
SENATE BILL 5457

State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session

By Senators Litzow, Liias, Hobbs, and King

Read first time 01/22/15. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

1 AN ACT Relating to firefighting apparatus length and weight
2 limits; and amending RCW 46.44.190.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 46.44.190 and 2002 c 231 s 1 are each amended to
5 read as follows:

6 (1) As used in this section, "firefighting apparatus" means a
7 vehicle or combination of vehicles, owned by a regularly organized
8 fire suppression agency, designed, maintained, and used exclusively
9 for fire suppression and rescue or for fire prevention activities.
10 These vehicles and associated loads or equipment are necessary to
11 protect the public safety and are considered nondivisible loads. A
12 vehicle or combination of vehicles that is not designed primarily for
13 fire suppression including, but not limited to, a hazardous materials
14 response vehicle, bus, mobile kitchen, mobile sanitation facility,
15 and heavy equipment transport vehicle is not a firefighting apparatus
16 for purposes of this section.

17 (2) Firefighting apparatus must comply with all applicable
18 federal and state vehicle operating and safety criteria, including
19 rules adopted by agencies within each jurisdiction.

20 (3) All owners and operators of firefighting apparatus shall
21 comply with current information, provided by the department,

1 regarding the applicable load restrictions of state and local bridges
2 within the designated fire service area, including any automatic or
3 mutual aid agreement areas.

4 (4) Firefighting apparatus operating within a fire district or
5 municipal department boundary of the owner of the apparatus,
6 including any automatic or mutual aid agreement areas, may operate
7 without a permit if:

8 (a) The weight does not exceed:

9 (i) 600 pounds per inch width of tire;

10 (ii) 24,000 pounds on a single axle;

11 (iii) 43,000 pounds on a tandem axle set;

12 (iv) 67,000 pounds gross vehicle weight, subject to the gross
13 weight limits of RCW 46.44.091(1) (c), (d), and (e);

14 (v) The tire manufacturer's tire load rating.

15 (b) There is no tridem axle set.

16 (c) The dimensions do not exceed:

17 (i) 8 feet, 6 inches wide;

18 (ii) 14 feet high;

19 (iii) ~~((50))~~ 65 feet overall length;

20 (iv) 15 foot front overhang;

21 (v) Rear overhang not exceeding the length of the wheel base.

22 (5) Operators of firefighting apparatus that exceed the weight
23 limits in subsection (4) of this section must apply for an overweight
24 permit with the department. The maximum weight a firefighting
25 apparatus may weigh is 50,000 pounds on the tandem axle set and
26 31,000 pounds on a single drive axle, and may not exceed ~~((600))~~ 670
27 pounds per inch width of tire. The maximum weight limit must include
28 the weight of a full water tank, if applicable, all equipment
29 necessary for operation, and the normal number of personnel usually
30 assigned to be on board, or four personnel, whichever is greater. At
31 least four personnel must be physically present at the time the
32 apparatus is weighed.

33 (6) When applying for a permit, a current weight slip from a
34 certified scale must be attached to the department's application
35 form. Upon receiving an application, the department shall transmit it
36 to the local jurisdictions in which the firefighting apparatus will
37 be operating, so that the local jurisdictions can make a
38 determination on the need for local travel and route restrictions
39 within the operating area. The department shall issue a permit within
40 twenty days of receiving a permit application and shall issue the

1 permit on an annual basis for the apparatus to operate on the state
2 highway system, with reference made to applicable load restrictions
3 and any other limitations stipulated on the permit, including
4 limitations placed by local jurisdictions.

5 (7) Firefighting apparatus in operation in this state before June
6 13, 2002, and privately owned industrial firefighting apparatus used
7 for purposes of providing emergency response and mutual aid are each
8 exempt from subsections (4) and (5) of this section. However,
9 operators of the exempt firefighting apparatus must still obtain an
10 annual permit under subsection (6) of this section.

11 (8) Firefighting apparatus without the proper overweight permits
12 are prohibited from being operated on city, county, or state roadways
13 until the apparatus is within legal weight limits and a current
14 permit has been issued by the department. When the permit is issued,
15 the fire district must notify the Washington state patrol that the
16 apparatus is in compliance with overweight permit regulations.

17 (9) The Washington state patrol may conduct random spot checks of
18 firefighting apparatus to ensure compliance with overweight permit
19 regulations. If a firefighting apparatus is found to be not in
20 compliance with overweight permit regulations, the state patrol shall
21 issue a violation notice to the fire department stating this fact and
22 prohibiting operation of the apparatus on city, county, and state
23 roadways.

24 (10) It is a traffic infraction to continue to operate a
25 firefighting apparatus on the roadways after a violation notice has
26 been issued. The following penalties apply:

27 (a) For a first offense, the penalty will be no less than fifty
28 dollars but no more than fifty dollars;

29 (b) For a second offense, the penalty will be no less than
30 seventy-five dollars;

31 (c) For a third or subsequent offense, the penalty will be no
32 less than one hundred dollars.

33 (11) No individual liability attaches to an employee or volunteer
34 of the penalized fire department.

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