

**Ag  
World**



During elevator moves, Digney always has at least one Caterpillar and a couple big tractors standing by to help skid dollies around corners.

**“26,000 BU. BUILDINGS  
WEIGH 150-200 TONS”**

**He Moves Grain Elevators  
Onto Farms For Storage**

When you drive through the country near Raymore, Sask., you can't help but noticing some unusual sights. Towering high above many of the farmsteads in and around the area are commercial grain elevators that you normally see only in town or alongside railroad tracks.

The man responsible for the king-size on-farm storage facilities is Leonard Digney who got into the grain elevator moving business to provide grain storage on his own farm. He's moved two 26,000 bu. elevators onto his own place and many others onto farms within a 50 miles radius of his home town of Raymore.

"It's the best storage you can find. Last year we had a good crop and filled both our elevators up. We're looking for another one to move onto our place," says Digney. Once on farm, the elevators are set up just as they would be commercially with dump pit, grain elevator and distributor to the 15 to 20 bins inside, and load-out augers.

Digney says commercial elevators, which he generally purchases for a nominal fee of just \$25 apiece, become available for many reasons. "Most companies are looking for bigger, more automated storage so they can cut costs. But that doesn't mean these buildings don't still have a lot of years left in them."

Although he has always farmed, the 73-year-old Digney has also been in the moving business for nearly 50 years. Until he started moving grain elevators, he moved mostly barns and houses. To move elevators, which can weigh as much as 150 to 200 tons, he had to build big equipment to handle them, including special hydraulic jacks and blocks and big moving "dollies".

The elevators Digney moves are wood-cribbed so they're built solid but still must be kept "square" when moving. The three dollies he built to carry the elevators provide support at three points, rather than four, to keep the building square even when it moves during transport.

In transport, elevators are carried by a total of 72 wheels. The two rear elevator-moving dollies each have 24 wheels mounted in pairs of two. Each set of duals is individually mounted and flexes on a hydraulic shock. Ahead of the two dollies is a third dolly, fitted with wheels, that provides the third leg of the moving "3-pt." An 8-wheeled tandem truck, which pulls the loaded dollies, also carries some of the weight.

To minimize damage to roads, Digney only moves elevators when there's at least 2 ft. of frost in the ground in winter. Without frost, the moves might not even be possible because of the tremendous weight of the buildings.

Once loaded, Digney moves the elevator down the road at speeds of 4 to 5 mph. He always has at least one Caterpillar and one or two big tractors standing by. For example, when making 90° turns, it's sometimes necessary to skid the dollies around the corner with the Caterpillar. The moving crew also has to take down any power lines that cross the road. The furthest Digney has ever transported an elevator is about 15 miles. Total charge to the farmer-customer is around \$20,000.

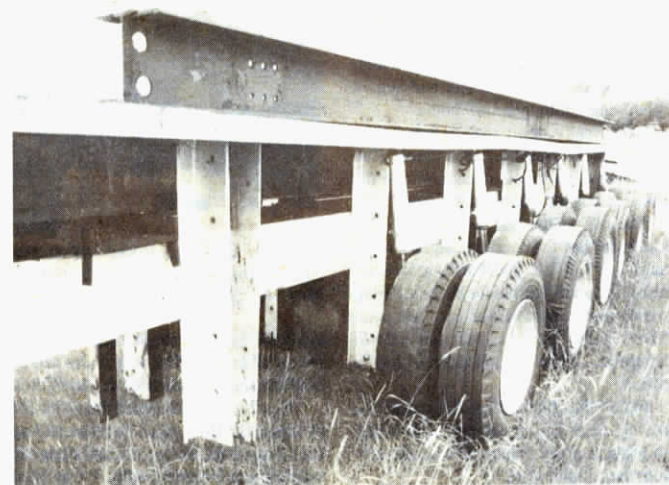
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**Editor's Note:** Most of what goes into Ag World stems from story ideas sent to us by readers. This special section of FARM SHOW touches on the lighter side of farming and ranching — everything from human interest stories, to unusual hobbies, to unique things farm families are doing for fun or profit.

If you've read or heard a good Ag World type story you'd like to share with others, send it to: FARM SHOW, Box 1029, Lakeville, Minn. 55044.



Digney moved two 26,000 bu. elevators onto his own farm. He bought the elevators for \$25 apiece.



This moving "dolly", which is one of three that Digney built to move elevators, has 24 independently mounted truck-size wheels.