign required under par. (b) is displayed.

(b) A vehicle specified in par. (a) shall conspicuously display, in the operator's area of the vehicle, a sign informing the operator that operation of the vehicle on any highway that is not part of a route approved under par. (a) is unlawful.

(c) A local authority may, for any reason, deny approval for the operation of a vehicle under this subsection, or deny approval of any route regardless of whether the requirements under par. (a) are satisfied, on any highway under the local authority's jurisdiction.

(d) A local authority that has approved operation of a vehicle under this subsection shall, with respect to any route approved for every such vehicle, inspect the approved route at least once each year. If the inspection reveals that the clearance requirements specified in par. (a) 1. are no longer satisfied, the local authority shall revoke the route approval, but may approve an alternative route that complies with the clearance requirements specified in par. (a) 1.

(e) A local authority may delegate to any department, division, official, or employee of the local authority the responsibility for issuing approvals, conducting inspections, or carrying out any other duty specified under this subsection.

(3) The limitations on total height stated in this section shall not be construed as requiring a clearance of such height or as relieving the owners of vehicles not exceeding such total height from liability for any damage.

History: [1999 a. 85](#); [2005 a. 11](#); [2007 a. 11](#); [2013 a. 377](#); [2015 a. 15](#).

348.07 Length of vehicles.

(1) No person, without a permit therefor, may operate on a highway any single vehicle with an overall length in excess of 45 feet or any combination of 2 vehicles with an overall length in

excess of 70 feet, except as otherwise provided in subs. [\(2\)](#), [\(2a\)](#), [\(2m\)](#), [\(2r\)](#), and [\(4m\)](#) and s. [348.08 \(1\)](#).

(2) The following vehicles may be operated without a permit for excessive length if the overall length does not exceed the indicated limitations:

(e)

1. Sixty feet for an implement of husbandry that is a single vehicle.

2. Except as provided in subd. [3](#), 100 feet for implements of husbandry that are 2-vehicle combinations and for 2-vehicle combinations transporting by trailer or semitrailer implements of husbandry from farm to field, from field to field, or from farm to farm.

3. No length limitation for an implement of husbandry that is an irrigation system in combination with a farm tractor, farm truck, farm truck tractor, or motor truck temporarily operated upon a highway.

(f) No overall length limitation for a tractor-semitrailer combination, a double bottom or an automobile haulaway when such tractor-semitrailer combination, double bottom or automobile haulaway is operated on a highway designated under sub. [\(4\)](#).

(fm) No length limitation for a truck tractor or road tractor when such truck tractor or road tractor is operated in a tractor-semitrailer combination or as part of a double bottom or an automobile haulaway on a highway designated under sub. [\(4\)](#).

(fs) 75 feet for a tractor-semitrailer combination, except as provided in par. [\(f\)](#) or sub. [\(4m\)](#).

(g) 48 feet for a semitrailer or trailer operated as part of a 2-vehicle combination, except as provided in par. [\(gr\)](#) or [\(gv\)](#).

(gm) 28 feet 6 inches for a semitrailer or trailer operated as part of a double bottom on a highway designated under sub. [\(4\)](#).

(gr) 53 feet for a semitrailer whose length from kingpin to axle does not exceed 43 feet and which is operated as part of a 2-vehicle combination on a highway designated under sub. [\(4\)](#). The length limits in this paragraph do not apply to a trailer or a semitrailer that is authorized to operate under par. [\(im\)](#).

(gv) 53 feet for a semitrailer whose length from kingpin to axle does not exceed 43 feet and which is operated as part of a 2-vehicle combination, except as provided in par. [\(gr\)](#) or sub. [\(4m\)](#). The length limits in this paragraph do not apply to a trailer or a semitrailer that is authorized to operate under par. [\(im\)](#).

(h) Sixty-six feet for articulated buses operated in urban areas.

(im) Seventy-five total feet for a 2-vehicle combination designed and primarily used for transporting livestock, if the trailer or semitrailer, measured as required by sub. [\(3\)\(b\)](#), is not longer than 53 feet, the trailer or semitrailer is equipped with at least 2 axles, and the towing

vehicle is not a motor truck, truck tractor, road tractor, or combination vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating or actual gross weight of 10,000 pounds or less.

(j) 66 feet for an automobile haulaway plus an additional overhang of 4 feet to the front of the vehicle and 5 feet to the rear of the vehicle.

(k) Sixty feet for a single vehicle, and 120 feet for a 2-vehicle combination, used by a pipeline company or operator, public service corporation, municipal utility, or cooperative association described in s. [196.01 \(5\) \(b\) 1.](#), or by a motor carrier operating under contract with a pipeline company or operator, public service corporation, municipal utility, or cooperative association described in s. [196.01 \(5\) \(b\) 1.](#), for transportation of poles, pipe, girders and similar materials. A vehicle or vehicle combination described in this paragraph may, in addition to the vehicle length specified in this paragraph, carry a load extending not more than 10 feet beyond the front bumper of the vehicle or foremost vehicle in the vehicle combination.

(2a) Four trains consisting of 4 vehicles including the propelling motor vehicle may be operated as provided in s. [348.08 \(1\) \(c\).](#)

(2m) Subsection [\(2\) \(e\)](#) also applies to implements of husbandry while being operated or transported by an implement dealer or farmer for purposes of delivery, repair, or servicing of the implement of husbandry if the implement of husbandry is being operated or transported under either of the following circumstances:

(a) Directly from a farmer's owned or leased land to the business location of an implement dealer that is within a 75-mile radius of the farmer's owned or leased land.

(b) Directly from the business location of an implement dealer to a farmer's owned or leased land that is within a 75-mile radius of the implement dealer's business location.

(2r) Subsection [\(2\) \(e\)](#) also applies to implements of husbandry while being transported by trailer or semitrailer on a highway from farm to field, from field to field, or from farm to farm.

(3)

(a) The overall length of a mobile home or recreational vehicle shall be measured from the rear thereof to the rear of the vehicle to which it is attached.

(b)

1. Except as provided in subd. [2.](#), the length of a semitrailer or trailer shall be measured from the front thereof to the rear of the semitrailer or trailer or cargo, whichever is longer, excluding bumpers, stake pockets, air deflectors and refrigeration units.

2. The length of a semitrailer operated as the first trailing unit in a double bottom consisting of a truck tractor and 2 semitrailers does not include a frame extension bearing a fifth-wheel connection by which the 2nd trailing unit is drawn unless the frame extension is more than 8 feet in length. This subdivision does not affect the measurement of length from the front of the semitrailer to the rear of the cargo.

(c) The distance between a kingpin and semitrailer axle shall be measured as follows:

1. On a semitrailer having a tandem axle, from the kingpin to a point midway between the first and last axles of the tandem axle.
2. On a semitrailer not having a tandem axle, from the kingpin to the center of the rearmost axle.

(4) The secretary shall, by rule, designate the highways to which sub. (2) (f), (fm), (gm), and (gr) and s. 348.08 (1) (a) 2. and (e) apply. The designation of highways under this subsection may not be inconsistent with the designation of highways made by the U.S. secretary of transportation under P.L. 97-424, section 411. The secretary may also designate additional highways by rule. In adopting a rule designating other highways, which may include 2-lane highways, the secretary shall specify the factors which resulted in the determination to designate the highways. These factors shall include, but are not limited to, safety, economics, energy savings, industry productivity and competition. Vehicles to which sub. (2) (f), (fm), (gm), and (gr) and s. 348.08 (1) (a) 2. and (e) apply may also operate on highways not designated under this subsection for a distance of 15 miles or less in order to obtain access to a highway designated under this subsection or to reach fuel, food, maintenance, repair, rest, staging, terminal or vehicle assembly facilities or points of loading or unloading. The secretary may, by rule, designate an access route of more than 15 miles from a highway designated under this subsection when the longer route provides safer and better access to a location which is within the 15-mile limit. Household goods carriers may operate between highways designated under this subsection and points of loading and unloading.

NOTE: Sub. (4) is shown as affected by [2013 Wis. Acts 99](#) and [220](#) and as merged by the legislative reference bureau under s. 13.92 (2) (i).

(4m) The secretary shall, by rule, designate those parts of the state trunk highway system to which sub. (2) (fs) and (gv) do not apply. For each part of the state trunk highway system designated under this subsection, the secretary shall specify the factors that resulted in the determination to designate the part as not suitable to accommodate vehicle lengths as specified in sub. (2) (fs) and (gv). The secretary may, by rule, establish exceptions to the vehicle-combination length limitation specified in sub. (1), including establishing any greater or lesser length limitation than that specified in sub. (1), with respect to specific types of vehicles identified by the secretary or highways designated by the secretary, but the secretary may not establish under this subsection any length limitation inconsistent with sub. (2) or (2a) or s. 348.08 (1).

(5) As often as it deems necessary, the department shall publish maps required for its own use and for free distribution showing the highways designated under subs. (4) and (4m), those parts of the state trunk highway system not designated under sub. (4m), and such other main highways and other features as the department deems desirable.

History: [1975 c. 279](#); [1977 c. 29](#) ss. [1487g](#) to [1487m](#), [1654 \(9\) \(b\)](#); [1977 c. 418](#); [1979 c. 255](#); [1981 c. 159](#), [176](#); [1983 a. 20](#), [78](#), [192](#); [1985 a. 165](#), [187](#); [1987 a. 30](#); [1991 a. 39](#), [72](#); [1995 a.](#)

[193](#); [1997 a. 27](#); [1999 a. 85, 186](#); [2003 a. 213, 234](#); [2005 a. 363, 365](#); [2007 a. 11, 93](#); [2011 a. 53, s. 2](#); [2011 a. 54, 243](#); [2013 a. 99, 220, 369, 377](#); s. 13.92 (2) (i); [2015 a. 15](#).

Cross-reference: See also ch. [Trans 276](#), Wis. adm. code.

The state may not prohibit 65-foot double-bottom trailers. Raymond Motor Transportation, Inc.

32-18-17. Breakaway from towing vehicle — **Brakes** to be applied automatically and promptly — **Trailers** — Class 2 misdemeanor.

- Every **trailer**, semitrailer, and pole **trailer** equipped with air or vacuum actuated **brakes** and every **trailer**, semitrailer, and pole **trailer** with a gross weight in excess of three thousand pounds, manufactured or assembled after July 1, 1967, shall be equipped with **brakes** acting on all wheels and of such character as to be applied automatically and promptly, and remain applied for at least fifteen minutes, upon breakaway from the towing vehicle. A violation of this section is a Class 2 misdemeanor.

32-19-9. Towed trailer — Coupling requirement — Class 2 misdemeanor.

Every trailer which shall be towed on the public highways at a speed in excess of twenty miles per hour shall be coupled to the towing vehicle by means of a safety chain, chains, cables, or equivalent devices in addition to the regular trailer hitch or coupling. This requirement does not apply to a semitrailer having a connecting device composed of a fifth wheel and kingpin assembly meeting the requirement of the interstate commerce commission, nor to a pole, pipe, casing, log or piling dolly. Any person who violates this section is guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor.

347.13. Tail lamps and registration plate lamps.

- (1) No person shall operate a motor vehicle, mobile home or **trailer** or semitrailer upon a highway during hours of darkness unless such motor vehicle, mobile home or **trailer** or semitrailer is equipped with at least one tail **lamp** mounted on the rear which, when lighted during hours of darkness, emits a red light plainly visible from a distance of 500 feet to the rear. No tail **lamp** shall have any type of decorative covering that restricts the amount of light emitted when the tail **lamp** is in use. No vehicle originally equipped at the time of manufacture and sale with 2 tail **lamps** shall be operated upon a highway during hours of darkness unless both such **lamps** are in good working order. This subsection does not apply to any type of decorative covering originally equipped on the vehicle at the time of manufacture and sale.
- (2) Every tail **lamp** on a vehicle shall be located at a height of not more than 72 inches nor less than 20 inches.
- (3) No person shall operate on a highway during hours of darkness any motor vehicle upon the rear of which a registration plate is required to be displayed unless such motor vehicle is equipped with a **lamp** so constructed and placed as to illuminate with a white

light the rear registration plate and render it clearly legible from a distance of 50 feet to the rear. Such **lamp** may be incorporated as part of a tail **lamp** or may be a separate **lamp**.

- (4) Tail **lamps** and registration plate **lamps** shall be so wired as to be lighted whenever the headlamps or auxiliary driving **lamps** are lighted. In a tractor-semitrailer combination, 2 switches may be employed, one to activate semitrailer **lamps** and one to activate tractor **lamps**.

347.40. **Mirrors.**

- (1) No person shall operate any motor vehicle upon a highway unless such vehicle is equipped with a **mirror** so located as to reflect to the operator a view of the roadway for a distance of 200 feet to the rear of such vehicle.
- (2) No person shall operate on a highway any school bus having a passenger-carrying capacity of 10 or more persons including the operator unless such bus is equipped with at least one **mirror** which is 7 inches in diameter so located as to enable the operator to see a reflection of the road from the entire front bumper forward to a point where direct observation is possible.
- (3) No person may operate or permit the operation of any motor bus on a highway unless the bus is equipped with 2 outside rearview **mirrors**, one to the right and one to the left of the operator. Each **mirror** shall have not less than 50 square inches of unobstructed reflective surface and shall be firmly supported and adjustable to give the operator a clear view past both the right and left rear of the bus.