



Overloaded Vehicles: Advice Sheet

Suffolk County Council's trading standards department check the county's roads for overloaded vehicles.

Appropriate formal action is taken under the Road Traffic Act, 1988, against vehicle users whose vehicles are overloaded. Formal action could mean prosecution. A successful prosecution could result in a fine of up to £5,000.

If a Road Traffic Officer suspects that a vehicle is overloaded they may want it to be weighed.

It is the responsibility of both the company and the driver of a vehicle to ensure that it complies with the requirements of the Road Traffic Act, 1988. The act requires vehicle users to ensure their vehicles are not overloaded.

If you need further information or advice contact Suffolk County Council's trading standards department on 01473 264859, email: enquiries@tradstan.suffolkcc.gov.uk or visit www.suffolk.gov.uk

There are a number of steps that can be taken to avoid being overloaded. These are:

1. Know and understand the maximum permitted weight of your vehicle.

This can be found on the manufacturers plate or if applicable on the Department of Transport plate.

2. Check what your vehicle weighs when it is empty (include the driver and a full tank of fuel). You will then be able to calculate the maximum weight you can carry.

3. Check the weight of the load required to be carried and ensure that it does not exceed the amount you have calculated.

4. If you do not know the weight of the load you are carrying you should go to the nearest available weighbridge to check the vehicles weight.

A list of weighbridges is available at www.chrishodgetrucks.co.uk. If the weight is more than the maximum your vehicle is legally allowed to carry you should return to where you loaded the vehicle and remove the excess weight.

5. There are also maximum weights allowed for each axle of a vehicle.

It is therefore important that any load is evenly distributed. Maximum weights can be found on the manufacturers plate or Department of Transport plate.