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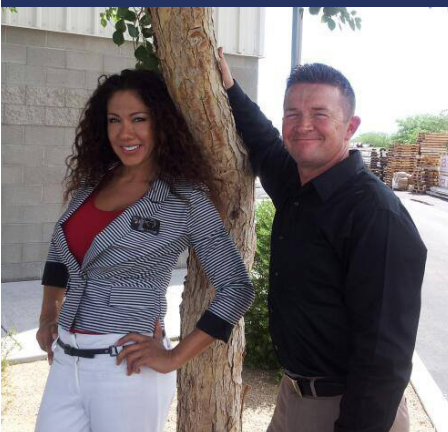
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Summer driving safety

Often, when we think of adverse driving conditions we think of snow, sleet, ice, and high winds.

Though professional drivers do not deal with these types of conditions during the summer, there are a whole different set of issues that they face during the warmer months of the year. This includes distracted and impaired drivers as well as road construction.

Vacationing drivers

Summer means sun, fun, and for many Americans that once a year family vacation/road trip. Though a professional driver shares the road with four-wheelers on a continual basis, summertime brings out a different set of hazards and concerns that require a driver to pay even more attention than usual and use all of his/her defensive driving skills.

The over-packed vehicle. We've all seen it — the boxes, coolers, and clothes covering a vehicle's back window and in some cases side windows as well. Assume the driver of this vehicle is unable to see out that back and/or side window. Leave plenty of following distance and pass with care.

Towing toys. For many people, a trip to the cottage, lake, or resort can mean towing a boat, camper, or trailer. This can also mean a driver who is unfamiliar and/or inexperienced with operating a four-wheeler with a towed unit — testing a professional driver's defensive driving skills.



When approaching this type of highway situation, allow for plenty of following distance, watch for swerving of the towed unit and the potential for over-correcting by the driver, and be alert to what seems like sudden slowing, stopping, or turning as the light systems on some towed units may not operate as they should.

Unfamiliar territory. Drivers need to be on the lookout for tourists when traveling through known vacation areas.

Those who are unfamiliar with the area can unintentionally pose a hazard, such as changing direction or slowing/stopping without warning.

The professional driver should watch for vehicles driving slowly, frequent use of brakes, or drivers looking at signs or maps. Additional signs of a tourist include car-top luggage, trailers, and out-of-state license plates.

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Summer driving safety *(continued from page 1)*

The impaired driver

Summer is a time when family and friends gather for special occasions such as reunions, graduations, and weddings. It is also a time for less formal activities such as picnics and barbecues.

These celebrations often go well into the evening hours. Drivers operating under the influence of alcohol or fatigue are issues that the professional driver needs to be aware of when traveling at night.

Just like any other defensive driving situation, the professional driver should be on the lookout for erratic driving such as varying speed and lane deviations.

If he/she suspects that he/she is following an impaired driver, he/she should either allow for plenty of following distance or exit the roadway and contact law enforcement. Using a cell phone to notify law enforcement of an impaired driver is one of the exceptions to the cell phone ban in Part 392 of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs).

Heat-related illnesses

As well as watching out for others, the professional driver needs to watch out for his/her own safety and welfare, especially when it comes to heat-related illnesses.

Ways to prevent heat-related illnesses include frequently drinking small amounts of water, eating regular meals and snacks, avoiding prolonged sun exposure, and taking breaks in shaded or air conditioned locations.

The following addresses the signs, symptoms, and treatment of heat-related illnesses.

Heat fatigue. Weakness, impaired motor skills, and reduced ability to concentrate are all symptoms of heat fatigue.

An individual dealing with these symptoms should take a break in a cooler area. Trying to work through this condition can lead to a more serious heat-related illness.

Heat exhaustion. Headache, nausea, dizziness, weakness, thirst, irritability, heavy sweating, and elevated body temperature are all symptoms of heat exhaustion.

An individual who exhibits these symptoms should be taken for medical evaluation and treatment as soon as possible. In the meantime, he/she should be taken to a cool, shaded area and given frequent sips of cool water to drink. Unnecessary clothing (shoes, socks, etc.) should be removed and cold compresses should be applied to the individual's head, neck, and face.

Heat stroke. Heat stroke occurs when the body's temperature regulating system fails and the body's temperature rises to critical levels.

Symptoms include confusion, loss of consciousness, seizures, a very high body temperature, and hot, dry skin or profuse sweating. Heat stroke is a medical emergency that requires an immediate call to 911 for medical help. An individual who suffers from heat stroke should be moved to a cool, shaded area, and should not be left alone.

Outer clothing should be removed and he/she should have wet cloths or ice placed on his/her body.

Safety belt use

Though it is required by the FMCSRs (Section 392.16) and most professional truck and bus drivers do it (84 percent), it can't be said enough — buckle up. Proper use of a safety belt can save a life.

In a frontal collision occurring at 30 mph, an unbelted person continues to move forward at 30 mph causing him/her to hit the windshield at about 30 mph. This is the same velocity a person falling from the top of a three-story building would experience upon impact with the ground.

Safety belts, especially lap/shoulder belts, hold a driver in place while the vehicle absorbs the impact of the crash and decelerates. They also spread the stress and impact forces of a crash along the stronger and broader areas of the body, such as the hips and shoulders, thereby limiting injuries.

Road construction

Summer is the prime season for roadwork throughout the country. Additional caution and safe driving practices are extremely important when driving through work zones.

Pay attention. Eliminate all activities that can be a distraction.

Don't tailgate. Maintain a safe following distance by leaving plenty of room between vehicles in case sudden braking is necessary.

Don't speed. As well as being one of the major causes of work zone crashes, the majority of states impose enhanced fines for speeding in work zones.

Merge as soon as possible. Don't wait until the last minute to merge.

Be patient. Slow down and pay attention to what is going on around the vehicle.

Expect the unexpected. Normal speed limits may be reduced, traffic lanes may be changed, and people may be working on or near the road.



Safety focus: Commercial motor vehicle definitions

This month's safety focus addresses the definitions of a commercial motor vehicle found in the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs). There are two definitions of a commercial motor vehicle in the FMCSRs. One definition is located in Part 390. The other is found in Part 383.

Part 390

The definition of a commercial motor vehicle in Sec. 390.5 covers interstate drivers. It applies to all of the regulations in Parts 390, 391, 392, 393, 395, 396, 397, and 399. This includes (but is not limited to) driver qualification, physical qualification, hours of service, and vehicle inspection.

In Sec. 390.5, a commercial motor vehicle is defined as:

- Having a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR), gross combination weight rating (GCWR), gross vehicle weight (GVW), or gross combination weight (GCW) of 10,001 pounds or more (whichever is greater);
- Designed to transport more than 8 passengers, including the driver, for compensation. See Sec. 390.3(f) for complete details.
- Designed to transport more than 15 people, including the driver, and not used to transport passengers for compensation; or
- Transporting a placardable amount of hazardous materials.

In Part 390, certain operations do not fall under the definition of a commercial motor vehicle. This includes certain school bus operations, government agencies, the



transportation of sick and injured people, and the operation of fire trucks and rescue vehicles. See Sec. 390.3(f) for complete details.

Note: The definition of a commercial motor vehicle may vary from state-to-state for intrastate (not crossing state lines, not furthering interstate commerce) operations. Consult individual state regulations for intrastate requirements.

Part 383

The definition of a commercial motor vehicle in Sec. 383.5 covers both interstate and intrastate drivers.

It applies to the CDL standards in Part 383. Also, the driver of a commercial motor vehicle that requires a CDL and the driver's motor carrier are subject to the drug and alcohol testing requirements in Part 382.

A commercial motor vehicle in Sec. 383.5 is defined as:

- Having a GCWR or GCW of 26,001 pounds or more, (whichever is greater) inclusive of a towed unit(s) with a GVWR or GVW of more than 10,000 pounds (whichever is greater);
- Having a GVWR or GVW of 26,001 pounds or more (whichever is greater);
- Designed to transport 16 or more passengers, including the driver; or
- A vehicle of any size used in the transportation of hazardous materials as defined in Part 383.

In Part 383, exceptions are made for certain operations including drivers of military vehicles and firefighters. See Sec. 383.3 for complete details.





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Opioid misuse is a national crisis

*"What you do
speaks so loudly
that I cannot
hear what you
say."*

By
Ralph Waldo
Emerson
1803-1882



**Opioid abuse has
become a nation-wide
epidemic.**

The drug overdose death rate in the United States has risen significantly over the past decade and a half, driven by heroin use and the misuse of prescription opioids.

About two-thirds of drug overdose deaths involve heroin and prescription opioids, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The number of overdose deaths involving opioids was five times higher in 2016 than it was in 1999.

The increase in opioid misuse and addiction has led to the National Institute on Drug Abuse to call the situation a national crisis. About 115 Americans die every day from an opioid overdose.

In light of the crisis, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is focusing on improving access to treatment and recovery services, promoting the use of overdose-reversing drugs, and advancing better pain management practices.

The CDC points out that it can be difficult to recognize an opioid overdose. Signs can include small "pinpoint" eye pupils, falling asleep or loss of consciousness, slow and shallow breathing, choking or gurgling sounds, a limp body, and pale, cold skin.

If signs are seen, it is important to call 911 or seek medical care and stay with the person until help arrives.

The use of heroin has increased dramatically over the past 15 years, a trend that's tied to the misuse of prescription drugs.

Use of the highly addictive opioid is up among both men and women, in most age groups, and across all income levels, according to the CDC. Three of four people who report using heroin have previously abused prescription opioids, the CDC says.

The CDC points to several possible reasons for the increase in heroin use:

- Greater availability of the drug;
- Its relatively low price when compared to prescription opioids; and
- The purity of heroin in the United States.

The rise in heroin-related deaths is part of a nationwide opioid crisis, which has its roots in a significant increase in opioid prescriptions that began in the 1990s.

The CDC notes that the number of prescription opioids sold to pharmacies, hospitals, and doctors' offices nearly quadrupled from 1999 to 2010, yet there was no corresponding increase in the amount of pain reported by patients.

In 2015, it was estimated that 2 million people in the United States had a substance use disorder related to prescription opioid pain relievers. An additional 591,000 suffered from a heroin use disorder.

Heroin use rate increasing

Sex	2002-2004*	2011-2013*	% Change
Male	2.4	3.6	50
Female	.08	1.6	100

*Annual average rate of heroin use (per 1,000 people in each group)