



What you need to know about Colorado's "CMV Chain Law"

- **Who:** Commercial Motor Vehicles, or vehicles with manufacturer GVWR or GCWR of at least 16,001 lbs. used in commerce on public highways or used to transport at least 16 passengers. The [new law](#) went into effect Sept. 1, 2024.
- **What:** All state, federal and interstate highways require that when CMV Chain Law is in effect, CMVs must have chains or Alternative Traction Devices on at least 4 of the drive wheel tires—or all of the drive wheel tires if vehicle has fewer than 4 drive wheel tires. Buses must have chains or ATDs on 2 drive wheel tires.
 - **ATDs** are metal chains consisting of two circular hoops, one on each side of the tire, connected by not less than evenly spaced chains across tire tread. Chains must meet SAE classification by the National Association of Chain Manufacturers and be on [CDOT's Approved Product List](#). Drive wheel sanders and pneumatically driven chains are also allowed. Clip-on chains and tire cables are not permitted for use on CMVs as ATDs.
 - **CMVs** are restricted to right lanes, from Sept. 1 to May 31, unless encountering stalled or slower-moving vehicles that result in the loss of traction. Then, the CMV may use left/center lane to pass if safe and does not interfere with other traffic. (See left-lane restrictions in Frequently Asked Questions on page 2.) Passing must occur without losing traction. The CMV must return immediately to the right lane after the pass.
- **When?** The Colorado Department of Transportation will communicate Chain Law requirements by Variable Message Signs, static signs, COtrip.org, phone messaging, email, text and other technologies. Notifications will specify mile points and exit numbers when chains are required. Chains cannot be removed until communicated in the same manner by CDOT.
- **Where?** The maps on the following pages identify chain-up spots in Colorado.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Are chains required for trailers?** No.
- **When can chains be removed?** The Chain Law shall remain in effect until CDOT communicates by digital overhead sign, static sign or other notification or when centerline or lanes are visible on a descending grade.
- **What are the fines for violations?** The following fines apply to all corridors listed above from Sept. 1 to May 31. Not carrying chains will result in a \$100 fine plus a \$32 surcharge. Statewide the penalty for noncompliance with winter driving restrictions is up to \$500 fine plus a \$78 surcharge or if you are stuck and blocking any traveled portion of the roadway the fine is \$1,000 plus a \$156 surcharge.

Permitted Vehicles

- **Oversized/overweight (osow) restriction:** From Dec. 1 to March 31, westbound travel is prohibited from 3 - 8 p.m. on Friday; between 7 a.m. - 12 p.m., Saturday and Sunday. Eastbound travel is prohibited between 3 - 9 p.m., Saturday and Sunday from West Vail (Exit 173) to Morrison (Exit 259) on I-70. [Creating a map; details forthcoming.]

Exception: To be exempt from curfew: (1) Overweight vehicles must not be in excess of (a) 110,000 lbs. GVW and (b) any other legal limit; and (2) are capable of maintaining a minimum speed of (a) 40 m.p.h. on a flat grade, (b) 30 m.p.h. on a grade or (c) the minimum posted speed limit if lower.

- **Extra-legal vehicle/load (elv) prohibited travel:** An ELV is prohibited from travel when (1) The Department, State Patrol or other peace officer determines and provides public notice (via any available means) that a hazardous road condition exists for an ELV; or (2) permittee is aware that a hazardous road condition exists for ELV. Hazardous road conditions may include, but is not limited to, water, ice, snow, mud, wind, or rocks on the Highway; debris from an accident, natural disaster, or an emergency on the Highway.

Hazardous material tankers/transporters & chains: Vehicles placarded for hazardous loads may pass chain-up signs and install chains where pavement is covered by snow or ice at a safe location outside the traveled portion of the highway.



Chain Stations Across Colorado

Chain stations on I-70

I-70 Eastbound:

Mile Points 178, 183, 184 (shoulder), 187 (shoulder), 195, 203 (scenic area), 205, 219, 228, 241, 251, 289, 343

I-70 Westbound:

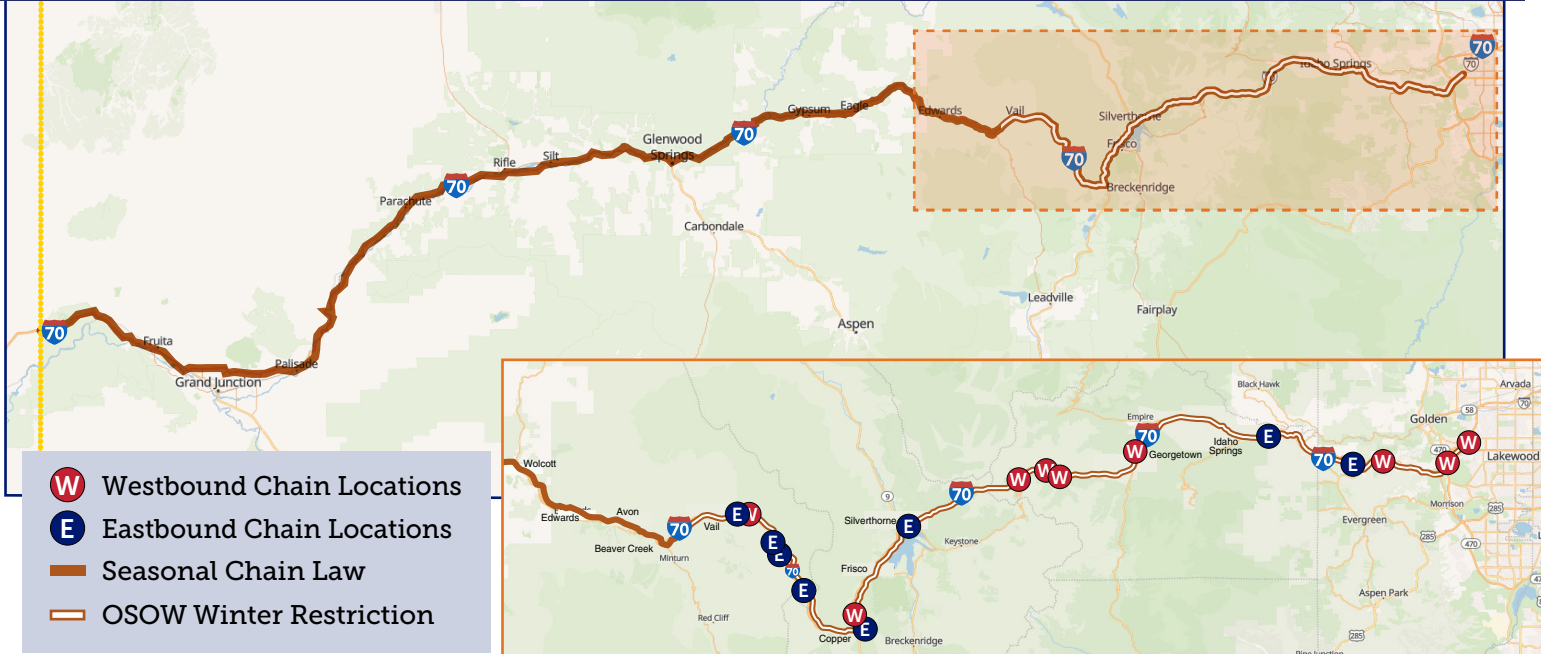
Mile Points 358, 263, 260, 254 (Buffalo Overlook), 228, 223, 221, 219, 213, 197, 179

Winter Restriction for OSOW

Morrison Exit 259 to the West Vail Exit 173

Must Carry Chain Law

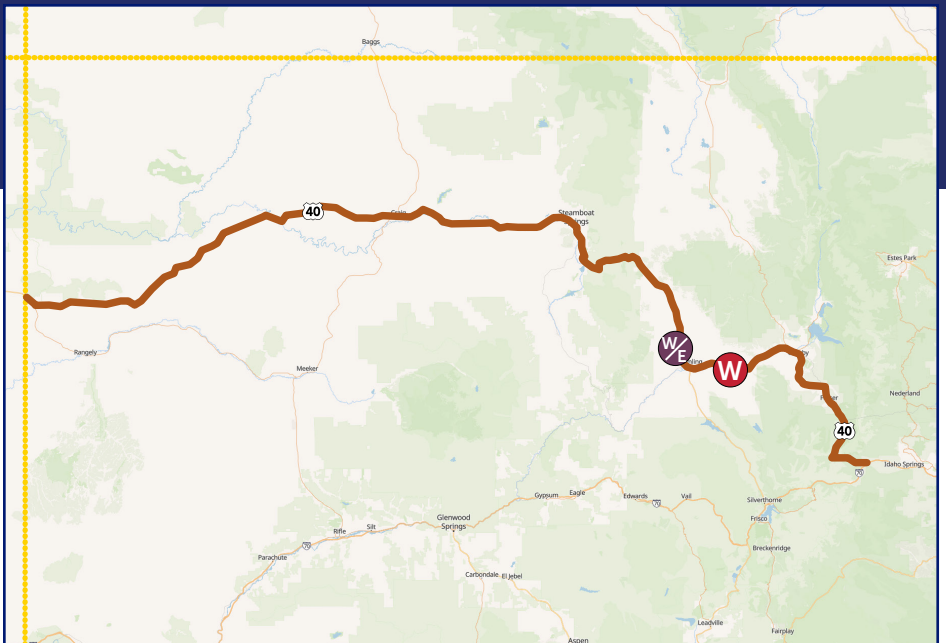
Utah state line to Morrison (Mile Point 259), both eastbound and westbound



Northwest

US 40: Mile Points 139 (EB+WB), 159 (WB)

- W Westbound Chain Locations
- E Eastbound Chain Locations
- WE West & Eastbound Chain Locations
- N Northbound Chain Locations
- S Southbound Chain Locations
- NS North & Southbound Chain Locations
- Seasonal Chain Law



Chain Stations Across Colorado

Southwest

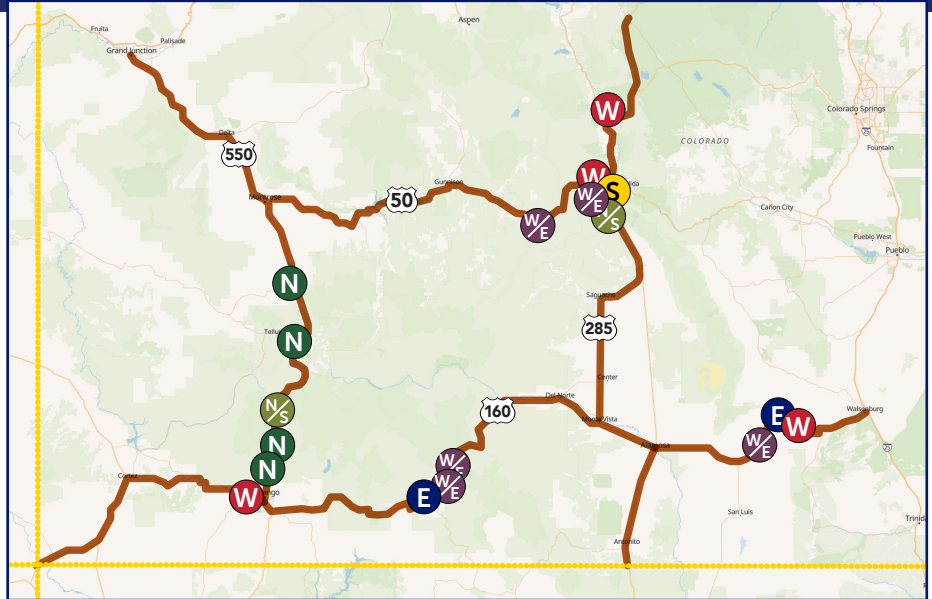
US 50: Mile Points 190 (EB+WB), 204 (WB), 209 (EB+WB)

US 160: Mile Points 77 (WB), 157 (EB), 173 (EB+WB), 176 (EB+WB), 261 (EB+WB), 276 (EB), 281 (WB)

US 285: Mile Points 119 (NB+SB), 125 (SB), 209 (WB)

US 550: Mile Points 34 (NB), 38 (NB), 49 (NB+SB), 71 (NB), 95 (NB)

-  Westbound Chain Locations
-  Eastbound Chain Locations
-  West & Eastbound Chain Locations
-  Northbound Chain Locations
-  Southbound Chain Locations
-  North & Southbound Chain Locations
-  Seasonal Chain Law



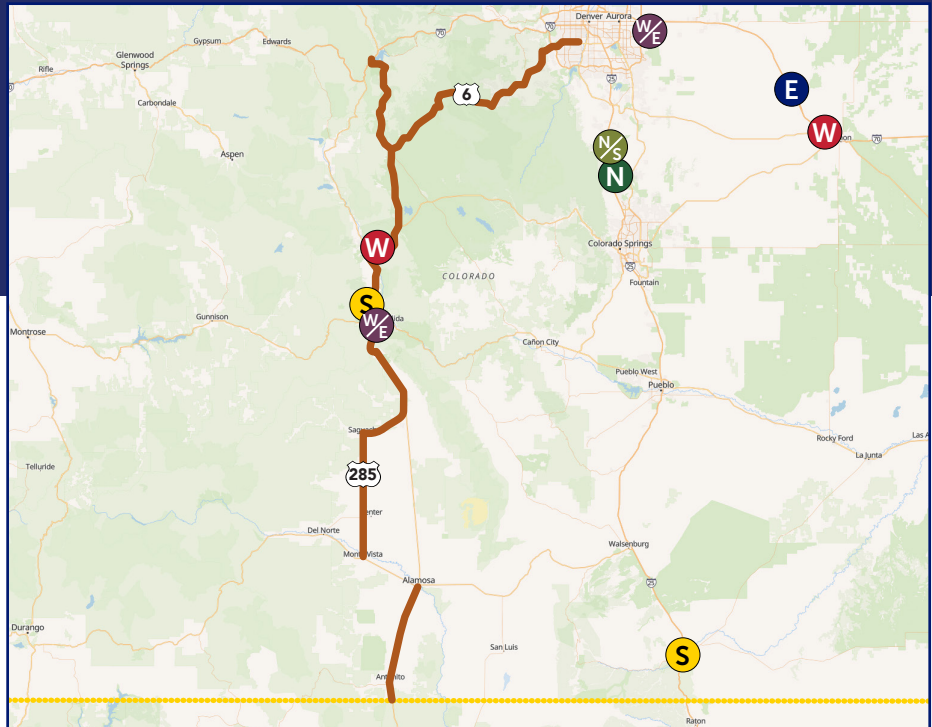
Southeast

I-25: Mile Points 11 (SB), 158 (NB), 170 (NB+SB)

US 6: Mile Points 219 (EB)

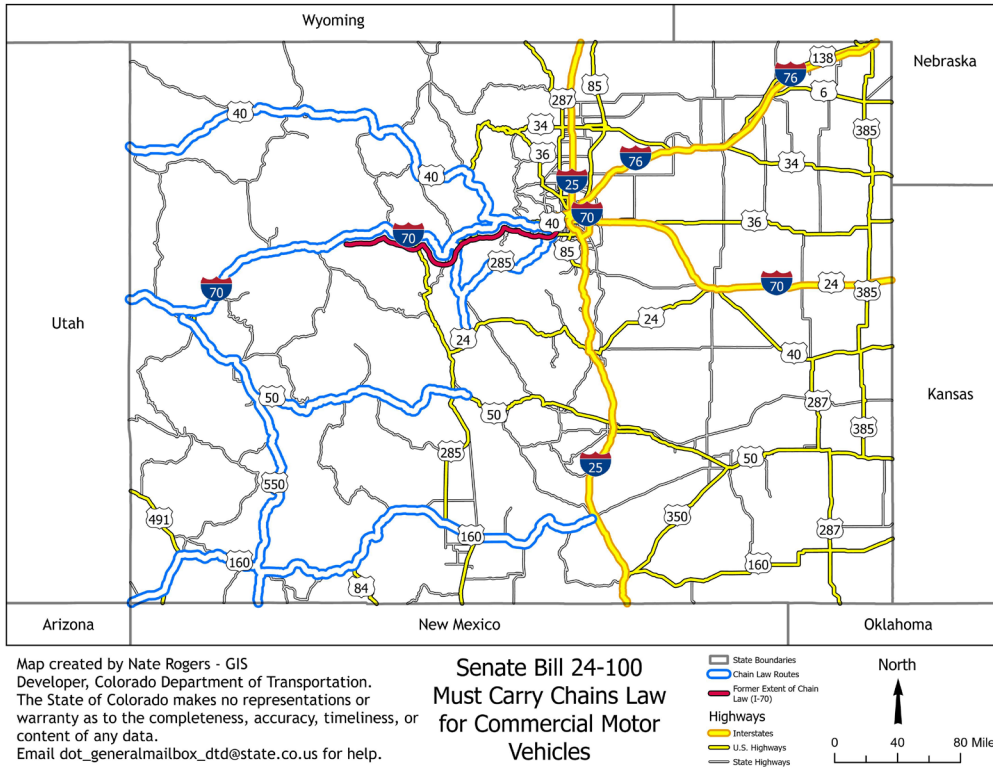
CO 13: Mile Points 12 (NB)

-  Westbound Chain Locations
-  Eastbound Chain Locations
-  West & Eastbound Chain Locations
-  Northbound Chain Locations
-  Southbound Chain Locations
-  North & Southbound Chain Locations
-  Seasonal Chain Law



Colorado's "Must Carry" Law

As of Aug. 7, 2024, all CMV drivers must carry chains from Sept. 1 to May 31. This applies to manufacturer GVWR or GCWR of at least 16,001 lbs. used in commerce or as transport for at least 16 passengers (including the driver) on public highways.



- I-70 west of milepost ("MP") 259 (Morrison to Utah state border)
- Colorado Highway 9, MP 63 to MP 97 (Frisco to Fairplay)
- Route 40 west of MP 256 (Empire)
- US Route 50 west of MP 225 (Salida)
- US Route 160 west of MP 304 (Walsenburg)
- US Route 285 west of MP 250 (Morrison)
- US Route 550 from MP 0 to 130

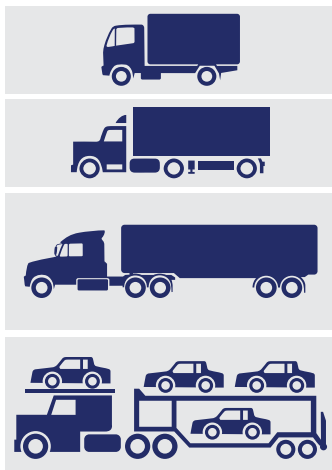
Fines include:

- \$100+ \$32 surcharge for not carrying Sept. - May
- \$500 + \$78 surcharge for not chaining up when Chain Law is in effect
- \$1,000 + \$156 surcharge for causing a road closure as a result of not chaining up

What Must be carried?

On the above state, federal and interstate highways, CMV's must carry traction devices that fulfill Colorado's Must Carry Chain Law. In the event of any inclement weather, the following requirements must be installed onto the tires of the vehicle when CDOT activates CMV Chain Law.

Those required to chain 4 drive tires:



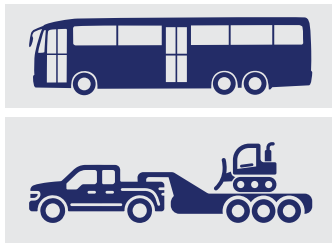
Straight Trucks: 4 tire chains, 4 AutoSocks, a combination of 2 tire chains and 2 tire cables 0.415 diameters or greater, auto chains, or sanders.

Single Drive Axle Combinations: 4 tire chains, 4 AutoSocks, auto chains, or sanders. **No cables are allowed.**

Tandem Drive Axle Combinations: 4 tire chains, 4 AutoSocks, a combination of 2 tire chains and 2 tire cables 0.415 diameter or greater, auto chains, or sanders. If chains are on the 2 outside tires of one drive axle, any tire cable may be used to cover 2 tires on the other drive axle. AutoSocks may be used to cover 2 tires on the other drive axle. **AutoSocks and tire cables cannot be used together.**

Auto Transporters: 4 tire chains, 4 AutoSocks, a combination of 2 tire chains and 2 tire cables 0.415 or greater, auto chains, or sanders. Do not use chains if use places hydraulic lines at risk of damage (alternative traction devices (ATDs) may be used to mitigate the risk). **Travel will be restricted if the vehicle is unable to chain.**

Those required to chain 2 drive tires:



Buses: 2 tire chains, 2 tire cables, a combination of 2 tire chains and 2 tire cables 0.415 diameters or greater, 2 AutoSocks, auto chains, or sanders.

Hot shot trucking: Traditional motor vehicles (such as pickup trucks) that are pulling trailers and meet the above-listed weight criteria must also carry chains. 2 tire chains for singles (to affix to rear tires). Exception: Duallies need 4 tire chains.

