Tire Chain Requirements

Colorado’s chain law REQUIRES commercial vehicles with a gross combination weight rating of 26,001 lbs. or more to have 4 or more drive wheels covered with an appropriate traction device. (Except Buses and super singles drive tires with power to only one axle)

**Straight Trucks**
Are required to use 4 tire chains; 4 autosocks; 4 tire cables 0.415” diameter or greater; auto chains or sanders covering 4 drive tires. **IF** there are chains on the 2 outside tires of one of the drive axles, any type of tire cable may be used to cover the other 2 tires. Autosocks may also be used to cover the other 2 tires. **Autosocks and tire cables CANNOT be used together.**

*Super single configurations require all drive wheels to be covered. If there is only power to one axle, two super single tires must be chained.*

**Single Drive Axle Combinations**
Are required to use 4 tire chains; 2 autosocks; auto chains or sanders covering 4 drive tires.

*Super single configurations require all drive tires to be covered. NO CABLES ALLOWED*

**Tandem Drive Axle Combinations**
Are required to use 4 tire chains; 4 autosocks; 4 tire cables 0.415” auto chains or sanders covering 4 drive tires. **IF** there are chains on the 2 outside tires of one of the drive axles, any type of tire cable may be used to cover the other 2 tires. Autosocks may also be used to cover the other 2 tires. **Autosocks and tire cables CANNOT be used together.**

*Super single configurations require all drive tires to be covered.*

**Single Drive Axle Busses**
Are Only Required to Cover 2 Tires
Are required to use 2 tire cables as long as they are 0.415” diameter or greater; 2 tire chains; 2 autosocks; auto chain or sanders

*Super single configurations require all drive tires to be covered.*

**Tandem Drive Axle Busses**
Are Only Required to Cover 2 Tires
Are required to use 2 tire chains. Autosocks or tire cables may be used as additional traction.
# COLORADO CHAIN LAW FACT SHEET*

## COLORADO TRACTION AND CHAIN LAW TIRE REQUIREMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typical Road Conditions</th>
<th>No Codes</th>
<th>Code 15</th>
<th>Code 15 + Code 17</th>
<th>Code 15 + Code 18</th>
<th>Code 16 + Code 18</th>
<th>Road Closed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dry or Wet: Warm, Cool, or Cold</td>
<td>No Traction</td>
<td>Adequate Tread Depth</td>
<td>Adequate Traction for Conditions</td>
<td>Chains or ATDs</td>
<td>Chains or ATDs</td>
<td>Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frozen Precipitation Collecting on Road</td>
<td>No Traction</td>
<td>Adequate Tread Depth</td>
<td>Adequate Traction for Conditions</td>
<td>Chains or ATDs</td>
<td>Chains or ATDs</td>
<td>Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single-Drive-Axle Commercial Vehicles</td>
<td>Safe Tire Tread</td>
<td>Adequate Tread Depth</td>
<td>Adequate Traction for Conditions</td>
<td>Chains or ATDs</td>
<td>Chains or ATDs</td>
<td>Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double-Drive-Axle Commercial Vehicles</td>
<td>Safe Tire Tread</td>
<td>Adequate Tread Depth</td>
<td>Adequate Traction for Conditions</td>
<td>Chains or ATDs</td>
<td>Chains or ATDs</td>
<td>Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2WD Passenger Vehicles</td>
<td>Safe Tire Tread</td>
<td>Adequate Tread Depth</td>
<td>Adequate Traction for Conditions</td>
<td>Chains or ATDs</td>
<td>Chains or ATDs</td>
<td>Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4WD or AWD Passenger Vehicles</td>
<td>Safe Tire Tread</td>
<td>Adequate Tread Depth</td>
<td>Adequate Traction for Conditions</td>
<td>Chains or ATDs</td>
<td>Chains or ATDs</td>
<td>Closed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## TRACTION REQUIREMENTS DEFINED

### Tires

Colorado Law states: "...motor vehicles...equipped with tire chains, four-wheel drive with adequate tires for the existing conditions, or snow tires with a "mud and snow" or all weather rating from the manufacturer having a tread of sufficient abrasive or skid-resistant design or composition and depth to provide adequate traction under existing driving conditions during storms..."

### Chains and Alternative Traction Devices (ATDs)

- **Tire Chains**
- **Wheel sanders**
- **Textile Traction Device (Autosock)**
- **Automatic chains**

## PENALTIES AND FINES

Colorado Law outlines the fines that can be levied against motorists in violation of the Chain Law, as follows:

**Fine Schedule:**
- **Passenger Vehicles:**
  - $100+$33 surcharge for violation
  - $500+$187 surcharge for incident that blocks traffic
- **Commercial Vehicles:**
  - $50+$16 surcharge for not carrying chains
  - $500+$187 surcharge for violation when chain law in effect
  - $1000+$187 surcharge for incident that blocks traffic

## CODE DEFINITIONS FROM RULES

1.01 "Adequate Tires" shall mean tires with conventional tread with a min. tread depth of 1/8 inch.

1.05 "Code 15" shall mean an implementation of the chain law which restricts all motor vehicles from travel on the state highway unless the vehicle has snow tires or is equipped with tire chains or ATDs or is a four wheel drive vehicle with adequate tires and all four wheels engaged.

3.05 Chain Law Code 15. Chain Law Code 15 may be implemented any time Chain Law Code 18 is in effect and any motor vehicle, other than a CV, is experiencing traction difficulties on an ascending grade. Code 15 may also be implemented on any other road, any time traction difficulties are occurring with any vehicle.

3.06 Chain Law Code 16. Chain Law Code 16 may be implemented any time Chain Law Code 15 is in effect and any motor vehicles are experiencing traction difficulties.

1.07 "Code 17" shall mean an implementation of the chain law that requires all single drive axles CV's in combination meeting the definition 8(a) below be equipped with tire chains or ATD's. All other CV's shall be required to be equipped with tire chains, ATD's or snow tires.

3.03 Chain Law Code 17. Chain Law Code 17 may be implemented any time there is snow cover on any part of the travelled portion of the pavement on an ascending grade.

1.08 "Code 18" shall mean an implementation of the chain law that requires all CV's to be equipped with tire chains or ATD's.

3.02 Chain Law Code 18. Chain Law Code 18 may be implemented any time there is snow cover on the entire part of the travelled portion of the pavement on an ascending grade or when in the discretion of the maintenance supervisor or designee, road, weather or driving conditions indicate this restriction is necessary to protect the safety of the travelling public or minimize the occurrence of road closures.

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* *This Chain Law Fact Sheet is for reference only. See CDOT Rules 2 CCR 684-14 Rules Regarding Travel Restrictions on State Highways for specific details. Special provisions exist for autotransport carriers, emergency vehicles, buses and state owned maintenance vehicles. Tire cables are also an acceptable traction device. Additional chain application requirements for trucks and buses are described.*

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11/30/2015

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