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Safe driving tips for truck drivers

GET SOME REST

The most important part of a moving truck is the driver, so get plenty of rest before getting behind the wheel. It's also important to eat well and stay fit. Remember, hours of service violations are serious and can threaten your livelihood and your life. Stay healthy and well rested, or don't drive!

MAINTAIN YOUR VEHICLE

Inspect your vehicle before each trip, and check your brakes regularly. Learn how to identify safety defects in brakes and get them repaired before risking your life and others' lives on the highway.

BE AWARE OF BLIND SPOTS

Blind spots are the danger areas around your vehicle where crashes are more likely to occur. In fact, one-third of all crashes between large trucks and cars happen in the danger areas (blind spots) around the truck. Familiarize yourself with your vehicle's blind spots and be vigilant in watching out for other vehicles in your blind spots. Other drivers may not be aware of the size of your truck's blind spots.

SLOW DOWN IN WORK ZONES

Watch out for highway construction. Stay alert. Work-zone crashes are more likely to happen during the day. Almost one-third of fatal crashes in work zones involved large trucks. Take your time going through work zones and give yourself plenty of room. Expect the unexpected!

ALWAYS KEEP YOUR DISTANCE

Always leave enough space between you and the vehicle in front of you. If you hit someone from behind, you may be considered at fault. Large trucks require more stopping distance than other vehicles. Take advantage of your driving height, and anticipate braking situations.

FASTEN YOUR SEATBELT

Buckle up for safety and control. If you are in a crash, a seatbelt can save your life and those around you. It will keep you in your seat and allow you to maintain control of your truck. A major cause of truck driver fatalities involves being ejected from the vehicle. Wearing seatbelts is still the single most effective thing all drivers can do to save lives and reduce injuries on our roadways.

DRIVE DEFENSIVELY

Avoid aggressive drivers. It's estimated that each year two-thirds of all traffic fatalities are caused by aggressive driving behaviors. Keep your distance and maintain a safe speed. The only thing speed will increase is your chance for a crash.

KEEP MANAGEMENT INFORMED

If you know of unsafe situations, report them immediately. This includes unsafe drivers, unsafe roadways and unsafe vehicles. Report these situations and any other safety issues to make the roads safer and your job easier.

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