



State of Wisconsin  
Department of Transportation

## State Trunk Highway (STH) connection permits

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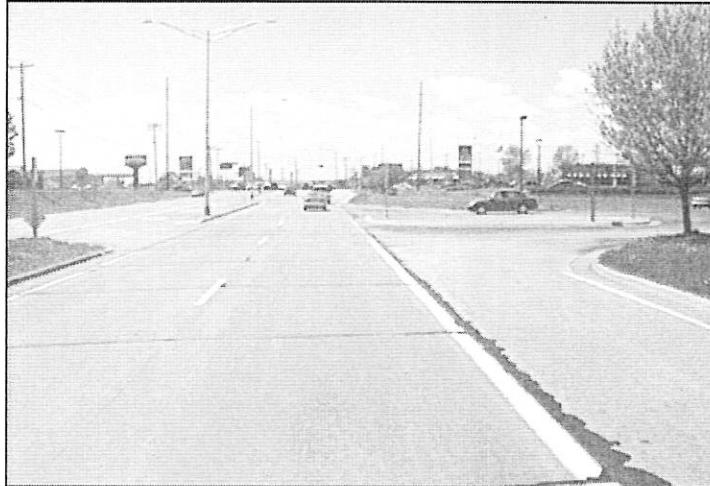
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The issuance of STH connection permits is part of the broader subject of access management. For access management related information, including its importance/benefits, land divisions, guidance on the basic principles, and Wisconsin statutes and administrative rules, click on the link above.



## Introduction

A driveway, public/private road, or recreational trail is a **connection** between property that abuts STH right of way and the highway itself. On highways under WisDOT jurisdiction, a **STH connection permit** is required when property owners and local agencies want to:

- Construct a new connection
- Remove an existing connection
- Relocate an existing connection
- Validate an existing unpermitted connection (when legal)
- Alter an existing connection, which includes a change of use

"Alter" means any change done to a connection beyond routine maintenance such as widening, paving, replacing a culvert, and improvements to the highway.

"Change of use" means any modification to a property that results in a change in the number and/or types of vehicles using a property's connection. Property modifications may include, but are not limited to:

- Changing from a residential to a commercial or industrial use
- Changing from single to multiple residential use
- Subdividing to accommodate additional residences or businesses
- Changing the type of business

## Classifications

A connection is classified by its use or how it serves a property. Types of use

include:

- **Commercial/industrial:** A driveway or private road that serves a business or non-profit organization.
- **Residential:** A driveway or private road that serves single and multiple family homes, apartments, condominiums, townhouses, etc.
- **Agricultural:** A field entrance and entrances to recreational or hunting lands. This use may also serve to provide an entrance to farm buildings but not residential buildings. It does not include commercial-type activities.
- **Public road:** A road, street, highway, etc. connecting to a state trunk highway that is maintained by a local unit of government. A road not maintained by a unit of government is categorized under commercial/industrial or residential.
- **Trail or trail crossing:** Any pedestrian, bicycle, snowmobile, ATV or equestrian trail that runs longitudinally along and/or crosses a state trunk highway.

## Access restrictions

Some properties have access restrictions. Examples of restrictions include:

- No direct access is allowed to a state trunk highway
- Only one connection is allowed to a state trunk highway
- A connection has a specific use (for example, agricultural – not residential or commercial)
- A connection has to be built at a specific location
- A connection has right-in, right-out turns only (no median opening allowed)

A property or group of properties may also have multiple access restrictions, which should be specified in the property deed(s).

If a property has access restrictions, WisDOT may not be able to issue a STH connection permit or may only be able to issue a permit that meets the restrictions. WisDOT may also issue a STH connection permit with certain restrictions in order to ensure the safety and operability of a state trunk highway, for example, limiting the connection to a certain type of use or a maximum number of vehicles per day.

## Apply for a STH connection permit

Fill out form [W DT1504](#), Application/permit for connection to state trunk highway, and follow the instructions. Submit the completed form to the [transportation region office](#) responsible for the county where the connection is or will be located.

In addition to the application form, you will need to provide:

- A location sketch. You may use form [W DT1248, STH Connection location sketch](#)
- Design details (dimensions, type/size of culverts, materials, surface grades, etc.)

- A copy of the property deed
- Zoning documentation for the property
- A copy of a certified survey map (if applicable)
- Evidence of a land division (if applicable)

You may also be asked to provide some type of proof that you have the authority to apply for a permit if you are not the property owner. A copy of an "Offer to Purchase Property" is an example of such proof.

For faster permit application processing, submit all materials electronically via email, or for larger files, a file transfer protocol (FTP) site. If you do not have access to a FTP site, WisDOT can provide one. Submit the permit form as a Word document with an electronic (typed) signature instead of scanning it. Supporting materials should be in PDF format. You may also submit the application and supporting materials by regular mail. If you do this, the application must be filled out in ink.

Once issued, a STH connection permit remains in effect until cancellation by the property owner or local agency, expiration of a temporary permit date, or revocation by WisDOT.

### Existing connections without permits

If an existing connection on your property does not have a valid WisDOT STH connection permit, you may be able to obtain a permit if it meets current law, standards and policy or if the connection can be legally altered or relocated to do so. Contact the transportation region office responsible for the county where the connection is located and a staff person will evaluate your situation. If an existing unpermitted connection meets current law, standards and policy, WisDOT may issue a connection permit to a property owner without his/her involvement or signature. This might occur when WisDOT conducts an inventory of its connections along a state trunk highway, for example, with a highway improvement project.

### Maintenance

Property owners and local agencies are expected to perform routine maintenance on the portion of their connections within state trunk highway right of way whether or not the connections have a valid WisDOT permit or are nonconforming. Routine maintenance includes items like removing snow, sealing asphalt, reshaping or grading gravel, culvert lining and cleanout, and minor repairs. Most of this work can usually be done without a permit. But a permit is required for work that affects traffic in some manner, disturbs the ground, or interferes with a WisDOT highway improvement or maintenance project. Replacing or regrading the connection or replacing a culvert, for example, or any activity that involves digging in the right of way, requires a permit.

### Authority

WisDOT's legal authority to issue STH connection permits comes from Wisconsin Statute [86.07\(2\)\(a\)](#) and Administrative Code [Trans 231](#).

## Policy

WisDOT's [STH connection permit policy](#) is part of Highway Maintenance Manual Chapter 9. Click on the link above to go to that page.

## Questions

Direct your specific questions on STH connection permit issues or requests to the [transportation region office](#).

For general questions on WisDOT STH connection permit policy and forms, contact:

**Bob Fasick**

Wisconsin DOT

Bureau of Highway Maintenance

4822 Madison Yards Way, 5th Floor South

Madison, WI 53705

(608) 266-3438

[robert.fasick@dot.wi.gov](mailto:robert.fasick@dot.wi.gov)

## Associated Wisconsin law

Visit the links below for Wisconsin law associated with utilities and permitting on state right of way.

- [Statute 66.0831](#)
- [Statute 84.07\(4\)](#)
- [Statute 84.08](#)
- [Statute 85.15](#)
- [Statute 86.07\(2\)\(a\)](#)
- [Statute 86.16](#)
- [Statute 182.017](#)
- [Statute 182.0175](#)
- [Administrative Code Trans 29](#)
- [Administrative Code Trans 231](#)