

NEWS

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NEWS RELEASE --- IMMEDIATE

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HEAVY COMMERCIAL VEHICLE FINES INCREASED

The Board of Selectman recently approved increases in fines to the Town's existing traffic regulations which prohibit heavy commercial vehicles over 2 ½ tons from operating on certain streets. The increase and changes in the regulation were proposed by Chief Ronald Glidden as a result of ongoing problems primarily with tractor trailer trucks traveling up Fuller Street attempting to travel to the Schweizer-Mauduit mill on Greylock Street. Commercial truck drivers using Mapquest and other computer mapping services frequently ignore signs prohibiting truck traffic on Fuller Street as they attempt to find the most direct route to the mill. Many of these trucks have become stuck at the top of Fuller Street as they are either unable to make the sharp left hand turn or find themselves stuck in Fairmont Cemetery. Their actions often result in property damage, and frequently require a police escort or tow service assistance before the truck can be escorted to the mill and the operator is cited for operating a heavy commercial vehicle on a prohibited street.

The new fines which are now in effect include \$200 for the first offense and \$300 for any subsequent offense by an operator of a heavy commercial vehicle on a prohibited street. If damage results from the prohibited operation, the fine is increased to \$500. In addition to a fine charged to the operator, whenever a second or subsequent offense by a truck from the same company occurs, the owner can also be fined an additional \$300.

Greylock and Fuller Streets over the past year have experienced the most notable problems with tractor trailer trucks causing property damage. However, other streets such as Stockbridge Road commonly experience problems from other types of heavy commercial vehicles. In addition to tractor trailer trucks, Stockbridge Road is often used by dump trucks and box trucks weighing over 2 ½ ton as a shortcut to Route 7 in Stockbridge. These smaller trucks weighing over 2 ½ tons, like the larger tractor trailer trucks, are all subject to the increased fines when operated on a prohibited street.

Streets prohibited to heavy commercial vehicle traffic in the Town of Lee include Greylock Street from Fuller Street to East Center Street, Marble Street from Pleasant to Lois Street, Stockbridge Road and High Street. Heavy commercial vehicle traffic on Fuller, Maple and Orchard streets is also prohibited because trucks can not travel through those neighborhoods without crossing the designated prohibited area on Greylock Street.

According to Lee Police Chief Ronald Glidden, the truck prohibition does not apply to heavy commercial vehicles going to or coming from locations on a prohibited street for the purpose of making deliveries or collections, or to vehicles being used in connection with construction, maintenance and repair of the prohibited streets.

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