

Road Projects in LaGrange County  
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In LaGrange County, located in Northeastern Indiana, the LaGrange County Highway Department is in charge of the maintenance of the county roads. One of our projects that become necessary is when the dirt and sod build up along the edge of the road preventing the water from running off the road. The excess dirt must be removed so that the water is able to drain off. We call this process berming.

To accomplish this we use a road grader, a berm loader and dump trucks. The grader operator cuts approximately two (2) feet of the berm beyond the traveled part of the roadway and pulls it onto the road. On a gravel road the driver pulls it closer to the center of the road because the road is normally flatter there which makes it easier to pick up. On a paved road, he shifts the blade sideways toward the ditch and places it at more of an angle which pulls the dirt and sod out 5 or 6 feet which will leave the windrow underneath the grader where the rear tires straddle it. The grader can be pulled sideways if the dirt and sod are thick or if there are tree roots or rocks. To help control the grader the front wheels are tilted at an angle away from the edge of the road. As the grader is pulling out a row of berm dirt, the berm loader follows a short distance behind.



The berm loader is designed to load the sod and dirt into a truck to be hauled away. At the front end of the berm loader is a heavy paddle chain that runs on top of the row to pull the window onto a rubber conveyor belt that runs the length of the machine at an upward angle to elevate the dirt into a dump truck. As the berm loader is driven forward the truck driver backs along behind the berm loader at the same speed.



The dump truck must be kept under the discharge of the conveyor to allow the dirt to fall into the truck bed. To fill the truck from front to back the truck driver speeds up or slows down slightly as they are loading. When the truck is full the dirt is hauled to anyone who wants it, if they are located close to the area where we are berming. Mostly we haul to local farmers to fill in lows spots in their fields.

We do berming in the spring before our summer projects and again in the fall before the ground freezes.

Berming is just one of the ways the LaGrange County Highway Department keep the roads well maintained and safer for the people that travel our county roads.