

Three Ports of Entry convert to phone service

In the next few months, the Motor Carrier Transportation Division (MCTD) is closing its Registration Offices at three Ports of Entry and replacing person-to-person over-the-counter service with the installation of phones and fax machines that truck drivers can use at least from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays to connect with MCTD Headquarters in Salem for registration and over-dimension permit service.

Effective June 1, 2012, MCTD is closing the Registration Office at the Farewell Bend Port of Entry on the Idaho border and reassigning three staff persons there to motor carrier enforcement officer duties.

Then effective October 1, 2012, it's closing the Registration Offices at the Ashland Port of Entry on the California border and the Umatilla Port of Entry on the Washington border and offering to relocate eight staff persons to Salem where they're most needed.

Size and weight enforcement, Green Light weigh station preclearance, and safety inspection activities will all continue as usual at these three locations.

The Ashland, Farewell Bend, and Umatilla Registration Offices had been open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. But an analysis of activity there shows a steady decline

in the need for over-the-counter service. MCTD's Salem Headquarters, on the other hand, has experienced a steady demand for service.

Last year, the Salem staff answered 220,517 calls just on weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Staff in the 24/7 Service Center answered another 102,166 calls at all other hours last year. As the call volumes peaked and managers tried to reduce phone wait times, they recently started forwarding overflow calls to field office staff. That got them thinking about just relocating the staff to Salem instead.

The vast majority of truck drivers stopping on weekdays for over-the-counter service at the Ashland, Farewell Bend, and Umatilla field offices just need registration trip permits or weight-mile tax temporary passes. That can be accomplished by phone and fax.

MCTD offers service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, via both its Phone Service Center – 503-378-6699 – and Internet site – OregonTruckingOnline.com. Motor carriers are expected to plan ahead before coming to Oregon. Drivers entering the state without credentials are subject to citation and a \$435 fine.

