

**Clearinghouse Rule 06-049**

STATE OF WISCONSIN

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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The Wisconsin Department of Transportation proposes an order to amend TRANS 276.07(28) and (31m), relating to allowing the operation of double bottoms and certain other vehicles on certain specified highways.

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**NOTICE OF HEARING  
AND  
TEXT OF PROPOSED RULE**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to ss. 85.16(1) and 348.07(4), Stats., interpreting s. 348.07(4), Stats., the Department of Transportation will hold a public hearing at the following location to consider the amendment of chapter Trans 276, Wisconsin Administrative Code, relating to allowing the operation of double bottoms and certain other vehicles on certain specified highways:

**June 20, 2006**

Department of Transportation  
Hill Farms State Transportation Office  
Room 701 (Superior Room)  
Madison, WI  
**10:00 AM**

*(Parking is available for persons with disabilities)*

An interpreter for the hearing impaired will be available on request for this hearing. Please make reservations for a hearing interpreter at least 10 days prior to the hearing.

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**Analysis Prepared by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation**

**STATUTORY AUTHORITY:** ss. 85.16(1) and 348.07(4), Stats.

**STATUTE INTERPRETED:** s. 348.07(4), Stats.

**Plain Language Analysis and Summary of, and Preliminary Comparison with, Existing or Federal Regulation.** In the Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1982 (STAA), the federal government acted under the Commerce clause of the United States Constitution to provide uniform standards on vehicle length applicable in all states. The length provisions of STAA apply to truck tractor-semitrailer combinations and to truck tractor-semitrailer-trailer combinations. (See Jan. 6, 1983, Public Law 97-424, § 411) The uniform standards provide that:

- No state shall impose a limit of less than 48 feet on a semitrailer operating in a truck tractor-semitrailer combination.
- No state shall impose a length limit of less than 28 feet on any semitrailer or trailer operating in a truck tractor-semitrailer-trailer combination.
- No state may limit the length of truck tractors.
- No state shall impose an overall length limitation on commercial vehicles operating in truck tractor-semitrailer or truck tractor-semitrailer-trailer combinations.
- No state shall prohibit operation of truck tractor-semitrailer-trailer combinations.

The State of Wisconsin complied with the federal requirements outlined above by enacting 1983 Wisconsin Act 78 which amended § 348.07(2), Stats., and § 348.08(1), Stats. This act created §§ 348.07(2)(f), (fm), (gm) and 348.08(1)(e) to implement the federal length requirements. In 1986 the legislature created § 348.07(2)(gr), Stats., to add 53 foot semitrailers as part of a two vehicle combination to the types of vehicles that may operate along with STAA authorized vehicles. (See 1985 Wisconsin Act 165)

The vehicles authorized by the STAA may operate on the national system of interstate and defense highways and on those federal aid primary highways designated by regulation of the secretary of the United States Department of Transportation. In 1984 the USDOT adopted 23 CFR Part 658 which in Appendix A lists the highways in each state upon which STAA authorized vehicles may operate. Collectively these highways are known as the National Network. In 1983 Wisconsin Act 78, the legislature enacted § 348.07(4), Stats., which directs the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to adopt a rule designating the highways in Wisconsin on which STAA authorized vehicles may be operated consistent with federal regulations.

The Department of Transportation first adopted ch. Trans 276 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code in December of 1984. The rule is consistent with 23 CFR Part 658 in that the Wisconsin rule designates all of the highways in Wisconsin that are listed in 23 CFR Part 658 as part of the National Network for STAA authorized vehicles. The federal regulation does not prohibit states from allowing operation of STAA authorized vehicles on additional state highways. The rule making authority granted to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation in § 348.07(4), Stats., allows the DOT to add routes in Wisconsin consistent with public safety. The rule making process also provides a mechanism to review requests from businesses and shipping firms for access to the designated highway system for points of origin and delivery beyond 5 miles from a

designated route. A process to review and respond to requests for reasonable access is required by 23 CFR Part 658.

This rule proposes to amend s. Trans 276.07(28) and (31m), Wisconsin Administrative Code, to add two segments of highway to the designated highway system established under s. 348.07(4), Stats. The actual highway segments<sup>1</sup> that this rule adds to the designated highway system are:

<u>Hwy.</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
CTHT	USH 12	STH 29
CTHF	STH 124	85 <sup>th</sup> Avenue

The long trucks to which this rule applies are those with 53-foot semitrailers, double bottoms and the vehicles which may legally operate on the federal National Network, but which exceed Wisconsin's regular limits on overall length. Generally, no person may operate any of the following vehicles on Wisconsin's highways without a permit: A single vehicle with an overall length in excess of 40 feet<sup>2</sup>, a combination of vehicles with an overall length in excess of 65 feet, a semitrailer longer than 48 feet, an automobile haulaway longer than 66 feet plus allowed overhangs, or a double bottom. Certain exceptions are provided under s. 348.07(2), Stats., which implements provisions of the federal Surface Transportation Assistance Act in Wisconsin.

The effect of this rule will be to extend the provisions of s. 348.07(2)(f), (fm), (gm) and (gr), and s. 348.08(1)(e), Stats., to the highway segments listed above. As a result, vehicles which may legally operate on the federal National Network in Wisconsin will also be allowed to operate on the newly-designated highway. Specifically, this means there will be no overall length limitation for a tractor-semi-trailer combination, a double bottom or an automobile haulaway on the affected highway segment. There also will be no length limitation for a truck tractor or road tractor when operated in a tractor-semi-trailer combination or as part of a double bottom or an automobile haulaway. Double bottoms will be allowed to operate on the affected highway segment provided neither trailer is longer than 28 feet, 6 inches. Semi-trailers up to 53 feet long may also be operated on this highway segment provided the kingpin to rear axle distance does not exceed 43 feet. This distance is measured from the kingpin to the center of the rear axle or, if the semi-trailer has a tandem axle, to a point midway between the first and last axles of the tandem. Otherwise, semi-trailers, including semi-trailers which are part of an automobile haulaway, are limited to 48 feet in length.

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<sup>1</sup> The rule text often achieves these objectives by consolidating individual segments into contiguous segments with new end points. In order to determine the actual highway segment added, it is necessary to compare the combined old designations with the combined new designation.

<sup>2</sup> 45-foot buses are allowed on the National Network and Interstate system by Federal law. Section 4006(b) of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991.

These vehicles and combinations are also allowed to operate on undesignated highways for a distance of 5 miles or less from the designated highway in order to reach fuel, food, maintenance, repair, rest, staging, terminal or vehicle assembly or points of loading or unloading.

**2005 Wisconsin Act 363.** 2005 Wis. Act 363 amends s. 348.07(4), Stats., effective August 1, 2006. That Act also requires the Department to promulgate emergency and permanent rules governing long trucks. Its effect on this proposed rule change has not been determined.

**Comparison with Rules in Adjacent States:** None of the states adjacent to Wisconsin (Michigan, Minnesota, Illinois and Iowa) have administrative rules relating to long truck routes in their states.

**Summary of Factual Data and Analytical Methodologies Used and How the Related Findings Support the Regulatory Approach Chosen:** Due to the federal requirement that requests for access to the designated highway system in a state be decided within 90 days of the request, a proposed rule making to add requested routes is initiated without investigation. The public hearing and Department investigation undertaken in preparation for the hearing provide the engineering and economic data needed to make a final decision on whether to withdraw the proposal or proceed to final rule making. In addition, Department review and rule making in response to the enactment of 2005 Wis. Act 363 may affect the Department's final decision on this rule making.

**Effect on Small Business and, If Applicable, Any Analysis and Supporting Documentation Used to Determine Effect on Small Businesses:** The provisions of this rule adding two highway segments to the designated system have no direct adverse effect on small businesses, and may have a favorable effect on those small businesses which are shippers or carriers using the newly-designated routes. The Department's Regulatory Review Coordinator may be contacted by e-mail at [andrew.ruiz@dot.state.wi.us](mailto:andrew.ruiz@dot.state.wi.us), or by calling (414) 438-4585.

**Fiscal Effect and Anticipated Costs Incurred by Private Sector:** The Department estimates that there will be no fiscal impact on the liabilities or revenues of any county, city, village, town, school district, vocational, technical and adult education district, sewerage district, or federally-recognized tribes or bands. The Department estimates that there will be no fiscal impact on state or private sector revenues or liabilities.

**Contact Person and Place Where Comments are to be Submitted and Deadline for Submission:** The public record on this proposed rule making will be held open until close of business the day of the hearing to permit the submission of comments in lieu of public hearing testimony or comments supplementing testimony offered at the hearing. Any such comments should be submitted to Ashwani Sharma,

Department of Transportation, Bureau of Highway Operations, Room 501, P. O. Box 7986, Madison, WI 53707-7986. You may also contact Mr. Sharma by phone at (608) 266-1273.

To view the proposed amendments to the rule, view the current rule, and submit written comments via e-mail/internet, you may visit the following website: <http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/library/research/law/rulenotices.htm>.

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**TEXT OF PROPOSED RULE**

**SECTION 1.** Trans 276.07(28) and (31m) are amended to read:

	<u>Route</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
Trans 276.07(28)	CHIPPEWA COUNTY:		
	<u>CTH F</u>	<u>South County Line</u>	<u>85<sup>th</sup> Avenue</u>
	CTH S	STH 124 N. of Chippewa Falls	STH 178 N. of Chippewa Falls
	CTH S	Jim Falls	STH 27 E. of Jim Falls
	<u>CTH T</u>	<u>South County Line</u>	<u>STH 29</u>
	CTH Y	STH 124 W. of Jim Falls	Jim Falls
(31m)	EAU CLAIRE COUNTY:		
	<u>CTH F</u>	<u>STH 124</u>	<u>North County Line</u>
	CTH R	S. <u>South</u> County Line	USH W. of Augusta
	<u>CTH T</u>	<u>USH 12</u>	<u>North County Line</u>

**(END OF RULE TEXT)**

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**Effective Date.** This rule shall take effect on the first day of the month following publication in the Wisconsin Administrative Register as provided in s. 227.22(2)(intro.), Stats.

Signed at Madison, Wisconsin, this \_\_\_\_ day of **May**, 2006.

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FRANK J. BUSALACCHI  
Secretary  
Wisconsin Department of Transportation