



A Publication of Missouri Department of Transportation's
Motor Carrier Services

Choose Bird Plates at Renewal

In our last issue of News on Wheels, we told you about the distribution of new license plates in Missouri. The new design features a blue-bird, the state bird, and is often referred to as "the bird plate".

A law passed in 2007 called for the replacement of all state license plates, beginning in June of 2008.

In 2008, a legislative exemption was granted to motor carriers. It took effect at the end of August.



Between June 16 and August 28, carriers that renewed their license plates were required to remove the old style and affix the bird plate to their equipment. After August 28, carriers will be able to choose whether to accept the new plate at renewal.

All replacements, fleet additions or other transactions that require a new license plate are fulfilled with the bird plate.

MoDOT recommends replacing the old plates at renewal time. A fresh, more visible plate not only helps spruce up the look of equipment, it can help streamline enforcement activities.

If you have questions about the new plates for motor carriers, call toll-free,

1-866-831-6277, or send an e-mail to contact-MCS@modot.mo.gov.

Interstate 44 Head-to-Head Traffic

Work to rehabilitate the bridge over the Little Piney River on Interstate 44 East in Phelps County began just after Labor Day. Between mile markers 173 and 175, both eastbound and westbound traffic runs on the two lanes that used to carry only westbound traffic. Speed limits in the area are reduced and travelers must exercise extra caution.

License Change Affects OD/OW Blanket Permits

The mandatory re-issuance of license plates will cause the plate information on some blanket OD/OW permits to be incorrect. The Missouri State Highway Patrol and other law enforcement agencies agree to honor the blankets. They will compare the VIN of the power unit to that on the permit when license plate information disagrees. However, if a carrier prefers, MCS will modify the blanket permits at no charge to update the license information.

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Jan's Letter

We need to talk. Your workplace needs attention. That's not news, is it? Missouri highways are improving, but we've got a long way to go to get them to the level you deserve. But tough times are looming. By passing Amendment 3 in 2004, voters told us to sell bonds and use the money for construction. The money gained from Amendment 3 is going to pay back those bonds over time.

So in the near future, we'll go back to our pre-Amendment 3 funding level. Remember those roads? To make things more challenging, we expect less federal funding for highway projects. Prices for asphalt, steel, fuel and other construction materials are on the rise. That's not news either. But it makes for a tough situation. Your workplace could suffer greatly.

So MoDOT wants to start a conversation. We've outlined ideas of what could happen in our state if more money were made available for transportation – and we need to hear from people who use the system on whether we're headed in the right direction.

This is our idea: to meet the bare minimum of what you deserve, an extra \$1 billion dollars per year is needed. We pledge our best effort to stretch each dollar to its limit. We've had a lot of practice employing practical design

and using innovative thinking to keep our projects so close to the budgeted amount (even under budget a lot of the time!) that other states come to study our methods!

Our top five priorities? They are aimed at keeping you on the move safely. At a minimum, we need to:

1. Take care of existing roads and bridges;
2. Do a better job of providing other ways people can get around;
3. Rebuild Interstates 70 and 44;
4. Tackle needed major projects; and
5. Meet regional transportation needs.

Visit www.modot.org/conversation to look into our ideas and share your own. MoDOT would love to talk to you in person. If you would like a speaker to visit your group – your VFW, church group, PTA/PTO, fraternal organization, etc. – we're happy to come see you. Call MoDOT toll-free at 1-888-ASK MODOT (888-275-6636) or visit www.modot.org/requestaspeaker

It's time to get excited about moving Missouri forward!



Motor Carrier Services Director

Dump Trucks Save Substation

Dump trucks of every type and size answered the call when the Army Corps of Engineers determined that the water level of Mark Twain Lake had exceeded safe levels.

Several heavy rainfalls in just a few days required opening the floodgates of Clarence Cannon Dam. The Corps knew the discharge would flood the Salt River, possibly affecting the large electric substation near the dam that serves much of northeast Missouri.

A protective wall was needed around the substation – fast!

Local officials sought and received an emergency declaration that allowed haulers to run overweight on a single route from a nearby quarry. Dump truckers responded in droves, hauling ton after ton of rock. By the time the floodgates opened, a ridge of limestone protected the substation.



Dump trucks of many types line State Route J near Clarence Cannon Dam in June. The rock they carried was used to form a protective wall around the dam's substation. (Photo by David Cheek, Mark Twain Regional Council of Governments)

IFTA Renewal – It's Automatic!

It was a hit – so we're doing it again. MoDOT will send International Fuel Tax Agreement renewals automatically to all carriers whose accounts are in good standing.

How is this going to work?

We'll use the information from your 2008 IFTA information to create the 2009 fuel license and determine the number of decals to send.

What if the contact information MoDOT has on file needs updating?

We'll send a copy of your account history with the license and decals. If anything is incorrect, write the changes you need on the paper and mail or fax it to us. Our fax number is (573) 751-0916.

What if I need more or fewer decals?

If we've sent too many decals, you can send the extras back. If we've not sent enough, you can request more through the MoDOT Online Express system. Visit www.modot.org/mcs and choose the Carrier Express button on the left side of the page. You can also write a request and mail it with the corrected contact information sheet. Either way, we'll make sure to get enough to you before the 2009 grace period ends.

When should the license and decals arrive?

You should receive your credentials by mid-November. If they have not arrived by December 5, please call us

toll free at 1-866-831-6277 and select option 2 to reach the IFTA team or send an e-mail to contactMCS@modot.mo.gov.

What if I have an outstanding payment or I haven't filed my quarterly returns on time?

If that is the case, you'll need to file the late returns and catch up on payments. We will not send a license or decals to any carrier who owes a payment or is late with paperwork.

What brought about this change?

We asked a simple question – why, when most carriers' IFTA information is unchanged, do they need to fill out the same form every year? In the spirit of innovation, we decided it wasn't necessary and set about to simplify the process. It was a hit last year – with carriers and with everyone in our office!

What about my International Registration Plan renewal?

The IRP license plate renewal process has not changed. When your renewal is due, we encourage you to renew online or by mail to save time.

What about IFTA tax returns?

Carriers still must file quarterly fuel tax returns. Remember, filing online through MoDOT Carrier Express can save a lot of time. The system does all the math, too!

New Laws Affect Motor Carriers

Recently, Governor Matt Blunt signed into law several bills with provisions that affect motor carriers. The following laws went into effect August 28, 2008.

UCR

MoDOT Motor Carrier Services will administer the Unified Carrier Registration program for Missouri-based carriers beginning August 28 for new carriers and renewing the registration of existing carriers for the 2009 season.

Left-Hand Lane Prohibition

Trucks registered for a gross weight of 48,001 or more are banned from the far-left lane of interstates and other highways that have three or more lanes of traffic proceeding in the same direction. The restriction does not apply under certain circumstances, such as when the right lane is closed for construction or because of a crash. See page 7 for additional information.

Weight Allowance for Idle Reduction Technology

The maximum gross vehicle weight limit and axle weight

limit for heavy-duty vehicles equipped with idle reduction technology may be increased up to an additional 400 pounds to account for the weight of the idle-reducing unit.

Increased Weight Limits for Livestock Hauling on Certain Highways

A weight limit maximum of 85,000 pounds applies to any vehicle or combination vehicle hauling livestock while operating on U.S. Highway 36 from St. Joseph to U.S. Highway 65 and on U.S. 65 from the Iowa state line to U.S. Highway 36.

Motor Carrier Indemnification Agreements

Any indemnity agreement in a motor carrier transportation contract which exempts a party for any losses from negligence or intentional acts will be void and unenforceable. Motor carrier transportation contracts must not include the Uniform Intermodal Interchange and Facilities Access Agreement or similar agreements.

Mo. Truck Driving Champions Crowned

Lawrence O'Neal of Festus, Missouri, a driver for FedEx National LTL of St. Charles, Missouri was named Grand Champion of the 2008 Missouri Truck Driving Championships. He outscored his competitors in a written exam, pre-trip inspection, personal interview and truck driving obstacle course.

The annual safe driving competition sponsored by the Missouri Motor Carriers Association and its Council of Safety Supervisors attracted 181 of the state's top truck drivers.

The first place winners earned the right to compete in their class at the National Truck Driving Championships in Houston. They are:

Straight Truck Class -Jeramy Riggs – Yellow Transportation.

Three Axle Class - John Barney – FedEx Express

Four Axle Class - Michael Gandee– Prime, Inc.

Five Axle Van Class - Paul Baumhoer– Wal-Mart

Flatbed Class- Mitchell Stegner– Roadway Express, Inc.

Sleeper Berth Class - Rick Hopwood – Wal-Mart

Twin Trailers Class - Lawrence O'Neal– FedEx National LTL

Tank Truck Class - Duane Grimme– Prime, Inc

Jeramy Riggs, a driver for Yellow Transportation was named "Rookie of the Year" for his outstanding performance as a first-time contestant. The "Pre-Trip Inspection" award went to Chad Daniel of Prime, Inc. "Team Championship" honors went to Wal-Mart Transportation, of St. James, Mo., who had the highest average team score in the competition.

MCS adds eCheck to Payment Options

Time is money...and now, MCS offers a way to pay invoices quickly, for less!

ECheck payments allow you to transfer funds directly from a business or personal checking account to pay MoDOT invoices.

A very small fee - just 60 cents! - covers the cost of the transaction, regardless of the payment amount. Put together the cost of a stamp, envelope and the time it takes to put it all together and the processing company's fee is a bargain.

Whether paying by phone, in person or using MoDOT Car-

Ramp Shoulders No Place to Sleep

MoDOT has noticed a disturbing trend among trucks parked roadside – drivers pulled over to rest on highway ramps.

Please, we beg you, do not park on the shoulder of ramps.

Off ramps are a special concern. They are used by traffic leaving the highway to turn onto another road. All too often, exiting drivers need the shoulder to recover from a mistake in steering. Because the vehicle is traveling at highway speeds, a truck parked on the shoulder can be a fatal obstacle.

Truck parking is a MoDOT priority. The number of available spaces and the number of drivers who use them are reported each quarter in the department's statewide report, the "Tracker". Driven by the director of MoDOT's System Management division, the results are reviewed by the department's top management and are published to the MoDOT.org Web site.

Since 2002, truck parking spaces at rest areas and truck-only facilities increased from 587 to 725 spaces, an increase of 138 or 23.5 percent. This number does not count the spaces in the closed facility near Conway, Mo., on Interstate 44.

When welcome centers near Conway (2009), Hayti (planned for 2010) and Marston (planned for 2011) are complete, almost 1,000 parking spots will be available for commercial vehicles statewide.

rier Express online, all you need is:

- The bank routing number - a 9 digit number printed at the bottom of the check
- The account number -also located at the bottom of the check
- The name on the check
- The payment amount

Funds are withdrawn quickly - often the same or next day. MoDOT does not store bank routing or bank account information, so your bank account is secure.

ECheck is quick, easy and secure. Try it the next time you do business with MoDOT!

Specimen Testing Final Rule

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration published a final rule on Specimen Validity Testing which ensures that samples provided during a controlled substance test are free of adulterants and substitutes. The final rule outlines procedures in observed collections, adulterant tables and charts, definitions, employee admissions, medical evaluations, Medical Review Officer verified test results and laboratory reporting.

Collections are required for all return-to-duty and follow-up testing. Observed collections occur when the collection site has a specific reason to believe that an employee may attempt to evade the testing process. Collection sites now check for prosthetic devices designed to carry clean urine. The employee must raise and lower their clothing prior to providing a sample.

During an invalid result review, any employee admission of adulterating or substituting is now considered a refusal to test.

The final rule also closes the loop on invalid specimen results for employees who have medical reasons for an invalid test. The medical review officer can perform a medical evaluation to rule out signs and symptoms of drug use. Efforts have also been taken to streamline the complicated laboratory-confirmed and medical review officer-verified test results. The final rule requires laboratories to report semi-annual statistical summaries on all of their DOT testing.

The rule went into effect August 25, 2008. To view or download the entire rule, visit: <http://contribute.modot.mo.gov/mcs/safety/index.htm>

Intrastate Carriers Can “Erase” Crashes From Compliance Review

Crashes happen.

No matter how safely you might operate your vehicle; you can't control the actions of others. That's why carriers who haul only inside Missouri can request that MoDOT take a second look at crash information during the compliance review process.

If a proposed safety rating is less than satisfactory – due in part to crashes – an intrastate carrier can petition MCS to review crash records. Any crashes deemed non-preventable can be excluded from the review. In many cases, this can result in an upgraded safety rating.

Motor carriers have seven days to petition an accident exclusion if their proposed safety rating is “unsatisfactory”. They have ten days to petition if the proposed rating is “conditional”.

In all instances, the carrier must provide copies of official police accident reports (and insurance accident investigation reports, when available) to MCS. MoDOT will review and notify the carrier of the review results.

Intrastate carriers can send petitions to remove an accident from a compliance review to:

MoDOT Motor Carrier Services
CR Accident Review Request
1320 Creek Trail Drive, P.O. Box 893
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102
Fax: (573) 751-4354

The New I-70 – Clarification

In the last issue, the News on Wheels stated that plans for truck-only and car-only lanes on Interstate 70 are under consideration. Truck-only lanes are being studied, but the remaining lanes will be “mixed use” lanes. Mixed used lanes are shared by cars, local trucks and trucks in the process of making connections to other highways.

To learn more about the plans for I-70, visit www.improvei70.org

kcICON Construction Information to Your Mailbox

Get information about the I-29/35 Paseo Bridge construction activities delivered to your e-mail. Visit www.kcicon.com/contact_en.html and sign up for project-specific e-Updates.

Would you rather look up the information only when you need it? Updated lane closure information for the kcICON Project can be found on the project site: www.kcicon.com/schedule.html or by calling the information hotline at 816-841-8888.



2008 OD/OW Rule Updates

Rule Change In Effect September 1, 2008

Missouri's maximum permissible weights were increased through an emergency rule of the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission. The new weight rules took effect September 1, 2008.

	Prior Rule	New Rule
Tandem weight	40,000 lbs	46,000 lbs
Quadrum weight	60,000 lbs	72,000 lbs
5 axles	92,000 lbs	104,000 lbs
6 axles (less than 51' in length)	112,000 lbs	112,000 lbs
6 axles (1-2-3)	112,000 lbs	120,000 lbs
7 axles (1-2-4) (alt. configuration)	112,000 lbs	130,000 lbs
7 axles (1-3-3)	132,000 lbs	132,000 lbs
7 axles (1-2-3-1 & 1-3-2-1)	132,000 lbs	138,000 lbs
7 axles (1-2-2-2)	132,000 lbs	150,000 lbs
8 axles (1-3-4)	132,000 lbs	144,000 lbs
8 axles (all other configurations)	152,000 lbs	160,000 lbs
9 axles (1-4-4)	132,000 lbs	156,000 lbs

Other 9, 10, 11 and 12 axle configurations remain unchanged at a 160,000 lbs limit.

Proposed Rule Change

The following list highlights major changes set in a proposed rule change. Public comments on the proposal were accepted through September 14, 2008.

2008 Rule Update Major Change Highlights

- An applicant may be required to have a minimum of \$425 in escrow before an application is processed.
- A permit will only be revised within two business days of the permit start date.
- Update hours to reflect Jefferson City office location is open 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Central Time, Monday through Friday.
- Tridem boosters are acceptable.
- Clarify LCV blanket permits are allowed overweight as allowed in the state from which they enter.
- Level 1 inspection required before move commences for loads escorted by Missouri State Highway Patrol.
- Permit fee is required for expired permits still in approved status.
- Trailer and load length justification is no longer required.
- A charge for a bridge study will be assessed if a company is notified that a superload is approved and they later change dimensions or weight so that a new route must be studied.
- Height greater than 17' requires a Highway Patrol escort.
- Adds verbiage to explain a highway crossing permit.
- 30-day blanket must be legal height, raise fee to \$300.
- Any alteration to a permit voids the permit.
- May require Missouri State Highway Patrol escorts at other times when necessary due to complexity of route or load.
- Require permittee or representative to physically run the permitted route if the vehicle and load measure greater than 120' long. Penalties may be assessed and future permit applications denied for failure to run route prior to move and load cannot negotiate turns.
- Missouri State Highway Patrol escorts are not required on MO 370.
- Eliminate pre-issued permits.
- Change non-reducible definition to mirror federal definition that military vehicles clearly marked and hauling military equipment and material and emergency response vehicles hauling salt, etc. to spread on state highways that are or may become slick are treated as non-reducible.
- When Missouri State Highway Patrol escorts a load, require only one front and one rear civilian escort on dual lane highways for loads exceeding 16' wide. If no patrol escort, one front and two rear civilian are still required.
- Increase permissible weight to 46,000 lbs. on a tandem and 72,000 lbs. on a quadrum. Increase permissible gross weights on several configurations (see table).
- Add commercial zone bridge study for loads that are legal weight in the commercial zone but have requested to cross a bridge that is posted for less. Fee of \$265.
- Allow superloads to move on Saturday and Sunday if less than 14' wide.
- Overweight annual blanket permits are available for government agencies.
- MoDOT insurance requirements will cover bodily injury and property damage only. Cargo insurance is purchased separately. MoDOT will not require proof of cargo insurance.
- Change requirement for written approval from utility companies from 17'5" high to 17' high.
- Additional power unit is required for superloads 350,000 lbs. and above.

E-Updates

There's been a chemical spill and MoDOT is going to de-tour one of the interstates for several hours. How will you know? You can sign up to receive e-mailed messages from MoDOT's e-Updates service.

You can sign up to get several kinds of information. Most of the updates are about highway incidents such as snow or flood closures, emergency shut downs or bridge trouble, but news about over-dimension/overweight permits, IRP, IFTA and safety is e-mailed as well.

Dispatchers love the service. If you're an independent driver, consider asking a friend or family member to sign up. They can pass the messages on to you when you're on the road.

It's easy to sign up. Start by visiting MoDOT's main Web site, www.modot.org. Look on the left side of the page for a dark blue e-Update tab. Create an account, choose your own userID and password. When you have the option to choose the information you'd like to receive, click on the Motor Carriers option near the bottom of the page.

You can also choose to receive e-mail about projects near you from MoDOT district offices, change your options or cancel the free service at any time.

Left Lane Off Limits On 3 (or More) Lane Roads

Currently, the law that bans trucks registered for a gross weight of 48,001 or more a from the far-left lane of interstates and other highways that have three or more lanes applies only in the St. Louis and Kansas City metropolitan areas - the only areas with true three-lane highways.

In other areas, what might appear to be a third travel lane is classified as an acceleration or deceleration lane.

Signs will define areas where the left lane prohibition is in effect. Signs will also inform drivers that trucks are allowed in the far lane in advance of highway exits that are located on the left.

OD/OW Insurance Required

Current proof-of-insurance must be on file by February 1, 2009 to submit OD/OW permit applications.

Datelines

September 30

Carriers whose apportioned plates expire today must carry new cab cards and/or display new plates tomorrow.

October 1

Last day for carriers whose plates expire Dec. 31, to file for IRP renewal to avoid late penalty fees and to be able to obtain temporary vehicle registration in 2009.

October 13

Columbus Day – MCS open, most MoDOT offices closed

November 1

Applications for 2009 Blanket OD/OW permits accepted – Apply online!

November 11

Veterans' Day – MCS open, most other MoDOT offices closed

December 1

Payment due for carriers whose plates expire Dec. 31 – after today, a late pay penalty will be assessed and carriers will not be able to obtain temporary vehicle registration in 2009.

December 5

Interstate carriers who have not received 2009 IFTA licenses and decals by this date should contact MCS for assistance

December 25

Christmas Day – All MoDOT offices closed

December 31

2008 Blanket OD/OW permits expire

January 1

New Year's Day – All MoDOT offices closed

Carriers whose plates expired December 31 must display updated plates and carry new cab cards

News on Wheels

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Additional copies available upon request. If you have any questions or comments, please send them to the address at left.

Motor Carrier Services Director
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Our mission is to provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri.





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UCR Available in Missouri!

Good news! As of August 28, Missouri is a member of the Unified Carrier Registration Plan, meaning Motor Carrier Services can handle registration and renewal for Missouri-based interstate carriers, brokers and freight forwarders.

Even if you registered with another state for 2007 and 2008, you can file 2009 renewal with MoDOT. Those renewals will arrive in your mailbox in late September, with instructions on filing online or by mail.

If you are an interstate carrier, broker or freight forwarder that was in business but did not file for UCR in 2007 or

2008, you must pay the fees for those years before your 2009 registration is complete. Enforcement is underway nationwide. Violation results in a fine that exceeds most companies' registration fees.

The fees for 2009 will remain the same as in prior years, though they are expected to rise in 2010.

UCR funds collected in Missouri are spent on highway safety programs – making the motor carriers' workplace safer.

Web site: www.modot.org/mcs

E-Mail: ContactMCS@modot.mo.gov