



Roadcheck Set for May 4-6: Will You Be Ready?

The Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) has joined with state enforcement agencies to set May 4-6 as the dates for this year's International Roadcheck. This year's focus will be on lighting violations and hours of service; however, inspectors will also check for critical vehicle inspection item violations, as outlined in the North American Standard Out-of-Service Criteria. If inspectors find such violations, the vehicle will be placed out of service and will be prohibited from operating until the out-of-service conditions have been corrected.



During Roadcheck 2020, an officer returns paperwork to a driver.

Vehicles that successfully pass inspection should receive a CVSA decal. In general, vehicles with a CVSA decal are not re-inspected during the three-month period during which the decal is valid. Also during a Roadcheck inspection, officers will check the driver's operating credentials, hours-of-service documentation, seat belt usage, and for signs of alcohol and/or drug impairment. A driver will be placed out of service if an inspector discovers driver-related out-of-service conditions.

Why a focus on lighting and HOS? Based on 2020 inspection data, the number one lighting violation - "lamps inoperable" (Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations 393.9) - accounted for approximately 12.24% of all vehicle violations. And during last year's Roadcheck, the top driver out-of-service violation was hours of service, accounting for 34.7% of all driver out-of-service conditions.

What about bypassing Roadcheck sites? Don't do it! In most states, agencies now position chase cars or have officers assigned to patrol

nearby roads to pursue trucks attempting to evade enforcement. The specific violation is failure to obey a traffic control device and, coupled with potential vehicle defects or driver violations, can lead officers to put both the vehicle and the driver out-of-service.

As was the case last year, in consideration of COVID-19, law enforcement personnel will conduct inspections following their departments' health and safety protocols. In addition, if you are hauling cargo in support of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout, enforcement agencies are committed to getting these shipments to their destinations quickly and safely. COVID-19 vaccine shipments will not be held up for inspection unless there is an obvious serious violation that is an imminent hazard to public safety.



Out-of-service trucks are shown parked at a rest area near a Roadcheck 2020 site.

Ready for Roadcheck 2021? Take time to prepare and go rolling on through!

Coaching Corner

By Mike Hitchcock
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How Fast is SAFE in your Truck?



Excess speed is normally the most frequent cause of truck-involved crashes. However, when drivers ask how speed affects tire inflation, the answer is “how fast are you driving?” Unless you are driving well over most states’ top speed limits or too fast for conditions, speed doesn’t affect tire inflation all that much.

I raise this question because of one trucking company owner’s insistence that his tires were somehow to blame for several crashes resulting from blowouts, prompting an investigation into the failures by a division of U.S. DOT. The investigation was eventually closed because investigators had determined that “exceeding the 75-mph tire rating” was the most likely cause in all 16 of the owner’s complaints.

So, his assumption that the tires were to blame was true; however, the investigation found that the tires had been damaged by running at high speeds. In other words, it was his drivers’ actions that caused the damage to the tires.

With few exceptions, almost all North American on-highway truck tires are rated for 75 mph. If you abide by the cold inflation pressure requirements for the load on the tires and maintain that pressure rigorously, you won’t have any issues with speed unless you are driving in excess of 75-mph. In fact, many companies govern their trucks at speeds less than 68 for two reasons: 1) much improved fuel economy; and 2) safety.

So, is it safe to drive at speeds over 75 mph? It’s not a best practice or a good business decision for a whole lot of reasons, but it’s probably not dangerous as far as your tires go – provided tires are rated for 75 mph and are properly inflated. (Prolonged operation at elevated speeds, especially in high-ambient-temperature environments, will not do the tires any favors, mind you.)

And let’s face it, excess speed can definitely increase risk for your business if you or a driver is involved in a crash that ends up in litigation. Judges, juries and trial attorneys may not know much about trucking, but everyone has his or her own opinion on safe versus unsafe speeds, especially if a fatality or serious injuries are involved.

Carriers Say Insurance Costs Continue to Rise

Tell ATRI What You Think

The American Transportation Research Institute is surveying motor carriers to better understand the rising costs of trucking insurance and how those costs are ultimately impacting the industry.

While ICSA’s safety-conscious members have been able to realize substantial savings on insurance by meeting our two key requirements— forward-facing video cameras and hair follicle testing— the data collected from this nationwide study will be incredibly valuable as members of many trucking organizations participate in a lawsuit abuse reform campaign to educate lawmakers about the negative impact that abusive litigation has on operational costs.



Specifically, the survey asks motor carriers to provide data through an online collection form that will quantify changes in deductibles, excess insurance over minimum requirements and how drivers and fleets are balancing insurance costs against rising risk levels. All submitted data will be kept strictly confidential and aggregated. As needed, ATRI will sign a confidentiality agreement.

To participate, click on: <https://www.research.net/r/ATRI-Insurance-Survey-2021>. Survey deadline is April 30. For more information, contact Rebecca Brewster, president of ATRI (rbrewster@trucking.org).

Top 10 Driver-Related Violations:

1. Speeding
2. Driving without a valid medical certificate
3. Failure to obey traffic control device
4. Log violation: general/form and manner
5. Failing to use seat belt
6. No logs (of proper type) in driver’s possession
7. False log(s)
8. Operating a CMV without a CDL
9. Lane-restriction violation
10. Driver’s log not current

For more information, check out the [CVSA Roadcheck Event](#).

In time for Roadcheck 2021, CVSA has provided a list of the top 10 driver-related violations.