



County Road Association
OF MICHIGAN

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Heavy haulers note: Seasonal weight restrictions take effect
CRA's seasonal weight restrictions app available to monitor changes in road status

LANSING, MI – Just two days early, the February winter thaw has several county road agencies across southern Michigan activating seasonal weight restrictions (SWRs). SWRs are important to heavy haulers that must travel primary and local roads, and are planning their routes.

Seasonal weight restrictions – or “frost laws” – are written into law to protect Michigan’s local roads from excess weight during periods when the roads are most vulnerable to damage. State law allows the Michigan Department of Transportation, counties and municipalities to reduce truck weights and speeds on roads that are not built to accommodate heavy truck traffic in such conditions. SWRs take effect each March 1, or sooner if weather conditions demand it.

During weight restrictions, trucks traveling on posted/restricted roads must reduce speeds to 35 mph and carry lighter loads – a 25% reduction on concrete roads and 35% less on asphalt or gravel.

Roads are vulnerable now, because mild temperatures and weather conditions have allowed the road surface to thaw, puddling on and under the road – while the subsoil remains frozen. The now-spongy surface under the roadbed makes it vulnerable to cracking under heavy loads. Depending on the region, Michigan SWRs typically remain in effect for 6-8 weeks.

To help heavy haulers stay legal and plan their routes, the County Road Association (CRA) of Michigan has released an updated SWR app for iPhone, iPad and Android devices, as well as a revamped seasonal weight restrictions webpage (micountyroads.org/SWRs). The app (“MI Weight Restrictions”) allows heavy haulers to be more informed about seasonal weight restrictions, ultimately leading to safer, better roads.

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“This new app gives heavy haulers the opportunity to be well-connected with the latest guidance on road restrictions during the spring thaw and helps road agencies appropriately protect the taxpayers’ roads at a vulnerable timeframe,” said CRA CEO Denise Donohue. “This app shows that Michigan county road agencies are keeping pace with the needs of our economy while safeguarding the roads.”

The app includes a color-coded map with county road agency weight restriction info; a list of restricted roads by county; a list of all season roads by county; the ability to pull and pay for an overweight permit online, directly from Oxcart Permit Systems, LLC; and the option to receive email notifications when counties make SWR changes.

For more information, heavy haulers may contact the relevant county road agency.

The 83 members of the County Road Association of Michigan represent the unified voice for a safe and efficient county transportation infrastructure system in Michigan, including appropriate stewardship of the public’s right-of-way in rural and urban Michigan. Collectively, Michigan’s county road agencies manage 75 percent of all roads in the state, including 90,500 miles of roads and 5,900 bridges. County road agencies also maintain the state’s highway system in 63 counties. Michigan has the nation’s fourth-largest local road system.

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