

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT WEIGHT LIMITS

1. What roads in Menard County are legal for 80,000 lb. trucks?

Based on legislation that took effect on January 1, 2010, the weight limit on all Illinois local roads became 80,000 pounds. Some roadways and bridges have a reduced weight limit and have been posted accordingly. Please obey the posted weight limits to avoid damages and to avoid costly fines.

Although the weight restrictions have been revised, there are still restrictions on width and length. Many rural roads simply cannot provide the turning radius for long vehicles. Drivers will need to determine if their vehicle is allowed on non-designated routes.

Menard County has the following roads designated as Class II and III highways:

IL Rte. 29	Class II
IL Rte. 97.....	Class II
IL Rte. 123.....	Class II
County Highway 11 (Quarry Ave) from IL Rte. 29 to Engel St	Class III

Class I - approved for all load widths of 8 foot 6 inches or less.

Class II - approved for all load widths of 8 foot 6 inches or less and a wheel base no greater than 55 feet.

Class III - approved for all load widths of 8 foot 0 inches or less and a wheel base no greater than 55 feet.

2. Are heavy trucks allowed access even during seasonal weight limits?

No. If the roadway is posted for specific or seasonal weight limits or for a posted bridge, that posted weight limit would govern. This is described further in the Vehicle Code where access on to a local road is granted provided there is no sign prohibiting that access (625 ILCS 5/15-111). The Menard County Board of Commissioners adopted a Resolution #7-98 which established a seasonal load limit on County Highways of 15 TONS from January 15 through April 15.

All County Highways that have this posting are subject to these weight limitations unless express written permission has been given by the Menard County Highway Department in accordance with the resolution.

When road bases are thawing or heavy rains have occurred, great damage can be done by heavily loaded vehicles. It is during these critical periods that compliance with the above restrictions will be necessary. It is not the intent of the County Board or the County Engineer that trucks or other vehicles be prohibited from using the County Highways when the roads are dry or frozen. Little damage results when these conditions prevail.

3. What is a “divisible” load?

The term “divisible” load refers to the nature of the material or object being transported. By statute, an object is considered “non-divisible” if it cannot be reasonable dismantled or disassembled to decrease the gross weight of the load. Examples would include excavators, cranes, and large construction objects. A divisible load would include material that could easily be divided into multiple trucks. This would decrease the gross weight of each individual load. Examples would include grain, manure, livestock, aggregate, etc.

4. What is an “implement of husbandry”?

The term “implement of husbandry” (625 ILCS 5/1–130) applies to vehicles designed and adapted exclusively for agriculture, horticulture or livestock raising, which includes tractors, wagons, etc., that are under 36,000 lbs. loaded weight. As soon as the non-permitted loaded vehicle goes over 36,000 lbs., it loses its exempt-from-weight-limit status as an “implement of husbandry”.

5. Does a grain cart, liquid manure tank, or even a large grain wagon still classify as an “*implement of husbandry*”?

If the gross vehicle weight is more than 36,000 lbs, it is no longer considered an “*implement of husbandry*”.

6. Can I use grain wagons to haul when Seasonal Weight Limits are in effect?

Grain wagons that have a gross weight of less than 36,000 lbs are considered “*implements of husbandry.*” The Seasonal Weight Limits only apply to licensed vehicles.

If grain wagons are used when the roadways are soft, we ask that good judgment be used. Wagons typically cause severe edge cracking when shoulders are not dry or frozen.

7. What damage is really done by heavy loads?

One local example is the damage to Sweetwater Ave. (CH 10) several years ago when grain trucks were hauling without permits during the seasonal weight limit and permits were not being issued. The oil & chip roadway was destroyed by the amount of heavy traffic in just a few days.

Other examples include most roadways in the vicinity of a large grain bin site or livestock farm. These are typically located on rural roads comprised of an aggregate base with an oil & chip surface. The most noticeable problem with these roads is rutting in wheel paths and turning vehicles. The road edges are typically broken off. And, the oil & chip surface usually has extensive cracking. The Iowa Department of Transportation conducted a study on this. You can see the results for yourself at www.dot.state.ia.us/agequip.pdf

Pavements always need to be designed so they will be strong enough to handle traffic that is expected. Less than 3% of the county highways in Menard County were designed for 80,000 lb. traffic.

8. Who determines when a bridge gets a posted weight limit?

IDOT’s Bureau of Bridges and Structures performs load rating analyses on certain bridges. Typically these are bridges that have low ratings on routine inspections. The local highway authority can also request ratings if they have specific concerns on a bridge. Note, no one can issue a permit for a vehicle to violate a bridge posting.