

April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to inform you that the Vermont Agency of Transportation will be installing new signs with weight limits for emergency vehicles on some Municipal-owned bridges throughout the state before the July 30th, 2023 deadline. This deadline applies to municipal-owned bridges, which are subject to the same requirements as our state-owned bridges, as outlined in the Transportation Secretary Memo issued on January 19th, 2022.

Under federal law, the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), and in response to a trend of trucks getting larger, some exceeding the weight of trucks that were in use when many bridges were designed, Vermont, along with all other states, is working to meet this Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requirement by expanding necessary load ratings to include emergency vehicles and posting if required. Load ratings determine the effect that these heavier and larger trucks have on a bridge, the bridge's capacity to safely handle the load, and whether a posting is needed.

The goal is to ensure that emergency responders are aware of the potential safety concern as it relates to emergency vehicles. VTrans and the State of Vermont understand that this may cause additional burden to some Municipalities. To assist in meeting this requirement, VTrans is performing the necessary load ratings and sign installations. A list of bridges that require posting will be provided to each municipality a minimum of three weeks prior to installing signs, providing bridge owners the opportunity for public notice if they so choose.

With the exception of some bridge signs that will show only a gross weight to match existing posting, all emergency vehicle posting signs on Municipal bridges will show a maximum single axle, maximum tandem, and maximum gross weight in tons that should, based on calculation and being the only vehicle straddling the centerline, cross the bridge.



Vermont statute allows exemptions for construction, maintenance, and emergency response vehicles (<https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/section/23/013/01399>).

While fire apparatus and emergency response vehicles may choose to cross a bridge, the posting helps identify the risk.

For additional information, please go to the VTrans website at <https://vtrans.vermont.gov/emergency-vehicles>

If you have questions, please contact our Asset Management Bureau, Corridor Manager, Shane M. Morin at [Shane.Morin@vermont.gov](mailto:Shane.Morin@vermont.gov), or by cell at 802-673-5200

Sincerely,



Joe Flynn, Secretary  
Agency of Transportation

