

PRESS RELEASE



State Senator Wes Shoemyer – 18th District

State Capitol – Room 434
201 West Capitol Avenue
Jefferson City, MO 65101-6806
Phone: (573) 751-7852

For Immediate Release: November 2, 2009

SEN. SHOEMYER SAYS EMERGENCY DECLARATION WILL HELP FARMERS WITH FALL HARVEST

JEFFERSON CITY – The Missouri Department of Transportation has issued an emergency declaration waiving some regulations to help farmers harvest their crops and haul them to grain elevators and processors. The fall harvest has been delayed by an unusually wet October. With no rain in the immediate forecast, the Missouri Department of Agriculture asked MODOT to waive certain rules to help farmers scrambling to get their crops out of the fields and into storage. The emergency declaration will allow farmers to run their loaded trucks at 10% above the required weight limit. The Agriculture Department also has asked that farmers receive a 60-day waiver to the hours-of-service requirements.

“A lot of farmers got a late start planting their crops due to the wet spring, and the heavy rains we received last month made it impossible to get those crops out of the fields,” Sen. Wes Shoemyer said. “I thank the Governor, MODOT and Agriculture Director John Hagler for recognizing the problems our farmers are facing and for taking steps to help us finish the fall harvest.”

Under MODOT’s emergency declaration, Missouri farmers will be required to follow these guidelines:

- Loaded, gross weight cannot be greater than 10% above the gross vehicle weight rating of the vehicle licensed weight;
- Limit the transport of row crops from the farm to a local storage facility and empty return trips to the farm;
- When crossing a bridge, the driver must not exceed 45 mph and must center the truck between the two lanes of the bridge;
- No interstate travel is permitted
- While transporting crops from farm to storage, farmers are not required to follow hours-of-service laws, and;
- Farmers must carry a copy of the emergency declaration in each vehicle that operates in response to these relief efforts.

Sen. Shoemyer reminds everyone to be aware of the increased agricultural traffic in the next couple of weeks as farmers rush to get their crops out of the fields.

“I just want folks to be on the lookout for slow-moving trucks and combines on our rural roads,” Sen. Shoemyer said. “The fall harvest is a busy time anyway, but with so many farmers just now getting into their fields after a wet October, the next couple of weeks will be a beehive of activity on our farms and in our rural communities. I hope everyone keeps safety in the back of their minds during this critical time.”

Farmers can download and print an emergency declaration by visiting the following website: www.modot.org/mcs. Information is also available at the Department of Agriculture website at www.mda.mo.gov.

###