



News on Wheels

## 2008 UCR Enforced

Starting June 1, 2008, law enforcement nationwide expect interstate and international carriers, brokers, freight forwarders and leasing companies to have registered and paid for 2008 Unified Carrier Registration. Those who have not could be ticketed and fined.

Unified Carrier Registration program began in Fall 2007. Companies that operate in interstate or international commerce as a motor carrier, motor private carrier of property, exempt carrier, broker, freight forwarder or leasing company must comply with UCR. Only motor private carriers of passengers are not required to participate in UCR.

**What is required to comply with Unified Carrier Registration?** Each company must file an annual application and pay program fees.

**Can we register in the State of Missouri?** No, not yet, but possibly soon. The 2008 Missouri Legislature passed a bill that could allow Missouri to participate later this year. If Gov. Matt Blunt signs the bill, it will take affect August 28, 2008.

**What are the 2008 UCR fees?** The 2008 fee and bracket schedule are the same as last year. Fees are based on the number of commercial motor vehicles owned and operated by a company (trailers are also counted as a commercial motor vehicle). Brokers, leasing companies and freight forwarders pay a flat \$39 fee. The highest fee, \$37,500, is paid by companies with more than 1,000 vehicles.

**Will I need to carry a credential in the truck?** No. You can carry the receipt for payment of the fees if you choose.

## Fuel Surcharge Answers

Lately, higher fuel prices prompted several calls to MoDOT about fuel surcharges. Here are the most common questions and their answers.

**How do I get a fuel surcharge when I work on a state highway projects?**

When MoDOT awards a contract, the prime contractor can elect to receive a fuel surcharge. If the prime contractor chooses to receive a fuel surcharge, then any subcontracting motor carriers are eligible for the fuel surcharge.

**Can I charge a fuel surcharge when I transport household goods within the state of Missouri?**

Motor carriers holding operating authority from MoDOT may freely negotiate and receive

a fuel surcharges when rates and charges are negotiated between the carrier and the shipper. There are specific requirements under the law for household goods carriers operating within the state. Contact MoDOT Motor Carrier Service for further information.

**Does everyone have to pay fuel taxes at the pump?** Yes. Everyone has to pay fuel taxes at the pump in the state of Missouri.

Special fuel users as designated under state law who consume fuel for off-road purposes are exempt from paying fuel taxes.

**Does MoDOT offer any assistance if I have problems claiming a surcharge?** No. MoDOT has no authority to intervene in fuel surcharge disputes.

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# Jan's Letter

This summer as you drive in Missouri, you'll notice lots of crews out making repairs and improvements to your highway workplace. Be sure and take a good, long look, because in just two short years, those crews might become a rare sight.

Thanks to voters' approval of Amendment 3, Missouri went on a repair and construction tear. We're still in the midst of an effort to make our roads smoother and safer. By law, MoDOT had to sell construction bonds and spend the funds in the course of five years. With the payback period underway, no new federal funding and little to no increase in gas tax and license fee receipts, we stand on a perilous perch.

You may have heard our director, Pete Rahn, refer to 2010 as the year MoDOT "falls off the cliff" in terms of funding. Bond repayment, materials cost inflation and slow-to-rise revenue mean there will be only enough money to pay for projects already committed to and to pay for minimal upkeep for the rest of the system.

The department focused on cutting costs and squeezing the most value from every dollar. Employee ingenuity helps. So much so that other states send their employees

to study Missouri's penny-pinching ways. We've been able to build and maintain our system with generally the same number of employees through the last 10 years and keep our commitments in a time when many states are forced to cancel promised projects.

Unfortunately, even our best efforts are not enough to pay for the transportation system you want and deserve. It's time to talk. Are you willing to make additional investment in Missouri's transportation infrastructure – which is, after all, your bread and butter? If so, how should funds be raised? If not, what are you willing to give up?

I'm interested in your comments. Please send a note to [contactMCS@modot.mo.gov](mailto:contactMCS@modot.mo.gov) with your suggestions.



Motor Carrier Services Director



## Missouri License Plates Transitioning to a New Design

For the first time in 12 years, all vehicles and equipment registered in Missouri will receive new license plates. A new design, similar to the concept pictured above, was chosen by a vote on the Missouri Department of Revenue's Web site last year. MoDOT's Motor Carrier Services Division plans to distribute new plates beginning this summer. All carriers will have new plates by Fall 2009.

### New Equipment and Replacement Plates

Starting June 16, 2008 MCS will issue the new design for replacement of lost, damaged or stolen license plates or other transactions that require a new license plate - such as add with transfer, fleet additions or weight changes.



### Registration Renewal

Carriers whose plates expire September 30, 2008, will receive new plates for power units during registration renewal. Please affix the new plate as soon as possible.

### Trailer Plates

Carriers have the option to replace trailer plates. We recommend replacing trailer plates at renewal.

A state law that requires the reissuance of Missouri's plates was enacted to take advantage of new license plate visibility technology, to reduce personal vehicle tab theft and to ensure collection of state and local sales taxes and local property taxes.

If you have questions about the new plates for motor carriers, call toll-free, 1-866-831-6277, or send an e-mail to [contactMCS@modot.mo.gov](mailto:contactMCS@modot.mo.gov).

# IRP Re-write

The International Registration Plan is an agreement that allows commercial motor vehicles that travel in two or more states or provinces to register in one base jurisdiction. The Plan agreement is updated from time-to-time, after a vote by all member jurisdictions. Many changes involve procedures that states and provinces must follow. The following changes affect carriers directly and go into effect July 1, 2008:

1. Phone line – Carriers are no longer required to have a landline telephone. Mobile phone numbers are now accepted by IRP.
2. Estimating Miles – Carriers that do not accrue any actual miles in a given jurisdiction during the reporting period can choose to provide their own estimates. However, they must provide the route for each jurisdiction. If carriers cannot provide estimation they may choose to use the estimated miles chart. If, after review, by MCS, the carriers estimated miles are not considered reasonable, they will be changed to those on the estimated miles chart.
3. Three forms of ID for new carriers – Proof of residence in a carrier's base jurisdiction is now required. To apply in Missouri, demonstration of any three forms of the following are acceptable:
  - An individual's Missouri drivers license,
  - A corporation's Missouri incorporation papers or proof that they are registered to conduct business as a foreign corporation in Missouri,
  - Proof that a corporation's principal owner is a Missouri resident,
  - A copy of a current federal income tax return that was filed from a Missouri address,
  - A copy of a current Missouri personal income tax return,
  - A receipt for paid Missouri real estate or personal property taxes,
  - A current utility bill sent to the applicant's Missouri address.
  - A Missouri vehicle title issued in the applicant's name
4. TVR 90-day payment requirement – If payment for a temporary vehicle registration is not received within 90 calendar days of its issue, the carrier's entire account is suspended and no vehicles can legally run until those fees are paid.

Carriers whose license plates expire September 30, have until August 1, 2008 to file for IRP renewal. Those who file after August 1 will be subject to a \$100 late filing penalty.

## I-44: Conway Rest Area Closed

The Conway rest areas on both sides of Interstate 44 closed June 2 for demolition and a complete remodel.

When the facilities reopen in the summer of 2009, commercial drivers will find vastly improved structures and nearly five times the amount of parking than previously available.

City	Mile Marker
Joplin	2
Halltown	52
Doolittle	177
St. Clair	235

*\*Joplin's westbound area provides parking only – no facilities.*

## AASHTO Subcommittee on Highway Transport To Meet in St Louis

The Association of American Highway and Transportation Officials and MoDOT will host a meeting of the Subcommittee on Highway Transport in St Louis June 26-27.

Over the course of two days, representatives from states and industry will discuss issues affecting the movement of oversize and overweight loads. They'll hear updates from federal agencies, receive a congressional forecast and tour MoDOT's St. Louis Gateway Guide traffic operations

facility. The Oversize/Overweight Permitting Task Force; the Size and Weight Task Force; the Commercial Vehicle Operations and Technology Task Force and the Highway Freight Movement Task Force will have an opportunity to meet and report to the attendees.

If you are interested in attending, visit <http://www.transportation.org/meetings/174.aspx> to find registration information.

# Increasing Permittable Weights for Tandem Axles in Missouri

Right now in Missouri, the heaviest a tandem axle set can carry is 40,000 pounds or 20 tons.

The Missouri Department of Transportation is pursuing a rule update that changes the maximum permittable weight per tandem to 46,000 pounds or 23 tons.

Why does MoDOT wish to increase permittable tandem axle weights?

- Most neighboring states allow at least 45,000 lbs. on tandem axles. When the rule change becomes effective, Missouri will no longer be a barrier state for carriers traveling through the heartland.
- Traffic will flow uninterrupted when Missouri allows heavier loads that previously had to route around the state. This will generate more revenue as more trucks pay more permit fees to Missouri.

- Midwestern states' laws will become more uniform, allowing more efficient movement of goods interstate. Carriers will be able to move along the most economical route. Decreased fuel consumption reduces pollution and improves business' bottom line.
- Missouri will limit the impact of heavier trucks on infrastructure by changing axle weight distribution requirements. By expanding the minimum axle space required for some configurations and eliminating maximum spacings between groups, more weight is carried with one less axle. This allows distribution of weight over a bigger footprint, minimizing damage to pavement and structures. One less axle decreases carriers' equipment costs.

If you have comments about the proposed rule update, please send an e-mail to [contactMCS@modot.mo.gov](mailto:contactMCS@modot.mo.gov) or send a letter to the mailing address on the back page.

## MoDOT Studies Truck-Only Lanes for I-70

Interstate 70 has been the topic of a series of studies by MoDOT and its contractors. All agree that preparing the corridor for future traffic will require a thoughtful, innovative solution. Of special concern is the expectation that truck traffic will grow exponentially over the next 25 years.

Missouri drivers – of both automobiles and commercial trucks – asked if the re-design of I-70 could include separate lanes for cars and trucks. That idea caught on with the design team, who drew up preliminary plans for separate, dedicated truck and dedicated car lanes within the same space originally studied for the interstate rebuild.

A video posted to [www.improvei70.org](http://www.improvei70.org) explains the background and provides an animated explanation of how the lanes would work. Automobiles would travel their own lanes, separated by a dedicated truck channel down the center of the corridor.

The Improve I-70 team traveled the state to collect public comment this spring. In late summer, public review of the draft impact statement begins. Visit the Web site and read the truck lanes proposal or call 1-888 ASK MODOT (888-275-6636) and ask for Improve I-70 information.

### FAQ

#### What are the benefits of truck-only lanes?

**Safety** – Separating long-haul trucks from other traffic offers the opportunity for safer travel for all by reducing the number of car and truck interactions.

**Freight Efficiencies** – Truck lanes offer Missouri's – and the nation's – businesses greater efficiencies and reliability as they serve Missouri's businesses, farms and families.

**Redundancy** – By having essentially two sets of lanes going each direction (general use lanes and separate truck-only lanes) if either set of lanes needed to be closed for any reason, all traffic could be shifted to the other, allowing traffic to continue to flow on I-70.

**Constructability** – Closing lanes on I-70 for construction would create significant congestion and delays. The construction of separate, truck-only lanes could be accomplished with fewer impacts to travelers.

Much more information is available at [www.improvei70.org](http://www.improvei70.org).

# CSA 2010 Off to a Successful Start

The Federal CSA 2010 initiative is well under way in Missouri, one of four states piloting the program. The third month of testing Phase I of the Federal Motor Carrier's new Comprehensive Safety Analysis 2010 safety initiative is complete. Seven safety investigators, drawn from both Motor Carrier Services Safety and Compliance team and the local division of FMCSA, work with Missouri-based motor carriers through this progressive initiative. Phase I focuses on driver fatigue, unsafe driving and vehicle maintenance issues.

The purpose of the CSA 2010 initiative is to develop more effective and efficient methods for industry regulatory enforcement agencies, such as MCS and FMCSA, to help reduce the number of commercial motor vehicle crashes, fatalities and injuries. Key features of CSA 2010 include:

increasing the opportunities to contact more carriers and drivers; using more and better data to improve performance measurements for identifying high risk carrier and driver behaviors and applying a wide range of interventions to correct high risk behaviors before they become chronic and habitual.

Already, investigators have worked with more than 80 carriers to identify unsafe behaviors and determine the root causes leading to those behaviors. It's been an adjustment, but industry comments have been positive and the team approach is something MoDOT and FMCSA enjoy. Motor carriers appreciate the early contact and assistance by safety enforcement agencies to help them correct their unsafe behaviors before they lead to problems.

## Seven-Second Permits Debut

Carriers who haul over-dimension/overweight loads through Missouri have a lot more time on their hands lately. An improvement to MoDOT Carrier Express allows the computer to verify and approve certain permit applications almost instantly.

Super-speedy evaluations are available for loads that travel state-to-state, neither originating nor ending in Missouri, traveling on interstates and some U.S. routes. They must carry a single item or commodity to gain near-instant evaluation. When conditions are normal, permit issuance should take 5-7 seconds.

"We hope that carriers are able to win more business and turn loads more quickly with faster permit approval," said

Kelly Ray, MoDOT's OD/OW supervisor. "We're working to automate more highway and bridge checks so more carriers can benefit from MoDOT Carrier Express' speed."

### Five Things You Can Do While Waiting for a Permit to Issue Automatically:

1. Blink
2. Sneeze
3. Add three links to a paper clip chain
4. Move your toy truck six feet down your desk
5. Think, "If this works, I'm gonna lov..."

## Save endangered erasers!

Each quarter, thousands of pencil erasers are worn to the nubbins by motor carriers who spend hours figuring their IFTA tax returns. Stop this needless waste by filing IFTA returns on MoDOT Carrier Express!

Enter mileage and fuel figures and the system will complete all the calculations, saving hours of mathematical gyrations and making the world a safer place for pink-topped pencils everywhere.



# Variable Speed Limits in Effect on I-270 and I-255

Drivers now notice digital speed limit signs on Interstates 255 and 270 in the St. Louis area. Starting in May, MoDOT implemented variable speed limits along the interstates. By varying speed limits, MoDOT intends to keep traffic flowing during periods of peak congestion.

Variable speed limits are used in Europe and on roads in New Jersey, Tennessee, Delaware and Washington State. When congestion or slow vehicles cause congestion, speed limits go down. As travel times shorten, the limit goes up - up to 60 mph. Speed limits won't change a lot - they could go as low as 40 mph during congestion and remain at 60



mph during normal traffic.

MoDOT installed signs along the route to warn drivers of the variable speed limits and to alert them that speed limits may rise or fall as they travel.

Changing speed limits helps control traffic flow in congested areas by slowing drivers as they approach areas with slowdowns. Studies show that if traffic moves at a slow and steady pace, more vehicles travel through congested

areas more quickly.

Safety improves, too - if drivers follow the posted speed limits, they have more time to react to congestion and can slow or stop sooner. This should prevent many rear-end collisions.

Variable speed limit signs will be monitored and controlled by traffic experts in the MoDOT Transportation Management Center in Chesterfield. MoDOT's network of cameras and sensors monitor the flow of traffic and notify MoDOT when traffic speeds reach certain parameters. The operator determines the proper action and instructs the system to raise or lower speed limits along the route.

"Variable speed limits will work along I-270, if the driving public obeys the posted speed limit," said Tom Blair, Assistant District Engineer in St. Louis. "Drivers in St. Louis have shown that they can adjust to keep traffic flowing safer and smoother - MoDOT believes drivers will see that vari-

able speed limits help minimize congestion."

More information, including a video demonstrating how variable speed limits work, is available at [www.modot.org/stlouis/links/VariableSpeedLimits.htm](http://www.modot.org/stlouis/links/VariableSpeedLimits.htm)

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Can variable speed limits be enforced?

MoDOT has the ability to raise and lower speed limits on interstates. The Missouri Highway Patrol has the primary responsibility of enforcing those speed limits. They will track speeders and issue tickets. MoDOT is working with the Missouri Highway Patrol, local law enforcement and local prosecutors to address other enforcement issues.

### Is the highway patrol or MoDOT pushing this to raise funds from tickets?

No. Neither MoDOT nor law enforcement agencies receive funds from speeding tickets. All funds raised from speeding tickets go into local school funds.

Implementing variable speed limits is intended to improve traffic flow on I-270, primarily during I-64 reconstruction. If the project is successful, MoDOT will consider maintaining variable limits on I-270 and may consider them for other regional interstates.

### What outcome is expected?

Expect variable speed limits to improve traffic flow on I-270 during morning and evening rush periods and when crashes cause congestion. MoDOT will implement variable speed limits for a two-year period and then will evaluate the project to see how effective it is for managing traffic. Then a decision will be made whether to incorporate variable speed limits on other interstate routes in the region.

### Who determines the speed limits?

The automatic computer system monitors traffic occupancy rates. If they slow or speed up to an extent that would merit a speed limit change, the staff review the recommendation and decide whether to make a change.

### How quickly will MoDOT change the limits?

MoDOT evaluates and changes the speed limit as needed. However, changes to the speed limit will never be made in increments less than 5 miles per hour, or more than 15 miles per hour between any two signs on the interstate. Traffic specialists wait at least 5 minutes after first adjusting the speed limit before making further changes. However, drivers should not expect the speed limit to change every 5 minutes.

# Alcoholic Beverage Haulers Maryland

The upcoming license plate change makes life more interesting for Missouri carriers who haul alcoholic beverages in Maryland. Those who hold Vehicle Identification Cards (VIDs) issued by Maryland, will notice that the license plate number printed on the card will not match that of the new plate issued by Missouri.

Maryland law enforcement has been made aware that the discrepancy is caused by Missouri's plate exchange. They were instructed to compare Vehicle Identification Numbers of the power unit against the VIN printed on the Maryland VID card.

By November 1, 2009, Maryland's VID cards will bear the new license plate number. Until then, alcoholic beverage haulers are advised to visit [www.modot.org/mcs](http://www.modot.org/mcs), click on the Forms and Manuals page and print a copy of the Vehicle Enforcement Bulletin under the International Registration Plan section. The bulletin explains Missouri's license plate change to law enforcement. You'll receive the bulletin with your IRP renewal, the Web copy is a backup.

## Safety Compliance Manual - Correction

A previous version of MoDOT Motor Carrier Services' Safety Compliance Manual, Part 382, contains an error. The chart in this part should say that drug and alcohol tests must be performed by an employer when their employee is involved in a crash that results in a fatality.

A corrected manual is available [www.modot.org/mcs/safety/index.htm](http://www.modot.org/mcs/safety/index.htm).

# Datelines

## June 2

Carriers with apportioned plates that expire June 30 must pay renewal fees by this date

## June 3-5

Roadcheck 2008. Annual truck enforcement blitz sponsored by Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance

## June 30

Carriers with apportioned plates that expire today must display new credentials

## July 4

Independence Day – State Holiday – All MoDOT offices closed

## August 1

Carriers with apportioned plates that expire September 30 must file an application for renewal by this date

## September 1

Labor Day – State Holiday – All MoDOT offices closed

## September 2

Carriers with apportioned plates that expire September 30 must pay renewal fees by this date

## 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.

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