

3 STEPS TO KNOW YOUR LIMITS

With approval from FHWA, Kentucky has created online resources to inform the affected operators of restricted structures they should avoid using during routine transit and emergency operations.

1. VISIT THE WEBSITE

EV operators and agencies can locate a list of restrictions by clicking the bridge icon at the top of the screen on the Kentucky DataMart website: datamart.business.transportation.ky.gov.



2. FIND YOUR COUNTY

Next, click the link titled “Kentucky’s Bridge Weight Limits for Emergency Vehicles per the FAST Act.” Select your county in the top right hand corner of the page.



3. CHECK COLUMNS

To determine load ratings for each bridge, look at weight limits in all four columns. If the EV exceeds **ANY** of the four posted weight limits for the bridge, then the EV is not permitted to use the structure.



KNOW YOUR LIMITS

BRIDGE LOAD RATING FOR EMERGENCY VEHICLES

EMERGENCY VEHICLES’ IMPACT ON BRIDGES

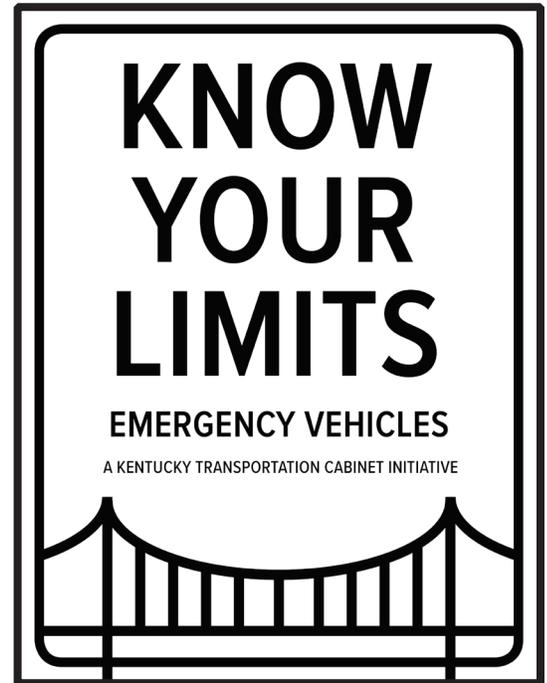
An emergency vehicle (EV), as defined in the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, is designed to be used under emergency conditions to transport personnel and equipment to suppress fires and mitigate other hazardous situations. Emergency vehicles are typically operated by fire departments and are primarily equipped for firefighting, but they are also used to respond to and mitigate other hazardous situations in an emergency.

While the EVs exempted from the weight limits by the 2015 amendment to the FAST Act are permitted to have much higher axle weight and higher gross vehicle weight than standard commercial vehicles, not all of Kentucky’s bridges and culverts were designed for such heavy loads or the significant weight shifting between axles on an EV. Allowing heavy EVs to operate freely across highway bridges could compromise bridge safety, serviceability, and durability.

Load rating and posting for all legal vehicles is mandated by the National Bridge Inspection Standards (NBIS). These legal loads now include the EV provisions enacted by the FAST Act. Due to possible significant weight shifting between axles on EVs, posting for both gross vehicle weight and axle weight is necessary. It is important for EV operators to learn whether or not bridges within their service area restrict the use of their vehicles to avoid bridge damage, fines, and safety risks.

KNOWING YOUR LIMITS

The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) is committed to providing Kentuckians a safe transportation system. Load rating and posting bridges for emergency vehicles will not only improve the safety of bridges for emergency responders and the traveling public, but also expedite the dispatch and safe movement of firefighters and fire trucks by eliminating the existing permitting and routing process. It may also result in savings, especially when EVs move through multiple states. EV restriction information is not posted on highway signs but can be found online on DataMart (see directions on the left).



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KYTC has an ongoing effort to load rate all bridges for emergency vehicles by Dec. 31, 2022. Kentucky has approximately 14,300 bridges statewide. To date, KYTC has rated 5,539 of those bridges for EVs, of which 640 are restricted for emergency vehicles while 2,676 are gross posted. KYTC’s Bridging Kentucky program will rehabilitate, repair, or replace more than 1,000 critical structures across the state over the next six years (2018-2024), increasing the number of bridges that EVs can cross by removing weight restrictions that prevent use by emergency buses, emergency vehicles and commercial trucks. KYTC encourages EV operators and agencies to refer to DataMart frequently for updates, as postings will change over time.



POINT OF CONTACT

Questions related to load rating Kentucky’s bridges for EVs can be directed to the Bridge Preservation Branch in the Division of Maintenance at (502) 564-4556.

RESOURCES

FAST Act: <http://bit.ly/KYLFastAct>

23 U.S.C. 127: <http://bit.ly/KYL23USC127>

Load Rating for FAST Act EVs: <http://bit.ly/KYLFastActLoadRating>

Load Rating for FAST Act EVs Q&A: <http://bit.ly/KYLFastActLoadRatingQA>

