



Traffic Engineering, Operations & Safety Manual

Chapter 13 Traffic Regulations

Section 13 Snowmobiles Crossing Freeways

13-13-1 Authority and Policy

January 1993

POLICY

Regional Transportation Directors *may* approve or disapprove crossings for snowmobiles over or under freeways which are on the State Trunk Highway system. The crossings *may* be via State Trunk Highways, other public highways, and non-highway crossings.

CROSS-REFERENCE

Operation of snowmobiles on or in the vicinity of highways, s. 350.02, Wis. Stats., (1) freeways, and (2) highways.

REQUEST AND APPLICATIONS

Requests for approval for snowmobiles to cross freeways *should* be made in writing, and approvals or disapprovals will be transmitted in writing. Requests will be accepted only from governmental authorities who are responsible for the designation and maintenance of snowmobile trails within their jurisdiction. A copy of each request, together with the approval or denial **shall** be sent to the State Traffic Engineer for Highways and to the State Maintenance Engineer for Highways.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

An official snowmobile trail or an approved snowmobile route (defined in s. 350.01, Wis. Stats.) must be designated on both sides of the freeway at the point of the proposed crossing.

The Regional Transportation Director **shall** be satisfied that snowmobiles *may* cross the freeway ramps with reasonable safety if using the proposed crossing, assuming that the snowmobile operator uses ordinary safety precautions and obeys the law relating to snowmobile operation.

AT CROSSROADS WITH INTERCHANGES

Snowmobiles *may* cross freeways at crossroads with interchanges, whether the crossroad is over or under the freeway provided that the ramp crossings are visible to the motorist did not obscured by snow piles, curvature or other features, and provided that, if the crossroad is under the freeway' the crossing can be made without violating ss. 350.02(2)(b)1, 2 and 4, Wis. Stats. (In some cases, the design of the bridge *may* prevent this).

OTHER CROSSINGS

Snowmobiles *may* cross freeways at bridges other than at crossroads providing that it *may* be done without violating the access control and there is adequate horizontal and vertical clearance.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL TO BE ACCEPTED BY MUNICIPALITY

1. The county or municipality **shall** sign the trail with approved snowmobile signs in compliance with the standards of the DNR.
2. The Regional Transportation Director *may* impose such additional reasonable requirements as a prerequisite to approval as are necessitated by the particular circumstances of the request.

13-13-2 Model Ordinance

April 1996

POLICY

Wisconsin Act 61 of 1995 provided for the operation of snowmobiles on roadways of streets and highways in municipalities for trips from residences or lodges to the nearest trail out of town. This includes permission to travel on state and county highways. The law requires that the municipality pass an ordinance to this effect. The ordinance *may* specify all roadways, all roadways with certain omissions, or specific roadways and segments.

The ordinance and guidelines were prepared by the DNR and the Snowmobile Council. They were reviewed by the State Traffic Engineer. The municipalities who are interested in this are likely to obtain these documents

from the other agencies, but a copy is included herein for the Regions' information and for making copies if asked.

**SNOWMOBILE ACCESS
MODEL ORDINANCE**

**AN ORDINANCE TO ALLOW SNOWMOBILE ACCESS FROM A RESIDENCE OR RESIDENCE AND
LODGING ESTABLISHMENT TO A SNOWMOBILE ROUTE OR TRAIL,
IN THE (TOWN/CITY/VILLAGE) OF _____, _____
COUNTY, WISCONSIN AND PRESCRIBING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION THEREOF.**

The (Town/City/Village) Board of the (Town/City/Village) of _____, _____ County, Wisconsin do ordain as follows:

Section I. Intent

1a. The intent of this ordinance is to provide a means for persons to travel from a residence within the limits of (Town/City/Village) _____, _____ County, Wisconsin for the shortest distance that is necessary for a person to operate a snowmobile to the snowmobile route or trail that is closest to that residence.

OR

1b. The intent of this ordinance is to provide a means for persons to travel from a residence and lodging establishment within the limits of (Town/City/Village) _____, _____ County, Wisconsin for the shortest distance that is necessary for a person to operate a snowmobile to the snowmobile route or trail that is closest to that residence and lodging establishment

Section II. Statutory Authority

This ordinance is adopted as authorized under s.350.18 (3) (a).

Section III. Designated Roadways and/or Highways

No person **shall** operate a snowmobile on a roadway or shoulder of a highway not designated as a snowmobile route other than the following:

- (a) all roadways or shoulders or,
 - (b) the following listed roadways or shoulders
-
-
-

Section IV. Conditions

This ordinance designates the roadways and/or shoulders of specific highways for snowmobile travel by persons residing in or staying at a lodging establishment within the limits of (Town/City/Village) _____, _____ County, Wisconsin to travel for the shortest distance that is necessary to reach the snowmobile trail or route that is closest to that residence or lodging establishment subject to the following conditions:

Section V. Speed

A snowmobile operated on a portion of the roadway or shoulder of a highway pursuant to this ordinance **shall** observe roadway speed limits.

Section VI. Enforcement

This ordinance **shall** be enforced by any law enforcement officer of the (Town/City/Village) of _____, _____ County, Wisconsin.

Section VII. Penalties

Wisconsin state snowmobile penalties as found in s. 350.11(1)(a), Wis. Stats., are adopted by reference.

Section VIII. Severability

The provisions of this ordinance **shall** be deemed severable and it is expressly declared that the (Town/City/Village) Board would have Wised the other provisions of this ordinance irrespective of whether or not one or more provisions *may* be declared invalid. If any provision of this ordinance or the application to any person or circumstances is held invalid, the remainder of the ordinance and the application of such provisions to other persons or circumstances **shall** not be affected.

Section VIII. Effective Date

This ordinance will become effective upon passage and publication.

Passed this _____ day of _____, _____ (year).

(Town/City/Village) Chairman

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING LOCAL SNOWMOBILE ACCESS ORDINANCES

This guideline and attached model ordinance is provided to assist you in developing your local ordinance. You *may* be more restrictive, you do not have to include lodging establishments and additional snowmobile regulations such as snowmobile routes can be included. Please feel free to utilize all or portions of this model.

State law allows Towns, Cities and Villages to enact local regulations allowing snowmobilers to travel between a residence or a lodging to travel along roadways and/or shoulders of highways to die closest snowmobile route or trail. The authority to enact local snowmobile residential access regulations is found in Chapter 350. 1 1(1)(a) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section I. Intent

State the specific name of the (Town/City/Village) covered by the ordinance. The law gives you the option to allow residential access and lodging access (only if residential access is also allowed) within your jurisdiction to operate their snowmobiles on a roadway or shoulder of a highway. Specify which activities you are allowing.

Section II. Statutory Authority

Your authorizing statute is s.350.18 (3)(a).

Section III. Designating Roadways and/or Highways

You have authority to open all the roadways and shoulders of highways within your jurisdiction for residential/lodging establishment access. This includes state and county trunk highways within your jurisdiction. Even though this authority exists, you also have the right to omit these major roadways from your ordinance. You are encouraged to open up only those roadways that will suit the needs of the snowmobilers in your community. Once determined, list the specific roadways to be open to snowmobilers.

The authorizing law gives you two options on where snowmobiles *may* be operated. One is the roadway which is the traveled portion of a highway or on the shoulder. Specify in this section where you are authorizing snowmobile operation.

Section IV. Conditions

Except for speed limits, the authorizing law does not grant additional authority to regulate snowmobile operation. (Municipal snowmobile ordinances are subject to the limitations of s.350.18, Wis. Stats.) However, you have the right to establish conditions on the right to use the roadways. The following is a list of conditions for your consideration:

1. Snowmobiles **shall** be operated on the extreme right side of the roadway and travel with the flow of traffic.
2. Snowmobiles are to be operated in single file.
3. Headlights *should* be on at all times.
4. Snowmobile operators **shall** yield the right-of-way to other vehicular traffic and pedestrians.

Snowmobiles violating any of the above conditions would be subject to the underlying violation of operating on the roadway.

Section V. Speed

Section 350. 18 Wis. Stats., allows municipalities to adopt certain ordinances in strict conformity with state law. This language mirrors that found in founding s. 350.02(2)(a) 6, Wis. Stats.

Section VI. Enforcement

The law enforcement officer/s within your jurisdiction *should* be listed as the enforcement authority. State Conservation Wardens do not have authority to enforce local ordinances,

Section VII. Penalties

The appropriate penalty section to be adopted would be s.350.1 1(1)(a), Wis. Stats.

Consideration *should* be given to include in your ordinance a seasonal effective date to eliminate problems that might occur because of early/late snowfalls. This would also eliminate any prospects of snowmobile use during non-winter seasons.

Snowmobile activity is constantly growing and local regulation can be responsive to the public need. Through regulation, a safe, enjoyable snowmobiling environment can be provided while at the same time controlling undesirable conflict. Understanding is needed by everyone involved in the process.

Once, your ordinance is adopted, you are required to submit a copy to the Department of Natural Resources, Attn. Snowmobile Section, P.O. Box 7921, Madison, Wisconsin 53707 and to the office of the law enforcement agency of the municipality and county having jurisdiction over such street or highway.