Overloaded Railcar Process
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. What is an overloaded railcar?

A. An overloaded railcar is one where the weight of the contents of the car (net weight) exceed the published load limit weight of the car, leading to unsafe operating conditions.

Q. How is an overload car identified?

A. The car is either weighed on BNSF (a Scaled Overload), or the waybill indicates that the car is heavier than permitted (a Billed Overload).

Q. How frequently are BNSF scales certified?

A. BNSF certifies its scales annually, and tests weekly.

Q. Can a car be reweighed?

A. Yes, a customer can request a car be reweighed, for a $500 fee.

Q. What is the overload process?

A. Below are the following seven steps:

1. Once a railcar is scaled and triggers an Overload Alert, BNSF will re-scale the car to verify that the overload condition is accurate.
2. Upon verification of the overload condition BNSF sends a notification to all users in the Shipper's company who are set up to receive Overload Notifications.
3. At that point customer will need to hire a contractor for the reduction of the railcar; a list of contractors that are approved to perform reductions are included in the overload notice.
4. The car will then be switched to a reduction track and another notice will be sent to all users that railcar is placed on the reduction track ready for reduction.
5. Once contractor completes the reduction they will need to send the hiring corporation the scale tickets confirming that reduction has been completed.
6. The Shipper contact who receives the scale tickets will need to access their case and enter the reduction information into the reduction form.
7. Once the reduction form is complete and all parameters have been met, a member of the BNSF Overload team will update the waybill with the new "reduced" weight, release the railcar in the BNSF Systems, and the car will begin resuming its journey to destination.

Q. What specific changes are coming from the customer's perspective?

A. Two specific changes are coming to the process (effective October 7, 2021):

1. All communications will be automated through Message Us.
2. The Shipper's contacts will be responsible for communicating the reduction information (weight reduced and scale ticket verifying the reduction).

BNSF RAILWAY

Q. What is the difference between a Scaled vs a Billed overload?

A. If a car is weighed on the BNSF System and is found to be over the car's load limit, the car is a "Scaled" Overload and is reweighed to confirm the weight reading. If overloaded, the car is switched to a reduction track where it is the customers' responsibility to have the contents reduced to get the net weight under the load limit of the car. If a waybill hits the BNSF system with the net weight greater than the load limit, that load is a "Billed" Overload. The customer is then required to either reduce the car while still at their facility or check to see if the weight was entered incorrectly on the waybill and if so then resubmit the waybill with the corrected weight.

Q. What is the fee structure for handling overloaded cars?

A. BNSF has the following tariffs for handling overloaded cars:

1. BNSF tariff 6044 Section 2 – Demurrage charge is $150 per day.
2. BNSF tariff 6100, Item 8080 – movement from a BNSF reduction track to an alternate location is subject to appropriate switching charges.
3. BNSF tariff 8006 – intra-terminal switch charge is $400 per car.
4. BNSF tariff 9300, Item 1200 – Overloaded car charge is $1,500 per car.

Q. What are the requirements when reducing hazardous material overloaded cars?

A. Per BNSF Mechanical Directive, MD-901210, if a TANK car carrying hazardous material is overloaded more than 1% but less than or equal to 5%, it can move to destination for unloading provided all the following conditions are met:

a. A One-Time Movement Approval (OTMA) is obtained from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA).

   a. use this link to access and fill out a copy of the FRA One Time Movement Authority (OTMA-2) form http://www.fra.dot.gov/eLib/Details/L02759

b. The car has no other AAR or FRA defects.

c. The car meets maximum spring deflection requirements.

   a. The average spring height (measure both sides of the truck and average) of the truck is not less than the following (based on spring nest having 50% reserve):

      i. D3 = 7 1/8 inch

      ii. D5 = 7 3/8 inch

      iii. D7 = 7 1/2 inch

d. The route is capable of handling the increased weight.

In no case, shall a car which is overloaded greater than 5% of its gross rail load be allowed to continue in service. Cars in this condition must be reduced at shipper expense. Contact the BNSF Hazmat Team for assistance in reducing cars carrying hazardous materials.