

**Frequently Asked Questions about the Olympic National Park  
Hurricane Ridge Road Tire Chain Requirement  
January 2009**

**Where and when do I need to carry tire chains?**

Between November 1 and May 1, all vehicles traveling on the Hurricane Ridge Road above Heart O'the Hills entrance station are required to carry tire chains. This requirement applies to all weather and road conditions.

**What about sunny days?**

The chain requirement applies to all vehicles and all days between November 1 and May 1, regardless of weather or road conditions. Weather at Hurricane Ridge is notoriously quick to change, and sudden storms can appear with little or no warning.

**Why do I need to carry tire chains?**

A set of chains in every vehicle means that every vehicle is prepared and equipped for changing winter weather conditions. As its name implies, Hurricane Ridge is prone to high winds, which in winter, brings drifting snow and whiteout conditions. Having chains available in the event of a storm will give each driver an extra margin of safety, allowing the road to remain open longer even when conditions are changing.

**What if my car's owners manual tells me not to install tire chains?**

The requirement to carry tire chains applies to all vehicles, regardless of make or model.

Vehicle manufacturers that caution against traditional metal tire chains (e.g. Subaru) do market cable chains that are specifically made for their vehicles. Cable chains can be a good option for vehicles with limited tire clearance.

**What if I have a rental car?**

Tire chains are required on all vehicles traveling to the Hurricane Ridge. However, several stores in Port Angeles accept returns of unused chains. (See list below.)

**I have a 4-wheel or all-drive car – do I still need to have chains?**

Yes. Four-wheel drive and all-wheel drive vehicles must carry chains.

While vehicles with all-wheel-drive capability and approved traction tires do have enhanced traction, during the most extreme conditions this is not sufficient for safe vehicle operations. Chains provide optimal traction in the most challenging road conditions. *(Continued on next page.)*

This new Olympic National Park regulation is closely similar to a Washington state requirement under the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 204-24-050, which states that, for vehicles under 10,000 gross vehicle weight:

*When “chains required” signs are posted, all-wheel drive vehicles shall be exempt from the chain requirement when all wheels are in gear and are equipped with approved traction devices as specified in WAC 204-24-020 provided that tire chains for at least one set of drive tires are carried in the vehicle.*

**Washington State law does not require motorists to carry tire chains over the major mountain passes – why is it different here?**

During extreme weather conditions, Washington state does require chains, even on all-wheel and four-wheel drive vehicles, as noted above.

In addition, Hurricane Ridge is unlike Washington’s mountain passes in a variety of ways. At 5,242 feet above sea level Hurricane Ridge is significantly higher in elevation than most of Washington’s road-accessible passes and is located on a mountain summit, rather than in a more sheltered pass. Further, the Hurricane Ridge Road is a park access road and not intended to be as wide or have as many safety pullouts as a state highway.

**Is there anywhere I can rent chains in Port Angeles?**

Rentals are not available, but several businesses allow unused chains to be returned. See listing above.

**Is there anything I can use instead of chains?**

Cable chains are typically thinner and lighter than traditional tire chains and may be more easily installed. We recommend checking with your local mechanic or tire store.

Tire chains are usually available at the following Port Angeles locations. We recommend calling ahead however, as stock availability and store policies may change.

**Les Schwab Tire Center**

2527 East Highway 101, Port Angeles,  
360-452-7691

Monday through Friday: 8am – 6pm;  
Saturday: 8am – 5pm; Sunday: Closed  
Return Policy: After the purchase  
customer must wait until after April 1 to  
return unused chains to any Les Schwab  
Tire Center.\* Chains must be in their  
original packaging.

**Port Angeles Tire Factory**

320 Tumwater Truck Rd, Port Angeles,  
WA 98363-2241  
360-406-4325

Monday through Friday: 8am – 5:30pm  
Saturday: 8am – 4pm; Sunday: Closed  
Return Policy: Unused chains in their  
original packaging **must** be returned  
within **one day** of the purchase if refund  
is desired.\*

**Baxter Auto Parts**

221 W 1st St, Port Angeles, WA 98362-  
2604  
360-457-3318

Monday through Friday: 7:30am – 6pm  
Saturday: 8am – 5pm; Sunday 9am –  
5pm  
Return Policy: Unused chains in their  
original packaging may be returned for a  
refund any time throughout the winter.\*

**Carquest**

116 N Race St, Port Angeles, WA 98362  
360-452-3891

Monday through Friday: 8am – 8pm  
Saturday: 8am – 5pm; Sunday: 10am –  
5pm  
No returns.

**Napa Auto Parts**

123 South Peabody Street, Port Angeles  
360-457-4466

Monday through Friday: 8am – 5:30pm  
Saturday 8am – 5pm; Sunday Closed  
Return Policy: Unused chains in their  
original packaging may be returned for a  
refund any time throughout the winter.\*  
Special Note: The selection might be  
depleted (owner said he only had 5 sets  
left on the shelf).

**Schuck's Auto Supply**

1911 E 1st St, Port Angeles, WA 98362-  
4925  
360-452-0883

Monday through Saturday: 8am – 8pm  
Sunday 9am – 7pm  
Return Policy: Unused chains in their  
original packaging may be returned for  
store credit.\*

**Wal-Mart**

3500 E Highway 101, Port Angeles, WA  
98362  
360-452-4910

Daily: 8am – 10pm  
Return Policy: Unused chains in their  
original packaging may be returned  
within 90 days for a full refund.\*

**\* NOTE:** All returns are dependent  
upon the individual possessing a receipt  
of purchase.