

# *In the Safety Zone*™

*A newsletter dedicated to safety awareness*

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## **The New Year Starts with a Final Ruling on Cell Phone Use for CMV Drivers**

On January 3, 2012, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA) final ruling banning the use of hand-held cell phones went into effect. A hand-held cell phone is considered any communication device that is required to be held in the hand in order to be operated. This includes hands-free devices that require pushing more than one button to activate or terminate the conversation. CB Radios and two-way radios are not covered under this regulation and can still be utilized.

The new regulation affects many areas of the current regulations which all drivers and motor carriers must be familiar with. Violating the regulation can have major implications affecting motor carriers, companies and drivers:



- **The Use of a Hand-held Cell Phone will be considered a “Major Moving Violation” under Part 383.51 and can result in the drivers’ CDL license being suspended, if there are more than two “Major Moving” violations within a two year period and it affects a driver’s CSA score.**
- **The regulations stipulate that the violation of these rules can result in fines up to \$2,750 for the driver for each offense and up to \$11,000 for motor carriers or companies that allow drivers to operate hand-held cell phones.**

Hand-held cell phones can be used only when you are pulled off the road in a safe location that does not create a safety risk to yourself or others using the roadways. This does not include temporary stops at stop lights, while in traffic jams where the vehicle is on the roadway intended for travel. The regulations do allow a driver to use a hand-held cell phone to call emergency service personnel such as police or ambulance to report accidents or potential hijack threats.

As a reminder, texting while driving a commercial motor vehicle was prohibited by the FMCSA Regulations in 2010. TransForce drivers are expected to comply with the new regulations and follow the respective rules of our customers. Call your branch in the event that any conflict arises or further clarification is needed.

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## A Safety Resolution for 2012 -100% Compliance for Seat Belt Use!



Unfortunately, seat belt use in the United States remains considerably lower than seat belt use in other industrialized nations. The 2010 National Occupant Protection Use Survey found that the average belt use was 88 percent in states that authorize primary enforcement of seat belt laws. The state of Maryland, as an example, has been a leader for many years with its primary enforcement law. Its observed belt use rate has been over 90 percent for several years.

### Seat Belts Are Effective

Seat belts are the number one defense against motor vehicle injuries and fatalities. Seat belts restrain vehicle occupants from the extreme forces experienced during motor vehicle crashes. Unbelted vehicle occupants frequently injure other occupants, and unbelted drivers are less likely than belted drivers to be able to control their vehicles. Also, seat belts prevent occupant ejections. In 2009, only 1 percent of vehicle occupants using seat belts were ejected, while 30 percent of unrestrained vehicle occupants were ejected. Among those occupants totally ejected from their passenger vehicles, 77 percent of the injuries were fatal.

### Behavior is a Factor in Seat Belt Use

Fatal crashes are the most violent motor vehicle crashes and can result from high-risk behaviors such as speeding and impaired driving. While observational surveys have identified an 85 percent seat belt use rate, use by occupants involved in fatal crashes in 2009 was significantly lower, approximately 70 percent. And among those occupants fatally injured in traffic crashes, only 47 percent were restrained.

For the TransForce driver, we have expectation of 100% compliance for seat belt use. Seat belt use is required whether you're driving on a road, highway or in a yard. Your safety and safety of others is of the utmost importance to us. Make a resolution for 100% compliance and.. ***Buckle Up!***

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## Lower the Risk Of Spreading Germs

The cold and flu season is upon us. To avoid the spreading of germs, always remember to:

- **Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.**
- **Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.**
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.**
- **Try to avoid close contact with sick people.**



## Extra Preparation is Needed for Winter Driving



With the winter driving season in full swing, drivers must be aware and prepared for hazardous road conditions. It's one of the most dangerous times to drive our streets and highways. Here are some tips to keep you safe and prepared for winter driving.:

### 1. Be certain that the vehicle you're driving is in good condition before each trip.

Clear all snow and ice from your vehicle, lights and windows. Snow in any of these areas increases the chances that your visibility will be affected as you are driving. Complete your pre-trip inspection! Make certain that it includes an inspection of the tires, wiper blades, fluids and lights. Maintain at least a half tank of gas at all times.

### 2. Carry a Winter Driving Kit. It should include the following items:

- \* Blanket(s)
- \* Loose clothing that can be layered, extra gloves and rain gear
- \* Non-perishable food and water
- \* Flashlight and extra batteries
- \* First aid kit (be certain to include any prescription medication you may need)
- \* Windshield brush and scraper
- \* Extra washer fluid
- \* Jumper cables
- \* Tire chains or traction mats
- \* Cell phone and charger



### 3. Drive slower for conditions.

Compensate for poor traction by increasing following distance, driving slower and gently changing lanes. This gives you more time to react if something occurs on the road or highway ahead. Be more patient and tolerant of the road conditions.

### 4. Allow for plenty of space in front and behind your vehicle.

You need to have enough room to move out of harm's way in the event of a sudden emergency. Increase the distance between yourself and others and avoid "pack driving." Remember, you need twice the distance to stop on ice vs. normal road conditions. Allow 8-10 additional seconds when driving on icy, slippery surfaces.

