

CASE 885B AWD Motor Grader Proves Its Meddle in Big Sky Country

As Road Supervisor for Toole County, Mont., Lloyd Omdahl understands the importance of power and versatility in his equipment. With nearly 2,000 square miles of land—about the size of Delaware—and just over 5,200 residents, it's a county that needs to make the most of its equipment purchases.

When the county needed a new Motor Grader last year, Omdahl decided to give the CASE 885B AWD (all wheel drive) a try.

"It was the middle of winter," Omdahl recalls. "We were impressed with our initial test, so the first day we had the machine we put it on a road job with our other three machines and it outworked every grader we had out there."

The geography of the county often requires the road crew to come up with creative ways to get the job done with the equipment on hand. Currently, Toole County is using their CASE motor grader for grading and rebuilding roads, ditching, snow removal, bulldozing and more. The all wheel drive design helps improve tractive performance, steering and side draft control in challenging conditions, including snow, mud and sand.

"You name it," Omdahl said. "We've used it for just about everything we do."

On a recent project, the county needed to build a road across alkali flats. "We brought out these boulders that were about three feet in diameter and we used its dozer blade to push them into the flats so we could build a road across it. Then, since we didn't have the crawler along to push the scraper, we just used the motor grader to push it and it turned out great."

Omdahl said he was particularly impressed with the power of the machine and the productivity he was able to achieve.

"The power to weight ratio and gearing is great," Omdahl said, "and that translates to more productivity. Head to head, it moves more dirt than our other graders. It just buries our other machines."

One of the reasons the 885B AWD was able to exceed Omdahl's expectations is the redesigned multi-radius involute moldboard, which cuts, mixes and rolls material more efficiently than a constant-radius unit.

"The new moldboard design has a sharper angle on the bottom instead of the same radius throughout," Omdahl noted, "and that really cuts the dirt, pulls it up and rolls it much faster than we're used to."

In addition to significant increases in productivity, the improved cutting and turning power of the moldboard design also provides Omdahl with better fuel efficiency.

Additional features that Omdahl found useful are the front articulation and all-wheel drive. He said the all-wheel drive is particularly useful for keeping the front-end stable in ditching jobs. The front articulation, he said, was a departure from the rear articulating machines he was used to, but that he quickly warmed up to its benefits.

"The front articulation took a little getting used to," he said, "but once we got used to it, we found that it gives us a better turn radius and when we're ditching we use it quite a bit to offset the front end."

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