

# Self Propelled Implements of Husbandry

Highway Traffic Act (HTA): **Highway** is any highway including any common roadway, bridge, overpass or underpass, and all areas between property lines, such as a road shoulder. **Roadway** is the travelled portion of a highway. **Night**, refers to the time between ½ hour before sunset to ½ hour after sunrise, and when insufficient light or poor conditions reduce visibility at 150 metres.

**Farm Tractors and SPIHs** are vehicles, not motor vehicles. **Farm Trucks** are motor vehicles. **Highway Tractor** means a power-unit designed to draw/pull a semi-trailer.

**Self-propelled implements of husbandry (SPIH)** are vehicles manufactured, reconstructed designed, redesigned, or converted for specific use in farming. For example, combines, swathers, harvesters, and sprayers are SPIHs, and a farm tractor is not an SPIH.

## SPIHs Converted From Highway Vehicles



Vehicles converted for specific farm uses **may** qualify as SPIHs. A qualifying conversion requires significant and specific physical change to the **cargo-carrying** portion of the vehicle. Modifications must be for specific farming uses with the vehicle being of little use except to carry the farm products the

redesign intended. After conversion, it must be impractical to use the vehicle for its original purposes. Specific farm use does not mean singular use. Transporting items such as grain, potatoes, or forages in the same converted vehicle are all specific farm use. Unmodified trucks, and highway tractor trucks are not SPIHs.

Acceptable vehicle conversions include replacing a truck cargo box with a grain gravity box, potato slinger, or a feed mixer.



Unacceptable vehicle conversions include removing doors, windows, seats and/or cab of a truck to carry crops, or welding a dump truck's tailgate shut.



## Slow Moving Vehicle (SMV) Sign

The SMV sign warns drivers that a vehicle is travelling at **40 km/h or less**. The slow moving vehicle must display an SMV sign near to the centre rear of the vehicle, 0.6 to 2m above the road.

SPIHs, farm wagons and farm tractors operating on a highway **must** have an SMV sign, unless travelling directly across the road. No one can display an SMV sign on a vehicle travelling over 40 km/h. SMVs loaded on a trailer or float must have any SMV sign covered or removed. HTA 76

A slow moving vehicle towing wagon(s) or implement(s) must display the sign or a second sign on the rear-most vehicle, clearly visible to 150m. Replace damaged or faded SMV signs.

### Safety First

Never drive equipment with a passenger, even inside an enclosed cab, unless there is a second seat provided for training. During training make sure you are travelling at a slow speed on level ground. The operator must have a clear unobstructed view of the road and instrument panels.

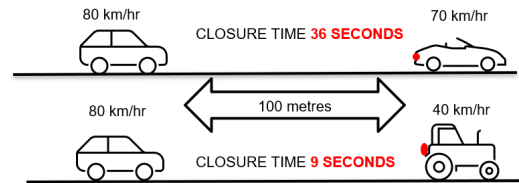
Drivers are responsible to indicate and safely maneuver roadway entries, lane changes, turns, and stops. Drivers may use hand signals, but must ensure equipment and loads do not obstruct other drivers from seeing any signal. It is safer to install electric light signalling systems.

Farm equipment should operate on the travelled portion of the highway. Road shoulders may contain obstructions and may not take equipment weight or accommodate equipment size.

It is not illegal to drive on the road shoulder, but it is illegal to use the shoulder to pass vehicles. Remember, if you leave your lane to drive on the shoulder, you must yield to any vehicle in the roadway before re-entering the highway.

One reason for farm equipment highway accidents is different vehicle speeds. Farm equipment travels below 40 km/h - much

slower than other vehicles. It takes much less time for a vehicle to overtake slower moving farm vehicles than it does for a vehicle to overtake other automobiles.



It is important to use lights when you are travelling at slow speed, and when it is dark or visibility is poor. Collisions occur when drivers do not see slow moving equipment with advance warning.

### SPIH Driving Restrictions

Driving an SPIH or farm tractor does not require a driver's licence, but the driver must be at least 16 years old to drive the vehicle on or along a road. Drivers under 16 may only drive the vehicle directly across a road. HTA (32), (37).

It is illegal to operate any farm equipment, on or off highway, when impaired by alcohol or drugs. A Criminal Code conviction for driving while impaired results in a ban on operating farm equipment on any road or in a public place. Criminal Code of Canada (253), (254), (259).

### Insurance

Most farm liability policies cover farm equipment, including tractors, SPIH and implements, when operating on the road. Contact your insurance company to discuss a vehicle conversion to an SPIH to determine insurability and to determine liability and damage coverage.

### License Plates

An SPIH does not require a plate to travel between a farm and equipment repair shop, or between farms, including farms not owned by the vehicle owner.

The SPIH must have a plate to travel to a commercial elevator, processing plant, or to transport general freight. Under these circumstances the SPIH must comply with HTA motor vehicle rules.

A trailer, including a livestock trailer or one transporting livestock or poultry, towed by an SPIH or farm tractor does not require a plate. If the trailer has a plate, it is not necessary to remove or cover the plate. An SPIH, even when towed, does not require a plate.

### Lighting

At night or when visibility is poor on roads SPIHs and farm tractors **must display** two white lights on the front of the vehicle and at least one red light on the rear, visible at 150m. Single or combined farm implements or wagons, towed by any vehicle, **must display** a red light on the rear of the rear-most vehicle, visible at 150m. When the combined length exceeds 6.1m, the rear-most vehicle **must display** four additional lights or reflectors, visible at 150m; amber or green on each side close to the front, and red on each side close to the rear.

Equipment over 2.6m wide **must display** at the rear two red lighted lamps or reflectors, one at each of the extreme left and right side of the vehicle, visible at 150m.

Flood lamps and general service lamps are meant to illuminate machinery or field work. On a public road, the operator must aim any front-facing lamp down and away from traffic. Rear-facing lamps must be turned off. [HTA PART VI EQUIPMENT](#) Sections 62(1), (13), (25), (62).

### Overweight And Oversize (O&O) Vehicle Requirements

Ontario public road maximum vehicle dimensions are 2.6m wide and 2.5m long. The HTA describes certain exceptions for mirrors, attachments, road service vehicles, fire equipment, full trailers, semi-trailers, and buses. Width restrictions do not apply to loads of loose fodder, hay, or straw. HTA 109(2).

An over-dimensional vehicle includes a farm tractor, SPIH, propelled piece of farm equipment, or combination, having weight, width, length **or** height exceeding Highway Traffic Act [PART VI EQUIPMENT](#) or [PART VII LOAD AND DIMENSIONS](#) limits.

An over-dimensional vehicle:

- is prohibited from moving on certain highways, highway sections, bridges, and tunnels
- is prohibited from using a public road by any sign posting restrictions for that road.
- may be required to display additional lights,
- may require front and rear escort vehicles when width exceeds 4.80 metres, and
- may require special flags and signs.

O. Reg. 603 [OVER-DIMENSIONAL FARM VEHICLES](#) describes the ONLY conditions where an over-dimensional farm vehicle may operate on or along certain highways. Over-dimensional farm vehicle lighting requirements are additional to those which apply to all farm vehicles.

Farm vehicles greater than 2.60m wide	PROHIBITED from operating on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sections of 400 series Highways, Highway 2A, QEW, and Conestoga PKWY</li> </ul>
Farm vehicles over 2.60m wide up to 3.80m	DAYTIME: No additional restrictions. NIGHTTIME or POOR VISIBILITY: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 flashing amber lights on front and 2 on rear,</li> <li>not more than 150mm from the side structure of the vehicle</li> </ul>
Farm vehicles over 3.80m wide up to 4.80m	DAYTIME: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 flashing amber lights on front and 2 on rear, <b>or</b> rotating roof light.</li> </ul> NIGHTTIME or POOR VISIBILITY: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 flashing amber lights on front and 2 on rear, and</li> <li>a rotating amber roof light, <b>or</b> escort vehicles at front and rear.</li> </ul>
Over 4.80m wide	DAYTIME: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 flashing amber lights on front and 2 on rear, <b>or</b> rotating roof light.</li> </ul> NIGHTTIME or POOR VISIBILITY: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 flashing amber lights on front and 2 on rear, and</li> <li>single rotating amber roof light</li> <li>an escort vehicles at front and rear.</li> </ul>
Escort Vehicles	Must show four-way flashers, <b>or</b> amber rotating roof light.

Please see the following links for further details [MTO Regional or Area Office](#)

MTO Website: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ministry-transportation>

MTO Farm Guide: [www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/publications/pdfs/farm-guide.pdf](http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/publications/pdfs/farm-guide.pdf)

OFA: <https://ofa.on.ca/resources/> Search: Towing Checklist, SPIH, Farm Implements on The Road, Farm Trucks, Farm Plates.

Information and recommendations in the Fact Sheet are believed to be correct at the time of publication. Legislation and regulations are amended from time to time and the accuracy or sufficiency of material should be verified by reviewing appropriate government information.

*Revised October 2024*