



DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Dale J Schmidt Sheriff Chad Enright Chief Deputy

Law of the Month – January

It is now January which means that we are officially in the season of winter. As we all know, with winter comes snow and ice which leads to the county and townships deploying snowplows to keep our roads clear of snow and safe during these months. However, to keep everybody on the roads safe and to prevent your vehicle from being potentially damaged, it is important to understand the laws regarding how close you may follow a snowplow. Wisconsin statute 346.915 states that no person is permitted to be within two hundred feet of a snowplow on a road where the speed limit is more than thirty-five miles per hour. On a road where the posted speed limit is thirty-five miles per hour or less, the permitted following distance is seventy-five feet. When approaching a snowplow that is stopped at an intersection, it is required that you remain at least twenty feet behind.

346.915-Following snowplows

(1) In this section, "snowplow" means a vehicle that is operated by a person employed by or on behalf of an authority in charge of the maintenance of the highway to perform highway winter maintenance snow and ice removal, including plowing, salting, and sanding, during either a storm or cleanup following a storm and which is using lamps described in s. 347.26 (7).

(2)(a) The operator of any vehicle that is not a snowplow may not follow a snowplow closer than the following distances, if the snowplow is engaged in highway winter maintenance snow and ice removal, as described in sub. (1), and is using lamps described in s. 347.26 (7):

1. Two hundred feet upon any highway having a posted speed limit of more than 35 miles per hour.
2. Seventy-five feet upon any highway having a posted speed limit of 35 miles per hour or less.

(b) Paragraph (a) does not apply when overtaking and passing a snowplow, but the fact that the operator of any vehicle follows the snowplow more closely than permitted by par. (a) for one mile or more or follows more closely than permitted by par. (a) when the snowplow is moving at the maximum speed limit is prima facie evidence that the operator of such following vehicle is violating par. (a).

(c) Paragraph (a) does not apply to a snowplow that is stopped or standing in the highway.

(3) The operator of any vehicle that is not a snowplow and that approaches from the rear any snowplow that is engaged in highway winter maintenance snow and ice removal, as described in sub. (1), and is using lamps described in s. 347.26 (7) and that is stopped at an intersection shall stop not less than 20 feet from the snowplow and remain stopped until the snowplow resumes motion.