



1.0 General

More tracked vehicles are being manufactured and more tracked vehicles are being used in fields and on roads. Wisconsin law generally requires pneumatic tires on vehicles operated on Wisconsin highways. The requirement, however, does not extend to farm tractors, self-propelled farm implements and implements of husbandry, which may be operated on Wisconsin highways with tracks. WisDOT recommends only rubber tracks be used on roadways to reduce the likelihood of road damage.

2.0 Authority

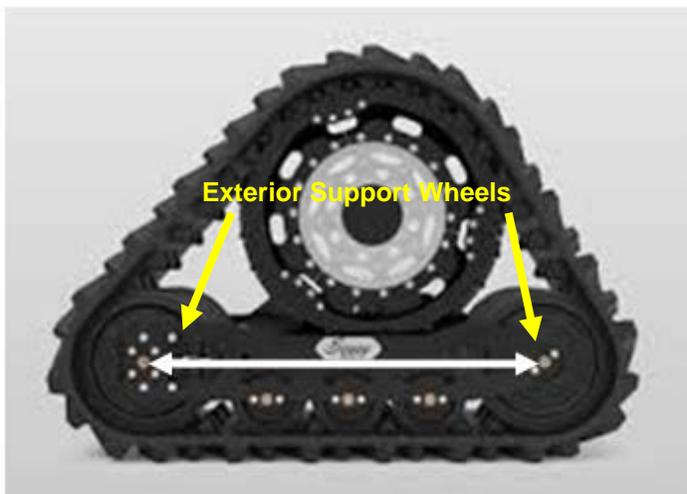
In general, Wisconsin’s motor vehicle tire regulations, Wis. Stat. s. 347.45(1) and s. Trans 305.30, require motor vehicles operated on highways to be equipped with pneumatic tires. Farm tractors, self-propelled farm implements, and implements of husbandry, however are exempted from that general rule by Wis. Stat s. 347.02(1)(a) and (b), and s. Trans 305.02(1)(a) and (b).

To protect roadway surfaces, Wisconsin law generally prohibits vehicles from being operated on roadways if any substance other than rubber protrudes from the tires’ surface, such as studs, flanges, cleats or spikes. Similar to the exception from the pneumatic tire requirement, farm tractors, self-propelled farm implements, implements of husbandry, animal-drawn vehicles and road machinery are exempted from the prohibition, provided that any protuberance does not damage the highway.

3.0 Weight Considerations

The IoH/Ag CMV Weight Table established in §348.15(3)(g) applies to both tracked and rubber tired IoH power and towed units. The table is based on gross vehicle weights, equivalent axle number and spacing, and axle weights. The exterior most support wheels for each track unit (whether a single track or a pair working in tandem) will be considered as equivalent axles for applying the weight tables. However, exterior support wheels that are closer than 42 inches apart are considered one axle.

If tracks are located across from one another, i.e. on the left and right of the vehicle, the weights of the exterior support wheels will be combined to obtain the axle weight.



DISTANCE BETWEEN EXTERIOR SUPPORT WHEELS
Less than 42 inches = 1 axle
More than 42 inches = 2 axles

4.0 Highway Damage

It is important to note that whether an agricultural vehicle has tires or tracks, a person who damages a highway by operation of farm equipment is liable for all costs of restoring the highway to its previous condition. Under Wis. Stat. s. 86.02, any person who injures a highway is liable to the maintaining authority for triple damages. The amount recovered is credited to the highway maintenance fund.

Persons who operate vehicles of any type that cause damage to a highway may be held responsible for all costs to repair and restore the highway to its condition prior to the damage. This liability is imposed regardless of whether the vehicle is operating at a legal weight, with legal equipment, and/or under a permit. It is the operator's responsibility to make sure that the operation of a vehicle does not damage a highway.

WisDOT recommends that only rubber tracks be used on roadways. Persons using tracked vehicles on pavements would be prudent to watch for any effect the vehicle has on pavements so as to avoid causing damage, resulting in an expensive repair.