



Highway Maintenance Manual

Bureau of Highway Maintenance

Chapter 06 Winter Maintenance

July 2025

Section 10 Storm Management Responsibilities

Subject 40 Hours of Service

1.0 Hours of Service

Each service provider should consider limiting the number of continuous hours a plow operator should work on a shift. The limitations should be done with the public's and plow operator's health and welfare in mind. Excessive continuous hours can be hazardous to both the operator and the public and can lead to an increased potential for crashes.

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation's Winter Highway Classification [HMM 06-05-01](#) calls for 18 or 24-hour coverage roadways. The intent is to provide service to the public for those hours based on the highway usage and traffic volumes. It is not the intent of the department to have plow operators work continuously for those hours during winter storms if conditions do not warrant.

Ideally, the service provider's contract would limit hours of continuous service during winter storm events in such a way as to not exhaust labor resources and yet still have the ability to maintain the winter highway classification service hours and respond to emergency situations.

The department feels that the typical upper limit for continuous hours of service should not exceed 18 hours.