

Big transformer headed to SRP plant

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The world's largest airplane will be headed for Mesa's Williams Gateway Airport Thursday night.

International freight company Kuehne and Nagel will bring in a 285,000-pound transformer for Salt River Project aboard the Antonov 225.

The Antonov 225 is the world's largest aircraft, with a 290-foot wingspan and a payload of 250 tons. It was originally built to carry the Soviet Buran Space Shuttle.

The mega aircraft will remain on runway 30 overnight and the four-hour unloading process will begin very early Friday morning.

A job of this size requires the help of many local businesses, including Phoenix-based Maxim Crane Works and Precision Heavy Haul. Both companies will be involved in moving the transformer from Williams Gateway along Power Road and Baseline Road to the SRP Kyrene/Santan Generating Plant in Tempe.

The plane, cargo and crew will be the first to clear Customs since the opening of an on-site U.S. Customs inspection facility at Williams Gateway Airport last month.

For more information on SRP, visit its Web site at <http://www.srpnet.com>.

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