

Transportation Safety

Training ADVISOR

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Preventive maintenance

The key to reliable vehicle performance

Help your drivers gain
traction in tire inspections

500+ CMVs get parked
during safety blitz

When is a DVIR required?

Information and resources to help your drivers operate safely



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In This Issue

Training Blueprint3

There's no such thing as too many inspections!

Training Handout4

Show drivers how they can use their senses to help prevent problems.

Test Your Knowledge5

Find the gaps in your drivers' preventive maintenance knowledge.

Quick read: Help your drivers gain traction in tire inspections.6

Learn how your drivers can help reduce defective tire costs with the right set of skills.

500+ CMVs get parked during safety blitz6

Use the data from this annual event to make sure your fleet is always brake-safety ready.

Expert Help7

How many minutes should a pretrip inspection on a truck and trailer take?



MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Preventive checklist to the rescue!

With so much for drivers to keep track of, little details can sometimes slip through the cracks. Help your drivers by offering a preventive maintenance checklist they can use for pretrip, enroute, and post-trip inspections any time.

Customize the checklist based on the needs of your drivers and your organization.

- Check **wheels, rims, and tire condition**, including pressure and tread depth.
- Inspect all **lights, signals, and reflectors**.
- Check **windshield wipers and washer fluid**.
- Inspect **mirrors** for proper adjustment and visibility.
- Check the condition of **seat belts**.
- Make sure the **vehicle's horn** works.
- Inspect the condition of the **vehicle's body and exterior**.
- Check the **engine oil** level and condition.
- Inspect the **coolant** level and condition.
- Check the **battery and terminals** for corrosion.
- Inspect the entire **brake system**.
- Check the **steering system** for any abnormalities.
- Inspect the **suspension system** for any signs of wear or damage.
- Check the **exhaust system** for leaks or damage.
- Inspect the **fuel system** for any leaks or damage.
- Check the **coupling devices** (if applicable).
- Make sure all required **emergency equipment** is on the vehicle.

If you as a driver trainer are also checking training vehicles, you may want to add a few extra items to *your* checklist:

- Inspect the **training vehicle's interior** for cleanliness and organization.
- Check the **functionality of any training equipment or devices** used during instruction.
- Check the functionality of any **communication devices** used during training, such as two-way radios or intercom systems.
- Inspect the condition of any **training materials or resources** carried in the vehicle. ♦



Lucero Truskowski

Lucero Truskowski joined J. J. Keller & Associates, Inc. as an Associate Editor in 2022. Lucero edits, writes, and researches content on a variety of topics, including transportation, human resources, and driver training. She holds a Master of Science (MS) in Professional Writing from New York University.



TRAINING BLUEPRINT — PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE

The key to reliable vehicle performance

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) require drivers to conduct a pretrip inspection and enroute/cargo securement inspections. Drivers must also submit a driver vehicle inspection report (DVIR) as part of the post-trip inspection process when a defect is discovered.

As a best practice, train your drivers to inspect their vehicles each time they stop.

TIP: Remind drivers that they benefit the most from well-maintained vehicles. Performing all required inspections will reduce the risk of receiving a citation or being stranded at the side of the highway waiting for a tow.

What should the driver do?

Drivers are an important part of the carrier's preventive maintenance program, acting as a first defense against preventable issues.

Driver responsibilities include:

- **Pretrip inspections:** Verify that the vehicle is in safe operating condition, review the most recent DVIR, and sign the DVIR to acknowledge that repairs were performed, if applicable.
- **Enroute and cargo securement inspections:** Check cargo and load-securing devices within the first 50 miles of a trip and recheck cargo and load-securing devices when there is a change of duty status, after driving the vehicle for 3 hours, or after traveling 150 miles (whichever is first).
- **Post-trip inspection:** Complete and sign the DVIR to report all defects discovered during that day.

In addition, drivers should:

- **Listen** for unusual or abnormal equipment sounds. Thumps, rattles, squeaks, bumps, squeals, and hisses can all be signals for trouble. If anything doesn't sound right, it should be reported to maintenance.
- Take note of **unusual odors** that may signal trouble. The smell of burning rubber, insulation, or oil can mean problems. Your drivers might help make an early diagnosis through a good sense of smell.
- **Feel** changes in the vehicle's response. Steering, braking, shifting, and other handling operations all have unique "feels" in a particular vehicle. If the vehicle doesn't seem to behave the way it should,

report it promptly. Little problems cost much less to fix and require less downtime.

- **Observe** the equipment carefully when completing required routine inspections. Defects in wiring, lights, cables, tires, splash guards, locks, air lines, coupling devices, fifth wheels, tarps and fasteners, landing gear, brakes, and various accessories should all be carefully noted and reported to the maintenance department.

TIP: Make sure your drivers understand the carrier's preventive maintenance policy so it's clear how daily inspections fit into the bigger picture.

What are the carrier's responsibilities?

In addition to meeting the regulatory requirements, motor carriers should view vehicle maintenance as an investment in their fleet and the safety of their drivers. Emphasizing the importance of preventive maintenance also gives carriers an opportunity to create a culture of shared responsibility.

Carrier responsibilities include:

- **Systematic inspections, repairs, and maintenance:** Perform preventive maintenance on vehicles based on miles driven or time, such as doing prescribed maintenance every 10,000 miles or every two months.
- **Periodic (annual) inspection:** Ensure vehicles undergo a periodic/annual inspection at least once per year.
- **As-needed repairs:** Repair issues noted on the DVIR before the vehicle is sent back out on the road. ♦

TIP: Show drivers a copy of your company's DVIR form and walk them through how to fill it out. Make sure they know who to submit the completed form to.





TRAINING HANDOUT — PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE

Observe and communicate



Listen for unusual sounds (rattles, squeaks).



Smell for unusual odors (burning rubber, hot oil).



Feel for changes in the vehicle's response (steering, braking, shifting).



Observe all equipment carefully during routine inspections (watch for defects).



Report all discovered problems to the motor carrier.

Driver responsibilities

- Know how to **detect** maintenance and repair needs.
- Conduct thorough pretrip, enroute, and post-trip **inspections**.
- Make sure the vehicle's **annual inspection** is current.
- Stop and **check** for potential problems. ♦



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE — MAINTENANCE

1. The driver is responsible for:
 - A. Pretrip inspections
 - B. Enroute inspections
 - C. Post-trip inspections
 - D. All of the above

2. Carriers are only responsible for fixing existing problems on a vehicle.
 - A. True
 - B. False

3. What does signing the DVIR during a pretrip inspection prove?
 - A. That the cargo is secured
 - B. That repairs have been scheduled
 - C. That repairs have been performed
 - D. None of the above

4. Since drivers are familiar with their vehicles, they can sometimes “feel” when something isn’t working correctly.
 - A. True
 - B. False

5. Once on the road, drivers should check cargo and load-securing devices within the first:
 - A. 10 miles
 - B. 20 miles
 - C. 50 miles
 - D. 75 miles ♦

NAME: _____ DATE: _____



Quick read: Help your drivers gain traction in tire inspections

Your commercial drivers can help deflate the cost of downtime and repairs associated with damaged tires. Given the right tools and training, they are your first line of defense against a defective tire.

Any detected problems should be reported by your drivers to the fleet maintenance shop to be addressed.

Equip your drivers

Make sure your drivers are equipped with the proper tools to help identify and address a defective tire.

Commonly issued equipment includes:

- An axe handle, hammer, or “tire buddy” used for checking tires when hot. “Thumping” tires is recommended any time the vehicle is parked.
- A good pair of pliers for removing objects from the tires.
- A quality tire pressure gauge. The tire gauges must themselves be checked frequently to make sure that they are accurate. If they are off by more than 5 psi, they should be replaced or repaired.
- A tire depth gauge.

In addition, it’s recommended that drivers maintain a tire-pressure log. This log could appear on maintenance inspection reports, pretrip inspection reports, or a post-trip DVIR.

500+ CMVs get parked during unannounced annual safety blitz

The Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance’s (CVSA’s) 2024 unannounced one-day brake safety event resulted in the removal of 570 commercial vehicles from roadways across Canada, the U.S., and Mexico.

Inspectors conducted 4,898 commercial motor vehicle (CMV) inspections and found 11.6 percent of commercial vehicles (570) traveling with brake-related vehicle violations. These critical violations resulted in immediate travel restrictions until the violation was corrected.

The top violation of the day was 20-percent brake violations, meaning “20 percent or more of the vehicle’s service brakes had an out-of-service condition resulting in a defective brake.”

Brake violation highlights

During Brake Safety Day 2024:

- **4,898** inspections were conducted.

Perform a visual inspection

Driver inspections should include a visual examination of the tire and rim, plus an inflation check.

When performing a tire inspection, your drivers should be trained to check:

- Rims for bends, cracks, or bad lug holes;
- Wheels for broken studs and nuts;
- Cap nuts for looseness (rust streaks); and
- Oil/grease seals for leaks.

Drivers should examine the tires for:

- Foreign objects embedded in the treads;
- Cuts, cracks, or separations;
- Bumps or bulges, tears, or cracks in sidewalls;
- Caps on valve stems;
- Low air pressure when the tires are cold; and
- Overheating by feeling the sidewall (during and after the trip).

Questions?

If you have a question about commercial motor vehicle tires or any other regulatory topic, please reach out to our compliance experts using Expert Help. Our team of experts is always happy to assist. ♦

- **4,328** (84.4 percent) commercial vehicles did not have brake-related out-of-service (OOS) violations.
- **570** (11.6 percent) commercial vehicles had brake-related OOS violations:
 - **330** vehicles (57.9 percent) had 20-percent brake violations.
 - **256** vehicles (44.9 percent) had other brake violations (worn brake lines, air leaks, broken brake drums, inoperative low-air warning device, etc.).
 - **73** vehicles (12.8 percent) had steer-related brake violations.
- **4** (4.5 percent) of 88 performance-based brake testers (PBBT) inspections failed to meet the 43.5-percent minimum required braking efficiency standard and were placed OOS.

What is Brake Safety Day?

Brake Safety Day is a one-day yearly inspection blitz conducted by the CVSA. During that day, CVSA-certified

inspectors conduct routine roadside inspections with an extra focus on brake systems and parts. The brake violation data collected from the blitz is then sent back to CVSA to glean more about regulatory compliance and enforcement standards and general safety on the roads.

Although the CVSA did not provide the date of this year's enforcement event (which probably took place in April) in its data announcement, it did reveal the results of the collected data.

Brake lining/pad focus data

The Brake Safety focus for 2024 was brake lining/pad health and safety, which may cause violations or OOS conditions that can impact a motor carrier's safety rating if not working properly.

Inspectors found:

- **114** brake lining/pad violations on power units.
 - **48** of these violations were for contamination.
- **71** brake lining/pad violations on towed units.
 - **23** of these violations were for cracks/voids in the linings/pads.

Other violations were for worn or loose/missing brake linings/pads that accounted for 72 violations for power and towed units combined. Overall, there were **185** total violations in all four violation categories among power and towed units. ♦

Expert Help

Your print publication gives you access to our Expert Help feature. Get answers to your toughest compliance questions from our team of experts, within one business day. Email us, privately and securely, at: asktheexpertprint@jjkeller.com.



Next Month's Topic: Fatigued driving

Fatigued or drowsy driving is one of the most common causes of vehicle accidents, despite being entirely preventable. According to recent statistics from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), fatigue was the one of the most common driver impairment factors associated with fatal large truck crashes. ♦

Expert Help: Questions of the Month

Question: How many minutes should a pretrip inspection on a truck and trailer take? DOT pickup truck and trailer? Bobtail truck?

Answer: The answer can depend on many variables, but it should take at least 10-15 minutes to do a complete inspection of a tractor-trailer or bus, and at least 5-10 minutes to inspect a small truck or bus.



The DOT has no rules or guidelines for the timing, so you are free to have your own inspection procedures and policies to some degree. Many companies set a "minimum 15 minutes" policy.

Question: When is a DVIR required?

Answer: If the vehicle is a commercial vehicle, as in a vehicle used in interstate commerce that weighs or is rated at 10,001 pounds or more (see the definition of a commercial motor vehicle in 390.5), the driver must submit a driver vehicle inspection report (DVIR) at the end of the workday if there is a defect. A carrier official must then address those defect(s). This involves either completing or overseeing the repair of those defect(s) or deciding if the repairs are not needed (the defect does not involve a safety-related component or system).

Once the defect is addressed, the carrier official signs the DVIR (see 396.11). The next driver to complete a pretrip inspection on the vehicle will also need to sign the DVIR, indicating that the repairs were completed or agreeing the repairs were not needed (396.13).

Keep in mind that although the regulations only require a DVIR when there is a defect, many companies have policies requiring a DVIR at all times, defect or not. ♦

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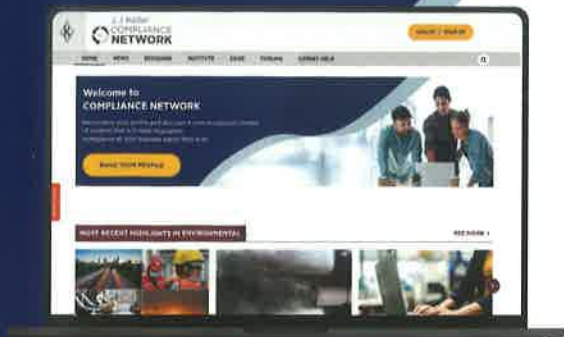
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