

Roadside Facilities Study

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) is preparing a Roadside Facilities Study that includes the state's network of 30 [rest areas](#), 16 Safety and Weight Enforcement Facilities ([SWEFs](#)) and 69 seasonal waysides.

The study will also consider privately-owned facilities along major travel corridors that provide parking, fuel and related services for commercial truckers and other travelers. The goal is to better understand how changing technologies, regulations and other societal trends are impacting traveler needs. Key issues include:

- Adequate parking for commercial trucks including oversize – overweight vehicles. Recent federal rules require commercial drivers to make regular stops for rest, underscoring the demand for safe, convenient parking.
- Technologies such as cell phones, global positioning devices, commercial vehicle weigh-in-motion systems and increasingly fuel efficient cars and trucks all influence motorist needs and trends.
- The state's strategic roadside facilities plan has not been updated in 25 years. Many rest areas, waysides and SWEFs are aging and require extensive maintenance.

Expected to be completed in the spring of 2016, the Roadside Facilities Study will help guide use of limited resources in ways that best accommodate commercial vehicle operators and all other highway users.

Rest area survey

As one component of the larger Roadside Facilities Study, WisDOT completed a survey of rest area customers to identify long-term rest area needs and trends. Over 2,100 travelers completed surveys. Some preliminary survey results:

- Top reasons for stopping at a rest area include restroom and/or rest breaks, vending machines, check a map and attend to a pet.
- For about two-thirds of rest area visitors, their length-of-stay was 15 minutes or less.

Wisconsin's 30 rest areas play a vital role in public safety, providing about 17 million visitors each year a safe, convenient place to unwind and refresh.

Also see [Roadside Facilities Study newsletter](#).