

If you operate or tow a tractor, combine, hay wagon or other **implement of husbandry** on public roads, you must follow state laws designed to ensure your safety and that of other drivers.

### **What is an implement of husbandry?**

Minnesota statutes define an implement of husbandry as a self-propelled or towed vehicle designed or adapted to be used exclusively for timber-harvesting, agricultural, horticultural, or livestock-raising operations.

This includes any towed vehicle that meets the above definition whether it is being towed by another implement of husbandry or by a registered motor vehicle.

### **Driver's license and license plates**

Any person driving or operating any farm tractor (used primarily as a farm implement) and other implements of husbandry temporarily operated or moved upon a highway is exempt from the requirements to be a licensed driver.

Implements of husbandry and tractors used solely for agricultural purposes are not taxed as motor vehicles and do not need to display license plates. However farm trailers with a gross weight of 10,001 pounds or more, drawn by a passenger automobile or farm truck and used exclusively for transporting

agricultural products are taxed as motor vehicles and must display license plates.

### **Speed Limit**

Pickup truck used primarily in the production or transportation of liquid fertilizer, anhydrous ammonia, or any agricultural commodity may draw not to exceed two empty trailers when the resulting combination does not exceed the size and weight limitations otherwise prescribed by law. A pickup truck when drawing two trailers shall not be operated on the highways of this state beyond a 35-mile radius of the home post office of the owner of the pickup truck nor at a speed exceeding 35 miles per hour.

### **Slow Moving Vehicle (SMV) Emblems**

All implements of husbandry which are designed for operation at a speed of 30 miles per hour or less are required to display a triangular slow moving vehicle emblem. The emblem must be visible 600 feet to the rear of the implement. Towed implements which obscure the towing vehicle's SMV emblem must display an emblem of their own. A towed implement of husbandry that is empty and that is not self-propelled may be towed at lawful speeds greater than 30 miles per hour without removing the slow-moving vehicle emblem.

### **Driving Rules**

An implement of husbandry may not be operated or towed on an interstate highway.

An implement of husbandry may be operated or towed to the left of the center of a roadway only if it is escorted at the front by a vehicle displaying hazard warning lights visible in normal sunlight and the operation does not extend into the left half of the roadway more than is necessary.

### **Brakes**

A self-propelled implement of husbandry must be equipped with brakes adequate to control its movement and to stop and hold it and any vehicle it is towing.

A towed implement of husbandry must be equipped with brakes adequate to control its movement and to stop and hold it if:

- it has a gross vehicle weight of more than 24,000 pounds and was manufactured and sold after January 1, 1994;
- it has a gross vehicle weight of more than 12,000 pounds and is towed by a vehicle other than a self-propelled implement of husbandry; or
- it has a gross vehicle weight of more than 3,000 pounds and is

being towed by a registered passenger automobile other than a pickup truck

- If a towed implement of husbandry with a gross vehicle weight of more than 6,000 pounds is required to have brakes, it must also have brakes adequate to stop and hold it if it becomes detached from the towing vehicle. (break away brake system)

### **Size and Weight Limitations**

#### *Size*

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

- The implement is being driven or towed at a speed of 30 miles per hour or less;
- It is not operated on an interstate highway;
- And it is operated within a 75 mile radius of land owned, leased or operated by the farmer.

#### *Weight*

Self-propelled implements of husbandry which are exempt from the size requirements are also exempt from weight limitations.

Towed implements of husbandry equipped with pneumatic tires operated on public highways must not exceed a

maximum wheel load of 500 pounds per inch of tire width. These vehicles must follow gross weight limits or posted weight limits on bridges.

**Hitches**

A towed implement of husbandry must be equipped with one of the following:

- A hitch with safety chains,
- A regulation fifth wheel and kingpin assembly, or
- A hitch pin or other hitching device with a retainer that prevents accidental unhitching.

**When are lights required? What lights/reflectors are required?**

Amber flashing hazard lights are required to be displayed at all times on self-propelled implements manufactured on or after January 1, 1970.

All implements of husbandry are required to display lights (as specified below) from sunset to sunrise, at any time during inclement weather or when visibility is reduced.

Self-propelled implements of husbandry are required to have:

- One white lamp to the front
- One red lamp to the rear
- Two red reflectors to the rear mounted as close as practicable to the outside edges.

Combinations of a self-propelled and towed implement(s) of husbandry are also required to have:

- At least one lamp showing white or amber to the front and red or amber to the rear.

The lamp(s) shall be mounted to indicate as nearly as practicable the extreme left projection of the combination.

- Two red reflectors visible to the rear mounted as close as practicable to the outside edges.

The reflectors are required to be displayed on the last unit of the combination.



For more information, contact the following agencies :

**MN State Patrol  
Commercial Vehicle Division  
1110 Centre Pointe Curve Suite 410  
Mendota Heights, MN 55120  
1-651-405-6171  
[www.dps.state.mn.us/patrol/comveh](http://www.dps.state.mn.us/patrol/comveh)**

Questions pertaining to driver's licenses  
MN Dept of Public Safety  
Driver & Vehicle Services  
445 Minnesota St.  
St Paul, MN 55101  
(651)296-6911

# Implements of Husbandry: Safety on Minnesota Roads

