

# Logging Trucks and Heavy Commercial Vehicles on Maine's Back Roads

## Truck accident lawyers committed to fighting for crash victims

Maine's back roads may look like a postcard, but when a fully loaded logging truck rounds a blind curve, that quiet country charm can turn into a high-stakes [truck accident](#) in a heartbeat. For drivers, understanding how Maine regulates logging trucks and other heavy commercial vehicles is one of the best ways to stay safer on those winding, wooded routes.

## How does Maine treat logging trucks on public roads?

In Maine, logging trucks may be part of everyday life, but they're still subject to a detailed set of rules once they leave private woods roads and roll onto public ways. The state's motor vehicle code, [Title 29-A](#), lays out the framework for how heavy commercial vehicles are allowed to operate on state highways and town roads, including how much they can weigh and how they can be configured.

That means when a log truck leaves a private haul road and turns onto a state route or local road, it isn't just "a truck doing its job." It's a commercial vehicle that must meet the same legal standards as any other rig on Maine's public network.

Many logging operations maintain their own road systems deep in the North Woods, where private landowners set the rules and maintain the surfaces. But the minute a logging truck hits a state or town road, it must comply with Maine's weight limits, size restrictions, equipment rules, and general traffic laws, just like any other commercial truck. That's also where state and local law enforcement, including Maine State Police Commercial Vehicle Enforcement, have the authority to inspect vehicles, issue citations, and pull unsafe trucks off the road when they don't meet the legal standard.

## What weight limits apply to logging trucks and heavy rigs in Maine?

Weight is one of the biggest safety issues when it comes to logging trucks. Maine law doesn't just look at how big a truck "looks" from the outside; it sets specific maximum weights based on how many axles the vehicle or combination has and how those axles are spaced. Under [Title 29-A, section 2353](#), Maine uses a tiered system that limits the gross vehicle weight (GVW) a truck can legally carry on most public ways.

In broad strokes, the statute allows lighter trucks with fewer axles to carry less, and heavier, multi-axle combinations to carry more (up to a point). For example, a two-axle truck is capped at 34,000 pounds, while vehicles and combinations with additional axles can go higher if they meet specific spacing requirements. Most commonly, combinations with five or more axles are limited to around 80,000 pounds on many public roads, which mirrors the standard federal maximum.

Maine also has a special provision that allows certain combinations (such as a three-axle truck tractor pulling a tri-axle semitrailer) to operate legally at up to 100,000 pounds on general law highways and, under a federal exemption, on designated Interstate routes. That exemption exists largely because of the importance of the forest products industry and heavy freight to Maine's economy.

### **How does Maine handle length, load overhang, and log-hauling quirks?**

Maine doesn't just care how heavy a logging truck is – it also limits how long these vehicles can be and how far their loads can safely stick out, especially when they're hauling full-length logs.

- [Title 29-A](#) includes maximum length limits for commercial vehicles and combinations, and Maine's rules also address overhang. This is the portion of a load that extends beyond the rear of the vehicle.
- Because tree-length logs are so long, a combination vehicle hauling only those logs can legally extend its load up to 8½ feet beyond the rear of the vehicle, as long as no more than 25% of each log's length sticks out past the back of the truck or trailer.
- Even with this extra allowance, overhanging loads must be properly marked and securely tied down so logs don't shift or fall, and if a truck exceeds the legal overhang, fails to mark the load, or skips proper securement, both the driver and company can be cited.

### **How do Maine's trucking rules affect an injury claim?**

When you're hit by a logging truck or other heavy commercial vehicle in Maine, the trucking rules you've probably never thought about suddenly matter a lot. They shape how your case is investigated, how fault is assigned, and ultimately how much compensation you may recover.

Here's how Maine's truck laws and fault rules can affect your claim:

#### **Safety rules become evidence**

If you're involved in a truck accident in Maine, a lawyer can look closely at whether the driver and trucking company followed Maine's weight, length, permitting, and safe-operation laws. If they cut corners to save time or money, that can be used as evidence to build your case.

#### **Common trucking violations**

A truck may be over the legal gross vehicle weight without a permit, hauling logs that extend farther than Maine allows, or using a setup that doesn't meet axle spacing rules for that road. It might also be driving on a road with posted seasonal weight limits or on a back road that bans heavy vehicles, despite clear signs. This evidence can work in your favor.

#### **Maine's modified comparative negligence rule**

In Maine, if you're found less than 50% at fault, you can still recover damages, but your compensation is reduced by your share of fault. The trucking company may try to push blame onto you (for example, claiming you were speeding or passing unsafely) to lower what they owe, while your lawyer will point out evidence that the truck broke key safety rules.

### **What makes logging and heavy commercial vehicle accidents so complicated?**

Crashes involving logging trucks and other heavy commercial vehicles are rarely simple fender-benders. The size of the vehicles, the web of regulations, and the number of players involved all make these cases more complex than a typical car accident.

Here's why these crashes are so complicated:

- **Multiple potential defendants:** Responsibility may be shared among the driver, the trucking company, the truck owner, the company that loaded the logs, a maintenance shop, or even a parts manufacturer.
- **Heavy regulation and technical rules:** These cases often turn on whether the truck complied with detailed weight limits, length and overhang rules, permit requirements, hours-of-service rules, and cargo securement standards.
- **Specialized evidence:** Key proof may live in driver logbooks, electronic control module ("black box") data, GPS records, weigh slips, permits, inspection reports, and internal company policies, not just the police report.
- **Severe injuries and high stakes:** Because these vehicles are so heavy, injuries are often catastrophic, which raises the medical costs, lost income, and long-term impact, and makes insurance companies fight harder to limit payouts.
- **Blame-shifting and comparative fault:** Trucking companies and insurance companies often try to shift part of the blame onto the injured driver to reduce what they have to pay, making fault more contested than in a typical crash.

### **Hurt in a truck accident in Maine? Romanow Law Group can help**

When a logging truck or heavy commercial vehicle collision turns your life inside out, it's easy to feel outmatched by trucking companies, their insurance providers, and a maze of technical rules. [Romanow Law Group](#) can step into that gap. The firm focuses on representing injured people, not trucking companies or insurance carriers. With a strong base in Portland and the ability to serve clients throughout the state, our law firm understands the day-to-day realities of driving in a place where the forest products industry and commercial trucking are part of the fabric of life.

From the moment you reach out, the firm's role is to protect your rights and take the pressure off you. That can mean preserving key evidence before it disappears, such as electronic data from the truck, driver logs, weight and permit records, and inspection reports that show

whether the truck was operating within Maine's legal limits. It also means dealing directly with the trucking company and its insurance provider so you're not fielding calls, answering leading questions, or facing settlement offers that don't come close to covering your medical bills, lost income, and long-term needs.

If we take your case, we do so on a contingency fee basis, which means no upfront or hidden fees. To find out how we can help you, [contact us](#) to schedule a free consultation.