

# *In the Safety Zone*™

*A newsletter dedicated to safety awareness*

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## **Springtime Has Its Own Driving Hazards**

When the weather begins to warm, drivers may think their driving worries have melted away with the winter ice and snow. Not so. Spring brings its own set of challenges for safety-conscious drivers. Many drivers underestimate road conditions once the snow and ice have melted. Spring showers bring May flowers, but rain is a common spring driving hazard. The roads can be very slick from the oils and moisture.



While daily pre-trip inspections of trucks are to be performed, particular attention should be given to the condition of wiperblades. After a long winter of salt and other road residue on the windows, wiper effectiveness can be greatly reduced. Make certain that they are in good condition before driving.

Springtime usually means more drivers on the road and more construction. Always drive defensively- allow for safe braking distances and sudden stops. Obey all construction signs and be mindful of the safety of workers on the roads and highways.

And as always....BUCKLE UP! There's no excuse for not wearing a seatbelt. Have a wonderful and safe Spring driving season.

## **Coming in June on a Highway Near YOU!**



Speaking of Springtime- Roadcheck 2011, the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance's (CVSA) 72-hour safety blitz, is scheduled for June 7 – 9, 2011. CVSA sponsors Roadcheck with participation by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators, Transport Canada, and the Secretariat of Communications and Transportation (Mexico).

Roadcheck is the largest targeted enforcement program on commercial vehicles in the world, with approximately 14 trucks or buses being inspected, on average, every minute from Canada to Mexico during a 72-hour period.

Each year, approximately 10,000 CVSA-certified local, state, provincial and federal inspectors at 1,500 locations across North America perform the truck and bus inspections. The primary reasons cited by inspectors for placing vehicles and drivers out of service continue to be brakes and logbooks, respectively.

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## Thought and Preparation are Critical to Safely Backing Trucks

One of the most challenging aspects of truck driving is backing a trailer. No amount of forward driving experience compares with having the skill of backing a trailer. Experience is the only way to gain trailer backing skills. Very few backing efforts are perfect on the first try. Drivers get better with practice. Exercising care when performing this function will reduce the risks of property damage and injury to others. Keep in mind the following:

- **Plan ahead.** Drivers should never put themselves in unnecessary backing situations.
- **Every backing situation is new and different.** Even if you drive to the same location every day, you should be mindful and look for changes that can create new backing hazards.
- **Do a walk-around.** Doing a walk-around provides a first-hand view of the area and any limitations. Check for hazards such as muddy areas, potholes or other obstructions.
- **Check for clearances.** When performing a walk-around, check for low hanging trees, power lines and any other potential clearance-related problems.
- **Know the blind spots.** In trucks, blind spots can extend 16 feet or more to the front and at least 160 feet or more to the back.
- **Adjust your mirrors.** Mirror alignment is critical to the successful backing effort. Turning sideways and looking out of the window of the vehicle almost never works. Adjust your mirrors and then *trust your mirrors*. The only objects that are not visible to you will be those directly behind the trailer.
- **Use a spotter if one is available.** If a spotter is available, use them to help you back safely into the designated area. A trained spotter should use hand signals instead of verbal ones. You should check to make certain you understand each other's signals before you begin backing the trailer.



## Loading Dock Maneuvers

Getting a truck into a loading dock or other confined area can be the most annoying part of driving. Box truck drivers develop this skill over months of pulling into various challenging spaces. A few fundamental tips can help drivers to avoid trouble:

- 1) **Get the truck in the general area and direction of the dock.** If possible, start several yards away so you can see the area around your target point.
- 2) **Begin backing up, going first left, and then right.** Watch your side mirrors to estimate where the sides of your vehicle are with respect to the sides of the dock.
- 3) **When you have lined up the truck,** put the wheel into the straight position and back up slowly, a foot at a time. Watch the space between the end of the truck and the dock.
- 4) **At several feet away,** you may want to check again to make sure you are square with the sides of the dock.
- 5) **As you get close, you won't be able to see the dock.** Back up in small increments, very slowly, until the end of the truck butts up against the dock. You may have to step out of the truck at least once to check the gap.

## Protect Your Hands

Just how important is it to protect your hands? Think about it-most of the work you do is with your hands. Without your hands it would be extremely difficult to perform simple tasks. Try to open a door, eat or even tie your shoes without them. What about the challenges you would face if you couldn't drive a truck because of a hand injury?

Although hand injuries on the job are quite common, most all can be avoided. Some common causes of workplace hand injuries are:

- Carelessness
- Disregard for safety procedures
- Non-use of personal protective equipment (PPE)

While cuts and bruises account for most common hand injuries, more serious injuries such as sprain, fractures or even amputations can occur. These injuries often result in more lost work days and loss of productivity. To avoid hand injuries:

- **Wear gloves.** Cotton or leather gloves are usually best for material handling. Never work using frayed or worn gloves.
- **Take your time.** Never rush while handling materials or equipment.
- **Never place your hands between a load and fixed object.** Your fingers or hands can get pinched.
- **In the event of a fall, never extend your hands.** Drop and roll onto your side instead.
- **Don't try to catch a load or object once it's started to fall.** This usually results in more serious injury to the hands or wrists.




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## TFI Safe Driver Incentive Program

### What Have you Learned?- take the quiz and win a \$50 gift card!

1. You can back into areas you are familiar without looking for new hazards. T F
2. You should always use a spotter if one is available. T F
3. Mirror alignment is critical to the successful backing effort. T F
4. You should back up a truck in small increments going very fast. T F
5. When backing into a loading dock, you should steer the truck in the general direction of the dock. T F
6. Many drivers underestimate road conditions once the ice and snow have melted. T F
7. Salt and other road residue can reduce the effectiveness of wiperblades over time. T F
8. Issues related to logbooks and brakes are the most common out of service violations. T F
9. Road construction contributes to driving hazards in the Springtime. T F
10. There are usually less drivers on the road in the Spring. T F

To qualify for the drawing, complete the quiz and return it via fax, email or mailing. Only TransForce drivers are eligible to participate. You must be a driver in good standing ( no accidents, injuries or performance issues) at any time during the year to qualify. Qualified drivers can win up to 3 times per year. The names of 20 TransForce drivers will be randomly selected to win \$50.00 Target gift cards. All mailings should be addressed to : TransForce, Inc, 6551 Loisdale Ct, Ste., 801 Springfield, VA 22150 Attn: Safety. Email: [safety@transforce.com](mailto:safety@transforce.com); fax: 703-838-5585 Attn: Safety. All entries must be received or postmarked by June 25, 2011.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Branch: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_