



# "Safety & Compliance are Never a Compromise"

## Keep it moving!

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### Preparing for cold-related hazards

Many of us drive in winter conditions, but if you drive a commercial motor vehicle, the challenges are even greater. Adverse weather conditions demand increased preparation for both you and your vehicle. Conditions can change quickly in the winter and being prepared is key to successfully operating in snow, ice, and extreme cold.

#### Vehicle Inspections

In addition to performing regular vehicle inspections, adverse weather requires that extra attention be paid to certain vehicle parts and accessories.

**Coolant level/antifreeze** — Ensure the vehicle's cooling system is full and there is enough antifreeze.

**Windshield** — The vehicle's defrosters and heater must work properly. The windshield wiper blades should press against the window hard enough to wipe the windshield clean. Make sure there is an appropriate type and amount of washer fluid in the reservoir. Also, check the reservoir for cracks or other damage.

**Tires** — Check tire tread depth, mounting, and inflation.

**Brakes** — Check the brake adjustment. Look for ice on the brake linings and keep air tanks as moisture free as possible.

**Lights and reflectors** — Make sure that lights and reflectors are free of debris such as dirt, snow, ice, and road salt.



**Fuel tank** — Your fuel tank should be full when you start out and keep it topped off if bad weather is expected.

**Exhaust system** — Check the exhaust system regularly. Loose exhaust system connections can cause carbon monoxide to leak into the vehicle.

**Coupling devices** — Before coupling, remove all snow and ice. In temperatures that are below freezing, the jaws of the coupling device may not lock if the grease is frozen. Doublecheck the locking and lubricate the fifth wheel with a winter-grade lubricant.

**Exposed wiring and air lines** — Remove ice and snow from wiring and air lines.

**Handholds, steps, deck plates** — Remove all ice and snow from the handholds, steps, and deck plates.

#### Tire Chains

Tire chains are most effective in heavy snow. They provide little traction in light snow and are not effective on glare ice.

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## Preparing for cold-related hazards *(continued from page 1)*

All vehicles should carry the proper size and number of chains as well as extra cross links. Check the chains regularly for broken hooks, worn or broken cross links, and bent or broken side chains. Also, make sure that chain slack adjusters are available.

When installing chains, use extreme caution. Make sure that chains are snug, but not too tight. Check them regularly and retighten if necessary.

### Emergency equipment

Carry the following adverse weather-related items on your vehicle:

- Windshield scraper;
- Snow brush;
- Small shovel;
- Flashlight; and
- Warning devices.

Also, for your protection and safety, have the following items along:

- Drinking water;
- Extra food;
- Medicine (as needed);
- Cell phone/CB radio; and
- Proper outerwear (heavy jacket, heavy coveralls, hat, boots, gloves).

### Operating hazards

There are two main hazards when driving in adverse winter weather conditions — reduced visibility and reduced traction.

#### Reduced visibility

When snow and ice build up on your vehicle's windows and mirrors, your visibility is reduced in all directions. Never drive if you cannot see in all directions.

When snow and ice build up on your vehicle's lights and reflectors, your visibility is reduced so other drivers cannot see you as well. Clean all lights and reflectors frequently.

Adjust your speed in bad weather to compensate for limited visibility. If you are unable to see, do not continue driving. Instead, pull off the road at the nearest safe place and stop until conditions improve.

#### Reduced traction

Various surfaces have a different amount of traction. For example, a snow packed or ice-covered surface will have only one-fifth (20 percent) of the traction that the same surface does when it's wet.

Slippery surfaces reduce traction, causing a vehicle's drive wheels to spin easily. This impairs your ability to maneuver the vehicle. Traction is needed for accelerating, turning, and braking. As vehicle speed increases, more traction is needed. If traction is poor, vehicle speed must be reduced. In some cases, it may be safer to stop in a safe location until conditions improve.

Black ice is one of the most dangerous road conditions, as most drivers aren't aware of black ice until it is too late. Black ice forms when temperatures drop rapidly and hover around the freezing mark. Any moisture on the road freezes into a smooth, nearly invisible, slippery surface.

On cold days when the road is wet, drivers should pay extra attention to the spray thrown from other vehicles. If the spray suddenly stops, black ice may be forming.

The most common places for black ice to form include bridges, beneath underpasses, in shaded areas, on the lower side of banked curves, and on dips in the road where water can collect and freeze.

Watch for rain turning into freezing rain as temperatures drop. This includes listening for a change in the sound of the tires on the road. Watch to see if spray from other vehicles suddenly disappears. Feel for ice on the front of the vehicle's outside mirror.

### Breakdowns

A vehicle breakdown can be dangerous at any time, but it is especially dangerous in adverse weather conditions. Exposure to wind and cold can cause frostbite.

If your vehicle breaks down in adverse conditions, you should:

- Stay in the cab;
- Put on extra clothing to stay warm;
- Use food and beverage supplies cautiously — you could be stranded for a while;
- If your vehicle's engine is able to run, leave a window open a crack to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning; and
- Avoid walking for help unless it is absolutely necessary — if you must leave your vehicle, leave a note on the steering wheel stating when you left, where you were headed, and when you may return.



Remember, winter weather is unpredictable. Take the steps you need to be prepared in case the unexpected happens to you.

# Safety focus: CDL endorsement questions

An endorsement may be required if you or your company drivers will be driving any type of specialized vehicle.

Before you can operate a specialized vehicles, you must pass a special written and/or driving test. If you pass the test(s), your license will show that you have an "endorsement" to drive that type of vehicle.

The types of vehicles that need an endorsement are:

1. Double/triple trailer
2. School bus
3. Passenger vehicle
4. Tank vehicle
5. Vehicle used to transport hazardous materials
6. Tank vehicle used to transport hazardous materials



If you are a driver or motor carrier that utilizes CDL endorsements, you have probably had questions regarding certain situations. Here are answers to some common questions that others have had difficulty finding answers to.

## Air brakes

**Q:** I have searched and cannot find any information on the air brake endorsement. Please help me find this information.

**A:** The reason you cannot find information about an air brake endorsement is because this endorsement does not exist.

An air brake restriction is placed on a driver's commercial driver's license (CDL) if the driver fails the air brake component of the knowledge and/or skills test, or performs the skills test in a vehicle that is not equipped with air brakes.

**Q:** Does a driver who is operating a non-CDL vehicle equipped with air brakes need an air brake endorsement?

**A:** No, an air brake endorsement does not exist for drivers who possess a license of a non-CDL class.

## TSA Background checks

**Q:** Will all CDL drivers be investigated?

**A:** No. Only those drivers applying for a CDL with a hazmat endorsement will be subject to the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) background investigation. This will include existing drivers who are renewing the endorsement or seeking to upgrade, as well as new applicants. If disqualified to hold hazmat endorsements, drivers may continue to transport all non-hazardous cargo.

## Tank vehicle

**Q:** I am hearing from one of my drivers that there are new tank endorsement requirements. He says that the new rules require drivers to obtain a tank endorsement to legally transport retail pallets of bottled drinking water, soda, and juice. Is this true?

**A:** The definition of a tank vehicle has changed, but the definition does not apply to smaller packaging such as retail pallets of bottled drinking water, soda, and juice.

The definition of a tank vehicle in §383.5 of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) was revised in 2011. States had until July 2015 to comply with and meet the new definition.

If the vehicle meets the definition of a tank vehicle in §383.5 of the FMCSRs, a tank endorsement is required on a driver's CDL.

The definition of a tank vehicle in §383.5 follows:

**Tank vehicle** means any commercial motor vehicle that is designed to transport any liquid or gaseous materials within a tank or tanks having an individual rated capacity of more than 119 gallons and an aggregate rated capacity of 1,000 gallons or more that is either permanently or temporarily attached to the vehicle or the chassis. A commercial motor vehicle transporting an empty storage container tank, not designed for transportation, with a rated capacity of 1,000 gallons or more that is temporarily attached to a flatbed trailer is not considered a tank vehicle.

Essentially, what the definition means is if a driver is hauling multiple tanks of 119 gallons or more that add up to a total of 1,000 gallons or more the driver will need to obtain a tank endorsement on his/her CDL.

## Passenger vehicle

**Q:** We repair and service buses. Our mechanics often test drive these vehicles. Do our mechanics, even if they are not transporting passengers, need to hold a CDL? If so, do they need a passenger endorsement?

**A:** Yes, if the mechanic is operating a bus that is designed to transport 16 or more passengers, including the driver, or that has a gross vehicle weight rating of 26,001 pounds or greater he/she is required to obtain a CDL in the applicable class.

A passenger endorsement is also required if the bus is designed to transport 16 or more passengers, including the driver.







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## Managing weight loss

*"Walking is the best possible exercise. Habituate yourself to walk very far."*

Thomas Jefferson



**Gradually build changes into your routine to make them last.**

Losing weight can seem daunting, but it's a worthwhile journey that can begin with a few simple steps.

Start by integrating healthy behaviors into your routine. Counting calories, exercising, and restricting high-calorie foods are all effective ways to lose weight, but setting goals that are too aggressive reduces the likelihood that you'll stick with them.

Instead of vowing to exercise for an hour a day every day, try a 15-minute walk three days a week. Rather than a drastic diet

change, eat a healthy breakfast daily and have a serving of vegetables with supper.

Small changes are more likely to become habits and part of your lifestyle. Start with one or two realistic goals and add more over time.

If a setback occurs, don't give up.



Forgive yourself for the slip-up, and think about what you might do differently next time.

Once a goal is achieved, reward yourself. Buying a new outfit or spending a morning biking with friends lets you enjoy the results of your healthier lifestyle.

### Solving the weight loss puzzle

Piece together a weight loss plan that works for you. Start with one or two healthy changes, and gradually build more into your routine.

