



Highway Maintenance Manual

Bureau of Highway Maintenance

Chapter 06 Winter Maintenance

Dec 2024

Section 10 Storm Management Responsibilities

Subject 05 Night Watchperson

1.0 General

A night watchperson can be an integral part of any successful winter maintenance unit. The typical hours for the night watchperson are from 10:00 PM to 6:00 AM, Sunday through Thursday. However, hours can vary.

2.0 Maintenance Areas with High Volume Roadways

The department may consider the authorization of a service provider's employee to serve as a night watchperson and to work from no earlier in the winter season than November 15 and no later than March 31. Approval for such a person must be obtained from the region maintenance office and will be based on the following:

1. The maintenance area in question must have either interstate or substantial "High Volume" roadways within its boundaries.
2. The watchperson shall be able to operate and analyze reports from both the Wisconsin Road Weather Information System (RWIS) and the Maintenance Decision Support System (MDSS), and they should have the ability to communicate with the acting patrol superintendent or have the authorization to call out snowplow operators. The person may also fill out weekly storm reports and make salt brine.
3. The need for a night watchperson, in a maintenance area that has split shifts, should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Compensation shall include a maximum of 50% of the night watchperson's billable time, with the department's portion not to exceed 40 hours per week. Typically, the department will not compensate for overtime. However, if existing maintenance provider's contract require overtime payments for the night watchperson, the department will compensate for its share of the overtime. It is preferred however that the night watchperson be a part time or seasonal employee if possible. In the agreement between the department and the service provider, effort should be made to assure that a reasonable amount of the watchperson's time should be spent conducting business that directly benefits the department.

When approved, this authorized position shall be enumerated in the Routine Maintenance Agreement for that county.

3.0 Maintenance Areas Without High Volume Roadways

The department may consider the authorization of a maintenance provider's employee to serve as a night watchperson in a maintenance area without interstate or substantial high volume roadways. The time frame of authorization to work shall be no earlier in the winter season than November 15 and no later than March 31. Approval shall be obtained from the region maintenance office. The region maintenance office will determine the criteria for approval on a case-by-case basis.