



MEMO / NOTE DE SERVICE

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| To / Destinataire | National Capital Heavy Construction Association (NCHCA), Ottawa Construction Association (OCA), Greater Ottawa Truckers Association (GOTA), Canadian Trucking Industry, Quebec Trucking Association, Greater Ottawa Home Builders Association, Building Owners and Managers Association of Ottawa. | File/N° de fichier: |
| From / Expéditeur | <hr/> Hadi Selman, M.Eng., P.Eng. Infrastructure Assessment Engineer – Pavement Asset Management Services City of Ottawa | |
| Subject / Objet | 2026 Seasonal Load Restrictions | Date: March 1, 2026 |

The City of Ottawa imposes Seasonal Load Restrictions (SLR) each year to protect our road network from damage during the spring thaw. Structural capacity of the pavement structure is greatly reduced around this time of the year due to trapped moisture in the pavement structure and underlying soils. The restricted period is generally in effect between early March and mid May, although the specific timing is determined by the progression of the thaw.

As of **Monday March 9, 2026**, the SLR will be in effect. During the SLR period, commercial vehicles, or trailers with any axle in excess of five (5) tonnes (11,000 lbs.) are prohibited on roads identified as “Restricted-Loads” on the Truck Route Maps (Urban Truck Routes and Rural Truck Routes). These restrictions also apply to all non-truck routes. Roads designated as “Full-Loads” can carry full loads all year. Designated Truck Routes are illustrated on the [Truck Route Maps](#) and on [geoOttawa](#). For more information, please visit the [SLR webpage](#) or call 3-1-1.

As the City of Ottawa is primarily concerned with the issues of public safety and the protection of its infrastructure, the City is under no obligation to provide exemptions from the seasonal load restrictions at any time, as there is a high risk of damage to the pavement structure from such operations.

The City of Ottawa will no longer be processing, reviewing, or approving Project Level exemptions during the SLR period. Notwithstanding, Single Level exemptions to the load restrictions are granted in exceptional cases where the movement of the load could not reasonably have been planned around the seasonal load restricted period, the risk of damage is low, the movement of a load cannot be reduced or reasonably rescheduled until after the restricted period, as well as various other considerations. Financial hardship (or benefit) for the owner, agent, project manager, contractor or trucking operator is NOT considered as justifications for an exemption.

In the event an SLR exemption is deemed to be required, the permit holder will be required to compensate the City of Ottawa for an estimated cost required to repair damage to the road infrastructure (including engineering and/or legal fees) as a result of over-dimensional/weight vehicle movements made by the permit holder (as outlined in Section 39 of By-Law 2003-497). The permit holder will need to enter into an agreement with the City to this effect.

SLR exemptions are handled through the Over-dimensional/weight Vehicle (ODV) permit process as governed by City of Ottawa [By-Law No. 2003-497](#). Depending upon the type of operation, a Single Level permit may be issued.

In addition to a completed Single Level ODV permit application for each vehicle to be used during the load-restricted period, the following information must be provided:

1. The proposed route,
2. Description of the materials/goods to be moved,
3. The total quantity of materials/goods to be moved,
4. The proposed start and end dates for the movements,
5. Justification for potential SLR exemption, and
6. Any specific information that may assist the City with the review of the exemption application.

Over-dimensional Vehicle permit applications may be obtained through the Right of Way (ROW) Permit Office electronically at ROW_Permit_Office@Ottawa.ca (Tel: 613-580-2424, Ext. 16000).

An SLR exemption request requires a minimum of ten (10) business days to review, after which a decision will be made, and written approval or denial, at the sole discretion of the City, will be provided to the applicant.