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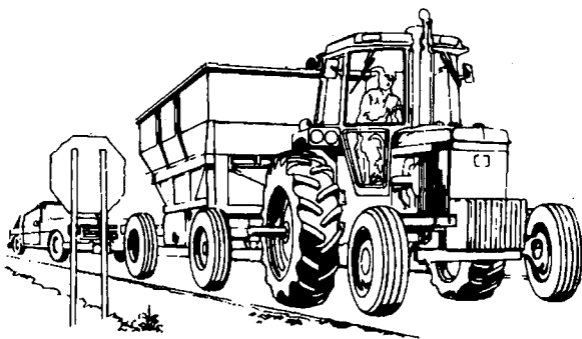
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*Implements
of Husbandry:*
Safety on
Minnesota
Roads



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*If you drive a tractor, combine, hay wagon or other **implements of husbandry** on public roads, you must follow state laws designed to ensure your safety and that of other drivers. This flyer gives basic information on Minnesota's laws about lighting, marking, weights and sizes for implements of husbandry. It also lists additional safety practices recommended by agricultural safety experts.*

What is an implement of husbandry?

An implement of husbandry, according to state law, is any vehicle designed or adapted exclusively for agricultural, horticultural or livestock operations, or for lifting and carrying an implement of husbandry.

Any towed vehicle which meets the definition above is an implement of husbandry. This includes wagon trailers and implement trailers used in a farming operation.

What laws apply to implements of husbandry?

Most state laws about safe operation of farm vehicles and implements of husbandry are in Minnesota Statute 169. The information in this flyer is based on this statute. You can look up the complete law in any library.

What is state law regarding operation of farm vehicles?

Driver's license and license plate

A driver's license is not required for operating an implement of husbandry. License plates and vehicle registration are not required for implements of husbandry, although if the implement is being towed by a truck, the truck must have a license plate. A farm trailer with a gross weight of 10,000 pounds or more pulled by a car, pickup or truck must have a registration plate.

Brakes

An implement of husbandry which is driven or towed faster than 25 miles per hour must be equipped with brakes if it exceeds 6,000 pounds gross weight. All implements manufactured or sold after January 1, 1994 with a manufacturer's recommended capacity of more than 24,000 pounds must be equipped with brakes. Surge brakes capable of controlling, stopping and holding a vehicle will be acceptable.

Speed limit

Implements of husbandry that exceed 6,000 pounds gross weight and are not equipped with brakes may not be driven or towed at more than 25 miles per hour.

Driving on the left/wide load

Implements of husbandry must stay to the right of the center line except when passing, or if preceded by a registered motor vehicle equipped with operating front and rear hazard warning lights.

Towing

Towed implements of husbandry must be equipped with safety chains except when hitched to the towing vehicle with a fifth-wheel and kingpin assembly, or a hitch pin and retainer that prevents accidental unhitching.

How should implements of husbandry be marked?

All implements of husbandry designed for operation at speeds of 25 miles per hour or less must be marked with a slow-moving vehicle emblem. The emblem is a fluorescent yellow-orange triangle with a dark red reflective border which conforms to standards set by the American Society of Agricultural Engineers (Standard S276). The emblem must be visible 600 feet from the rear of the implement.

An alternate SMV emblem that is black with a white reflective border may be used, with a special permit from the Department of Public Safety. The alternate emblem can not be used from sunset to sunrise, or at any time when visibility is impaired.

Towed implements which obscure the towing vehicle's SMV emblem must display an emblem of their own.

Chains, ropes or cables used for towing farm implements or vehicles must be marked with a flag. The flag should be red, white, orange or yellow, and at least 12 inches square.

When is lighting required?

Amber flashing hazard lights are required at all times on self-propelled implements manufactured since January 1, 1970. Other lights specified below are required on implements of husbandry (regardless of manufacture date) from sunrise to sunset, while it's raining, or any time visibility is impaired. Although not required by law, lights used during daylight will enhance equipment visibility on the road.

What lights are required?

Lights on self-propelled implements must include at least:

- two amber flashing hazard warning lights visible to front and rear
- one white headlight visible to front
- one red taillight visible to rear
- two red reflectors visible to rear

Self propelled implements may also display a rotating amber beacon.

Lights on towed farm implements must include at least:

- one white or amber light, visible from the front to mark the extreme left projection of the implement
- one amber or red light visible from the rear to mark the extreme left projection of the implement
- two red reflex reflectors at the extreme left and right rear ends of the implement

What are the limits on size and weight?

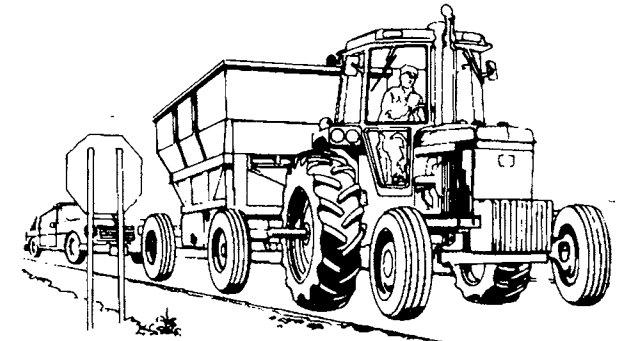
Size

With some exceptions, implements of husbandry are exempt from size limitations, if:

- the implement is being driven or towed at 25 miles per hour or less;
- it is not on an interstate highway;
- and it is operated within a 75 mile radius of land owned, leased or operated by the farmer.

Weight

With some exceptions, farm implements are exempt from weight limitations. However, the weight on any wheel of an implement must not exceed 600 pounds per inch of tire width. For example, a single tire 10 inches wide can carry a load of 6,000 pounds, or 24,000 pounds total for a four-wheeled implement.



Are there other exceptions?

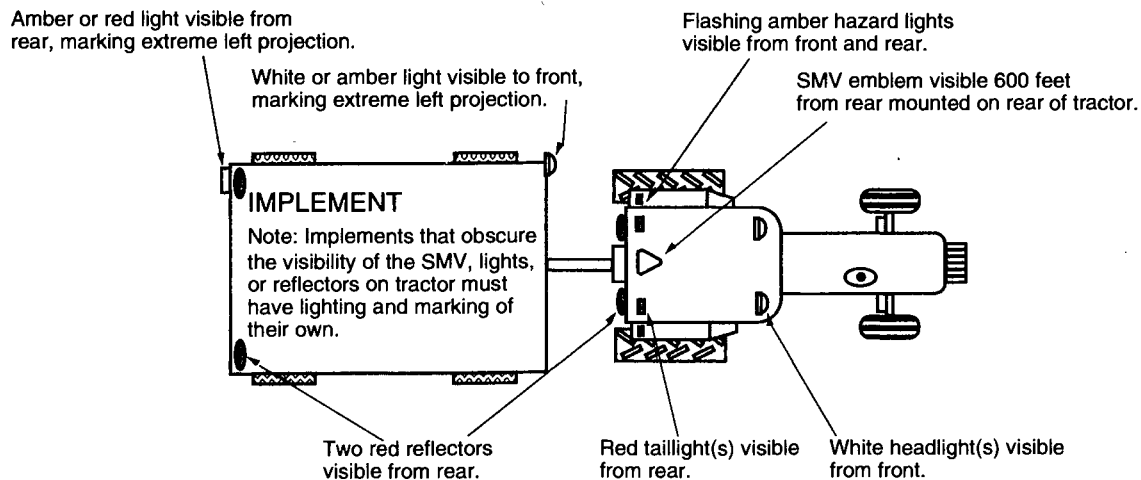
State laws on safe operation of farm vehicles are lengthy and sometimes complicated. This flyer lists basic and general rules that apply to most situations. It does not detail the exceptions that may occasionally apply to you. For complete details, consult the Department of Public Safety, State Patrol Division, 1 (800) 475-7555.

What other safety practices are recommended?

The American Society of Agricultural Engineers and other safety organizations suggest:

- Implements extending more than 33 feet behind the hitch point should have amber reflectors on both sides spaced at least every 16.4 feet, with the rearmost reflector positioned as farback as possible.
- Tractors or other vehicles towing implements should be of adequate size to safely control their towed load. It is unsafe to tow any implement without brakes at any speed, if the implement's weight exceeds twice that of the towing vehicle.
- Drivers should reduce speed for hills, rough ground, curves and turns and before approaching intersections or stops.
- If possible, implements of husbandry should pull over on busy or narrow roads to allow traffic to pass.
- Brake pedals on self-propelled implements should be locked together.
- Shift to lower gear before ascending incline.
- Reflectors, lights and SMV emblems should be kept clean and should be replaced when faded.
- Extra riders should never be allowed on implements of husbandry. Runovers by tractors and trailing implements are the leading cause of farm-work related death to children.

Diagram shows proper placement of emblems, lights and reflectors according to Minnesota statutes.



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