

Ordinance Restricting Vehicle Weight on Posted Way

Adopted February 11, 2014

Section 1. Purpose and Authority

The purpose of this "Ordinance Restricting Vehicle Weight on Posted Ways" (hereinafter, the "Ordinance") is to prevent damage to town ways and bridges in the Town of Sangerville, Maine which may be caused by vehicles of excessive weight, to lessen safety hazards and the risk of injury to the travelling public, to extend the life expectancy of town ways and bridges, and to reduce the public expense of their maintenance and repair. This Ordinance is adopted pursuant to 30-A M.R.S.A § 3009 and 29-A M.R.S.A. § 2395 as in effect of this date.

Section 2. Definitions

Terms and words used in this ordinance shall be given their common and ordinary meaning.

Section 3. Restrictions and Notices

The municipal officers may, either permanently or seasonally, impose such restrictions on the gross registered weight of vehicles as may, in their judgment, be necessary to protect the travelling public and prevent abuse of the highways, or designate the town ways and bridges to which the restrictions shall apply.

Whenever notice has been posted as provided herein, no person may thereafter operate any vehicle with a gross registered weight in excess of the restriction during any applicable time period on any way or bridge so posted unless otherwise exempt as provided herein.

The notice shall contain, at a minimum, the following information: the name of the way or bridge, the gross registered weight limit, the time period during which the restriction applies, the date on which the notice was posted, and the signatures of the municipal officers and/or the road commissioner. The notice shall be conspicuously posted at each end of the restricted portion of the way or bridge in a location clearly visible from the travelled way.

Whenever a restriction expires or is lifted, the notices shall be removed wherever posted. Whenever a restriction is revised or extended, existing notices shall be removed and replaced with new notices. No person other than the road commissioner or municipal officers may remove, obscure or otherwise tamper with any notice so posted except as provided herein.

Section 4. Exemptions

Vehicles that are exempt from the Maine Department of Transportation's (Maine DOT) "Rules and Regulations Restricting Heavy Loads on Closed Ways" dated December 31, 1996 and amended on March 4, 1998, is incorporated as part of this Ordinance, are exempt from this Ordinance. In addition, any vehicle delivering home heating fuel and operating in accordance with a permit issued by the Maine DOT under 29-A M.R.S.A § 2395 (4) and, when necessary during a period of drought emergency declared by the governor, any vehicle transporting well-drilling equipment for the purpose of drilling a replacement well or for improving an existing

well on property where that well is no longer supplying sufficient water for residential or agricultural purpose and operating in accordance with a permit issued by the Maine DOT under 29-A M.R.S.A. § 2395 (4-A)

Section 5. Permits

The owner or operator of any vehicle not otherwise exempt as provided herein may apply in writing to the municipal officers for a permit to operate on a posted way or bridge notwithstanding the restriction. The municipal officers may issue a permit only upon all of the following findings:

- (a) No other route is reasonably available to the applicant;
- (b) it is a matter of economic necessity and not mere convenience that the applicant use the way or bridge; and
- (c) The applicant has tendered cash, a bond or other suitable security running to the municipality in an amount sufficient, in their judgment, to repair any damage to the way or bridge which may reasonably result from the applicant's use of same.

Even if the municipal officers make the foregoing findings, they need not issue a permit if they determine the applicant's use of the way or bridge could reasonably be expected to create or aggravate a safety hazard or cause substantial damage to a way or bridge maintained by the municipality. They may also limit the number of permits issued or outstanding as may, in their judgment, be necessary to preserve and protect the highways and bridges.

In determining whether to issue a permit, the municipal officers shall consider the following factors:

- (a) the gross registered weight of the vehicle;
- (b) the current and anticipated condition of the way or bridge;
- (c) the number and frequency of vehicle trips proposed;
- (d) the cost and availability of materials and equipment for repairs;
- (e) the extent of use by other exempt vehicles; and
- (f) such other circumstances as may, in their judgment, be relevant.

The municipal officers may issue permits subject to reasonable conditions, including but not limited to restrictions on the actual load weight and the number or frequency of vehicle trips, which shall be clearly noted on the permit.

Section 6. Administration and Enforcement

This Ordinance shall be administered by the municipal officers and may be enforced by a duly authorized law enforcement officer.

Section 7. Penalties

Any violation of this Ordinance shall be a civil infraction subject to a fine of not less than \$250.00 nor more than \$1000.00. Each violation shall be deemed a separate offense. In addition to any fine, the municipality may seek restitution for the cost of repairs to any damaged way or bridge and reasonable attorney fees and costs. Prosecution shall be in the name of the municipality and shall be brought in the Maine District Court.

Section 8. Amendments

This Ordinance may be amended by the municipal officers at any properly noticed meeting.

Section 9. Severability; Effective Date

In the event any portion of this Ordinance is declared invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining portions shall continue in full force and effect. This Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon enactment by the municipal officers at any properly noticed meeting.

Approved by Sangerville Board of Selectmen February 11, 2014

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