



Winter Season and Trucking Safety

Driving a truck can be a risky, if not dangerous, profession on any given day. According to TheTruckersReport.com, as many as 600 truckers are killed on the job every year. The fatalities and injuries involved with trucking arise from collisions and fuel fires. However, the risk is increased as the winter months settle in and driving conditions quickly deteriorate. Below are several tips to keep drivers safe while traversing the roads this winter:

- Upon arriving at an intersection be sure to signal early to ensure that other motorists know which way your truck is turning.
- Slow down long before a complete stop is necessary. Other motorists do not realize how long it takes for a truck to come to a full stop, so seeing the brake lights early will help to avoid a collision.
- Keep changing lanes to a minimum as trucking blind spots are large. Be sure to check mirrors every few seconds.
- When driving slower than the speed limit always use your flashers.
- Do not tailgate!
- Take sufficient breaks and get out of the truck periodically to stay fresh and alert on long hauls.
- Wear loose-fitting, comfortable clothing as sitting for long periods of time can cut off circulation. Also, pack additional warm clothing in case of breakdown.
- Trucking regulations prohibit more than 11 hours of continuous trucking with a subsequent 10 hour off-duty break. However, this is not always enough rest time so be sure to pay attention to your body's fatigue levels. Take the time to rest when you feel fatigued.
- During rain or snow conditions, keep substantial space between your truck and the vehicle in front of your truck in case of an emergency stop.
- In bad weather, drive slower than the speed limit. Slower speeds will help avoid rollovers, jackknifes, and collisions.
- Always keep tire chains on hand in case of snow or ice.
- Keep the fuel tank full during the colder seasons. Water condensation can build up in the fuel line.

- Remember to take extra precautions on bridges as they freeze before roads do.
- Make sure the truck has been pre-inspected and winterized before departing on your journey. This includes all the necessary safety checks plus ensuring winterization fluids are full and ready for use.

Sources: 2011, The Trucker's Report. www.thetruckersreport.com
 2011, USDOT FMCSA