



Planning to Haul Freight over Memorial Day Week-end?

AAA predicts traffic will "be a doozy!"



The American Automobile Association (AAA) – long known for its accuracy in predicting holiday traffic volumes – has projected a 7% increase in travel volumes for the upcoming holiday weekend compared to last year. The majority of Americans traveling over Memorial Day weekend will drive. Just think of it: 37.1 million holiday drivers on the road, competing with ICSA members and other truckers and clogging up traffic everywhere, but most definitely in major metro areas like Atlanta, Boston, Los Angeles, New York, Seattle, Tampa and other large cities.

AAA also projects that travel times will double in those areas compared to normal traffic flows. Even worse, experience shows that far too many of these drivers will have been drinking, making for even more dangerous driving conditions. So when should you plan to be on the road to avoid traffic jams?

Traffic planners say the heaviest holiday-weekend road traffic is expected on Friday, May 26 between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. But the afternoons of Thursday, May 25; Monday, May 29; and Tuesday, May 30 are also going to be high volume, with plenty of potential for congestion and traffic snarls. The best days to travel – whether in a car or driving a truck with a delivery deadline – are Saturday and Sunday.

Lastly, National Safety Council statistics show that the average number of highway deaths over the past six Memorial Day weekends was 398 – a number that would likely have been higher had it not been for reduced travel during the pandemic years. Predictions are running as high as 450 deaths this holiday. Make sure you and/or your drivers aren't among them. Stay safe out there.

Time to Renew ICSA Memberships?

July 1 is the Due Date for Many Memberships

Members whose membership term expires June 30, 2023, should be watching for a dues invoice sometime in mid-June. Membership in ICSA is a requirement for Platinum-level members who are covered under ICSA's group insurance program. And while other organizations are raising dues to reflect their increased expenses, ICSA's dues remain the same as they have since March 2020 - \$100 for the first truck, \$25 for each additional truck – with a cap of \$500 annually regardless of fleet size.

Questions about your membership status? Email us at contact@safecarriers.org.

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Invitation to Member Orientation Webinar, Thursday, June 8 11 AM to Noon Pacific Time - Click Zoom Link Below

Getting the Most from Your ICSA Membership

Whether you joined ICSA three years or three months ago, you will want to join our leadership team for an overview of the services and programs available to you through your ICSA membership. Learn how your commitment to safety keeps your insurance costs as low as possible and makes you more profitable; how to use your event recorders/cameras to develop safer drivers; how prompt and accurate reporting of claims helps reduce costs arising out of a crash; what free resources are available to you on the ICSA website? Get answers to these questions and more. ICSA will provide time for questions and comments following the formal presentations.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84592248693?pwd=L2ZlWQV9QTE5DUnk4Zml1cW82UzZmMwdz09>

ICSA Announces Q1 2023 Safety Awards

ICSA is pleased to announce the 1st Quarter 2023 winners of our safety awards. These quarterly awards recognize the top three single-truck operators and top three fleets that have the best safety records performance for each quarter – in this case, for January 1, 2023 through March 31, 2023. To be considered for an award, carriers had to meet these criteria:

- ◆ ICSA membership dues paid up and an active member profile set up in safecarriers.org
- ◆ SmartDrive camera(s) installed and active
- ◆ SmartDrive score under 10 for the quarter
- ◆ Initial hair testing of all drivers for drugs completed
- ◆ No claims

First place winners receive a \$500 Visa gift card, while second and third place winners receive \$300 and \$150 gift cards, respectively. Congratulations to the following Q1 2023 winners!



Third-Place Single-Truck Operator: MNJ Logistics
Christina Vinson, Owner

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Single-Truck Operator	Location	SmartDrive Score
1 st : Urban Farmer Transport	Fresno, CA	4
2 nd : Singular Point Inc	Chino, CA	5
3 rd : MNJ Logistics LLC	Lawrenceville, GA	9

Fleet	Location	SmartDrive Score
1 st : P&S Logistics Group Inc	Fresno, CA	3
2 nd : Mega Heavy Hauling LLC	Nacogdoches, TX	3
3 rd : Sunsure Transport LLC	Redford TWP, MI	5

This Month's Featured Member

ICSA recently spoke with Christa Vinson, the owner of MNJ Logistics LLC and 1st Quarter 2023 Single Truck Safety Award Winner. Originally from Philadelphia, PA and currently residing in Georgia, Christa found inspiration for her business through her three amazing children, Malayah, Nathan and Josiah (MNJ). Christa's trucking journey began in January of 2021 during the nationwide pandemic.



"What I realized during that period was, there were always trucks still on the road," Christa said. "Products and goods still needed to be delivered. I equate the trucking industry to the healthcare industry. There is always going to be a need regardless of what is going on in the world" she remarked.

As an owner, Christa's number one focus after researching successful strategies was the importance of safety. MNJ Logistics believes a safe workplace is sound business. Implementing procedures, setting goals, monitoring performance, and evaluating the outcomes were all topics that have contributed to the success of MNJ.

"I am happy to say, we've been on a path to great levels of safety achievement. I look forward to continuing to grow my fleet," Christa said.

Check out New SmartDrive How-to Videos

In the member dashboard of the ICSA website, behind the login, members will find links to several short SmartDrive videos. These will help you better understand how best to use your SmartDrive system to improve driver behavior and reduce your risk of a crash.

ICSA Launches New Mountain Driving Course

FirstGear™ Training is Free to Members

A few years ago, ICSA reported on a devastating truck-at-fault fatal crash that occurred in April 2019 on Interstate 70 near Denver. The driver in question was a rookie with a new CDL whose company was a five-truck fleet based in Houston, Texas. He had never driven on mountain roads before, nor

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had he received any training on how to do so safely. He was traveling 85 mph when his brakes failed on the I-70 downgrade leading into a Denver suburb. He hit the stopped traffic at full speed, creating a 28-car pileup that killed four, injured dozens of others and closed the highway for many hours. (Think this can't happen to your driver or your company? Read more below about this crash and the driver's trial and conviction.)

Many carriers don't or can't provide their drivers the type of training necessary to improve driving behaviors on mountainous roads, so ICSA's safety consultants got together to create a new Mountain Driving chapter in our FirstGear online driver training program. FirstGear is a free-to-members program to provide valuable training to CDL drivers regardless of their years of experience. The Mountain Driving curriculum includes topics of pre-trip tips and preparation, how to best ascend and descend a mountain, and additional preparedness information.

The link to FirstGear training can be found on the member's profile page when you log on to ICSA's website.

The driver at fault in the April 2019 Colorado crash was a 23-year-old Cuban immigrant hauling a load of lumber over the mountainous and winding terrain of Interstate 70. After his brakes failed, he missed several runaway truck ramps available to drivers on that downhill stretch of interstate. Investigators later said the driver had poor English skills and was not able to understand the signage.

Following a high-profile trial, the driver later was convicted of vehicular homicide and 23 other charges, including six counts of assault in the first degree (extreme indifference); 10 counts of attempt to commit assault in the first degree (extreme indifference); two counts of vehicular assault (reckless); one count of reckless driving; and four counts of careless driving causing death.

In December 2021, the driver was sentenced to 110 years in prison, the minimum required by Colorado law at the time. The presiding judge said he believed the sentence was extreme but that he had no choice under state law. More than four million people signed an online petition filed by Change.org asking that the sentence be reduced. The petition organizer reported that the trucking company employing the driver should be held responsible. The company had received several inspections since 2017 with a number of mechanical violations.

At the time, the Houston-based trucking company carried only \$750,000 of liability insurance, the minimum required under federal law. The company dissolved and closed its doors just a few months after the I-70 crash.

On December 30, 2021, Colorado's governor intervened to reduce the driver's sentence to ten years. However, this driver's life and his family's lives will never be the same, nor will the lives of the families of those killed or injured in the crash. Take steps to make sure this never happens to you, your drivers or your company. Log in and set up access for Mountain Driving in FirstGear!



Coaching Corner

What Is Your Goal for Highway Safety Part One

By Mike Hitchcock,
ICSA Safety Consultant



Everyone in business – whether small sole proprietors or mega corporations – has goals. Some goals can be too high and therefore unachievable while others may be too low and too easily achievable. That statement can apply to many areas of business (and life in general) but what if we apply it to highway safety?

What are your business's safety goals? It would be easy to have perfect safety; just park the truck! That is not a practical solution, right? So, you must decide, will you invest in modern technologies or in driver training, or both? Will you hire experienced drivers or raw recruits and train them yourself? Each decision you make will affect your business's bottom line, insurance costs and loss experience. What will your ROI be versus your investment?

Managing risk is complicated when it comes to highway safety. As a business owner, you must decide what works for you. What technologies can you afford and how will you fill the gaps to help reduce your business risk?

There are many creative and effective technologies, and more in development, which improve highway safety and save lives. Trucks can now stop without driver input. Drivers can be alerted when they have traffic in their blind spots. Drivers can receive audible warnings when they are following another vehicle too closely. Adaptive cruise control can help a driver maintain a proper following distance and brake only as necessary. Event recorders can capture video in front of a tractor, during an accident, to help determine who is at fault. The data kept by event recorders can be used to develop and educate drivers to perform more safely. The list goes on. The drawback is that these technologies are expensive unless you invest in ICSA and leverage our buying power.

Event Recorders: Every business owner in transportation must determine their own safety goal and how to achieve it. What technology can you afford and how will you fill in any technology gaps to achieve your safety goals? One of the most effective returns on investment lately has been event recorders.

They capture crash events to protect your business from false claims AND they offer you the opportunity to develop your drivers. Help them learn from their mistakes and reduce the risk of being in a costly crash.

The Navy is a fitting example. Naval pilots videotape every landing on an aircraft carrier and formally review them with safety leadership. They do this not because they are bad pilots but because they have a professional (and self-preserving) interest in becoming better every day.

In trucking, we use event recorders the same way: coaching drivers to be better drivers. Using event recorders as a safety tool affects your bottom line in several ways. First, you reduce the frequency and severity of any crashes your drivers may have. They will never be perfect but the difference between a rear-end collision that dents a bumper (\$2500) and

one that pushes the bumper into the back seat and potentially injures or kills someone is about one second. One extra second of following distance can be the difference between a bent bumper and a potential injury or fatality crash. To realize this type of safety improvement you need to know your event recorder inside and out. Know the program and use the coaching tools built into it.

Join me June 8 for ICSA's Member Orientation, when I will talk about the value of your event recorder system. And watch Coaching Corner next month for Part Two of this series when I'll tell you about free ICSA training courses and other tools to help you improve your safety score.



ICSA Files Comments on CSA Overhaul

On behalf of its 6,500 member carriers, ICSA filed comments May 16 in support of key changes being proposed to the data system that FMCSA uses to determine carriers' safety ratings. Review ICSA's filed comments [here](#).