Trucker Safety Meeting Kit

What’s At Stake

Truck driving is one of the most dangerous occupations in Canada, and in the U. S. In addition to driving accidents, truckers are also at high risk for equipment-related injuries and ergonomic injuries.

What’s the Danger

DANGERS OF TRUCK DRIVING

One of the main causes of truck accidents is negligent driving by the person behind the wheel of the truck. There are many risk factors for truck drivers that make them more likely to cause an accident.

Health Problems

Driving a truck is a sedentary job, which means drivers are sitting for long periods of time, which can lead to numerous health problems

Factors that can contribute to health issues for truck drivers include:

- Loading and unloading heavy cargo (truck drivers have a high rate of musculoskeletal injuries)
- Exposure to hazardous chemicals
- Exposure to diesel fumes that can cause lung problems and respiratory issues
- Extreme fatigue
- Smoking, which increases the chance of lung problems and cancer
- Increased likelihood of dependence on stimulants to stay awake
- Increased likelihood of depression due to being isolated on

the job

The nature of truck driving makes many drivers susceptible to serious health problems, such as:

- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Cancer
- Musculoskeletal injuries
- Cardiovascular disease
- Elevated blood pressure
- High blood sugar
- Increased cholesterol levels
- Stress
- Sleep apnea

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

BEST TRUCKER SAFETY DRIVER PROTOCOL

1. **Drive Defensively**

Stay aware of your blind spots: 10-15 feet in front of you, directly behind your trailer, on the passenger side from the door to the back of your sleeper unit, and on the driver side from the front bumper to the nose of the trailer. Checking your mirrors every 3-5 seconds can help you maintain 360 degrees of awareness at all times.

1. **Maintenance Schedules**

Keep a regular maintenance schedule for operating a commercial vehicle safely. Maintenance issues are a leading cause for tractor trailer accidents.

1. **Pre & Post Trip Inspections**

When inspecting your vehicle pay close attention to:

Your braking system which includes your air compressor, air brake lines, brake pads, drums or rotors and calipers, low air pressure alarm and brake lights

Your steering system which includes the amount of play in your steering column, rack and pinion components, power steering fluid and your steering tires

1. **Avoid unsafe areas at bad times and stay alert in truck yards and loading docks**

There are some places you just don't want to visit outside of daylight hours. You don't always know where those areas are, especially when you're driving new routes.

1. **Always do a circle check**

Circle checks are a small step that can save a lot of time and energy later.

1. **Use caution on trailer decks and loads**

It's tempting to climb up the back of your rig. You might just be going up for a quick fix after all.

1. **Avoid Distractions**

Distracted driving has grown to become one of the greatest threats to your safety on the road. The odds of being involved in a crash, near crash, or unintentional lane deviation are 23.2 times greater for truck and bus drivers who are texting while driving.

1. **Prepare for Dangerous Road Conditions**

Icy roads – Pay attention to weather and road condition reports and plan your trip around winter conditions.

Snow – Snow can compact into ice so caution is needed on roads that have not been plowed.

Rain – Rain conditions can make the roadway slick because of oil and other materials present on the road.

Fog – When encountering heavy fog slow down and keep your headlights on low beam to see better.

Disabled vehicles – When approaching disabled vehicle on the side of the road, move over and slow down.

Road construction – When entering road construction observe all posted speed limits and other signs.

Accidents – If you come up on an accident, slow down if it’s possible to maneuver around the accident.

Animals on the road – Do not swerve or slam on your brakes if an animal is on the roadway.

1. **Take Adequate Breaks**

Driver fatigue is another leading cause of accidents in the trucking industry. Especially when you first start your truck driving career, a great tip for new truck drivers is to take breaks to lower fatigue like drivers’ knee.

1. **Invest in a Dash Cam**

To protect yourself from unjust accusations, legal penalties, increased insurance costs, and potential termination by your employer, invest in a quality dash cam.

1. **Maintain Space Cushion**

If conditions are unsafe use extra caution and give yourself even more space.

FINAL WORD

Other drivers are one of the big dangers of being a truck driver. Be alert to your surroundings and the other vehicles around you.