

Mid America Association of State Transportation Officials, Subcommittee on Highway Transport

State Report

State: Minnesota Report Date: Jan 27, 2020

Completed By: Shelly Meyer

Permits Issued Prior Year: 80777

Permits Issued Year to Date: 4388

Number of Staff Issuing Permits: 6 Techs, 1 Student, 1 Team Lead

Does your State offer Online Requests: Yes No

If yes what percentage
Of permits does your
System issue without
Your review? 60 % YTD

New Legislation:

2019 legislation - clarified commodity types for the Special Farm Products permit. We don't require carriers to list the specific commodity to be hauled when applying; so the only time the State weighs in on commodity is at roadside. Minnesota works with their Patrol partners to agree on acceptable commodities that align with the statutory language (without needing to interpret what the law meant or didn't mean). This legislative clarification makes that effort easier.

Special Product Permit - route and commodity modifications.

Starting in 2019, this language modified a special overweight vehicle permit to (1) specify that only paper products, finished forest products, or iron ore tailings can be transported under the permits for two- and three-unit vehicles; and (2) expanded the roads on which the vehicle may operate, to include all of Trunk Highway 53.

Permitting System Updates:

Contract negotiations are wrapping up. We expect to have a signed contract if not by the date of this meeting ... very soon.

Procedural Changes or Innovative or Special Initiatives:

We have been working with MnDOT's Materials office and pavement engineers to review the Spring Load Restrictions (SLR) and associated policies to determine whether there was opportunity to modify the process/policies. MN appears to be the only state that has mid-range (meaning after SLR is removed, we still have a 2-3 week timeframe before full summer weights can be restored). Conversation to be continued ...

We're working to develop and document a consistent heavy-haul project and application intake process, which will detail what happens when and who we need to contact when and who the carrier must contact when. We believe this will create consistencies and efficiencies in our process; and provide a good guide to our customers that will hopefully answer questions prior to contacting our office. We're looking to apply this to other areas within our unit.

New/Unique Communication Efforts: (Describe any outreach to your carrier population)
Just sent out a 'How are we doing' survey to our customers to help us better focus our customer engagement and customer service efforts.

Special Challenges Affecting Permit Operations:

Techs continue to spend an inordinate amount of time as technical support for customers. We're confident a new system will eliminate this role for my staff.

Other challenge is timeliness of a system replacement. Negotiations continue and that's set us back from a naïve, but hopeful 2020 system rollout.

Successes:

Coordinated the truck movement of 162 windmill blades, each 220 feet in length (250' overall), from the Port of Duluth to destinations throughout Minnesota and beyond. Minnesota expects 275' overall length for 2020.

Other:

For permits issued CY20 to date, we're at 73% auto issue.

Our system also processed 100,282 trip logs on annual permits in CY2019. Of those trip logs, 89% were automated (no tech intervention). So far for CY2020, the system processed 3,855 trip logs. Of those, 90% were automated (no tech intervention).