

# State Chain Laws

November 2009

- Alabama.....Tire chains, or metal studded or safety spike tires of reasonable proportions may be used when required for safety because of snow, rain or other slippery conditions.
- Alaska .....It is permissible to use tire chains because of snow, ice or other conditions that may cause a vehicle to skid.
- Arizona .....Permissible when required for safety because of snow, ice or other conditions tending to cause a vehicle to skid. If a mountain pass or other roadway is posted vehicles must use chains because of immediate weather conditions, then the vehicle must chain up or stop until the posting is lifted.
- Arkansas .....Chains of reasonable proportions may be used on any vehicle when required for safety. Pneumatic tires with flat-headed studs projecting 1/16 inch or less beyond the tread may be used on trucks up to 6,000 lbs. in weight when required for safety on ice or snow.
- California.....Required to be equipped with tire traction devices when entering a signed restricted area. There is no requirement for trucks to carry chains during any specified time period. For more information, go to Caltrans' Web site at <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/trucks/trucksize>
- Colorado .....When the chain law is in effect, drivers will be notified which vehicles must chain up and where by the following means: electronic message signs along the roadway, 511 traveler information, [www.cotrip.org](http://www.cotrip.org), and media outlets. Metal chains must consist of two circular metal loops, one on each side of the tire, connected by not less than nine evenly spaced chains across the tread. Commercial vehicles having four or more drive wheels must chain four wheels. Dual tire chains are acceptable. Approved alternative traction devices include wheel sanders and the AutoSock. Also tire cables are not permitted by law as an alternative traction device but there are two exceptions that can be found at [www.cotrip.org](http://www.cotrip.org). **Chain Law Level 1**; All single drive axle combination commercial vehicles must chain all four driver wheels. All other commercial vehicles must have snow tires or chains. Level 1 may be implemented any time there is a snow covering any part of the traveled portion of pavement on an ascending grade. **Chain Law Level 2**; All commercial vehicles must chain up. Single drive axle and tandem drive axle combination commercial vehicles must chain four drive wheels. Level 2 may be implemented any time there is snow covering the entire traveled portion of pavement on an ascending grade, or when driving conditions dictate that this level is necessary. Commercial vehicles traveling on I-70 in either direction between milepost 133 (Dotsero) and 259 (Morrison) from Sept. 1 from May 31 must carry sufficient chains at all times to be in compliance with the Colorado chain law. For more information, go to CDOT's Web site at <http://www.dot.state.co.us/Publications/Brochures/ChainTips.pdf>
- Connecticut.....Studded tires and any other non-skid devices may be used from November 15 - April 30.
- Delaware.....Studded tires are permitted from October 15 - April 15 and tire chains of reasonable proportions may be used upon any vehicle when required for safety because of snow, ice or other conditions tending to cause a vehicle to slide or skid.
- Georgia .....Safety spike metal studs may be used when conditions demand them. A set of chains is also permissible for all vehicles likely to encounter conditions requiring chains.
- Idaho .....Permissible to use tire chains. There are times when chains are required. Signs will be posted "Chains required beyond this point" when the road is snow-covered or icy. If the alert is in effect,
- Illinois.....Tire chains of reasonable proportion will be legal when required for safety because of snow, ice or other conditions causing vehicles to skid.

- Indiana ..... When required for safety because of snow, ice or other conditions, tire chains of reasonable proportions may be used on the highways. From October 1 to May 1, tires in which ice grips or tire studs of wear-resisting materials have been inserted may be used.
- Iowa ..... Permissible upon any vehicle when required for safety because of snow, ice, or other conditions tending to cause a vehicle to skid.
- Kansas..... Permissible upon any vehicle when required for safety because of snow, ice or other conditions tending to cause a vehicle to skid.
- Kentucky..... Permissible when icy road conditions exist.
- Louisiana..... Permissible upon any vehicle upon any vehicle when required for safety because of conditions tending to cause a vehicle to slide or skid.
- Maine..... Permissible when icy road conditions exist.
- Maryland..... In case of declared snow emergency, chains will be required on certain designated highways. Studded snow tires are not allowed on vehicles having a registered gross weight of more than 10,000 pounds.
- Massachusetts ..... Studded tires are permissible in Massachusetts between November 1 and May 1.
- Michigan ..... Permissible upon any vehicle when required for safety because of snow, ice, or other conditions tending to cause a vehicle to skid.
- Minnesota ..... Permitted when road conditions (ice and snow) require tire chains. Studded pneumatic tires are not allowed on Minnesota registered vehicles.
- Mississippi ..... Permissible upon any vehicle when required for safety because of snow, ice, or other conditions tending to cause a vehicle to skid.
- Montana ..... Chains are permissible from October 1 until May 31, but not mandatory unless the department makes that determination and notices are posted. They are then required on one set of drive axles.
- Nebraska ..... Permissible upon any vehicle when required for safety because of snow, ice, or other condition tending to cause a vehicle to slide or skid.
- Nevada ..... Requires operators of all vehicles of more than 10,000 pounds (GVW) to install chains when chains or snow tire requirements are in effect. Vehicles over 10,000 pounds (GVW) are permitted in chain control areas when equipped with chains or Automatic Traction Devices (MTD) on drive axles. Studded snow tires are permitted between October 1 and April 30. For more information, go to NDOT's Web site at <http://www.nevadadot.com/business/trucker/>
- New Jersey..... May be fitted with tire chains of reasonable proportions when roads, streets, and highways are slippery, because of rain snow, ice, oil, manner of construction or other reason; provided, however, that no tire chains shall be used at any time on improved highways when highway conditions do not make such use necessary for the safety of life or property. No person shall use any tire chains so constructed or installed as to be likely to be thrown so as to endanger any person or property.
- New Mexico..... Permissible upon any vehicle when required for safety because of snow, ice or other conditions tending to cause a vehicle to skid.
- New York..... Tire chains are required when a snow emergency has been declared.
- North Carolina ..... Permissible upon any vehicle when required for safety because of snow, ice or other conditions tending to cause a vehicle to slide or skid.
- North Dakota ..... Tire chains may be used when necessary. Pneumatic tires with metal stubs projecting to 1/16 inch above the tread surface may be used between October 15 and April 15.
- Ohio ..... Permissible when there is ice and/or snow on the roadway were you are driving or in the immediate vicinity, if you deem it necessary.

- Oklahoma.....Permissible upon any vehicle when require for safety because of snow, ice, or other conditions tending to cause a vehicle to skid.
- Oregon .....Tire chains are required when conditions demand because of snow, ice or other inclement weather and signs are posted. When signs are posted, you must use chains on any single drive axle vehicle rated over 10,000 pounds gross vehicle weight (GVW) and you must use chains if your vehicle is towing (such as a pickup towing a boat). Chains must also be used on the trailer or vehicle being towed. Under this condition, chains are not required on tandem drive axle vehicles. For chain information from within Oregon, call 511 or 1-800-977-ODOT (6368). From outside Oregon, dial 503-588-2941. Drivers who disobey the signs requiring chains or traction tires are subject to a traffic infraction, \$190 for failure to obey snow zone signs and \$544 for failure of a commercial vehicle to use chains. For more information, go to ODOT’s Web site at <http://www.tripcheck.com/pages/>.
- Pennsylvania ..... One set of chains or snow tires is required when vehicles are likely to encounter any adverse weather conditions which may require chains. They must consist of not less than five cross chains and must not project more than an inch on the outside surface of the wheel.
- Rhode Island .....Tire chains of reasonable proportions are permitted on any vehicle when required for safety because of ice, snow, or other conditions tending to cause a vehicle to skid.
- South Carolina ..... Vehicles likely to encounter conditions requiring chains must carry them and have them ready for use.
- South Dakota .....Permissible upon any vehicle when required for safety because of snow, ice, or other conditions tending to cause a vehicle to slide or skid. The secretary of transportation may restrict public travel upon any state trunk highway system to four-wheel drive vehicles or motor vehicles equipped with tire chains.
- Tennessee.....Permissible to use on any vehicle when required for safety because of snow, ice, or other condition tending to cause a vehicle to skid. Must carry one set of tire chains for all vehicles likely to encounter conditions requiring them.
- Texas.....May be used when required for safety because of a condition that might cause the vehicle to skid.
- Utah..... Vehicles likely to encounter conditions requiring chains must carry sets for at least one driving wheel on each side. Signs will designate when chains are required.
- Virginia.....Permissible when required for safety because of snow, ice, or other conditions tending to cause a vehicle to slide or skid. Vehicles blocking traffic due to lack of tire chains may be fined.
- Washington .....The chain requirements are effective when the department of transportation has posted signs marked “chains required.” On certain routes sufficient tire chains must always be carried on the vehicle from Nov 1 to Mar 31. The number of chains required varies, depending on the number of axles and vehicle configuration. At least two extra chains must be carried on the vehicle. For more information, go to WSDOT’s Web site at [http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/commercialvehicle/chain\\_req.htm](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/commercialvehicle/chain_req.htm)
- West Virginia.....It shall be permissible to use tire chains of reasonable proportions upon any vehicle when required for safety because of snow, ice or other conditions tending to cause a vehicle to skid.
- Wisconsin .....May be used when required for safety because of snow, ice or other conditions tending to cause a vehicle to skid.
- Wyoming .....May be required when the superintendent or his authorized representative determines that travel is sufficiently hazardous due to snow, ice, or other conditions. When the chain law is in effect operators of a commercial vehicle must affix tire chains to at least two of the driver wheels of the vehicle at opposite ends of the same driver axle.

No chain laws .....D.C., Florida, Hawaii, Maine, Missouri, New Hampshire, and Vermont.

## Canadian Chain Laws

Alberta ..... Allowed when conditions warrant.

British Columbia..... Vehicles in the mountains must be equipped with snow tires or chains from Nov 1 to Apr 30.

Manitoba ..... Permissible upon a motor vehicle where required for safety.

New Brunswick ..... May also be carried in the vehicle for use in ice and snow conditions.

Newfoundland..... Required on drive wheels when there is snow or ice on the surface of the highway.

Nova Scotia..... Permissible upon any vehicle when required for safety because of snow, ice or other conditions tending to cause a vehicle to slide or skid.

Prince Edward Island .... Permissible to use tire chains.

Quebec ..... The Minister of Transport may authorize, under the conditions and for the period he determines, the use of certain types of non-skid devices for such road vehicles as he may designate.

Updated on November 10, 2009