



**THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**



**GEORGE N. CAMPBELL, JR.**  
**COMMISSIONER**

**JEFF BRILLHART, P.E.**  
**ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER**

Bureau of Highway Maintenance  
September 17, 2009

To: All Applicants for Overweight Permits

Re: New Load / Axle Weight Restrictions  
Effective Monday, November 2, 2009  
Meeting and Discussion on Tuesday, September 29, 2009

Dear Permit Applicants:

As you may know, during the past year the New Hampshire Department of Transportation has been thoroughly reviewing all procedures, regulations, and rules that pertain to permits that allow overweight vehicles and loads to travel on New Hampshire's highways and bridges. The goal was to determine if current procedures were appropriate to protect the condition and safety of New Hampshire's roads and bridges with regards to overweight loads.

Part of this effort resulted in additional information being requested when applying for a permit to transport an overweight vehicle and load, specifically, individual axle loads, axle spacings, gross vehicle weight rating, gross combined weight rating, and various other equipment ratings. This again, was to ensure that the equipment being used to transport the overweight vehicle and load was adequate to safely complete the trip.

More recently, a review of the data from overweight permit applications determined that some combinations of equipment and loads were configured such that the resulting loads applied to the bridges and roadways could cause damage to these facilities. For this reason, the Department is revising the criteria by which a permit for transporting an overweight vehicle and load can be approved. The result is that a number of loads that previously would not have required, nor received, a bridge review will now require a bridge review prior to a permit being issued.

Criteria for specific loads and axle spacing combinations have been identified and will serve as limits for determining when a bridge review is required, as listed on the attachment. Whenever an application to transport an overweight vehicle and load is received, if it is above these limits, then a bridge review will be performed.

These limits will go into effect on Monday, November 2, 2009. It is recognized that many more bridge reviews will be required, in addition to those that currently undergo a bridge review. The Department also recognizes that timely reviews and responses to applications are critical to your business and operations. For this reason, additional staff has been retained to assist with this effort and to ensure that all bridge reviews will be processed in a timely manner.

That being said, the Applicant will not receive immediate approval for overweight vehicles and loads that exceed these limits. The requested information must be submitted, using current procedures, and if necessary, a bridge review will be performed. This overall process is estimated to take a minimum of 2+ hours to process, and we will endeavor to perform these reviews as quickly as possible. However, when considering the number of bridge reviews anticipated with these changes, and the complexity of some of the applications, there will be times when the bridge review cannot be completed within the ideal 2-hour time frame. Therefore, all Applicants should plan accordingly when preparing and submitting their applications.

It is recognized that these proposed changes will create some disruption in the issuance of permits for overweight vehicles and loads. However, the safety of the traveling public and the integrity of the transportation infrastructure are of critical importance. The Department is committed to working cooperatively with the trucking industry to assure that this change is implemented with minimal disruption to your activities.

The Department believes that permits will be issued for the vast majority of overweight vehicles and loads currently being submitted. However, we are very concerned with the potential damage being caused to our transportation infrastructure by the overweight vehicles and loads that currently exceed the new limits.

A meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2009 from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm in Room 114 at the Department's offices at 7 Hazen Drive in Concord. At that time, we will discuss these changes, answer questions, and further explain the reasons that these new restrictions for permitting overweight vehicles and loads are necessary. You are invited to attend this discussion and exchange of information regarding the need for the proposed revisions.

If you have any questions, please contact Jim Gilbert, Oversize/Overweight Permit Supervisor, at (603)-271-6489.

Sincerely

*(Signed)*

Caleb B. Dobbins, PE  
Highway Maintenance Engineer

cc: Commissioner John Barthelmes, NH Department of Safety  
NHDOT Commissioner George N. Campbell, Jr., NH Department of Transportation  
David J. Brillhart, Assistant Commissioner/Chief Engineer, NH Department of Transportation  
Caleb Dobbins, State Maintenance Engineer, NHDOT  
David Powelson, Chief, Existing Bridge Section, NHDOT

**OS/OW Permit shall be submitted to Bridge Design for bridge review if:**

<b>Description of bridge review “trigger”:</b>
Any bridge on the proposed route has a load posting or weight restriction
Any axle spacing less than 4'-0"
Any single axle exceeds 27,500 pounds. (10'-0" or more to any adjacent axle)
Any axle of a tandem group exceeds 25,000 pounds. (see note 2)
Any axle of a tridem group exceeds 22,500 pounds. (see note 2)
Any axle of a quad group exceeds 20,000 pounds. (see note 2)
Any group of five axles. (see note 2)
Any 2-Axle Single Unit exceeds 55,000 pounds.
Any 3-Axle Single Unit exceeds 72,500 pounds.
Any 4-Axle Single Unit exceeds 90,000 pounds.
Any 5-Axle Single Unit exceeds 100,000 pounds.
Any Single Unit, with 6 or more axles, exceeds 110,000 pounds.
Any 3-Axle combination Unit exceeds 82,500 pounds.
Any 4-Axle combination Unit exceeds 95,000 pounds.
Any 5-Axle Combination Vehicle exceeds 108,000 pounds.
Any 6-Axle Combination Vehicle exceeds 120,000 pounds.
Any 7-Axle Combination Vehicle exceeds 130,000 pounds.
Any Combination Vehicle, with 8 or more axles, exceeds 149,999 pounds.

Note 1) RSA 266:18-c states that a vehicle or combination of vehicles shall not be driven or moved over any bridge or other structure on any way if the weight of such vehicle, or combination of vehicles and load, is greater than the capacity of the structure as shown by a sign on the right side of or overhead on the structure. It is assumed that the weight of the OS/OW permit vehicle will be in excess of the provisions of RSA 266:18-b, and therefore will exceed the posted capacity of the bridge.

Note 2) For purposes of this table, axles together are considered a group of axles (tandem, tridem, quad, etc.) when each individual axle space in the group is less than 10'-0".

Note 3) Speed of permit vehicle shall not exceed 20 miles per hour while crossing bridges (except for bridges on the interstate and turnpike system, or corridors designed to meet interstate standards...including NH101 from Manchester to Hampton, etc.).