



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ACT MEMO

2011 Wisconsin Act 243
[2011 Senate Bill 422]

Length of Vehicle Combinations

2011 Wisconsin Act 243 increases the maximum length of certain vehicle combinations that may be operated on a highway without an overlength permit.

CURRENT LAW

Under current law, the general rule is that no person may operate any combination of two vehicles with an overall length in excess of 65 feet unless he or she obtains a permit from the Department of Transportation (DOT) to exceed this length. There are several exceptions to this rule. For example, subject to limitation by the DOT, a tractor-semitrailer combination that does not exceed 75 feet in length may be operated without a permit on state trunk highways. In addition, also subject to limitation by the DOT, there are special length limitations for semitrailers operated as part of two-vehicle combinations when operated on state trunk highways.

2011 WISCONSIN ACT 243

Act 243 increases the overall length limit for any combination of two vehicles that may generally be operated on a highway from 65 feet to 70 feet. The bill also specifies that the special length limitations that pertain to certain semitrailer combinations no longer only apply to operating on state trunk highways. Instead, the Act gives the DOT the authority to designate the highways on which such combinations may be operated. In addition, the Act increases the maximum permissible length for articulated buses operated in urban areas from 65 to 66 feet, and increases, from 65 feet to 75 feet, the maximum length for vehicle combinations being transported by the drive-away method in saddlemount combination. The statutes do not define "saddlemount combination," but generally this refers to a combination of vehicles in which one or more trucks or truck tractors are towed by another truck or truck tractor by piggybacking the towing vehicle.

Effective date: 2011 Wisconsin Act 243 takes effect on November 1, 2012.

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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.state.wi.us/>.