

**HEAVY LOAD PERMIT POLICY FOR LOADS IN EXCESS OF 200,000 POUNDS  
GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT  
NDHP Motor Carrier Operations; Ref: 9-6 Annex E (8/2023)**

**PURPOSE**

To establish guidelines when permits will be issued for loads of excessive weight that require additional restrictions and regulations to prevent highway damage.

**POLICY STATEMENT**

As authorized by section 39-12-02 NDCC and Article 38-06 NDAC, the NDHP, with guidance from NDDOT engineers, will issue single trip permits for movement of loads that cannot be reduced in weight and exceed 200,000 pounds gross vehicle weight. It must also be shown that the load cannot be moved by any other means other than on a state highway. The NDHP and NDDOT have the authority to reject any application for a movement that could be damaging to the highways or could create an unsafe condition on the highways.

**PROCEDURE**

A. Permit Requirements

1. Permits must be in possession prior to starting any movement. They shall designate the route to be traveled and may contain such other restrictions as deemed necessary by the NDHP or NDDOT engineers. The NDHP has the authority to revoke permits when the holder violates or abuses the privilege or conditions of the permits.
2. General travel restrictions
  - a. Single trip permits shall not be issued for overdimensional movements between ½ hour after sunset and ½ hour before sunrise unless:
    - 1) Twelve feet or less in width and one hundred twenty feet or less in length, or
    - 2) Approved by the superintendent.
  - b. Single trip permits for overwidth exceeding 16 feet shall not be issued authorizing movements on Saturday after 12 noon, all day Sunday, and on holidays of New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.
    - 1) No overwidth permit exceeding 16 feet will be valid from 12 noon the day before the holiday until sunrise the day after the holiday.

- c. Single trip permits shall not authorize movements when inclement weather prevails, highways are slippery, or when visibility is ½ mile or less.
- d. Single trip permits do not authorize travel on shoulders of road.
- e. Oversize vehicle and load movements shall allow traffic to pass.
- f. Permits may not be issued for movements during spring road restrictions, or any other time of the year that excessive rain or heat could increase the possibility of highway damage.

### 3. General safety requirements

- a. All overdimensional vehicles and loads shall have minimum 18 inches by 18 inches red or bright orange flags displayed on the traffic side front and rear.
- b. When the overall length of an overdimensional movement exceeds 75 feet in length and/or 8 feet six inches in width, there shall be at least a 12" x 60" **OVERSIZE LOAD** sign on the front and rear. The lettering shall be black on

yellow background. Letters shall be at least 8 inches high with 1-inch brush stroke. When the movement is overlength only, exceeding 75 feet in overall length, a **LONG LOAD** sign that is a minimum 12" x 60" in size may be used in lieu of the **OVERSIZE LOAD** sign. The lettering shall be black on yellow background. The letters shall be at least 8 inches high with 1-inch brush stroke. The sign shall be covered or removed when the movement is not overdimensional.

- c. Authorized oversize movements made from ½ hour after sunset to ½ hour before sunrise require:
  - 1) Clearance lights visible from the front, rear, and side marking the outermost portion of the vehicle and load that extends beyond 8 feet 6 inches.
  - 2) One rotating or two flashing amber lights mounted above the cab visible at a distance not less than 500 feet.
    - a)) When lights on the cab are not visible to the rear, additional flashing amber lights are required at the rear.
  - 3) Lights shall be SAE (Society of Automotive Engineers) approved for Class 1 lights and reflectors.
  - 4) Vehicle must be capable of traveling at the posted highway speed.
- d. All motor vehicles when transporting loads must be loaded and equipped to prevent the shifting or falling of the load. Loads such as a

hydraulic backhoe or crane must be secured to prevent the accidental lifting of the bucket or boom.

- e. Towing vehicle must have two mirrors to reflect a rear view of 200 feet to the driver.

#### 4. General conditions for all overweight movements

- a. A permit may not be issued for an overweight vehicle unless the vehicle is registered for the gross weight the vehicle can legally carry without a permit, nor issued for loads that can be reasonably made to conform to legal limits. Overweight permits will be issued for hauling one piece of equipment only.
- b. Overweight permits are not valid for movement on bituminous pavements when the atmospheric temperature is 90°F or above or when otherwise deemed necessary by the North Dakota Department of Transportation.
- c. Routing is restricted by the Permit Bridge Load Limitations Map (Policy 9-6 Annex A), the Approved Gross Vehicle Weight Map (Policy 9-6 Annex D), the Weight Limitations Map (Policy 9-1 Annex D), and the Load Restriction Map <https://www.dot.nd.gov/driver/commercial/north-dakota-load-restrictions>.
- d. Spring weight limits and load restriction weight limits other than during the spring thaw (Policy 9-17) <https://travel.dot.nd.gov/commercial>.
  - 1) Overweight permits may not be issued during the period of spring road restrictions and on highways with road restrictions other than during the spring thaw, except as provided for in the Road Restriction Permit Policy (Policy 9-17), or unless an emergency has been declared. On all state highways, not including the interstate system, overweight movements are subject to ton-mile fees.
  - 2) Self-propelled earthmoving equipment and other self-propelled vehicles that exceed 650 pounds per inch width of tire or 30,000 pounds on a single axle may not be permitted to drive on bituminous pavement during the period of spring road restrictions nor on highways with load restrictions other than during the spring thaw (excludes workover rigs).

#### 5. Towing vehicle and equipment requirements

- a. All power units, trailers, and auxiliary axles shall have sufficient tires and axles so as to prevent highway damage.
- b. All power units shall have sufficient tires and axles to provide the necessary traction.

- c. Equipment inspection may be required by the NDHP and/or NDDOT prior to the movement.
- 6. Loads must be broken down as follows if requested routes of travel cannot be approved by both the district engineer(s) and the bridge engineer:
  - a. Blades and rippers must be removed from dozers and hauled separately.
  - b. All scrapers must be split and hauled separately.
  - c. Counterweights must be removed from cranes and hauled separately.
  - d. Counterweights and buckets must be removed from backhoes and hauled separately.
  - e. Transformers must be drained of oil.
- 7. Pilot car requirements
  - a. All movements exceeding 14 feet 6 inches in width, 18 feet in height, and 120 feet in overall length are required to have official escort or approved pilot cars (see Pilot Car Policy). In lieu of the pilot car requirement for movements not exceeding 16 feet in width, the overwidth vehicle itself, or vehicle towing or hauling an overwidth load, may be equipped with a lighted rotating or flashing amber light or lights that are visible from front and rear for a minimum 500 feet. On four-lane divided highways there are no pilot car requirements for movements not exceeding 16 feet in width. Movements exceeding 18 feet in width will be required to have an official escort unless exempted by the Highway Patrol regional commander(s).
- 8. Weight limitations
  - a. Maximum permissible axle weights for overweight movements are set forth in the permit policy "Permits for Oversize and Overweight Vehicles" (Ref: Policy 9-6).
- 9. Double trucking requirements
  - a. The driver of each vehicle must have a minimum of one-year experience hauling oversize and overweight loads.
  - b. The power units must be sufficiently powered and equally geared to ensure an even and consistent rate of speed. The vehicle combination shall have the same number of axles with the axle spacings very similar.
  - c. Two-way communication is required between the drivers.

## B. Application Procedure

1. Applications for single trip permits must be made online at [www.nd.gov/ndhp](http://www.nd.gov/ndhp), click on E-Permits. A single trip permit application (SFN 3535) for excessive size and weight may also be completed and submitted to the NDHP permit office at [ndhppermits@nd.gov](mailto:ndhppermits@nd.gov).
2. Information required to obtain a permit:
  - a. Origin and destination of the vehicle and load.
  - b. Proposed route of the movement.
  - c. Dates of the movement.
  - d. Name of the applicant's insurance carrier.
  - e. A statement by the applicant that the weight of the load cannot be reduced and that no other means of transportation is available.
  - f. Estimated operating speed of the vehicle's movement. The application shall be accompanied with the following information: A diagram of the vehicle(s) and the proposed load when the gross vehicle weight exceeds 250,000 pounds or when using specialized trailers/dollies regardless of the GVW. Wheel base measurements of the vehicle. Tire widths of the vehicle (the first set of numbers from tire sidewall). Track/gauge widths of power unit, trailer, trunnions, dollies, double trailers, or dual lane trailer. Dimensions and weight of load. Overall dimensions of the vehicle and load.
3. Axle weights.
  - g. The tire weight in pounds per inch width of the tire.
  - h. A certification of insurance coverage containing: 1) policy coverage, 2) liability limits, and 3) in force on date of movement.
  - i. An insurance bond in the amount determined by the North Dakota Department of Transportation may be required.
4. All permit applications must be submitted 1 to 15 days prior to the requested date(s) of movement unless an emergency exists.
  - a. Should the movement include county and other local roads, permit applications must also be sent to those local jurisdictions. Permits issued by local jurisdictions must be in possession.
5. Issuance of permit
  - a. All permits issued under this policy shall be for a single trip. All permits will be issued by or authorized by the NDHP permit office. Prior to issuance of the permit, the permit office shall obtain approval from the

NDDOT bridge engineer and from the district engineer(s) through which regions the load will be moved.

b. All permits issued shall contain the following.

- 1) Each permit shall contain maximum axle weights as authorized by NDDOT engineers.
- 2) Each permit shall contain: a) the route of travel, b) dates of the movement, and c) the points of origin and destination.
- 3) Each permit shall contain a hold harmless clause for the benefit of the state, the NDHP, the NDDOT, and employees of both departments.
- 4) Each permit will specify the maximum operating speed of the vehicle.
- 5) Each permit will contain any requirements and restrictions deemed appropriate by the NDHP or NDDOT engineers.

6. A legible electronic or paper copy of the permit must be in possession prior to entering North Dakota or starting movement.

a. The applicant and driver are responsible for complying with the travel restrictions and safety requirements listed on the receipt/permit.

7. Violating provisions and conditions on a single trip permit may result in invalidating the permit.

8. Permit fees

a. A ton-mile fee of \$.05 per ton per mile is assessed upon the portion of gross vehicle weight exceeding 200,000 pounds.

b. The above ton-mile fee may be reduced based on axle weights, axle configuration, and roadway conditions.

c. The above ton-mile fee is applicable to the combined gross vehicle weight when "double trucking" a load. The above ton-mile fee is applicable to the movement of buildings.

d. In addition to the ton-mile fee, the applicant shall be responsible for the payment of the costs and expenses attributable to the issuance of the permit and the actual movement, including but not limited to, the following items:

1) Permit fee.

2) \$8 service/routing fee for each permit.

3) Escort services provided by the NDHP, \$50/hour and \$.50/mile per trooper.

- 4) Traffic control personnel provided by NDDOT.
- 5) Inspection of the vehicle for which the permit is sought.
- 6) Engineering fee when additional analysis is required – \$25 for each application submitted.
- 7) Trip and fuel permits.

e. Unless prior approval has been obtained, all the applicable above fees, except escort fees, must be paid prior to issuance of the permit.

9. Applications for permits can be obtained from the North Dakota Highway Patrol, Permit Office, 600 E Boulevard Avenue Dept. 504, Bismarck, ND 58505-0240 or online at [www.nd.gov/ndhp/motor-carrier](http://www.nd.gov/ndhp/motor-carrier). The permit office e-mail address is [ndhppermits@nd.gov](mailto:ndhppermits@nd.gov). The telephone number is 701-328-2621.