



Everything You Need to Know About Chain Laws

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The weather is beginning to get a little cooler across the United States and some of the higher elevations are beginning to see snow. That means it's time to freshen up on the chain laws in the states that you regularly run.

Alabama

The use of tire chains shall be permitted upon any vehicle when required for safety because of snow, rain, or other conditions tending to cause a vehicle to slide or skid.



Alaska

You are not permitted to use chains from May 1 through September 15 when north of 60 North Latitude.

You are not permitted to use chains from April 15 through September 30 when south of 60 North Latitude.

If you are operating a vehicle on Sterling Highway, you are not permitted to use chains from May 1 through September 15.

You will need to obtain a special permit from the Department of Administration if you would like to use chains in one of these prohibited zones.

Arizona

The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

Arkansas

The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

California

California does not require trucks to carry chains during any specified time period. When the weather hits, though, it takes at least eight chains for a standard tractor-trailer configuration to comply with the regulations.

During the winter months, there might be traction chain controls in the mountain areas. When these are established you will see signs posted along the highway. These signs will also include the type of requirement, which will include one of the following:

- **R1** - Chains, traction devices or snow tires are required on the drive axle of all vehicles except four wheel/ all wheel drive vehicles.
- **R2** - Chains or traction devices are required on all vehicles except four wheel/ all wheel drive vehicles with snow-tread tires on all four wheels.
- **R3** - Chains or traction devices are required on all vehicles, no exceptions.

Colorado

From September 1 through May 31, all trucks must carry sufficient chains on I-70 when traveling between mile marker 259 outside Golden, CO and mile marker 133 in Dotsero, CO. If you get stopped and do not have chains on your truck, the fine is \$50 plus a surcharge of \$16.

If you do not put chains on your truck when the law is in effect, the fine is \$500 plus a \$78 surcharge. If you do not put chains on and you end up blocking the highway, then the fine will increase to \$1,000 plus a \$156

surcharge.

Colorado has two different types of chain laws:

- **Level 1** - Single-axle combination commercial vehicles must chain up. Trucks must have all four drive tires in chains. When level 1 is in effect, all other commercial vehicles must have snow tires or chains.
- **Level 2** - When level 2 is in effect, all commercial vehicles are required to chain up the four drive tires.

Connecticut

Chains are permitted during hazardous weather from November 15 through April 30. The chains can not be damaging to the highway's surface.

Delaware

You are permitted to use chains on highways from October 15 through April 15.

Georgia

At any time the Georgia Department of Transportation may close or limit access to certain highways during inclement weather. If this occurs, signage will be placed to inform drivers that chains are required in order to proceed.

For commercial vehicles, chains must be placed on the outermost drive tires.

Idaho

Officials with the Idaho Department of Transportation can determine that it is unsafe to drive over Lookout Pass and Fourth of July Pass on I-90, and Lolo Pass on Highway 12. If it is deemed unsafe, then you will be required to chain up a minimum of one tire on each drive axle and one axle at or near the rear.

Illinois

The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

Indiana

The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

Iowa

The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

Kansas

The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

Kentucky

No person shall use on a highway not covered with ice a vehicle with a chained wheel unless the wheel rests upon an ice-shoe at least 6 inches wide. When chains are used on rubber-tired vehicles, the cross chains shall be not more than three-fourths (3/4) of an inch in thickness or diameter, and shall be spaced not more than ten inches apart, around the circumference of the tires.

Louisiana

The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

Maine

Vehicles cannot have tires with metal studs, wires, spikes or other metal protruding from the tire tread from May 1 through Oct. 1. Other than that the use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

Maryland

The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

Massachusetts

Massachusetts prohibits the use of studded tires and chains between May 1 and Nov. 1 without a permit. The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

Michigan

The use of chains is allowed for safety when snow, ice, or other condition are present. If chains are used, they must not come in direct contact with the roads surface.

Minnesota

The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

Mississippi

The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

Missouri

No person shall operate any motor vehicle upon any road or highway of this state between the first day of April and the first day of November while the motor vehicle is equipped with tires containing metal or carbide studs. The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

Montana

If the Montana Department of Transportation determines that highways are too dangerous for travel, they may establish the following recommendations on traction devices:

1. Chains or other approved traction devices recommended for drive wheels
2. Chains or other approved traction devices required for drive wheels
3. Chains required for driver wheels

Nebraska

The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

Nevada

It is unlawful for any person to operate a motor vehicle, whether it is an emergency vehicle or otherwise, without traction devices, tire chains or snow tires upon any street or highway, under icy or snowy conditions, when the highway is marked or posted with signs for the requirement of traction devices, chains or snow tires.

If a highway is marked or posted with signs requiring the use of traction devices, tire chains or snow tires, a motor vehicle or combination of vehicles must be equipped with:

1. Traction devices, tire chains or snow tires if it has a gross weight or combined gross weight of 10,000 pounds or less.
2. Tire chains if it has a gross weight or combined gross weight of more than 10,000 pounds.

New Hampshire

The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

New Jersey

The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

New Mexico

The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

New York

The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

North Carolina

The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

North Dakota

North Dakota also allows metal studs within 1/16 inch beyond tread from Oct. 15 through April 15. The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

Ohio

The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

Oklahoma

The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

Oregon

Oregon's law applies to all highways in the state. Signs will tell you when you are required to carry chains and when you are required to use them. You will need to have six chains on hand to comply in Oregon. The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

Pennsylvania

The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

Rhode Island

The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

South Carolina

The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

South Dakota

The South Dakota DOT has the authority to restrict travel on roads. Signs will alert you to these restrictions. The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

Tennessee

The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

Texas

The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

Utah

When any designated highway is so restricted no vehicle shall be allowed or permitted the use of the highway, during the period between October 1 and April 30, or when conditions warrant due to adverse, or hazardous weather or roadway conditions, as determined by the Utah Department of Transportation, unless:

- An operator of a commercial vehicle with four or more drive wheels, other than a bus, shall affix tire chains to at least four of the drive wheel tires.

Vermont

Vermont has a traffic committee that will decide if use of chains will be required. The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways. Vehicles with semitrailers or trailers that have a tandem-drive axle towing a trailer shall have chains:

- On two tires on each side of the primary drive axle, or if both axles of the vehicle are powered by the drive line, one tire on each side of each drive axle; and
- On one tire of the front axle and one tire on one of the rear axles of the trailer.

Virginia

The use of tire chains are allowed when required for safety during a time of snow, ice, or another condition that might cause slippery highways.

Washington

Any commercial vehicle over 10,000 lbs. Gross vehicle weight rating should carry chains from November 1 to April 1 when driving on one of the following routes:

- Blewett Pass

SR-97 between MP 145 and Milepost 185

- Chinook Pass

SR-410 Enumclaw (MP 25) to SR-12 (MP 342)

- Cle Elum to Teanaway

SR-970 Cle Elum (MP 0) to Teanaway (MP 10)

- Gibbons Creek to Intersection of Cliffs Rd.

SR-14 Gibbons Creek (MP 18) to Intersection of Cliffs Rd. (MP 108)

- Mt. Baker Highway (Ellensburg to Selah)

SR-542 (MP22) to (MP 57)

I-82 from Ellensburg (MP 3) to Selah (MP 26)

- Newhalem to Winthrop

SR-20 Newhalem (MP 120) to Winthrop (MP 192)

- Omak to Nespelem

SR-155 Omak (MP 79) to Nespelem (MP 45)

- Satus Pass

SR-97 Columbia River (MP 00) to Toppenish (MP 59)

- Sherman Pass

SR-20 Tonasket (MP 262) to Kettle Falls (MP 342)

- Snoqualmie Pass

I-90 North Bend (MP 32) and Ellensburg (MP 101)

- Stevens Pass

SR-2 Dryden (MP 108) to Index (MP 36)

- White Pass

SR-12 Packwood (MP 135) to Naches (MP 187)

West Virginia

The use of chains is allowed for safety when snow, ice, or other condition are present. If chains are used, they must not come in direct contact with the roads surface.

Wisconsin

The use of chains is allowed for safety when snow, ice, or other condition are present. If chains are used, they must not come in direct contact with the roads surface.

Wyoming

When the chain law is in effect due to snow, ice or other conditions, travel on a highway may be restricted to use only by motor vehicles utilizing adequate snow tires or tire chains. There are two levels.

Level 1: When conditions are hazardous, travel can be restricted to vehicles equipped with tire chains, vehicles with adequate snow tires, or all-wheel-drive vehicles.

Level 2: When conditions are extremely hazardous, travel can be restricted to vehicles equipped with tire chains or all-wheel-drive vehicles equipped with adequate mud and snow or all-weather-rated tires.

The operator of a commercial vehicle shall affix tire chains to at least two (2) of the drive wheels of the vehicle at opposite ends of the same drive axle when the vehicle is required to utilize tire chains under this subsection.

Any driver that is in violation will face a fine of no more than \$250. If the violation results in the closure of all lanes in one or both directions of a highway, you will face a fine of no more than \$750.



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