

Louisiana:

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AUTHORITY

R.S. 32:1
R.S. 47:451
R.S. 47:462(B)(1)
R.S. 47:462(B)(2)(c)
R.S. 47:463.5
R.S. 47:479(6)
R.S. 47:501

DEFINITION OF TRAILER

Louisiana law requires every owner of a motor vehicle, trailer, or semi-trailer, or other vehicle be registered prior to being operated upon the public highways in this state. The category of trailer determines the class of the license plate issued.

Trailer Categories:

- "Light-trailer" -- every vehicle of the trailer or semi-trailer type having a loaded gross weight of not more than five hundred pounds.
- "Semi-trailer"-- every single vehicle without motive power designed for carrying property and passengers and so designed in conjunction and used with a motor vehicle that some part of its own weight and that of its own load rests or is carried by another vehicle and having one or more load-carrying axles.
- "Trailer" -- every single vehicle without motive power designed for carrying property or passengers wholly on its own structure, drawn by a motor vehicle which carries no part of the weight and load of the trailer on its own wheels and having two or more load carrying axles.
- "Boat trailer" -- a noncommercial vehicle, of the trailer or semi-trailer type, used solely and exclusively for transporting pleasure water craft and having a loaded gross weight of not more than one thousand five hundred pounds.
- "Farm trailer" and "farm semi-trailer" -- every vehicle of the trailer or semi-trailer type as are owned by persons engaged in the business of actually farming and used exclusively in carrying farm produce raised on their farms from such farms to market and returning therefrom carrying goods and merchandise back to their farms.
- "Mobile home" -- a trailer or semitrailer which is designed, constructed and equipped as a dwelling place, living abode, or sleeping place, either permanently or temporarily, and is equipped for use as a conveyance on highways; or, (b) a trailer or semitrailer whose chassis and exterior shell is designed and constructed for use as a mobile home, as

defined in (a), but which is used instead permanently or temporarily for the advertising, sales, display, or promotion of merchandise or services, or for any other commercial purpose except the transportation of property for hire or the transportation of property for distribution by a private carrier.

- "Travel trailer" and "camper trailer" -- trailer or semitrailer which is designed, constructed and equipped as a dwelling place, living abode, or sleeping place, either permanently or temporarily, and is equipped for use as a conveyance on highways.

Note: A tow-dolly is not considered a trailer and is not be eligible for registration.

§54. Size, weight and load of vehicles limited

A. No person shall drive or move any vehicle, nor cause or knowingly permit any vehicle owned or controlled by him to be driven or moved, on any highway of this state when such vehicle is of a size or weight exceeding the limitations stated in this Chapter or otherwise in violation of this Chapter, and the maximum size and weight of vehicles herein specified shall be lawful throughout the state.

B. The provisions of this Chapter governing size, weight and load shall not apply to fire apparatus, vehicles and machinery used solely in the building of highways while actually temporarily engaged in work upon a highway, to implements of husbandry, including farm tractors temporarily moved upon a highway, or to a vehicle operated under the terms of a special permit issued as herein provided, or to trolley coaches or motor buses operated under a franchise or indeterminate permit wholly within the corporate limits of a municipality having a population of one hundred thousand or more inhabitants.

C. These exceptions shall not include any vehicle or combinations of vehicles not used primarily for such purposes, nor ordinary commercial vehicles upon which are placed removable machinery for such purposes, nor vehicles designed for the purpose of evading the limitations of this Part.

Acts 1962, No. 310, §1.

§384. Trailers and towed vehicles

A. The drawbar or connection between two vehicles, when one is towing the other, shall be of sufficient strength to pull all weight towed thereby and shall not exceed fifteen feet from one vehicle to the other, except that the drawbar or connection may exceed fifteen feet between any two vehicles transporting poles, pipes, machinery, or other objects of a structural nature which cannot be readily dismembered.

B. When the connection between a vehicle and a towed vehicle is a chain, rope, or cable, a red flag or cloth not less than one foot square shall be displayed upon such connection between

sunrise and sunset, and a red light, plainly visible under ordinary atmospheric conditions for a distance of at least five hundred feet, shall be displayed upon such connection between sunset and sunrise.

C. Truck-tractors may be transported by a drawbar, pintle connection, or by the triple saddle mount method of transportation, consisting of a combination of four truck-tractors where the front axle of one truck-tractor is mounted on the fifth wheel of the lead truck-tractor, the front axle of the third truck-tractor is mounted on the fifth wheel of the second truck-tractor, and the front axle of the fourth truck-tractor is mounted on the fifth wheel of the third truck-tractor; and with the rear wheels of the second, third, and fourth truck-tractors trailing on the ground behind the operating motor unit, provided that:

(1) The combination of vehicles shall be equipped with necessary lights and signals in accordance with Louisiana law and Bureau of Motor Carrier Safety, United States Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration Safety Rules and Regulations;

(2) The rear wheels of the second, third, and fourth truck-tractors of the combination shall be equipped with adequate splash guards or mud flaps; and,

(3) It shall be unlawful to operate this combination of vehicles in excess of fifty-five miles per hour.

D. Every trailer and semitrailer with a loaded gross weight capacity of up to six thousand pounds shall be equipped with safety chains or other safety device approved in accordance with Subsection E. The safety chains or other approved safety device shall be securely attached to the towing vehicle when the trailer or semitrailer is in motion and shall be of sufficient strength to hold the trailer behind the towing vehicle in case the connection between the two vehicles detaches.

E.(1) The Department of Public Safety and Corrections, office of state police, shall have the authority to approve safety devices other than safety chains to be used when towing trailers or semitrailers. The approval of a safety device shall be in writing. Any such device shall be inspected by the office of state police before written approval is given. The following criteria shall be considered in making the determination of whether or not to approve such safety device as an alternative to safety chains:

(a) The physical characteristics of the device, including but not limited to the material or materials used in constructing the device.

(b) The method by which the device is attached to the trailer or semitrailer.

(c) The overall strength of the device.

(2) The office of state police shall promulgate rules and regulations in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act to implement the provisions of this Subsection, including but not limited to the procedure for accepting and processing applications for approval of alternative safety devices.

§381. Height

A.(1) The height of any vehicle and its load shall not exceed thirteen feet, six inches, except that the height of any vehicle and its load which operates exclusively on the interstate highway system shall not exceed fourteen feet, provided that vehicles operating on the interstate highway system shall have reasonable access, within one road mile from the interstate highway to terminals and facilities for food, fuel, repairs, and rest, unless prohibited for specific safety reasons on individual routes.

(2) The operator of a vehicle that is higher than thirteen feet six inches shall ensure that the vehicle will pass through each vertical clearance of a structure in its path without touching the structure.

(3) Any damage to a bridge, underpass, or similar structure caused by the height of a vehicle shall be the responsibility of the owner of the vehicle.

B. Nothing in this Section shall be interpreted to require the state or any subdivision thereof or any person, firm, or corporation in this state to raise, alter, construct, or reconstruct any overpass, wire, pole, trestle, or other structure to provide such clearance.

§382. Length; special length limits

A. Length

(1) The length of a single vehicle shall not exceed forty-five feet. The length of a trailing unit on any single vehicle shall not exceed thirty feet. The length of the semitrailer portion of a tractor-semitrailer combination shall not exceed fifty-nine feet and six inches. The length of the semitrailer or trailer portion of a tractor-semitrailer-trailer combination shall not exceed thirty feet. The length of the trailer portions of a tractor-trailer-trailer combination shall not exceed thirty feet. The length of the semitrailer portions of a tractor-semitrailer-semitrailer combination shall not exceed thirty feet.

(2)(a) The load carried by a combination of vehicles transporting timber poles and piling shall not exceed sixty-five feet plus one foot additional tolerance in length. The load carried by a combination of vehicles transporting forest products in their natural or treated state shall not exceed sixty-five feet plus one foot additional tolerance in length. Said combinations transporting poles and piling or forest products in their natural or treated state shall operate only during daylight hours and shall display a red flag or cloth not less than one foot square at the rear of the load. A combination of vehicles transporting forest products in their natural state shall be equipped with stationary vertical retaining poles on the driver's side of the trailer portion.

(b) No combination of vehicles shall consist of more than two vehicles, except as provided in R.S. 32:384(C) and R.S. 32:382(A)(3) and except that combinations of truck-tractor and two

trailers; truck-tractor and two semi-trailers; or truck-tractor, semi-trailer, and trailer are permitted.

(c) The combination of vehicles consisting of three vehicles excepted in this Section by Subsection A(2)(b) shall be permitted to operate over all highways within the Interstate System and other highways designated by the secretary.

(d) No combination of vehicles operated on any parish road under the jurisdiction of the police jury shall consist of more than two vehicles, except as provided in R.S. 32:382(A)(3).

(3)(a) A vehicle having no more than two axles may tow any combination of two vehicles, provided the combination of vehicles does not exceed sixty-five feet.

(b) A vehicle having no more than two axles and owned and/or operated by a manufacturer or dealer of boats may tow two boat trailers.

B. Special length limits

(1) Subject to the provisions of R.S. 32:380, R.S. 32:381, and Subsection A of this Section, the load upon any single vehicle or upon the front vehicle of a combination of vehicles shall not project more than four feet beyond the foremost part of said vehicle, and the load upon any single vehicle or upon the rear vehicle of a combination of vehicles shall not project more than eight feet beyond the rear of the bed or body of said vehicle, except that the load upon the rear vehicle of a combination of vehicles transporting poles and piling shall not project more than fifteen feet beyond the rear of the bed or rear tire of said vehicle, whichever is further from the cab, and the load upon the rear vehicle of a combination of vehicles transporting forest products in their natural state shall not project more than twenty feet beyond the rear of the bed or rear tire of said vehicle, whichever is further from the cab, and said load or loads must maintain a two foot clearance above the pavement structure, and provided further said combination of vehicles transporting forest products in their natural state with a rear projecting load in excess of fifteen feet shall operate only during daylight hours and shall display a red flag or cloth not less than one foot square at the rear of its projected load. A combination of vehicles transporting forest products in their natural state shall be equipped with stationary vertical retaining poles on the driver's side of the trailer portion.

(2) Equipment that is permanently attached to and cannot be readily removed from a vehicle shall not constitute load and the provisions of Subsection B(1) of this Section shall not apply to such vehicles if the following conditions exist:

(a) The vehicle meets requisite state safety standards to be and is licensed for use on state highways; and

(b) That portion of such equipment which extends in front of the foremost part of said vehicle has a minimum vertical clearance above the surface of the highway of six feet.

(c) The provisions of this Section shall not apply to vehicles collecting garbage, rubbish, refuse, or recyclable materials which are equipped with front-end loading attachments and containers

provided that the vehicles are actively engaged in the collection of garbage, rubbish, refuse, or recyclable materials.

(3) Sportsmen coaches or vehicles obviously used solely for recreational purposes and registered therefor may tow a combination of no more than two vehicles and shall not exceed seventy feet in total length.

C. The combinations of vehicles consisting of three vehicles excepted in this Section by Subsection A(2)(b) shall have reasonable access, not to exceed ten miles, between the interstate system or other highways designated by the secretary and terminals and facilities for food, fuel, repairs, and rest, unless otherwise prohibited. Household goods carriers shall have unrestricted access for loading and unloading purposes only, unless otherwise prohibited.

D. The secretary shall designate the qualifying highway system to which the foregoing length limitations shall apply.

E. The foregoing regulations of tractor-semi-trailer combinations shall not prohibit the operation, replacement, or reasonable business expansion of those types or lengths of vehicles which are in actual and lawful use on or before July 2, 1983.

F. All vehicles of legal length on the interstate system and other designated systems but which are not of legal length off of the interstate system and other designated systems shall have reasonable access, not to exceed ten miles, between the interstate system or other highways designated by the secretary and terminals and facilities for food, fuel, repairs, and rest, unless otherwise prohibited. Household goods carriers shall have unrestricted access for loading and unloading purposes only, unless otherwise prohibited.

§386. Weight

A. The total gross weight of any vehicle or combination of vehicles shall not exceed eighty thousand pounds, and no vehicle or combination of vehicles shall exceed its licensed gross weight.

B. No tire mounted on any axle attached to any vehicle or combination of vehicles shall impose a greater weight on the surface of a highway than six hundred fifty pounds per inch width of tire.

C. The total gross weight of any single axle attached to any vehicle and equipped with low pressure pneumatic tires shall not exceed twenty thousand pounds.

D. The total gross weight of any tandem axle or tandem steering axle attached to any vehicle and equipped with low pressure pneumatic tires shall not exceed thirty-four thousand pounds. However on any vehicle carrying forest products in their natural state, the weight limitation shall be thirty-seven thousand pounds per tandem axle and equipped with low pressure pneumatic tires except on the Interstate system.

E. The total gross weight of any tridum axle attached to any vehicle and equipped with low pressure pneumatic tires shall not exceed forty-two thousand pounds.

E-1. The total gross weight of any quadrum axle attached to any vehicle and equipped with low pressure pneumatic tires shall not exceed fifty thousand pounds.

F. The total gross weight of any single axle or any single steering axle attached to any vehicle and equipped with high pressure pneumatic, solid rubber or cushion tires shall not exceed eighteen thousand pounds.

G. The total gross weight of any tandem axle or any tandem steering axle attached to any vehicle and equipped with high pressure pneumatic, solid rubber or cushion tires shall not exceed thirty-two thousand pounds.

H.(1) For vehicles using the Interstate system, the overall maximum gross weight, including enforcement tolerances, on a group of two or more consecutive axles, shall be produced by application of the following formula:

$$W = 500(LN/(N - 1) + 12N + 36)$$

where W equals overall gross weight on any group of two or more consecutive axles to the nearest five hundred pounds, L equals distance in feet between the extreme of any group of two or more consecutive axles, and N equals number of axles in group under consideration, except that two consecutive sets of tandem axles may carry a gross load of thirty-four thousand pounds each provided the overall distance between the first and last axles of the consecutive sets of tandem axles is thirty-six feet or more. The overall gross weight shall not exceed eighty thousand pounds, including all enforcement tolerances, except for those vehicles and loads which cannot be easily dismantled or divided and which have been issued special permits.

(2) In accordance with 23 U.S.C.A. 127, certain vehicles carrying certain commodities shall be exempt from application of the formula. The exemptions shall include the following:

Vehicles with Type Two axle configuration (three axle combination with one single axle and one set of tandem axles); or Type Six axle configuration (five axle combination with one single axle and two sets of tandem axles); or a vehicle with Type Eight axle configuration (six axle combination with one single axle, one tandem axle, and one tridem axle); or vehicles with Type Ten axle configuration (double bottom); or Type Eighteen axle configuration (four axle combination with one single axle and one set of tridem axles) carrying any of the following bulk commodities thereof: forest products in their natural state, lumber, sand, gravel, agricultural products in their natural state, loose or mixed concrete (including asphaltic or Portland cement), or bulk liquid commodities.

(3) All vehicles which are rendered economically useless by application of the bridge formula which are legal and operational on the effective date of this Subsection shall remain legal for a period of five years from the effective date of this Subsection. The trucking industry is hereby granted a phase-in period to extend for a period of five years from the effective date of this Subsection, within which time it shall adjust, modify, or replace equipment to comply with the provisions of this Subsection.

I. Notwithstanding the provisions of Subsection (A) of this Section and subject to the provisions of Subsections (B), (C), (D), (E), and (E-1) of this section, the total gross weight of any combination of vehicles which has a tridum axle or a quadrum axle shall not exceed eighty-eight thousand pounds while operating on any state-maintained highway except the Interstate System and shall not exceed eighty-three thousand four hundred pounds while operating on the Interstate System within this state.

J. When by reason of the condition of the weather or other emergency, or the physical condition of any highway or its recent construction, or the making of repairs thereto, the secretary deems it necessary, then for such time as is reasonably necessary to remedy the situation, he may prohibit the use of such highway or specify lesser gross weights than those fixed in this Section, pursuant to the recommendations of the chief engineer of the department, in order to protect the public highways and the persons and property of the traveling public from unnecessary damage. Notice of such restrictions, prohibitions, or weight reductions shall be given by the secretary by posters at the terminal of the highway. However, failure to post such notice shall under no circumstances make either the state or the department liable for damages which may result because of such failure.

K. Vehicles and combinations of vehicles shall be loaded in such manner that the axle limitations set forth in Subsections C, D, E, E-1, F and G of this Section are not exceeded. However, while operating on any state-maintained highway except the Interstate System, the provisions of Subsections C, D, E, E-1, F and G of this section shall not be deemed to have been violated unless the axle weight exceeds by more than two thousand pounds Subsections C and F of this section or more than three thousand pounds Subsections D, E, E-1, and G of this section. This Subsection shall in no way be construed to allow the total gross weight in any vehicle or combination of vehicles to exceed the gross weight limits set forth in Subsections A or I of this Section.

§462. Trucks and trailers

A. Classification.

For the purpose of registration and licensing hereunder, trucks, tandem trucks, truck-tractors, semitrailers, and trailers shall be classified as follows:

- (1) Those carrying or transporting freight, merchandise, or other property except those included in Class 4 in Paragraph (4) of this Subsection shall be Class 1.
- (2) Those carrying and transporting products of the forest in their natural state, including but not limited to logs, debarked logs, untreated ties, stave bolts, plywood bolts, pulpwood billets, wood chips, stumps, sawdust, moss, bark and wood shavings, and property used in the production thereof, including bulldozers, and used to transport actual employees of the owner of such vehicle to and from the place of employment, and those carrying and transporting sugarcane which are not in Class 5, shall be Class 2.

(3) Those used exclusively in carrying and transporting gravel shall be Class 3.

(4)(a) Those operated exclusively within the corporate limits of the incorporated city, town, or village in which said vehicle was domiciled at the time of its registration, and where said city, town, or village has a population of less than five hundred thousand within territory contiguous to the domicile thereof and not exceeding thirteen miles distance from the corporate limits thereof, and where said city, town, or village has a population in excess of five hundred thousand within territory contiguous to the domicile thereof and not exceeding thirteen miles from the corporate limits thereof; those operated exclusively within the limits of an unincorporated urban area having a population in excess of one hundred thirty-five thousand, as determined by the United States Bureau of the Census, in which said vehicle was domiciled at the time of registration, or within territory contiguous thereto not exceeding thirteen miles distance from the limits of such unincorporated area, said limits to be those used by the United States Bureau of the Census in reporting the population thereof; and those operated exclusively in transportation between a municipality and its airport, when supplemental to transportation by aircraft, shall be Class 4. At the time vehicles in this class are registered, the domicile of the vehicle so registered shall be shown on the registration certificate.

(b) A motor vehicle bearing a Class 4 city use license shall be entitled to operate within the confines of any city, town, village, and territory contiguous thereto as followed herein for Class 4 licenses, and in any unincorporated urban area which has limits determined by the United States Bureau of the Census, without transferring its domicile or obtaining a different class of license; provided that a city use truck is not authorized to carry any cargo or goods from one city or such unincorporated urban area to another. A motor vehicle bearing a Class 4 city use license is authorized to travel on the highways of this state outside of a city, town, village, or such unincorporated urban area provided that it carries absolutely no cargo or goods.

(5)(a) Those owned by persons engaged in the business of actual farming and by them used primarily but not exclusively in carrying farm produce raised on their farms from such farms to market, or returning therefrom carrying goods and merchandise back to their farms, this individually or cooperatively, but not for hire, shall be Class 5.

(b) Farm produce shall include but not be limited to fruits, vegetables, livestock, fish, and shellfish.

(c) Those owned by persons engaged exclusively in the business of hauling milk and milk products for dairy cooperatives or any other milk plant also shall be Class 5.

B. Rates

(1) For each semitrailer or trailer, an annual registration or license tax of ten dollars shall be collected by the commissioner or through such agency as he may designate. The collection of the annual registration or license tax shall be subject to the following provisions:

(a) The annual registration or license tax of ten dollars for each semitrailer or trailer may be paid, at the option of the person paying the tax, every four years. If the person avails himself of this option, the tax shall be forty dollars for four years. Any person who has availed himself of

this option who subsequently changes his domicile and moves out of this state or who subsequently sells the trailer shall be entitled to a refund of the tax. The refund shall be computed on a yearly basis in such manner that each fraction of a year in which the trailer is used shall be deemed to be a year, and a refund of ten dollars shall be made for each year in which the trailer is not used.

(b) In lieu of paying the annual registration and license tax of ten dollars, the owner of any semitrailer or trailer used as or in connection with a motor vehicle, truck, or tractor shall have the option of obtaining a permanent registration and license plate for such a semitrailer or trailer. The fee for such permanent registration and license plate shall be a one time fee of seventy dollars. The permanent registration and license plate issued for a specific semitrailer or trailer shall continue to be valid for the duration of the owner's interest in such semitrailer or trailer. A permanent registration and license plate shall not be transferred for any reason. When the owner of such semitrailer or trailer no longer holds an interest in such semitrailer or trailer, the license plate shall be returned to the commissioner or his designee with no refund of any fee.

(2)(a) For each light trailer, farm trailer or farm semitrailer both with a loaded gross weight of six thousand pounds or less, or boat trailer, an annual registration or license tax of three dollars shall be collected by the commissioner or through such agency as he may designate. The annual registration or license tax of three dollars for each trailer licensed under the provisions of this Paragraph shall be paid for a four-year period of time.

(b) Any person who subsequently changes his domicile and moves out of this state or who subsequently sells the trailer shall be entitled to a refund of the tax. The refund shall be computed on a yearly basis in such manner that each fraction of a year in which the trailer is used shall be deemed to be a year, and a refund of three dollars shall be made for each year in which the trailer is not used.

(c) For each boat trailer registered under the provisions of this Paragraph, there shall be collected by the commissioner or through such agency as he may designate an additional annual registration or license tax of three dollars and twenty-five cents. The additional registration or license tax shall be paid every four years in the amount of thirteen dollars. The proceeds of the tax levied by this Subparagraph shall be deposited into the Aquatic Plant Control Fund created by R.S. 56:10.1. The provisions of Subparagraph (b) of this Paragraph apply to the tax levied by this Subparagraph.

(3)(a) For each truck, tandem truck, truck-tractor, or truck, tandem truck, or truck-tractor used in combination with a trailer or semitrailer, an annual registration or license tax shall be collected by the commissioner or through such agency as he may designate in amounts fixed by the following schedule:

MOTOR TRUCKS, TANDEM TRUCKS, TRUCK-TRACTORS,

OR MOTOR TRUCKS, TANDEM TRUCKS, OR

TRUCK-TRACTORS USED IN COMBINATION WITH

A TRAILER OR SEMITRAILER
GROSS WEIGHT IN POUNDS TRUCKS
UP TO AND INCLUDING CLASS 1

6,000 or less

\$ 10.00

6,001 to 10,000

\$ 28.00

10,001 to 23,999

0.38 per

100 lbs.

24,000 to 37,999

0.60 per

100 lbs.

38,000 to 80,000

0.63 per

100 lbs.

80,001 to 88,000

0.64 per

100 lbs.

GROSS WEIGHT

FOREST

GRAVEL

CITY USE

FARM

IN POUNDS UP TO

PRODUCTS

HAUL

ONLY

TRUCKS
AND INCLUDING

CLASS 2

CLASS 3

CLASS 4

CLASS 5

6,000 or less

\$10.00

\$10.00

\$10.00

\$ 3.00

6,001 to 10,000

0.25 per

0.35 per

0.25 per

100 lbs.

100 lbs.

100 lbs.

3.00

10,001 to 23,999

0.25 per

0.35 per

0.25 per

100 lbs.

100 lbs.

100 lbs.

10.00

24,000 to 43,999

0.28 per

0.60 per

0.30 per

100 lbs.

100 lbs.

100 lbs.

20.00

44,000 to 65,999

0.28 per

0.60 per

0.30 per

100 lbs.

100 lbs.

100 lbs.

30.00

66,000 to 88,000

0.28 per

0.60 per

0.30 per

100 lbs.

100 lbs.

100 lbs.

40.00

(b) When a truck, tandem truck, or truck-tractor is used in combination with a trailer or semitrailer, the annual registration or license tax shall be assessed on the truck, tandem truck, or truck-tractor, based on the gross weight of such vehicle combination, and the trailer or semitrailer shall be issued an identification license plate as provided in Paragraph (1) of this Subsection.

(4) Repealed by Acts 1994, No. 33, §2.

(5) Repealed by Acts 1995, No. 701, §2.

(6) Provided further that the registration or license tax for each motor truck and tandem truck having a gross weight per load carrying axle up to and including ten thousand pounds or less and motorcycles may be paid, every four years, pursuant to a staggered registration system as shall be adopted by the commissioner.

(7) Provided further that the registration or license tax for each boat trailer having a gross weight per load carrying axle of one thousand five hundred pounds or less, each farm use trailer having a gross weight per load carrying axle of six thousand pounds or less and each privately owned trailer having a gross weight per load carrying axle of five hundred pounds or less may be paid every two years, pursuant to a staggered registration system as shall be adopted by the commissioner.

(8) No license plate or registration certificate shall be issued by the commissioner for a vehicle which is liable for payment of the Federal Heavy Vehicle Use Tax without such proof of payment as provided in the Surface Transportation Act of 1982.

C. Any truck having a gross vehicle weight of not more than sixteen thousand pounds which is registered in the state and is not registered under the International Registration Plan is eligible for any prestige license plate authorized by this Part.

§ 32:341. **Brake** equipment required.

- **A.** Every motor vehicle, other than a motorcycle or motor-driven cycle, when operated upon a highway of this state, shall be equipped with **brakes** adequate to control the movement of and to stop and hold such vehicle, including two separate means of applying the **brakes**, each of which shall be effective to apply the **brakes** to at least two wheels. If these two separate means of applying the **brakes** are connected in any way, they shall be so constructed that the failure of any one part of the operating mechanism shall not leave the motor vehicle without **brakes** on at least two wheels.
- **B.** Every motorcycle and every motor-driven cycle, when operated upon a highway of this state, shall be equipped with at least one **brake**, which may be operated by hand or foot.
- **C.** Every **trailer** or semi-**trailer** of a gross weight of 3,000 pounds or more, when operated upon a highway of this state, shall be equipped with **brakes** adequate to control the movement of and to stop and hold such vehicle and so designed as to be applied by the driver of the towing motor vehicle from its cab, and said **brakes** shall be so designed and connected that in case of an accidental breakaway of the towed vehicle the **brakes** shall be automatically applied.
- **D.** Every motor vehicle, **trailer** or semi-**trailer** manufactured or assembled after December 31, 1962, and thereafter sold in this state and operated upon the highways of this state shall be equipped with **brakes** upon all wheels of every such vehicle, except that no motorcycle, motor-driven cycle, or semi-**trailer** of less than 1,500 pounds gross weight, need be equipped with **brakes**.

- **E.** Parking **brakes**—adequacy—Every such vehicle and combination of vehicles, except motorcycles and motor-driven cycles, shall be equipped with parking **brakes** adequate to hold the vehicle on any grade on which it is operated, under all conditions of loading, on a surface free from snow, ice, or loose material. The parking **brakes** shall be capable of being applied in conformance with the foregoing requirements by the driver's muscular effort or by spring action or by equivalent means. Their operation may be assisted by the service **brakes** or other source of power provided that failure of the service **brake** actuation system or other power assisting mechanism will not prevent the parking **brakes** from being applied in conformance with the foregoing requirements. The parking **brakes** shall be so designed that when once applied they shall remain applied with the required effectiveness despite exhaustion of any source of energy or leakage of any kind. The same **brake** drums, **brake** shoes and lining assemblies, **brake** shoe anchors and mechanical **brake** shoe actuation mechanism normally associated with the wheel **brake** assemblies may be used for both the service **brakes** and the parking **brakes**. If the means of applying the parking **brakes** and the service **brakes** are connected in any way, they shall be so constructed that failure of any one part shall not leave the vehicle without operative **brakes**.
- **F.** The **brake** shoes operating within or upon the drums on the vehicle wheels of any motor vehicle may be used for both service and hand operation.
- **G.** All sport, boat, or any other nonagricultural **trailers** and semi-**trailers** of less than 3000 pounds gross weight need not be equipped with **brakes**.
- **H.** Every **trailer** or semi-**trailer** of between three thousand and one and five thousand pounds gross weight need only have **brakes** on a single axle.
- **I.** Vehicles carrying forest products in their natural state shall not be required to have a **brake** on the drag axle if the wheels of the axle touch the ground only when the vehicle is loaded; however, this provision does not apply to **trailers** or trucks with more than two axles.

§ 32:384. **Trailers** and towed vehicles.

- **A.** The drawbar or connection between two vehicles, when one is towing the other, shall be of sufficient strength to pull all weight towed thereby and shall not exceed fifteen feet from one vehicle to the other, except that the drawbar or connection may exceed fifteen feet between any two vehicles transporting poles, pipes, machinery, or other objects of a structural nature which cannot be readily dismembered.
- **B.** When the connection between a vehicle and a towed vehicle is a **chain**, rope, or cable, a red flag or cloth not less than one foot square shall be displayed upon such connection between sunrise and sunset, and a red light, plainly visible under ordinary atmospheric conditions for a distance of at least five hundred feet, shall be displayed upon such connection between sunset and sunrise.

- **C.** Truck-tractors may be transported by a drawbar, pintle connection, or by the triple saddle mount method of transportation, consisting of a combination of four truck-tractors where the front axle of one truck-tractor is mounted on the fifth wheel of the lead truck-tractor, the front axle of the third truck-tractor is mounted on the fifth wheel of the second truck-tractor, and the front axle of the fourth truck-tractor is mounted on the fifth wheel of the third truck-tractor; and with the rear wheels of the second, third, and fourth truck-tractors trailing on the ground behind the operating motor unit, provided that:
 - (1) The combination of vehicles shall be equipped with necessary lights and signals in accordance with Louisiana law and Bureau of Motor Carrier **Safety**, United States Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration **Safety** Rules and Regulations;
 - (2) The rear wheels of the second, third, and fourth truck-tractors of the combination shall be equipped with adequate splash guards or mud flaps; and,
 - (3) It shall be unlawful to operate this combination of vehicles in excess of fifty-five miles per hour.
- **D.** Every **trailer** and semitrailer with a loaded gross weight capacity of up to six thousand pounds shall be equipped with **safety chains** or other **safety** device approved in accordance with Subsection E. The **safety chains** or other approved **safety** device shall be securely attached to the towing vehicle when the **trailer** or semitrailer is in motion and shall be of sufficient strength to hold the **trailer** behind the towing vehicle in case the connection between the two vehicles detaches.
- **E.**
 - (1) The Department of Public **Safety** and Corrections, office of state police, shall have the authority to approve **safety** devices other than **safety chains** to be used when towing **trailers** or semitrailers. The approval of a **safety** device shall be in writing. Any such device shall be inspected by the office of state police before written approval is given. The following criteria shall be considered in making the determination of whether or not to approve such **safety** device as an alternative to **safety chains**:
 - (a) The physical characteristics of the device, including but not limited to the material or materials used in constructing the device.
 - (b) The method by which the device is attached to the **trailer** or semitrailer.
 - (c) The overall strength of the device.
 - (2) The office of state police shall promulgate rules and regulations in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act to implement the provisions of this Subsection, including but not limited to the procedure for accepting and processing applications for approval of alternative **safety** devices.

