

Colorado Chain Up Tips

COMMERCIAL VEHICLES



This information applies to Colorado State, Federal and Interstate highways.

- **Chains on I-70:** Commercial vehicles driving on I-70 between Dotsero (MP* 133) and C-470 (MP 259) from Sept. 1 to May 31 must carry chains to comply with Colorado chain law. This is the only area in Colorado where chains must be carried during the specified season.
- **Definitions:** Commercial Motor Vehicles (CMVs) for the purposes of these rules means vehicles with manufacturer GVWR or GCWR of at least 16,001 lbs. used in commerce on public highways or used to transport at least 16 passengers including the driver.
- **Chain Law:** To travel on a state highway when CMV Chain Law is in effect CMVs must have chains or Alternative Traction Devices (ATDs) on at least four of the drive wheel tires or all of the drive wheel tires if vehicle has fewer than four drive wheel tires. Buses must have chains or ATDs on two drive wheel tires.
- **Notification:** CDOT will communicate Traction and Chain Law requirements by Variable Message Signs, static signs, COtrip.org, phone messaging, email, text and other technologies. Notifications will specify Mile Points and exit numbers when chains are required.
- **Chaining Up:** CMV Chain Law requires all large vehicles to affix chains or ATDs to all drive tires (up to four).
- **Tire Chains/Cables:** These include (but are not limited to) metal chains consisting of two circular hoops, one on each side of the tire, connected by not less than nine evenly spaced chains across the tire tread. Chains must meet the SAE classification by the National Association of Chain Manufacturers. Clip-on chains and tire cables are not permitted for use on commercial vehicles, nor are other devices not designated as approved ATDs.
- **Alternate Traction Devices (ATDs):** ATDs must be on the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Approved Product List ("APL"). Drive wheel sanders and pneumatically driven chains are also allowed.
- **Passing When Chain Law In Effect:** CMVs are restricted to the right lane unless encountering a stalled or slower moving vehicle that would result in the loss of traction. In this case, the CMV may use the left or center lane to pass if it can be done safely and without interfering with other traffic. Pass must be completed without losing traction and the CMV must return immediately to the right lane upon completion of the pass.

* Mile Point

Frequently Asked Questions

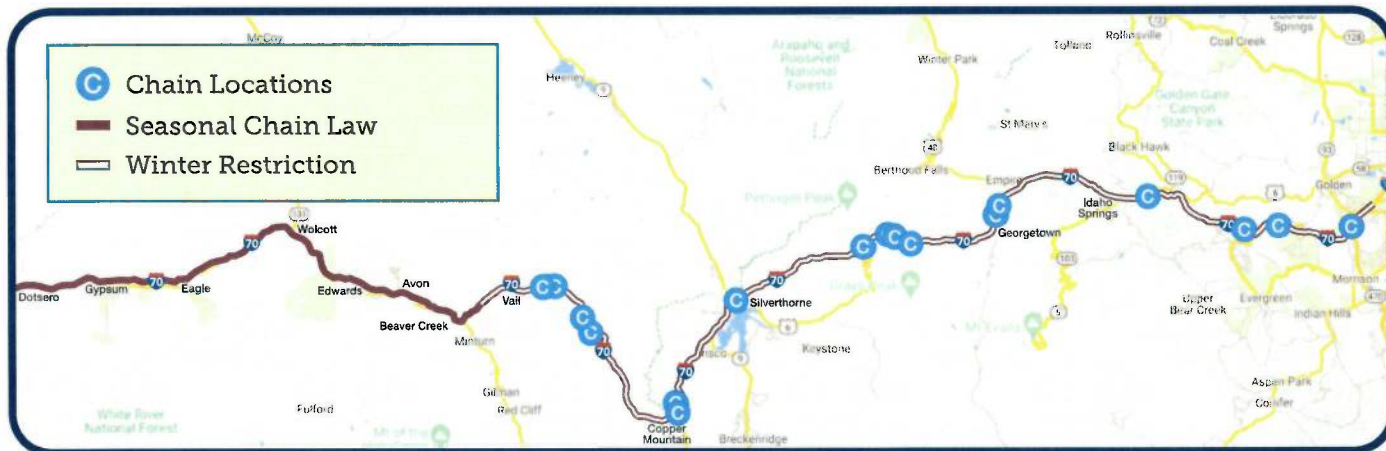
- **Are chains required for trailers?** No.
- **Must hazardous material tankers and transporters comply with the chain law?** Yes. Vehicles placarded for hazardous loads may pass the chain up signs, and install chains where pavement is covered by snow or ice at a safe location outside the traveled portion of the highway.
- **When can chains be removed?** The Chain Law shall remain in effect until CDOT communicates by VMS, static sign or other notification or when centerline or lanes are visible on a descending grade.
- **Where are chain-up stations?** **I-70 Eastbound:** MP 178, 183, 184 (shoulder), 187 (shoulder), 195, 203 (scenic area), 205, 219, 228, 241, 251, 289, 343. **I-70 Westbound:** MP 358, 263, 260, 254 (Buffalo Overlook), 228, 223, 221, 219, 213, 197, 179. **I-25 Northbound:** MP 159. **I-25 Southbound:** MP 172.
- **What are the fines for violations?** Penalty for not carrying chains on I-70 between MPs 133-259 from Sept. 1 to May 31 is a \$50 fine plus a \$17 surcharge. Statewide the penalty for noncompliance with winter driving restrictions is up to \$500 fine plus a \$79 surcharge or if you are stuck and blocking any traveled portion of the roadway the fine is \$1,000 plus a \$157 surcharge.

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- **Chain Law:** Sept. 1 through May 31. Commercial Vehicles operating on 1-70 in either direction between Dotsero (MP 133) to Morrison (MP 259) must carry sufficient chains at all times to be in compliance with the Colorado chain law.
- **Winter Restriction:** December 1 to March 31. Westbound travel prohibited from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Friday; between 7 a.m. and noon on Saturday and Sunday. Eastbound travel prohibited between 3 p.m. and 9 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday from Morrison Exit 259 to the West Vail Exit 173.
- **Exception:** Overweight vehicles not in excess of 110,000 lbs. GVW, not in excess of any other legal limit and capable of maintaining a minimum speed of 40 mph on a flat grade, 30 mph on a grade or the minimum posted speed limit if lower are exempt from curfew.

Colorado I-70 Mountain Corridor



Colorado Northwest



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