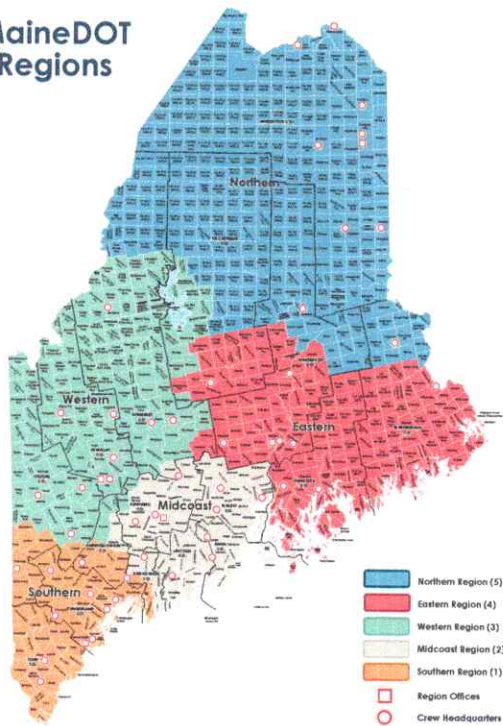


## MaineDOT Regions



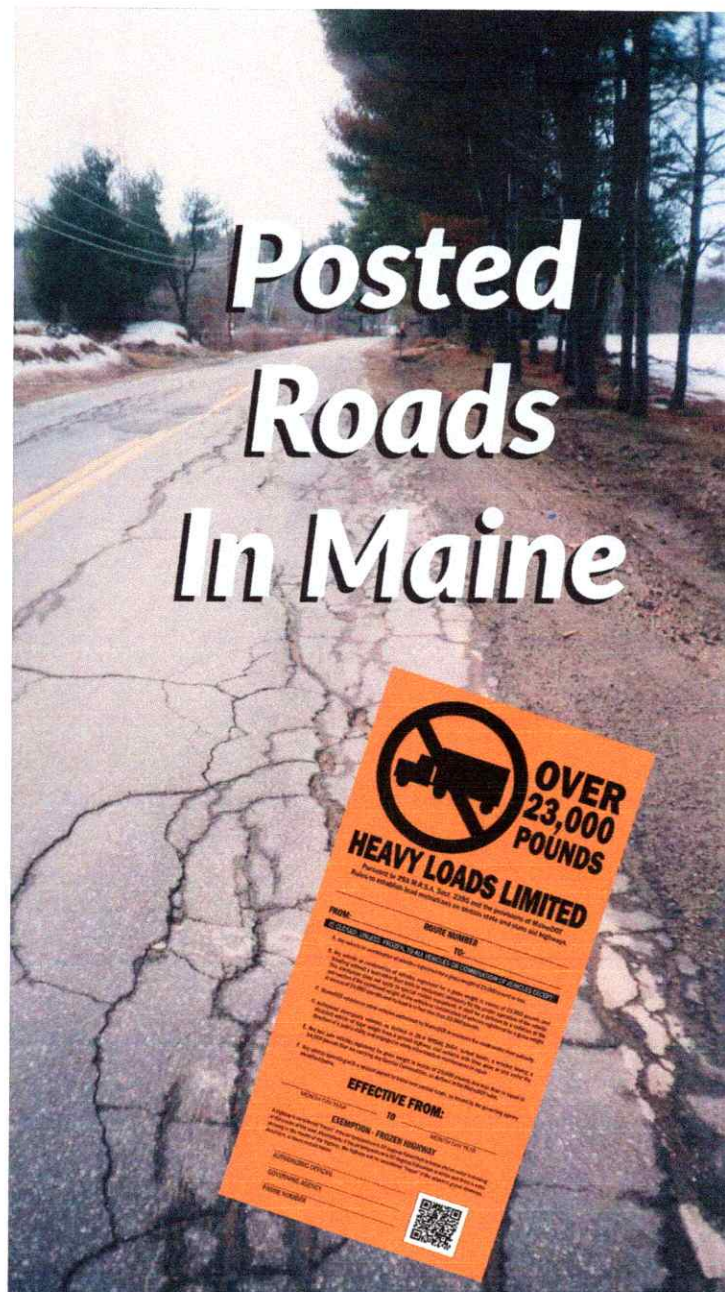
For more information on posted state roads, please contact MaineDOT Region Offices at:

Southern Region 1 - Scarborough  
 region1.mainedot@maine.gov 207-885-7000  
 Midcoast Region 2 - Augusta  
 region2.mainedot@maine.gov 207-624-8200  
 Western Region 3 - Wilton  
 region3.mainedot@maine.gov 207-562-4228  
 Eastern Region 4 - Bangor  
 region4.mainedot@maine.gov 207-941-4500  
 Northern Region 5 - Presque Isle  
 region5.mainedot@maine.gov 207-764-2200



**mainedot.gov**

# Posted Roads In Maine



# MaineDOT





### ***"Posted Roads" in Maine***

During the winter and spring, some of Maine's roads weaken and they need to be protected. As temperatures warm and the ground thaws, soil under the pavement becomes saturated with water, making the pavement unstable. As a result, many roads cannot support heavy loads.

This means that a road carrying a 15-ton load in the summer or winter may only be able to carry a 5-ton load in the spring when it thaws. A posted state road's maximum weight limit is 23,000 pounds. The posting is temporary and is designed to protect a road while it is vulnerable. Repairing or rebuilding a road is expensive, at times costing over \$1 million per mile.

Many roads have been posted for years and these roads are well-known to those who use them. However, as roads age and deteriorate, posting is one maintenance strategy to protect them and extend their life.

### ***Why we post***

Asphalt roads are at their weakest when the ground begins to thaw and the materials underneath a road's surface are saturated with moisture. Travelling over roads that have a saturated base underneath can cause cracking, potholes, and rutting. Heavy trucks can completely break through asphalt and severely damage a road.

### ***Travel over posted roads***

In some instances, you may travel over posted roads. When a posted road is "solidly frozen," you may drive over the road. A road is considered "solidly frozen"

when the air temperature is 32°F or below and there is no water showing in the cracks of the road. Alternatively, if the air temperature is 32 degrees Fahrenheit or below and there is water showing in the cracks of the highway, the highway will be considered "frozen" if the adjacent gravel driveways, shoulders, or lawns remain frozen.

### ***Posted roads versus non-posted roads***

Not all roads are the same. If money was not an issue, all roads would be built to carry the heaviest legal loads. In Maine, many roads have been built to these modern standards.



However, there are also many miles of road that weren't built to tolerate heavy trucks and the day-to-day demands of modern traffic. Since dollars are limited, MaineDOT prioritizes construction on roads and bridges that have the most traffic and offer the most economic benefit to the state. Unfortunately, it may be many years before some smaller, less-traveled roads are rebuilt. In the meantime, we must post roads in order to protect and extend their life.

### ***State law permits posting roads***

In order to protect the state's road infrastructure, the Maine Legislature has authorized MaineDOT to post roads. Title 29-A, Chapter 21, Subchapter 3 states that "the Department of Transportation may restrict the weight or passage of any vehicle over any way when, in its judgment, such passage would be unsafe or likely to cause excessive damage to the way or bridge." Municipalities and counties are also authorized to enact rules on roads under their jurisdiction.

***For more information visit  
[mainedot.gov/postedroads/](http://mainedot.gov/postedroads/)***

**17 DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**229 OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER**

**Chapter 308: RULES TO ESTABLISH SEASONAL LOAD RESTRICTIONS ON CERTAIN STATE AND STATE AID HIGHWAYS**

**SUMMARY:** The following rules define the heavy load restrictions on posted State and State Aid Highways between November 15 to June 1, pursuant to the Department of Transportation's authority under Title 29-A M.R.S.A., Section 2395

**SECTION 1. DEFINITIONS**

1. The definitions contained in Title 29-A, Section 101 of the Maine Revised Statutes Annotated are hereby included.
2. **Limited Load Permit** - A written permit issued by the Maine Department of Transportation authorizing the transport of certain commodities under certain specified circumstances as defined in this chapter.
3. **Exemption Certificate** - A permit that was issued by the Maine Department of Transportation prior to the establishment of Limited Load Permits and allows for a partial load defined by axle configuration.
4. **Perishable Product** - Any commodity (typically food items) that requires expeditious transportation in a controlled atmosphere for protection against heat or cold to prevent deterioration.
5. **Special mobile equipment.** "Special mobile equipment" means a motor vehicle with permanently mounted equipment not designed or used primarily for the transportation of persons or property. "Special mobile equipment" includes, but is not limited to, road construction or maintenance machinery, ditch-digging apparatus, stone crushers, air compressors, power shovels, cranes, graders, rollers, trucks used only to plow snow and for other duties pertaining to winter maintenance, including sanding and salting, well drillers and wood-sawing equipment or similar types of equipment.
6. **Special Commodity** - Includes any of the following:
  - A. Home delivered heating fuel (oil, gas, coal, stove size wood that is less than 36" in length, propane and wood pellets);
  - B. Petroleum products;
  - C. Groceries;
  - D. Bulk milk;
  - E. Bulk feed
  - F. Solid Waste
  - G. Animal Bedding
  - H. Returnable beverage containers
  - I. Sewage from private septic tanks or porta-potties
  - J. Medical gases
  - K. United States mail.

**SECTION 2 DESIGNATED CLOSED WAYS**

In order to prevent excessive damage to State and State-Aid Highways, the Maine Department of Transportation Commissioner (MaineDOT) may close all or part of a highway to heavy vehicles during any time from November 15 to June 1. No heavy vehicles shall travel over closed ways except those permitted by this rule.

### **SECTION 3 NOTICE**

Notice shall be given by erecting an orange poster at each end of a closed highway indicating the following: (1) the date of the posting, (2) a description of the highway that is closed, (3) a summary of the vehicles exempt from the closing, (4) the name of the Department's Representative and (5) the applicable statutory and regulatory references.

### **SECTION 4 EXEMPT – FROZEN HIGHWAYS**

This rule shall not apply to a closed highway which is frozen. A highway is considered "frozen" if the air temperature is 32 degrees Fahrenheit or below and no water is showing in the cracks of the road. Alternatively, if the air temperature is 32 degrees Fahrenheit or below and there is water showing in the cracks of the highway, the highway will be considered "frozen" if the adjacent gravel driveways, shoulders, or lawns remain frozen.

### **SECTION 5. EXEMPT VEHICLES**

The following vehicles are exempt from this rule and do not require any type of permit from MaineDOT:

1. Any vehicle or combination of vehicles registered for a gross weight of 23,000 pounds or less.
2. Any vehicle or combination of vehicles registered for a gross weight in excess of 23,000 pounds and traveling without a load other than tools or equipment necessary for the proper operation of the vehicle. This exemption does not apply to special mobile equipment. It shall be a defense to a violation of this sub-section if the combined weight of any vehicle or combination of vehicles registered for a gross weight in excess of 23,000 pounds and its load is in fact less than 23,000 pounds.
3. MaineDOT vehicles or other vehicles authorized by MaineDOT to maintain the roads under their authority.
4. Authorized emergency vehicles as defined in 29-A MRSA §2054, school buses, a wrecker towing a disabled vehicle of legal weight from a posted highway, and vehicles with three axles or less under the direction of a public utility and engaged in utility infrastructure maintenance or repair.
5. Any two axle vehicles registered for a gross weight in excess of 23,000 pounds and less than or equal to 34,000 pounds that are carrying any of the Special Commodities defined herein may operate without a permit.

### **SECTION 6. ELIGIBILITY FOR LIMITED LOADS**

A Limited Load Permit specifies a reduced weight for a truck based upon its axle configuration and tire width. Applications for a Limited Load Permit must include a copy of the vehicle registration and a certified weigh slip for the empty weight of the vehicle. Applications are located on MaineDOT's Posted Roads website found at [www.mainedot.gov](http://www.mainedot.gov). A Limited Load Permit is valid for as long as it is used to transport the same commodity and is owned by the same owner.

1. A Limited Load Permit is available for vehicles with a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating over 34,000 pounds and carrying a Special Commodity (Vehicles with a GVW from 23,000 pounds and up to 34,000 pounds are covered in Section 5). These vehicles must be carrying a partial load and the total vehicle with load weight equal to or less than that indicated on the Limited Load Permit issued by MaineDOT. This

permit shall accompany the vehicle at all times as shall weigh slips, delivery slips, or bills of lading for the load being carried.

2. "Exemption Permits" issued prior to the implementation of this rule remain valid as long as the vehicle owner and registration number on the permit are still consistent with the vehicle's registration.

#### **SECTION 7. OBTAINING TRIP TICKETS TO HAUL BULK PERISHABLE PRODUCTS OVER SEASONALLY POSTED ROADS**

Trip Tickets are used to move bulk perishable items one time. Entities interested in obtaining a Trip Ticket must use the following process:

1. Entities intending to haul bulk perishable products over seasonally closed ways must secure a Trip Ticket from MaineDOT through its applicable region office. Information regarding the MaineDOT regions, office locations and contact information may be found on the MaineDOT web site at [www.mainedot.gov](http://www.mainedot.gov).
2. Upon receipt of information regarding the requested route, vehicle axle configuration, and commodity being moved, MaineDOT will have up to 72 hours to review the request and may charge a reasonable fee for its administration of Trip Tickets.
3. Any Trip Ticket issued will be valid for a single move by a 5 axle or more combination vehicle and will be limited to a combined maximum weight of 80,000 pounds. The Trip Ticket may be further limited by time, route, and/or weather conditions.
4. The trip ticket must be kept with load at all times.
5. Additional trip tickets will not be issued to shippers that are in violation of any of the required conditions and rules.
6. At its sole discretion, MaineDOT may close any posted road to the hauling of bulk perishable products.

#### **SECTION 8. EXCEPTIONS**

MaineDOT, in its sole discretion, may allow heavy loads over posted roadways during times of emergency or in such instances where singular, nonrecurring moves are deemed to be unique, essential, and reasonably unforeseen. Permission for such moves will be made in writing specifying the limitations, and shall accompany the vehicle at all times.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: 29-A MRS §2395; 23 MRS §§ 52, 4206

EFFECTIVE DATE: