

Transportation Safety

Training ADVISOR

July 2025

Effects of drugs and alcohol

It's not just your driving that's affected

Drive like someone's
watching — they are!

Rest area or stress area?

What happens to your brain
on drugs?

Information and resources to help your drivers operate safely


J. J. Keller
& Associates, Inc.[®]
Since 1953

In This Issue

Training Blueprint3

Are your drivers familiar with the potential consequences of drug and alcohol use and abuse?

Training Handout.....4

Use this handout to help identify any potential substance issues.

Test Your Knowledge5

This short quiz will test your drivers' understanding of the potential consequences of drug and alcohol use and abuse.

Drive like someone's watching — because they are!6

CVSA's Operation Safe Driver week will take place July 13-19, 2025. Make sure you're ready!

Is it a rest area or a stress area?.....6

New research reveals information on the availability, costs, and provisions of truck parking in public rest areas.

Expert Help7

What are the consequences if a carrier allows a driver to perform safety-sensitive functions before the driver passes the return-to-duty test?



Lucero Truszkowski

Lucero Truszkowski 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.



MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

What happens to your brain on drugs?

Drugs and alcohol cause impairment; that much is clear. For professional drivers especially, it's essential to understand the many ways that drugs and alcohol affect their ability to drive safely.

While being safe on the road is the main concern, it's also important for drivers to understand that drug use and alcohol misuse can *also* have dire professional, health, financial, and personal consequences.

Interestingly, some of the most common dangers of drug use and alcohol misuse aren't talked about very often:

- When under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, people's inhibitions are lowered and they are **more likely to participate in dangerous activities and risky behaviors**. Driving under the influence and ingesting unknown substances can have serious consequences because more risk is the last thing a driver should bring to the road.
- While alcohol and drugs may be used by people suffering from depression and anxiety to self-medicate, the truth is that these substances will **ultimately worsen the symptoms** of mental illness. This leads to a vicious cycle of needing to self-medicate more often, which adds yet another risk to any situation.
- Nobody really knows what's in illegally obtained substances, because there are no regulations to enforce any rules. Drugs can be cut with products like baking powder, laundry detergent, or other drugs. Not only are buyers risking their health by using the drug, but they are putting themselves at **risk of being poisoned** by or overdosing on ingredients they weren't aware of.
- Drug use and alcohol misuse increase the risk of **becoming involved with the criminal justice system**. Arrests, fines, and jail time are all serious potential consequences that can follow you around for a lifetime. ♦





TRAINING BLUEPRINT — DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Drug use and alcohol misuse: It's not just your driving that's affected

Part 382 of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) places strict prohibitions on the use and abuse of alcohol and drugs by commercial motor vehicle (CMV) drivers. Part 382 prohibits drivers who possess a commercial driver's license (CDL) from possessing or using drugs or alcohol while performing any safety-sensitive functions, including driving. Drivers are also prohibited from performing any safety-sensitive functions, including driving, within four hours of using alcohol or using alcohol within eight hours following an accident.

CDL holders who fail or refuse a Part 382 drug or alcohol test must be referred to a substance abuse professional (SAP), complete a treatment plan, and pass a return-to-duty drug and/or alcohol test before returning to any safety-sensitive functions, including driving a CMV.

Part 392 of the FMCSRs includes drug and alcohol use prohibitions for drivers of all CMVs. This includes a vehicle or combination of vehicles that weighs or is rated at 10,001 pounds or more, a vehicle of any size transporting placardable hazmat, and certain types of passenger-carrying vehicles. These regulations prohibit being under the influence of, the possession of, or use of alcohol or drugs while on duty or driving a CMV.

But there are more than just regulatory considerations to worry about. When under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, people's inhibitions are lowered, and they are more likely to participate in dangerous activities. Drivers who have accurate information about the regulations, consequences, and treatment options are more likely to get help before a tragedy occurs.

TIP: Ask drivers if they can explain the career consequences of a failed drug or alcohol test. If there is any uncertainty, make sure to go over the consequences (both regulatory and non-regulatory).

Health consequences

Both drugs and alcohol can cause a variety of serious health problems. For example, when alcohol is consumed in high doses, it causes organ damage because the body can't get rid of the alcohol quickly enough.

Chronic misuse may lead to liver damage, pancreatitis, heart attack, stroke, brain damage, or cancer of the liver, esophagus, or larynx. Alcohol misuse can also cause hypertension, a weakened immune system, and malnutrition. Heavy drinking will shorten a lifespan by 10 years, on average.

Drugs can also cause significant health problems. The most obvious risk of drug use is overdose, but drug use can also lead to memory loss, anxiety, organ damage, cancer, and a host of other health problems.

TIP: Not all use disorders require in-patient treatment, especially if caught early. It's possible to receive treatment without having to take time off work. Knowing this may alleviate some financial worry for drivers who may consider seeking help.

Financial consequences

Drugs aren't cheap, and people with a substance use disorder may spend thousands of dollars a month to feed their addiction. Not only is this money that can't be put toward other things, but people who have use disorders may steal money, credit cards, or other valuables; take out a second mortgage on their home; sell valuable items; or wipe out college and retirement accounts to obtain the funds they need to maintain their substance habit.

Relationship consequences

When you use drugs or misuse alcohol, those things can take priority over the people you love. Family members and friends may say:

- They can't count on you to do what you say you're going to do,
- Your moods are unpredictable and irrational,
- You've become verbally or physically abusive,
- You don't spend time with them or do the things you used to do together, or
- You cause them to worry that you may hurt yourself or someone else.

When children are involved, the consequences of your drinking or drug use may have lasting effects on what they consider to be healthy, loving relationships.

TIP: Finish your training with a question-and-answer session to make sure everyone understands the impacts of drugs and alcohol on and off the job.

The bottom line is that you stand to lose a lot by using drugs or misusing alcohol. If you think you might have a problem, talk to your doctor or contact a local substance abuse professional. ♦



TRAINING HANDOUT — DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

How do you know if you might have an alcohol use disorder (AUD)?

- Do you sometimes drink more than you intended to?
- Have you tried to stop or cut back on your drinking but been unable to?
- Do you ever want a drink so badly you can't think of anything else?
- Have family or friends expressed concerns about your drinking?
- Have you missed work due to drinking or being hungover?



How do you know if you might have a substance use disorder (SUD)?

- Do you frequently get into fights, accidents, or engage in illegal activities?
- Have your children missed meals or school because of your drug use?
- Do you misuse drugs to avoid or relieve withdrawal symptoms?
- Have you tried to stop using a substance but been unable to?
- Do you feel fearful, anxious, or paranoid for no reason?
- Have you experienced sudden mood swings or drastic changes in energy or motivation? ♦



This page may be duplicated for your internal use



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE — DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

1. Failing a Part 382 drug or alcohol test can result in a CDL holder being prohibited from driving until the driver is referred to a substance abuse professional, completes a treatment plan, and passes a return-to-duty drug and/or alcohol test.
 - A. True
 - B. False

2. Potential consequences of alcohol use and drug misuse include:
 - A. Health problems
 - B. Professional consequences
 - C. Relationship struggles
 - D. All of the above

3. Heavy drinking can shorten a lifespan by 10 years, on average.
 - A. True
 - B. False

4. The FMCSRs allow a driver to possess a small amount of alcohol when operating a CMV.
 - A. True
 - B. False

5. Which of the following are potential symptoms of a substance abuse disorder?
 - A. You use drugs to avoid or relieve withdrawal symptoms
 - B. You take your prescription medication as directed by a doctor
 - C. You've tried to stop using a substance but have been unable to
 - D. Both A and C ♦

NAME: _____ **DATE:** _____

This page may be duplicated for your internal use



Drive like someone's watching — because they are!

Time to look alive, drivers! Operation Safe Driver Week will run from July 13-19 this year, with a focus on reckless, careless, and dangerous driving. Officers in Mexico, Canada, and the U.S. will be looking out for commercial drivers' unsafe driving habits — don't be one of the offenders!



Drivers who engage in these types of behaviors will be pulled over and issued a warning or citation. Any person who drives a vehicle with clear disregard for safety is considered a reckless driver. All drivers must operate with due care and attention, and with reasonable consideration for everyone else on the road.

Why Operation Safe Driver Week matters

Data from the National

Highway Traffic Safety Administration revealed that 42,514 people were killed in traffic crashes during 2022. Also in 2022, Canadian statistics reported 1,931 motor fatalities, while Mexican statistics reported 15,979 road deaths.

The goal of Operation Safe Driver Week is to address and reduce these rates by improving awareness. To boost these efforts, CVSA also offers other driver education initiatives to bring more attention and information to their cause.

CVSA will be offering:

- Resources for teen drivers and new drivers;
- Resources for commercial motor vehicle drivers;
- Public service announcements; and
- Postcards available in French, English, and Spanish.

To find more information about CVSA's Operation Safe Driver Week initiatives, visit <https://cvsa.org/programs/operation-safe-driver/> ♦

During last year's initiative, officers in Canada and the U.S. pulled over 11,050 vehicles, issued 2,712 tickets and citations, and gave 3,228 warnings to both commercial and passenger vehicle drivers. Research shows that these interactions have had a positive impact on safe driver rates over time.

What do drivers need to know?

The Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) runs Operation Safe Driver Week every summer to help encourage safe driving practices and improve road safety for everyone. Law enforcement personnel are looking for unsafe driving practices, including:

- Speeding,
- Following too closely,
- Drunk driving,
- Drugged driving,
- Distracting driving, and
- Other unsafe driving habits.

Is it a rest area or a stress area?

Adequate truck parking is critical to the success of the transportation industry. But, with an estimated national average of just 1 truck parking spot available for every 11 truck drivers, research on how to expand such parking options at public rest stops has recently become a top priority.

Truck parking concerns have sparked attention at both state and federal levels, prompting the American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI) to release data in collaboration with the American Association of State

Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). The agencies' joint research covers all 50 state Departments of Transportation, as well as Puerto Rico and Washington, D.C.

Truck parking research results

Findings revealed that, on average, rest areas have 19 truck parking spaces; Southern states typically had an average of 25 truck parking spaces per stop while Northeast states averaged 15 spaces.

ATRI created a dashboard that breaks down each state's public truck parking availability, including any available safety features. The dashboard covers 47 states and is available on ATRI's website: <https://truckingresearch.org/2025/04/truck-parking-index/>

The dashboard also includes:

- The number of parking spaces per 100 miles of roadway,
- The state's maintenance budget per space, and
- The ratio of public to private parking spaces.

According to ATRI's dashboard, Florida has the most truck parking spaces available at rest stops, Indiana has the most rest area truck parking spaces per 100 miles of national highway, and Virginia has the highest annual maintenance budget per parking space.

Truck parking research efforts

National research efforts on public truck parking included:

- A joint ATRI/AASHTO survey to understand costs and provisions;
- A collection of data on issues and costs connected to land, construction, maintenance, and amenities; and
- A survey on state efforts to increase parking, with over 500 driver participants. Select case studies on specific topics of interest included:
 - Truck parking information systems,
 - Truck parking provisions for severe weather, and
 - Repurposing state-owned locations for truck parking. ♦



Next Month's Topic: School bus safety

All states have laws in place to protect children as they board and exit school buses. Though specifics vary from state to state, there are standard rules that apply everywhere. ♦



Expert Help: Questions of the Month

Question: What are the consequences if a motor carrier allows a driver to perform safety-sensitive functions after testing positive, but before the driver passes the return-to-duty test?

Answer: A driver who tests positive under the Part 382 drug and alcohol regulations cannot return to duty performing a safety-sensitive function until the necessary return-to-duty steps in 49 CFR Part 40 are completed. A motor carrier that allows a driver to perform a safety-sensitive function without completing these steps has committed a "non-recordkeeping" violation and is subject to fines and penalties as outlined in 49 CFR Part 386.

Question: We had a driver test positive on a DOT random drug test. The manager notified him in person, and a letter containing substance abuse professional (SAP) information was given to him. Are we required to provide any other termination documentation to him?

Answer: The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations don't address consequences for a DOT drug/alcohol violation other than being prohibited from performing any safety-sensitive functions and driving any CMV until the return-to-duty process is completed and the driver has a negative return-to-duty test. The driver also has to complete all follow-up tests required by the SAP.

If your company chooses to terminate the driver, that decision must be based on your company policy and state and federal employment law. ♦

Expert Help

Your subscription to this publication gives you access to our Expert Help feature. Get answers to your toughest compliance questions from our team of experts by emailing us, privately and securely, at: asktheexpertprint@jjkeller.com. On average, our experienced experts provide an answer in less than two business hours.



Copyright 2025 J. J. Keller & Associates, Inc.

Neither the *Transportation Safety Training Advisor* nor any part thereof may be reproduced without the written permission of J. J. Keller. Government regulations change constantly, therefore, J. J. Keller cannot assume responsibility or be held liable for any losses associated with omissions, errors, or misprintings in this publication. This publication is designed to provide reasonably accurate information and is sold with the understanding that J. J. Keller is not engaged in rendering legal, accounting, or other professional services. If legal or other expert advice is required, the services of a competent professional should be sought.

EDITOR: Lucero Truszkowski

ISSN 2688-1616

GST R123-317687

(75619)



J. J. Keller & Associates, Inc.®

3003 Breezewood Lane, P.O. Box 368
Neenah, Wisconsin 54957-0368

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

PRSR STD
U.S. Postage

PAID

J. J. Keller &
Associates, Inc.®

**J. J. Keller & Associates, Inc.
Certified Management Systems**

ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management Standard (for high-security seals), certificate issued by DQS, Inc.

ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management Standard, certificate issued by DQS, Inc.

ISO 27001:2022 Information Security Management Standard, certificate issued by SGS North America

ISO 45001:2018 Occupational Health and Safety Management Standard, certificate issued by DQS, Inc.

75619

Join an Entire **NETWORK** of Safety & Compliance Expertise...

Become a member of **COMPLIANCE NETWORK** and gain access to J. J. Keller's industry-leading safety and compliance content - custom-tailored to your exact regulatory needs.



MEMBERS ENJOY THESE VALUABLE BENEFITS:

- ▶ **PERSONALIZED REGULATORY CONTENT** for workplace safety, transportation, environment, HR, and other markets.
- ▶ **NEWS & TRENDING ISSUES** relevant to your industry, area(s) of operation, and more.
- ▶ **J. J. KELLER INSTITUTE**, an expansive collection of articles, videos, and interactive exercises spanning 120+ compliance topics.
- ▶ **UNPRECEDENTED ACCESS TO EXPERTS** through question submissions, one-on-one phone or video consultations, and in-depth research requests.
- ▶ **AND MORE**



Build Your Profile and Start Getting Personalized Content Today
Visit JJKellerComplianceNetwork.com