

**WAC 468-38-265 Tow trucks—Permitting for oversize/overweight.**

**(1) What classes of tow trucks are eligible for special permits?**

Special permits may be issued to Class B and Class C tow trucks, including Class E tow trucks with either a Class B or Class C rating.

**(2) What is the duration of a special permit issued to tow trucks?**

The special permit issued specifically to tow trucks is an annual permit from date of purchase.

**(3) Are there size and weight limitations and/or requirements to the special permit for tow trucks?**

Permit limits and/or requirements are categorized as follows:

(a) **Weight of tow truck:** Maximum weights for tow trucks are as follows:

(i) All classes of tow trucks must conform to RCW 46.44.041 when towing a disabled unit by draw bar or tow chain method.

(ii) When any portion of the weight of the disabled unit rests upon a Class B, C or E (with B or C rating) tow truck; the weight must not exceed:

(A) Six hundred pounds per inch width of tire up to twenty-two thousand pounds per single axle; or

(B) Forty-three thousand pounds per tandem axle set; or

(C) The weight allowed for axle groups per formula in RCW 46.44.091(1).

(iii) The tow truck steer axle must carry sufficient weight to maintain safe operation.

(iv) A Class B tow truck steer axle must carry a minimum of three thousand pounds at all times.

(v) A Class C tow vehicle steer axle must carry a minimum of three thousand five hundred pounds at all times.

(vi) A Class E tow truck with B or C rating must meet the requirement for minimum steer axle load for the rating.

(vii) The special permit does not allow a tow truck to exceed legal weight limits when not in tow or haul status.

(b) **Weight of disabled unit:** Maximum weight for disabled units towed under an annual special permit are as follows:

(i) When being towed by a Class B, C or E (with B or C rating) tow truck, using a draw bar or tow chain method, the weight of the disabled unit must conform with weight limits in RCW 46.44.041, or to the limits of any special permit issued to the disabled unit.

(ii) When a Class B, C or E (with B or C rating) tow truck carries a portion of the weight of the disabled unit, the first load bearing axle(s) of the disabled unit must not exceed:

(A) Six hundred pounds per inch width of tire;

(B) Twenty-two thousand pounds per single axle;

(C) Forty-three thousand pounds per tandem axle set; and

(D) Weight limits for axle groups per formula in RCW 46.44.091.

(iii) A load recovery vehicle configured as a truck-tractor/semi-trailer, or solo vehicle may carry either a divisible or nondivisible load. The recovery vehicle is limited to weight limits in RCW 46.44.041 when carrying divisible loads, or to the weight limits in (a)(ii) of this subsection when carrying nondivisible loads. The recovery vehicle must be rated as either a Class B or Class C tow truck in order to be issued the annual special permit.

(c) **Height and width:** No disabled unit, including load, shall exceed fourteen feet in height or eight feet six inches in width, except:

(i) When the disabled unit is authorized under a special permit allowing a greater height or width. The allowances granted under the special permit shall apply only to the route identified on the special permit; or

(ii) Where an accident or collision has caused a disfigurement of the disabled unit resulting in a width greater than eight feet six inches, but not exceeding ten feet in width. In this event, during daylight hours the disabled unit must be flagged per WAC 468-38-155, and during the hours of darkness the extreme width must have clearance lights that comply with the requirements of *Code of Federal Regulation*, 49 C.F.R. 393.11.

(iii) Rear view mirrors may exceed the width authorized in the special permit to a point that allows the driver a view to the rear along both sides of the vehicle(s) in conformance with *Federal National Safety Standard 111* (49 C.F.R. 571.111).

(d) **Length:** All classes of single unit tow vehicles may not exceed forty feet in length. The length of the disabled unit shall not exceed the length for such vehicle established in statute or as allowed by a special permit issued to the disabled unit. The towing of a vehicle combination (i.e., tractor/trailer or truck/trailer) is not authorized, except during an emergent situation when directed by the state patrol or the department to remove the disabled combination to the nearest safe location off the highway.

(e) **Restrictions and postings:** An annual special permit must not be used to exceed published road and bridge restrictions, or posted bridges. Restrictions and postings should be reviewed online daily for changes, each permit will contain this instruction. It is the operator's responsibility to remain current with bridge restriction and posting information.

(f) **Exceptions:** Exceptions to the rules provided in this section will be handled on an individual basis by separate special permit, after the disabled unit has been moved to the nearest safe location.

**(4) Is there ever a time when a Class A or D tow truck is authorized to exceed legal weight?**

Class A and D tow trucks are not eligible for special permits. In an emergent situation, when no other class of truck is available, either class truck may make or assist in making short moves, at the direction of the state patrol or the department, to the nearest safe location off the highway.

**(5) What constitutes an emergent situation?**

An emergent situation, for purposes of this section, is defined as a disabled vehicle on any public highway, including shoulders and access ramps.

**(6) Is there ever a time when a heavy duty tow truck can move in combination exceeding legal weights without a permit?**

When a heavy duty tow truck weighs the same or greater than the disabled vehicle, a permit is not required to move the disabled vehicle from the place where the vehicle became disabled to the nearest appropriate repair facility. The operator shall check the restrictions on WSDOT's commercial vehicle website prior to each movement. The load bearing axle(s) of the combination shall not exceed:

(a) Six hundred pounds per inch width of tire;

(b) Twenty-two thousand pounds per single axle;

(c) Forty-three thousand pounds per tandem axle set;

(d) Weight limits for axle groups per formula in RCW 46.44.091;

and

(e) Posted limits and restrictions listed on WSDOT's commercial vehicle services website on the route traveled.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 46.44.090, 46.44.0941. WSR 17-04-023, § 468-38-265, filed 1/23/17, effective 2/23/17; WSR 04-16-060, § 468-38-265, filed 7/30/04, effective 8/30/04. Statutory Authority: RCW 46.44.090 and 46.44.015. WSR 03-19-026, § 468-38-265, filed 9/8/03, effective 10/9/03. Statutory Authority: RCW 46.44.090. WSR 95-24-074, § 468-38-265, filed 12/4/95, effective 1/4/96.]