

Towing Industry – Driver Safety

Tow truck drivers transport vehicles that are wrecked, non-functional, repossessed and illegally parked. They are the saviors of many motorists who find themselves stranded due to an accident, mechanical breakdown or other problem with their vehicle. Drivers are available 24 hours each day, 7 days a week. Providing roadside vehicle assistance can be fraught with hazards, especially when towing is involved. To stay safe, drivers should take into account the following safety concerns.



COMMUNICATION

You should make certain that someone is aware of your destination and planned route. You should also inform them of the location that the vehicle will be delivered to along with the name of the person requesting the service and their telephone number.



CAUTION LOADING VEHICLES

Tow truck drivers must be particularly cautious when standing outside of their truck. Caution is required when they are loading a vehicle or otherwise helping a stranded motorist. This is how many accidents occur which can result in the death. A recent California case involved a tow truck driver who was struck and killed upon impact by a hit-and-run driver.

PLANNED ROUTE

Take the time to plan your route carefully. Once you arrive at the destination you should proceed with caution especially if something appears to be amiss. An Illinois case highlighted a situation where a tow truck driver stopped to assist a broken down vehicle. The occupants robbed the tow truck driver at gunpoint and fled the scene. Fortunately, the driver was not injured.

HEALTH & FITNESS

Tow truck drivers must have a certain level of [health and fitness](#) to perform their jobs well. They should also have knowledge of proper lifting techniques to avoid [back](#) and shoulder injuries. Engaging in regular [exercise](#) will help drivers stay fit and engage in maneuvers such as mounting, bending, lifting and stretching with relative ease. However, you should never strain or overreach to perform your job. Also, do not jump up or down into the cab of the truck when loading as this can injure your [knees](#), ankles, hips and even cause you to stumble or fall.

ALERTNESS

A sleepy driver is a dangerous driver. Be [sharp and alert](#). It is important to avoid distractions. Avoid eating heavy foods and the use of alcohol, drugs and medications that tend to cause drowsiness. Stay focused and keep your eyes on the road.



DEFENSIVE DRIVING

[Defensive driving](#) training is designed to equip motorists with the tools necessary to identify problems that may arise while driving. Driving defensively will enable you to be more aware of potential road hazards and vehicles in blind spots.



CLOTHING

Drivers should wear protective gloves, a helmet and a fluorescent safety vest (in green, orange or yellow) that meets American National Standards Institute standards. They should wear shoes that have slip-resistant soles and steel toes to minimize the possibility of foot injuries. Appropriate gear should be worn in inclement weather conditions such as rain or snow.

Source: <http://www.truckingsos.com/driver-personal-safety/>