

Biggest Load Ever

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In March, the Stark County Highway Department authorized LoadPass Permits to issue permits to Mammoet USA South Inc. for two loads, each weighing nearly 1.5 million pounds.

The approved routes authorized travel for 3 miles on county and township roads. The loads were reactors being hauled to the Marathon refinery near Dickinson, ND. Two self-propelled modular trailers with 56 axles and 224 tires

were used to haul each reactor from the railhead to the refinery. Remote controls were used to steer the trailers. Not only were these loads excessively overweight, they were also very over dimensional. Permits were issued for up to 26'3" in width, 24' in height and 210'4" in length.



Turning the corner at 39th and 116th Avenue

One of the 1.5 million-pound loads was equivalent to 19 80,000-pound gross vehicle weight 18 wheelers. Nineteen 18 wheelers lined up on a highway would create a train of vehicles measuring 1,425 feet long – more than a quarter of a mile! The process to find a route for these loads was not any easy task.

Janet Sanford, Permit Operator for the LoadPass Permit Program said Mammoet contacted her more than a year ago. When she first spoke with them, they weren't sure the transfer of the huge loads was going to happen. The first requested route was denied. Al Heiser, Stark County Road Superintendent, worked with the company on a route that was better designed to accommodate the large loads. A major challenge with the selected route was that it crossed a two-span, 141-foot-long bridge. Marathon Oil hired an engineering firm and worked with the county and NDDOT Bridge Division to analyze the bridge to assess if it had the capacity to withstand the load. In the end, three bridge analyses were done before the movements were approved by the county and permits could be issued.

"The Largest GVW I have ever seen by far," Sanford commented. "It was exciting and scary. I was pleased that everything went well."



Sanford has been managing the LoadPass Permit program for a number of years. Under her tutelage, counties have seen the program evolve from using a handwritten paper permit to an automated permit and routing program. With automation, counties/cities/townships can better monitor where, when, and if, an oversize movement can travel on their roads, over their bridges, and what criteria they must adhere to. Currently 28 counties and 2 cities are members of the LoadPass Permit Program.

We look forward to the day that LoadPass is adopted by all 53 counties, providing a unified permitting system that allows motor carriers easy access to local road permitting of non-divisible loads. This Stark County example illustrates the value of a permitting system and means to best mesh hauling needs with roadway preservation.

