

Subject:

January 2020 Newsletter from Air Safe Hitches

January 2020

Newsletter

1/2/20

Happy New Year

“May this year bring new happiness, new goals, new achievements, and a lot of new inspirations for life. Wishing you a year fully loaded with happiness”.

Apps for RVers

Apps for RVers

Apps that locate campgrounds, monitor the weather, find shopping, internet connectivity and more.

Allstays Camp & RV Our #1 pick for finding campgrounds and RV parks. The app shows both government owned (state, county and city) parks as well as private RV parks.

Open the app, view the map, click on a park and get the name and distance from you. You can click through to the address, number of sites, available hookups, etc.

The “reviews” link just takes you to a Google search so we will look on other sources like RVParkReviews.com for better insight from other RVers who’ve stayed there..

The app also finds urban boondocking options like Walmarts, Sams Clubs, Cracker Barrels and truck stops.

This app only works for iOS - this bothers me as this app is extremely good.

Amazon Prime Video Amazon’s Prime program is a no-brainer for fulltime RVers. The program started by offering free two-day shipping on many items - which alone is worth the price of Prime.

Over time Amazon has added many other benefits including movies and music. We have an iPhone with a grandfathered unlimited data plan, so we often use this app to watch movies snuggled up in bed.

CardStar Traveling in the US means an ever-shifting landscape of regional grocery store chains. Each chain has their own frequent shopper cards - we’ve started collecting them like baseball cards.

CardStar makes them easier to manage - you just scan each card into the app. At the grocery store you then let the cashier scan the barcode from your phone.

Coverage Another app by the nomadic geek developers Chris and Cherie of Technomadia.com, Coverage loads cell-coverage maps from all the different providers.

We use this mostly when venturing into State and National Parks where the cell coverage may not be sufficient to keep our online businesses running.

Gas Buddy This is one of those apps that we don't use often but when we need it, we need it.

We have learned to look for fuel when we reach a 1/2 tank. There have been times where we got a bit closer to empty than we liked, so used Gas Buddy to find the closest source.

When traveling with the fifth wheel attached, we are more concerned about accessibility of the gas station than the price, so don't use the app to shop for the cheapest gas source.

Google Earth Google Earth is handy for getting a better sense of a campground we are heading towards - especially if you are worried about navigation with a big rig.

I also use it once in campgrounds to find sources of noise, or paths to rivers or lakes, etc.

Google Maps We do recommend a dedicated GPS for navigation, but still use our smartphones at times.

We have iPhones, and trying to use Siri and Apple Maps always leads to frustration. Instead we use Google Maps.

Geocaching Geocaching is a great way to explore places you (think you) know and places you don't. The app is excellent, allowing you to download cache locations and log finds all from within its interface.

History Here Published by the History Channel, this app will show places of historical importance that are around you.

We're not *huge* history buffs but will sometimes load up this app to see if there's anything of note close by.

It's been handy in finding out more about those historical markers we always drive by but can't often stop for.

Librivox Librivox.org creates free audio versions of books in the public domain, read by volunteers.

MsBoyink and I have been listening to a chapter or two of an audio book at night for 4+ years using Librivox and haven't run out of stories yet.

Use the app to find and play free audiobooks!

MyRadar Inclement weather is a big concern for RVers. We like MyRadar because it puts the local radar front and center and defaults to animating it so you can see how a storm front is moving.

Local forecasts are just a click away.

The once-simple app has gotten a bit junked up with unused features - but remains our go-to weather app.

NOAA Radio We use this in conjunction with the MyRadar app.

NOAA Radio is a bit clunky - but you can give it a location to get weather alerts (but you *have* to set it vs. it reading your location).

If this app sounds the alert, we dial up the radar app to see what the situation is.

Passport America

Passport America is a discount camping program. RV parks join and list their "unsold inventory" at various discounts. Members join for a reasonable rate (~\$40/year) and then enjoy those discounts at the campgrounds.

This app helps you locate participating Passport RV parks.

MsBoyink describes the app as “a bit clunky” and prefers to use the website instead if possible, but it’s still worth loading the app

Redbox

We have a limited internet connection, so unless the RV park Wifi supports streaming a movie (which does happen..once in a very great while) Redbox is our go-to choice for movies.

Pick the movie up in one spot, drop it off in another - perfect for RVers on the move.

Roadside America

We love seeing the quirky and unusual, so we’ll often load up Roadside America to see what fun stuff is around us.

RV Parky

We recently used RVParky after the AllStays app had some issues. We’re not in love with RVParky, but it’s a decent backup option if Allstays doesn’t work for you.

Skyview

Once we got out of the ‘burbs to where the stars and planets were easier to see, we took a greater interest in them.

We often pull out this app to identify what we are seeing. It’s one the kids always love - walking around a dark park holding the phone to find treasures in the sky.

State Lines

Created by fellow RVers Chris and Cherie of Technomadia.com, State Lines captures all the laws that are different state by state.

Taxes, seatbelts, motorcycle helmets, cellphone bans and more are all listed in a state by state format.

Especially handy for RVers on the move are rest area stay lengths, towing speeds, and right-turn-on-red laws.

Stack the States

Learn about the states as you stack them for fun! We played this game a lot our first year on the road - it’s great for learning the relative sizes and shapes of the states.

SworKit The constant change of schedule and location while traveling makes getting regular workouts hard.

We’ve had the best luck with this SworKit app. You tell it the time you have (as little as 5 minutes) and what type of workout you want (cardio, strength, yoga, etc), and it leads you through different exercises with video examples.

Tuneln Radio

If you have certain radio stations that you want to listen to even if you aren’t within range, check out the Tuneln App.

I use it mostly to listen to WWOZ out of New Orleans so I can feel like I’m there when we aren’t.

White Noise

One way to get better sleep with an ever-changing symphony of RV park, truck stop or Walmart sounds outside your door is to mask them using a white noise app. We fire this up at night (after finishing our story) so we don't wake up at every new sound in the campground (or parking lot).

These apps tend to go overboard with variety of sounds, playlists, timers, alarm clocks etc. We just use the simple "static" white noise sound and turn it off & on manually.

Yelp

We most often use Yelp when looking for a local place to eat.

Yelp has got us to great burgers in Melbourne, FL, unforgettable pork sandwiches in Brunswick, GA and to-die-for sweet potato casserole in San Antonio, TX.

We've also used Yelp to find laundromats, oil change places and other local businesses while traveling.

AVOID THIS COSTLY RV MISTAKE

Things may seem quiet over here on the blog, but that's only because we've been spending the majority of our time dealing with a costly RV mistake we could have avoided, ceiling water damage. And as it turns out, it's not covered by our warranty or insurance company.

Water damage is one ugly beast when it comes to motorhomes, and sadly it happens more often than you would think.

For this reason we spent countless hours reading articles and watching videos on how to *avoid* buying an RV with water damage. We even had checklists printed out that we brought along with us when we were narrowing down our selection.

Despite checking the ceiling and walls for soft spots, feeling around the inside of every cabinet, inspecting every corner, and double-checking the roof, we ended up with an RV that had a water leak. Go figure.

Yes we are kicking ourselves for making such a dumb mistake. We still don't know if the damage existed when we purchased the coach, or if it happened during one of our trips, but either way it's been both a nightmare and a blessing.

However, we will say that with the amount of damage and rust, we honestly believe there was an issue *before* we bought the coach.

What caused the RV Water Leak? As it turns out there were a couple cracks at the bottom of the bathroom skylight that were missed when we inspected the roof. These were not visible from inside the shower due to the inner skylight blocking the view, but were discovered once we removed all of the vents and the inner skylight to clean them and make painting the ceiling easier. The sagging ceiling panel and rust was a pretty good indicator as well.

Eric has been on the roof a few times since we purchased the RV and even re-caulked it, but the skylight damage went undetected. Now that we know they are there it seems obvious, but they were so thin that I can also see how we missed them. It doesn't help that it's rained an INSANE amount since we purchased the RV. There were some weeks where I forgot what it was like to *not* have rain.

Be sure to Avoid this Costly RV Mistake!

The moral of the story? If you currently own an RV or camper, or you are planning to buy one, double-check the skylight for any damage especially around the base!

With that being said, I honestly do believe that this situation has proved to be a blessing for us. Sure it's been stressful, costly and time-consuming, but it's also given us the opportunity to learn more about our coach before we hit the road.

It's crazy to think that this is what our RV kitchen progress looked like just a couple weeks ago....

Yikes!!!!!!

Kinda looks like I have the before and after switched up, eh? Haha.

We didn't originally plan to move the kitchen cabinets, but once we realized the costly water leak had traveled into the kitchen area and found water behind a false wall in the upper cabinets, we knew it would be best to remove them. I'm not sure how long the water was there but we checked behind that false wall a couple months ago when trying to locate the hot water heater bypass and there was no water there at that time.

Although we were lucky in the sense that there was no black mold in the ceiling, we did find some mold in between a few of the cabinets which we were able to clean up with some tea tree oil (I'll share more on that in a later post).

Be sure to use all safety precautions when dealing with water damage as you never know what may be lurking behind that wall or ceiling. We had our safety goggles, gloves and respirators handy.

Things can look pretty perfect on the outside, but what's underneath may surprise you. And since motorhomes don't stay stationary, it's easy for water to spread into other areas.

Since we have plans to update a lot of other details in the RV, we figured it wouldn't hurt to remove some cabinets and walls now. This way we could double-check for any additional damage while we still have a warm bed and non-construction looking home to go back to.

We are moving slow to make sure we avoid creating more damage than good, and it doesn't help that there are 435987394583974653745 staples and screws in every single thing. I can't complain too much because at least that keeps everything in place while you move and bob down the road.

There are some great articles, videos and RV forums out there which have helped immensely, but at the same time it can still be really difficult to find the right solution when every RV make, model and year can vary greatly. We want to be self-reliant when possible and are trying to learn as much as we can in order to avoid another costly RV mistake in the future.

Have an RV or Camper? Don't forget to buy a Dehumidifier!

When we originally called Tiffin (the manufacturer) about the ceiling damage they recommended we run a dehumidifier for a couple days and then cut around the ceiling panel to create a template for the new panel. We had planned to eventually purchase a portable dehumidifier for the RV since we had read they are handy to have due to moisture issues, but opted to rent a professional dehumidifier for the time being. We figured renting a commercial one for a couple days may help speed up the process over using a residential one.

It did help by removing A LOT of the moisture, but we now realize what we should have attempted to remove the vinyl padding FIRST, leaving the plywood exposed while we ran the dehumidifier. Although running it beforehand helped, the areas where the vinyl was still covering the ceiling were still pretty damp a couple days later when we went to remove the vinyl. Duh. So really we should have just splurged on a nicer dehumidifier rather than renting one. (We later bought this Danby Dehumidifier – [affiliate link](#)).

This is also why we freaked out a bit when we saw the plywood under the vinyl because it looked black and was pretty scary. However, the next day we saw how much it dried just from being exposed to air and realized it was only that dark because it was wet, not because it was covered with mold. Whew!

It basically looked worse than it was because it was still wet.

Ordering the RV Ceiling Panel and Replacement Skylight

We received our new skylight from Tiffin and should have the new ceiling panel within the next 2 days, yay! We still need to do some cleaning, including taking care of the rust on the metal and I have some "green" recipes I'm going to test out.

The price for the inner and upper skylight replacement from Tiffin were \$42 each and the single ceiling panel was \$60. Not too shabby. We were told they wouldn't know the shipping because it was based on freight charges. I had looked up ceiling panels at other online vendors and they all pretty much said the same thing about shipping costs, so we didn't think much of it. In all honesty, we didn't think it would be more than \$50.

WRONG.

We were charged \$150 for the shipping since the ceiling panel is so large. Yes, the shipping cost was more than the items!

The price for the products was super reasonable based on what I had researched but the shipping was definitely more than I had expected. I did call the parts department back to ask if it's possible to be notified in the future about shipping before an order is placed so that I could pass that information along to anyone else, and they said yes.

Just be sure to tell the tech that you want to know the cost of shipping BEFORE they put your order through and they will have either someone from the service department, or from shipping contact you to let you know the total cost, which varies by size and weight. They will then wait to get your approval before pushing the order through. Just something you may want to know if you decide to order parts and want to do some shopping comparisons. Overall, we are very happy with the service Tiffin has provided 😊

So this is the current state of the bathroom after the costly RV mistake:

We also poked around to make sure none of the water leaked into the side walls, and luckily it didn't.

We will be sharing more on how we are *actually* repairing the water leak in a later post, but here's an updated video of Eric talking about some of the damage and what we have done thus far.

Have you experienced any costly mistakes in your RV or camper and have any advice you want to pass along to others? We'd love to hear about it in the comments.

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RV Winter Storage Tips

An RV and the open road form the classic Americana road trip daydream. But, as summer closes and the cooler weather rolls in, it's time to store the RV away until next year. Keep your RV clean, comfortable, and road-ready for next year with these essential storage tips covering the interior, exterior and wheels of your RV.

Interior:

Keep the inside of your RV in excellent shape and prevent the stale odors that typically accompany extended storage with these essential steps:

- Make sure all the appliances are disconnected, and that your fridge and freezer are fully defrosted. Propping the fridge and freezer doors open will prevent stale odors from forming.
- Since winter storage is several months long, it's important that your RV isn't connected to any electrical sources. Stem the flow of power by flipping off the main breaker on the distribution panel. It's also advised to turn off the LP-gas supply valve, which is located on the LP tank.
- Give your cabin and upholstery a thorough cleaning to avoid any microbial buildups.
- If you have vent covers that will prevent water from getting inside, open your vents to allow free circulation, so you're not greeted with a blast of stale air when you open your RV in spring. Also, adding Fresh Cab or dryer sheets prevents the musty smell from forming, while helping repel any mice or other small rodents.
- Winterize your plumbing and tanks by flushing them thoroughly with antifreeze.

Exterior:

Properly protecting the exterior of your RV during storage will extend the lifespan of your RV. Whether your RV will be stored in a garage or covered and tied down in your driveway, take the time to protect the exterior:

- hibernation for the winter. A thorough wash and wax will remove any buildup that may damage the clear coat and paint if left unchecked over the winter months. If your RV has an awning, be sure to clean it thoroughly as well to prevent staining.
- Check all of your seals and caulking to make sure your RV is airtight. If you notice damage to a seal, have it repaired – leaving it unattended allows moisture and bacteria in during the winter months, leading to any number of costly damages.
- Investing in an RV cover is an easy, effective way to protect it during storage. RV covers keep rodents and pests out of your cabin, prevent moisture from entering through your vents, and protects the paint and upholstery from UV fading. A good cover will bear the brunt of the elements so your RV doesn't have to.

Safe Parking:

Choosing where and how to park your RV is also important to your tires. Follow these essential steps to avoid any long-term issues when parking your motorhome for months at a time:

- Make sure your parking spot is on flat, level cement. Parking on a surface that shifts with changing temperatures – like dirt or asphalt – will subject your RV tires improper weight distribution which puts excess strain on your tires and chassis.
- Place wood underneath the tires to prevent damage to them from the frozen ground. The wood must be large enough that the tires do not hang over the sides.
- Invest in a set of wheel chocks to keep your RV securely in place, preventing accidental movement and costly damages. In addition, make sure the parking brake is off before sealing up your cabin.
- Keep the RV tires covered or at least out of direct sunlight. Constant exposure to UV rays degrades the rubber, and you will have to replace your tires sooner.
- Cooler temperatures will cause the air in your tires to contract, so it's recommended to inflate your tires to the recommended PSI, without exceeding the manufacturer's inflation capacity.

Engine:

Engine repairs are costly, and can easily derail your vacation. These tips will help keep your motorhome's engine in prime condition:

- Store your RV with a full tank of gas, and add a bottle of fuel stabilizer.
- Change the engine oil before prepping it for storage. Check and fill the rest of the fluids if needed. Prevent your windshield washer fluid reservoir from cracking by adding winter blend washer fluid.
- Remove the batteries before storage and give them a good cleaning with a 50/50 mixture of baking soda and water. Be sure to store your batteries in a cool, dry place where they're not going to freeze or be subjected to the elements. Storing your battery on wood is recommended, because a cold garage floor will drain the charge faster.

Hit the Road Next Year

Proper maintenance and storage during winter is key for keeping your RV in good shape all year. With some preparation, you'll be able to hit the road as soon as spring rolls around!

RV Towing Laws by State

You could be in for a big surprise when you cross state lines in your brand-spankin'-new RV and find it's too tall to comply with the laws of the state -- in which you've been pulled over. If you're lucky, you'll meet a friendly state trooper who lets you off with a warning. At worst, you could face a fine or possibly jail time, depending on the mood of said officer. The best way to get around this situation is to familiarize yourself with the towing regulations of all of the states you intend to pass through.

Quick, what do Texas and Washington have on common? They're the only two states that require coaches with vehicles in tow to observe a speed limit of 60 miles per hour [source: Hitch Me Up]. In general, many states set a speed limit of 65 for coaches with vehicles in tow; others set a limit of 55 mph. This is a good example of how towing regulations can change when you cross state lines, and why you should be aware that they often do.

Another regulation that can vary wildly by state is the maximum allowable weight for what you're towing -- be it a car or a trailer. Some states rely on the **federal bridge formula** -- that calculates the amount of weight based on how much is carried per axel. Other states have their own determinations. Colorado allows a gross vehicle weight of 54,000 pounds, while Iowa allows 80,000 pounds [source: Towing World]. You'll also want to have a good idea of your **combined gross vehicle weight**. This is the total weight for your RV, your towed cargo, all of the passengers, fuel -- anything found aboard the RV and tow vehicle that has weight.

Most states offer public scales for you to weigh your RV and tow set-up. They're usually found just off major highways. Some are operated by the state, while others are found on the premises of private businesses that use scales to weigh shipping cargo, like dairy farms. Either way, you'll likely be charged a fee. It'll be worth the money to know you're complying with state laws, however.

Before you leave on an extended trip with your RV and tow set-up, list the states you plan on traveling through. Beside each state, list different regulations that pertain to your situation, like allowable height and weight. You can use this as a handy reference guide. Be sure to also keep a full print out of the regulations of every state in your RV; you never know when a detour from your original path will tempt you.

The requirement your vehicle have insurance also varies by state; some states require it, while others don't. Read the next page to get a clearer picture of why you should be insured to the teeth when you're towing with your RV.

RV Towing Insurance

When it comes to towing with an RV, it's common for people to assume the insurance policy covering the RV also extends to any vehicle in tow. After all, the RV's much larger than the tiny car it's towing; why wouldn't it envelop the car in tow?

It's absolutely incorrect to assume your RV policy covers a car (or anything else) you're towing. Coverage and policies vary by company and state, so How Stuff Works can't stress enough that you have a long conversation with your insurance agent before heading out on the road to

make sure you've got all the coverage you need.

Very few, if any, RV insurance include coverage for a vehicle in tow. When you're on the road, you'll need an insurance policy for both your RV and the vehicle you're towing. If, heaven forbid, your towed vehicle becomes detached while traveling and hits another car, you'll most likely have two claims involved in the accident. The first will be a collision claim filed to repair any damage to your towed vehicle. This is why you need an insurance policy for the towed vehicle. The claim you'll make to your insurance company will be against the collision portion of the policy.

The other claim involved will be filed by the drivers of any vehicles, other property owners or people your out-of-control car hit after it became detached. These claims will most likely be against the liability portion of your RV insurance. This is why you also need full coverage (including liability) for your RV; a towed vehicle on the loose is usually considered the fault of the driver of the coach pulling the towed vehicle. It's a good idea to also have liability coverage on the towed car, in case you really made another driver mad during the detached towed vehicle debacle.

People who live in their RVs more than 150 days per year will also want to look into a type of RV insurance exclusive to recreational vehicles, usually known as a **full-timers comprehensive personal liability policy**. This type of policy extends your coverage to allow you to treat your RV like your home. Someone who trips inside your RV and breaks his or her ankle may make a claim against you as they could in your home, and this type of coverage is designed to cover such claims. This type of policy is exotic and many people who travel full time in their RVs don't realize they need it until their insurance company denies their claims because they use their RV as their primary residence.

There are other policies RV drivers should look into as well. Some pay for hotel stays while the RV is under repair. Others offer full replacement of a new model or upgrade if you total your RV. Again, policies change from company to company and across states. Speak to your insurance agent to find out what policies are offered.

On the next page, learn about converting a bus to an RV.

Bus to RV Conversions

The charm of the highway appeals to a wide swath of people. While some travelers opt to purchase a brand new RV, there's also room for do-it-yourselfers. Converting an old bus into an RV has become an increasingly viable and popular option.

It's true you can make your own RV from an old bus for a fraction of the cost of even a used factory-made RV. One enthusiast, Jake VonSlatt, purchased an old school bus from eBay for around \$2,000 and chronicled his conversion process online. With an environmentally-friendly mindset, VonSlatt used as much recycled material as possible, including salvaged and demolished materials, as well as used and discarded items from friends and the Internet. Another bus converter took the green aspect even further, converting the bus to run on a diesel-vegetable oil mixture.

VonSlatt's converted bus was similar to others like it in that it was a unique creation borne from the owner's mind. This is perhaps the biggest reason that bus conversions has caught on among some RV enthusiasts -- converted buses are one of a kind.

Among the most popular (and often cheapest) buses to convert are old school buses. In most quarters, these conversions are called **schoolies**. City transit buses and old motor coach company buses that have been replaced by newer models and fallen out of use are also popular candidates for conversion. There are several companies that specialize in converting buses into RVs for people who aren't sure in which direction to hold a hammer. These professional conversions often look just like the interiors of manufactured RVs. They're usually cheaper than a new RV, but more expensive than converting a bus yourself. What's more, most people who convert buses into RVs are handy to begin with and prefer doing it themselves.

To be sure, there is a degree of difficulty to any bus conversion. Most require a complete strip down of the interior, removing all seats and other obstacles, before insulating the inside of the exterior walls (after all, buses weren't originally made for sleeping). After this, the paneling process begins, with walls and floors added. Bedrooms, cabinets, bathrooms and appliances and fixtures all have to be installed. New plumbing and energy sources (for cooking and

lighting) have to be installed as well. After the bones are laid, it's time to install the finishing touches like wall covering, upholstery and flooring.

Converting a bus into an RV is a long process, and typically a labor of love. It's far too detailed to chronicle here, but fortunately, there are plenty of resources on the Internet dedicated specifically to posting advice and information on bus conversions (you can find one link below). Mr. VonSlatt offered a piece of advice: Finding a free used travel trailer through a site like Freecycle or Craigs list not only yields reusable appliances designed specifically to maximize spaces -- like sinks and couches - but enthusiasts often find that tearing an old trailer apart is the best learning experience one can undertake to prepare to convert a bus [source: VonSlatt].

Whether you choose to go all out and purchase a brand new motor home with all the bells and whistles, convert a bus into an RV yourself, or something in between the two, make sure you're properly insured and aware of variations among state regulations. And most of all, be sure to take it easy as you ease on down the road.

State Regulations Regarding Travel Trailers and Driving Laws

BY MICHELE BOYER

If you plan to drive your RV or trailer on a state by state camping road trip, you'll want to know the laws of each state. We RVers go to great lengths to choose an RV that meets our needs and budget. We learn to drive or tow them with care. We insure them, make sure they're registered and that we're abiding by all the laws.

But one thing most of us don't give much thought to is that when we cross a state line not only might the traffic and driving laws be different than in our home states, but the legal specifications for our RVs might be different, as well. These tips on regulations for RV laws and trailer by the state are intended to be helpful, but regulations change often and it is up to you to know and follow the law.

Some General Differences in State Driving Laws In California, the speed limit on freeways is 55 mph for any vehicle towing a trailer and 70 without a trailer.

In New Jersey, if you are pulled over and found to have a firearm that was not purchased IN New Jersey, you are breaking the law.

The speed limit maximum in Texas is 70 mph during the day, and 65 at night. If you don't take notice of this they will ticket you. It's easy to do when leaving a state like Colorado where the speed limit maximum is 75 mph. I was pulled over in Texas one morning for going 72 mph. New York doesn't allow trailers at all on most parkways.

Some states don't allow right turns on red lights, anywhere. Others allow them as a rule, and with only specific streets restricted.

Most speed laws become immediately apparent because they are usually posted prominently along the highways. But the right turn, towing regulations, propane limitations, and other types of laws are harder to know, because those are in the drivers' handbook, but not necessarily posted so that out-of-state drivers would be aware of them.

But these aren't the only differences in highway laws that can get you a citation and a fine.

Width Limits Our older Airstream is only 8 feet wide. But newer ones are 8 feet 5.5 inches. But, did you know that these newer Airstreams are illegal, by a mere 5.5 inches, on highways in some states?

Alabama, Arizona, Washington D.C., Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, and Tennessee each have a width restriction for trailers of 8 feet.

In Connecticut width for RVs is limited to 7.5 feet, 8 feet high, length 24 feet and weight 7,300 pounds on the Merritt and Wilbur Parkways.

Length Limits Alabama, in addition to having an 8-foot width limit also has a trailer limit of 40 feet.

If you plan to tow a trailer and a boat, or any combination of two tows, stay out of California.

Contrary to California, Arizona allows, with some restrictions, more than one trailer.

Trailers are limited to 32 feet on Mississippi's Natchez Trace.

Brakes, Hitches Several states have trailer brake and hitch requirements. Iowa requires equalizing hitches, sway control and brakes on all trailers over 3,000 pounds.

Minnesota requires trailers of 6,000 pounds or more to have breakaway brakes.

North Carolina requires an independent brake system for house trailers of 1,000 pounds or more.

Utah requires breakaway braking system if over 3,000 pounds.

Other Restrictions If you're traveling from Illinois to Iowa, route around the bridge between Fulton, IL, and Clinton, IA. Trailers are prohibited on that bridge.

If you have propane tanks (don't we all?) you cannot pass through the Baltimore Harbor Tunnel or Fort McHenry Tunnel in Maryland.

If you're planning a trip to Montana's, find out what RV restrictions are in place first.

In Virginia, you're limited to two portable bottled gas tanks of 45 pounds with valves closed in the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel, Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel and the Norfolk-Portsmouth Tunnel.

And Wisconsin, under limited conditions allows riding in a fifth wheel.

Sorting It All Out Planning a cross-country trip could be more work than you'd originally planned to do if you want to stay street-legal in all the states you'll be traveling through. To be sure, look up the department of motor vehicles websites in the states you plan to travel through. Most have a way to apply for a permit or waiver if your rig doesn't meet their laws. Having these on file as you travel through each state will make your trip go more smoothly. It is also good to know whether there are no waivers, too, so you can reroute your trip.

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