



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ACT MEMO

2013 Wisconsin Act 377
[2013 Senate Bill 509]

Agricultural Vehicles

Under Wisconsin law, with exceptions, no person may operate any vehicle or combination of vehicles that exceeds statutory size or weight limitations on a highway unless the person obtains a permit issued by the authority in charge of maintenance of the highway. Wisconsin law treats implements of husbandry differently than other vehicles for a variety of circumstances--for example, implements of husbandry are not required to be registered--however, implements of husbandry must generally comply with statutory size and weight limitations unless a specific exception applies.

Generally, under prior law, an implement of husbandry was subject to the same weight limitations as all other vehicles. These limitations prohibit a person from operating a vehicle on a highway without a permit if the vehicle's weight exceeds 20,000 pounds per axle. Depending on the number of axles, a person may operate a vehicle with a weight of up to 80,000 pounds without a permit.

2013 Wisconsin Act 377

Very generally, 2013 Wisconsin Act 377 makes the following changes to current law:

- Modifies the definition of "implement of husbandry."
- Creates a definition for a new class of agricultural vehicles, termed "agricultural commercial vehicles."
- Creates an increased weight limitation for all implements of husbandry and agricultural commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) that is approximately 15% higher than the general statutory weight limitation for other vehicles. This increased

This memo provides a brief description of the Act. For more detailed information, consult the text of the law and related legislative documents at the Legislature's Web site at: <http://www.legis.wisconsin.gov>.

One East Main Street, Suite 401 • P.O. Box 2536 • Madison, WI 53701-2536
(608) 266-1304 • Fax: (608) 266-3830 • Email: leg.council@legis.wisconsin.gov
<http://www.legis.wisconsin.gov/lc>

(OVER)

weight allowance authorizes an implement of husbandry to operate at up to 92,000 pounds without a permit, depending on the number of axles.

- Exempts implements of husbandry being operated for a specified distance on a highway between fields and implements being transported between a farm and an implement dealer within a specified distance from weight and width requirements.
- Exempts certain types of implements of husbandry from per wheel, axle, or group of axles weight limitations on non-state trunk highways and authorizes local governments to override this exemption by resolution or ordinance.
- Creates a new “no-fee permit,” issued by the Department of Transportation (DOT) and local authorities for implements of husbandry and agricultural CMVs that exceed statutory length or weight limitations.
- Modifies length, width, and height limitations for implements of husbandry.
- Modifies lighting and marking requirements for wide implements of husbandry.
- Prohibits state patrol officers and DOT inspectors from issuing citations to persons operating certain implements of husbandry for violations of width, height, length, or weight restrictions until January 15, 2015.
- Sunsets the bill’s no-fee permitting provisions and the increased weight allowances for implements of husbandry and agricultural CMVs on January 1, 2020.
- Requires persons in the business of selling farm equipment to make certain disclosures to the buyer of the equipment, such as the gross vehicle weight of the farm equipment.

Effective date: With certain exceptions, the Act takes effect on May 24, 2014. The provisions modifying the definition of implement of husbandry, creating a definition for agricultural CMVs, and increasing the weight limitations for implements of husbandry and agricultural CMVs took effect on April 24, 2014. The provisions relating to lighting requirements take effect on November 1, 2015. The new requirements for persons in the business of selling farm equipment to make certain disclosures to the buyer of the equipment take effect on January 1, 2015.

Prepared by: Michael Queensland, Staff Attorney

May 6, 2014

MQ:jb;jal