



CLEAN AND COMPACT

Midland Machinery introduces a new foldable road widener as the company paves the way to Final Tier 4 compliance

Midland Machinery introduces a new model road widener that can be transported without a permit. The machine folds up to a maximum 98.5-inch (2.5-meter) width.

Many roads have taken a turn for the better thanks to advancements in road wideners. Just adding a few feet of pavement to a lane or turning lane can help relieve traffic pressure and improve road safety. In this issue, we feature an interview with Barre Banks, president of Midland Machinery Co. Inc. of Tonawanda, New York. As a manufacturer of equipment designed to widen roads, Midland Machinery introduces a new foldable model that can be transported without a road permit. Banks talks about the new SPF-8 and the road he's traveled to achieve Final Tier 4 compliance.

PowerSource: Give us a bit of history. Has the process of road widening changed over the years?

Banks: The classic way to widen a road was to excavate next to the road and place a layer of material into that strip to make it load bearing. It wasn't easy to pour, level, and strike it off. We entered the business in the 1980s with offset road wideners with a conveyor and strike-off blade. It made road widening faster and less costly, and places just the right amount of material so there is no wasted product. The road widener was able to do the work of three or four machines.

PowerSource: Fast-forward three decades — at the 2015 World of Asphalt, Midland Machinery unveiled the SPF-8. What's different about this road widener?

Banks: Road wideners are typically very wide and need hauling permits to be moved. The SPF-8 is a foldable machine that, when in transport mode, measures only 98.5 inches (2.5 meters). It can be folded up and trucked around town or across the country — day, night, or weekends — without a hauling permit. It's a whole new concept.

PowerSource: Is this a new design from the ground up?

Banks: It's a new design, but all of the components are time-tested and proven — even the John Deere engine.

PowerSource: Tell us about the machine when it's unfolded and on the job.

Banks: The SPF-8 is capable of spreading material from 1 to 8 feet (0.3 to 2.4 meters). With the push of a button on the dash, the blade can be moved out or retracted. If you come up to a signpost, you can pull the blade in, go around the sign, and put it back out. It's double-sided and will dispense material from the right or left side of the machine.

PowerSource: What other uses does it have aside from widening roads?

Banks: It's used to build and maintain shoulders, turning lanes, and road rehabilitation, and utility cuts that need to go along the road. It can be used to backfill a trench or cover newly installed utilities, like road edge drain, sewer lines, and fiber-optic cables.

PowerSource: The 85-hp (63-kW) PowerTech 4.5L engine has powered most of your road wideners. Now you have introduced the new SPF-8 with Final Tier 4/Stage IV engine.

Banks: We have one prototype built with a 74-hp (55-kW) PowerTech EWX 4.5L Final Tier 4 engine.

PowerSource: How would you describe the package size or footprint of this engine?

Banks: The aftertreatment takes up a little more space, but not a lot. The size of the housing that surrounds the engine is the same as before.

PowerSource: What was your impression when you turn the key?

Banks: It burns so clean, at first we forgot to take the machine out of the building!

PowerSource: What engine characteristics are most important to you?

Banks: Service and support. Dealer support is essential to having a good relationship with our end users. We export to Europe, Russia, and eastern Asia. We want to make sure the support was there for parts and warranty and to make sure our customers don't have to go too far to find it.

PowerSource: How would you describe the power and performance of John Deere engines?

Banks: I guess I could brag: All of our machines are designed to travel up a 10 percent grade at full load. With the 74-hp (55-kW) engine, the SPF-8 can push a fully loaded 18-wheeler weighing 80,000 pounds (36 metric tons) with its blade extended out as far as it can go, loaded to the max. The power also shows up when we travel from job to job. Engine response is good in high and low gear.

PowerSource: And you have a long history with John Deere, don't you?

Banks: For the last 20 years, we've been exclusively powering our machines with John Deere engines from Superior Diesel. We have about 600 John Deere-powered machines still out there working day in and day out — trouble-free. Longevity has been fantastic. We have such a good track record with them. Between longevity and the support from Superior Diesel and the dealers, it doesn't seem reasonable to do business with anyone else.

 **Distributor:** Superior Diesel, Rhinelander, Wisconsin, www.sdiesel.com



A 74-hp (55-kW) PowerTech EWX 4.5L Final Tier 4 engine supplies hydraulic power to the new SPF-8 road widener.



Midland Machinery President Barre Banks and his wife, Amy, recently introduced a road widener with a Final Tier 4/Stage IV engine.



The hydrostatic, self-propelled SPF-8 pushes a semi-truck as it unloads material into its hopper. A variable speed conveyor feeds the material at a rate of 500 tons (454 metric tons) per hour. Behind it, an asphalt machine will lay a base and topover over the reclaimed material.