

Frequently Asked Questions about Permitted Trucks in Idaho

What are over-legal shipments?

Idaho and federal law allow for the shipment of oversize loads on U.S. highways conditional upon the issuance of a permit from the Idaho Transportation Department. Based on the dimensions and weight of the load, a decision is made whether the trip can be made safely, without risk to roads and bridges, and with minimal disruption to traffic.

More than 68,000 over-legal permits are issued annually for Idaho highways. Permits have been issued for grain silos, boats, electric turbines, wind turbine blades, agricultural equipment, mobile homes, and more.

The term “over-legal” does not mean illegal. It usually simply means a permit is required. In most cases, a shipment requires an over-legal permit if it is more than 8.6 feet wide, has a height of more than 14 feet, or weighs more than 80,000 pounds. A shipment also requires an over-legal permit if it is greater than a certain length, depending on the type of trailer configuration it is using.

Shipments can be reducible, or non-reducible. Reducible shipments are those in which cargo or goods can be removed to make them lighter. A truck carrying sugar beets or timber is reducible because beets or timber can be removed. A non-reducible shipment is hauling cargo or goods that can't be reduced. Examples of non-reducible shipments are heavy equipment or a wind turbine blade.

Which routes are they allowed on?

Over-legal shipments are allowed on state highway routes and local roads. Local roads are managed by a highway district, county or city. Routes that are managed by the Idaho Transportation Department have a state highway designator, U.S. highway designator or interstate designator. Some examples of routes under the transportation department's jurisdiction include Idaho 44, Idaho 55, U.S. 95 and Interstate 84.

The federal government has oversight regarding the interstate system, and has rules transporters are required to follow. Interstate routes in Idaho are Interstate 84, Interstate 86, Interstate 90, Interstate 15 and Interstate 184.

The Idaho Transportation Department has a process it follows before an over-legal permit is issued. This includes a review of the shipment's height, width, length and weight, and the highway route it will travel.

The transportation department maintains maps that designate by color code the state highway routes where permitted trucks can travel. These maps, found on ITD's website, address length and/or weight.

For example, red routes can safely accommodate over-legal shipments up to 115 feet in length. Blue routes can accommodate shipments that are 95 feet in length.

What does the Idaho Transportation Department do to ensure shipments can travel safely?

The Idaho Transportation Department tracks and monitors the conditions of its highways and bridges. Before an over-legal shipment is allowed to travel, the shipper is required to contact the transportation department regarding the route it proposes to use and the dimensions of its shipment. The transportation department checks to ensure the route can safely accommodate the shipment's weight, length, height and width.

How does "off tracking" affect safety?

Many concerns about truck safety related to lane and shoulder widths or road curvature are addressed through off track requirements. Off tracking happens when the wheels of the trailer of a typical semi tractor-trailer combination do not follow the same path as those of the tractor portion. This can cause a turning truck to cross a center line or encroach into adjacent lanes or the shoulder. Off track requirements help ensure that a truck stays safely in its proper lane. Idaho's administrative rules regarding permitted loads have specific off track requirements for various vehicle types and configurations.

Why is the Idaho Transportation Department considering public input regarding all permitted trucks?

Safety and efficient mobility is important for all commercial vehicles. The Idaho Transportation Department will evaluate input and comments received during its negotiated rulemaking process, and assess which vehicles are affected by the suggestions. Any proposal that moves forward will be based on careful consideration, with a solid basis for the vehicles affected.

What requirements do the drivers of over-legal shipments follow?

To be eligible to apply for a commercial driver license, the driver must:

- Be at least 18 years old.
- Must be 21 years old to drive across state lines or operate a vehicle containing hazardous materials.
- Have no prior disqualifying criminal offenses.
- Provide a medical examination self-certification form to show he/she is physically able to operate a commercial vehicle.

The applicant must also pass the CDL skills test, which consists of 3 parts:

- Vehicle inspection
- Basic controls exam
- Road test

Drivers applying for any endorsements on the CDL, such as hazardous materials, may have additional knowledge and road skills exams.

What types of overlegal permits are there?

There are various types of single trip and annual overlegal permits which may be obtained for the movement of vehicles/loads that exceed legal size and weight.

- Non-Reducible Vehicle/Loads: A vehicle/load that consists of a single piece that cannot be physically reduced in size or weight to meet legal size and weight limits.
 - Overweight – An overlegal permit is required to exceed the legal axle weight(s) and/or 80,000 pounds for travel on all highways. All lift axles must be fully deployed when remaining axles exceed legal axle weights.
 - Oversize – An overlegal permit is required to exceed the legal dimensions established by law over Idaho highways.
- Reducible Loads: Loads which consist of multiple pieces which may be reduced in size or weight to meet legal size and weight limits.
 - Excess Weight – An overlegal permit is required to exceed 80,000 pounds on all highways (cannot exceed legal axle weight limits or maximum gross weight limit of 105,500 pounds unless operating on routes designated for Up to 129,000 pounds).
 - Excess Height – An overlegal permit is required to exceed a height of 14 feet on routes designated for such operations up to a maximum height of 14 feet 9 inches.
 - Extra Length – An overlegal permit is required to exceed legal length limits (i.e. single trailers over 48 feet and double trailers exceeding 61 feet or 75 feet overall) on routes designated for such operation up to 95 feet or 115 feet.

A listing and description of annual overlegal permits can be viewed [here](#).