

Passenger Vehicle Traction Law

Additional Information

Chaining up Trailers

Chains are not required on trailers. However, minimum adequate tire tread (2/32-inch) is always required on all tires in contact with the roadway.

Penalties for Violations

Drivers who do not comply with the requirements of the Passenger Vehicle Traction Law commits a Class B Traffic Infraction and will be subject to a \$133.00 fine plus fees and surcharges.

If the violation results in the closure of a traffic lane, the fine is increased to \$657.00 plus fees and surcharges.

Additional Actions

Law enforcement personnel may take additional actions for vehicles that are not in compliance.

- Drivers may be prohibited from any further travel.
- Drivers may be turned around and away from the restricted portion of the roadway.
- Vehicles might even be towed by a private towing company through the restricted portion of the roadway at the driver's expense.

What is the [Passenger Vehicle Traction Law](#)?

The passenger traction law requires two-wheel drive passenger vehicles to have all weather or mud and snow rated tires with adequate tread or to affix chains or alternate traction devices (ATDs). Four/all-wheel drive vehicles must have all drive wheels engaged and tires with adequate tread depth.

What vehicles must comply with the [Passenger Vehicle Traction Law](#)?

Any motor vehicle with a GCWR/GVWR that is less than 16,001 pounds must comply with the Passenger Vehicle Traction Law. This includes vehicles towing a trailer or another vehicle, vans designed to transport up to 15 passengers (including the driver), two-wheel drive, all-wheel drive and four-wheel drive vehicles.

How will I know when the [Passenger Vehicle Traction Law](#) is in effect?

At a minimum, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) will notify the public of the travel restriction with erected static and electronic variable message roadway signs. Additionally, CDOT may utilize radio channels, the official CDOT travel website (www.cotrip.org), phone message system, email, text and other automated personal notification systems.

How do I comply with the [Passenger Vehicle Traction Law](#)?

Two-wheel drive vehicles must have:

- Chains on two or more drive tires; OR
- An approved Alternate Traction Device (ATD) on two or more drive tires; OR
- Tires with at least 3/16-inch tread depth and which are rated for either "All weather" or "Mud and Snow" (indicated by an All Weather, M+S, M/S, etc. on sidewall) by the manufacturer.

Four/all-wheel drive vehicles must have all drive wheels engaged and tires with 3/16-inch tread depth.

If I am going to use chains, cables or ATDs to comply with the [Passenger Vehicle Traction Law](#), where should I put my chains on and take them off?

The designated chain up/chain down areas located on the shoulders and pullout areas along the highway are primarily reserved for larger vehicles such as commercial trucks, vehicles towing trailers and buses. The best option for a smaller passenger vehicle is to use the nearest exit and find a public parking area located off the highway and away from traffic.

How will I know that the [Passenger Vehicle Traction Law](#) is no longer in effect?

The advisement will include mile points (and/or exit numbers), be indicated by official traffic signs or the restriction will end when the centerline or lane lines are visible on a descending grade.

Are there any restrictions on the types of chains or ATDs I can use?

Yes. Tire Chains consist of two circular hoops, one on each side of the tire, connected by not less than nine evenly spaced chains across the tire tread. The tire chains must meet the SAE requirements outlined in NACM 92805 (TC).

ATDs must be on the CDOT Approved Product List (APL). Drive wheel sanders and pneumatically driven chains (auto chains) are also allowed to meet the requirements. Clip on type chains or any other device, which is not listed on the CDOT APL, are not permitted.

The APL can be found at: <https://www.codot.gov/business/apl>



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