## Crossroads

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The rules now allow local pick-up and delivery of full legal loads on roads classified as Class B. Previously, local deliveries were not exempt, and all loads were restricted to 60% of normal legal loads. Since it is difficult to enforce a regulation with this exemption, local officials may now have to decide if they

changes affect their road postings.

Designating Class B highways has

enforce load limits. been one tool available to local officials to protect weaker roads from heavy trucks. The regulations on Class B highways have changed recently, and local officials need to understand how the

aware of truck use and take action where it is feasible. However, this effort is often frustrated by pressure from local road users, misunderstandings over the real impact of truck loads, and limited staff to

Heavy truck loads are known to shorten

the life of roads, and overloaded trucks

road officials have a responsibility to be

cause even more of a problem. Local

should provide additional protection to roads in weak condition.

To protect roads at the same level as under the old Class B designation, the local agency now has to post the road with a reduced load limit, such as a 24-ton limit. Specific load limits below the normal legal load would also be needed to assure protection from loads traveling with annual and single trip permits issued by WisDOT under Section 348.27 of the statutes.

"Off road equipment" like that used

in agriculture and construction can also

be a concern. It has been commonly

assumed that these large loads would

have little adverse affect because they

have flotation tires or treads that allow

The South Dakota DOT field tested

pavements, subjecting them repeatedly

to equipment with large loads and low-

inflation tires. It looked at the relative

impact on the roads of tire pressure,

them to work in soft soils.



tread type, axle load, travel speed, road

The most important impact found

roughness, and vehicle suspension.

is related to axle loads. Loads that

damage the asphalt, seal coat, and

showed early distress in the form of

exceeded legal limits were shown to

gravel roads evaluated in the study and

shortened pavement life. The pavements

fatigue (alligator) cracking, rutting, and

surface disintegration. The study recom-

mends that no additional axle loads be

allowed because of off road-type tires.

of the SD DOT report.

See Resources, page 5, for how to get copies