

Advice for hauling in Virginia

RICHMOND, Va. -- To give you some guidance on bypassing the roadblocks that have effectively closed Interstate 77 travel from the South into West Virginia, Virginia has provided these general routes and information.

The Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles issues single-trip and blanket-trip permits for hauling factory-built 14-foot-wide and 16-foot-wide loads.

Single-trip permits are route-specific and valid for 13 days. Blanket-trip permits are valid for one year on all nonrestricted routes.

If DMV issues a longterm route-specific permit, the routes would have to be cleared for the requested dimensions for a long period of time, which could affect even short term (one day to one week) maintenance/construction projects if they reduce lane width.

Virginia has worked with all VDOT field offices that have the alternative routes within their jurisdiction and is prepared to offer clearance (in so far as planned work activities are concerned) on the routes listed below for a period of one year, or until October 2007. At that time, Virginia will re-evaluate these routes for the ability to offer clearance for another one-year period.

However, be aware that emergency work activities or accidents may require temporary lane restrictions.

Traffic coming from Tennessee has three options:

--Using U.S. 23, enter into Virginia at the Tennessee state line to bypass 23 into Kentucky and travel north.

--Traveling north on Interstate 81 to U.S. 460, then taking that west into West Virginia.

--Traveling north on Interstate 81 until it connects with Interstate 64 west at Lexington, VA, and taking that route into West Virginia.

North Carolina traffic has two best options:

--Traveling north on I-77 to I-81 in Virginia; taking it north to U.S. 460 and traveling west on U.S. 460 into West Virginia.

--Traveling north on I-77 to I-81 in Virginia, then taking it north to I-64 in Virginia and taking that route west into West Virginia.

If the hauling company currently has a blanket permit, these routes can be used. If the company does not have a blanket permit, it can request a route-specific blanket for one or all of the alternative routes.

In West Virginia, there is a two-year lane restriction on I-64 just east of Huntington that requires a 100-mile detour if the western approaches are to be used into West Virginia.

For more specific information, please contact Theo Taylor, hauling permit program supervisor, who can be reached at (804) 497-7121 or via e-mail at theo.taylor@dmv.virginia.gov.

Virginia continues to remind you to visit its website for all updated information. That address is www.virginiadot.org.