

# W.W. Transport INC.

## Safety Newsletter

February 2020



### JANUARY SAFETY LEADERS

#### Congratulations to this month's Safety Leaders!

Lavaderic Banks- Cement Division  
Brian Grisham- Burlington, IA  
James Hogan- North Texas  
Richard Patton- Wood River, IL  
Julio Torres- South Texas  
Zachary Wells- Dowagiac, MI

Daymon Cottam- Ogden, UT  
James Harris- Wood River, IL  
Kirk Lockwood- Wood River, IL  
Leroy Sisco- Refrigerated Division  
John Vacaro- Martins Creek, PA

Keep up the great work!



## DOT Medical Card Requirements

Commercial drivers, as you may know, are required to be medically qualified by a physician in order to exercise their Commercial Driver's License (CDL). This is done in the form of the DOT physical a driver must complete if they are driving non-excepted commerce. When a physical is completed, it can last anywhere between three months and two years before needing to be renewed. Before that time comes, a driver must update their medical card and, once updated, will need to update their new medical information with their state. In 2015, the Department of Transportation made it a requirement that every driver reflect their current medical card status on their motor vehicle record. This is a commonly overlooked requirement that can have a big impact on a driver's license status.

Why is this all important? States are required to downgrade a CDL license if a medical card expiration date is not renewed. A driver may have an updated copy of their medical card in hand during a traffic stop, but if the information is not updated with their licensing state, the driver will be found to be unsafely operating a commercial motor vehicle (CMV). In addition, a driver can be Out-of-Service for operating a CMV with an expired medical card, causing delays for themselves and their dispatcher. An Out-of-Service violation will also affect a driver's CSA scores and can hurt their safety bonus.

To avoid all of the potential hold ups, check your medical card periodically to ensure you have an active updated card or to give yourself enough time to update the card and send in to the state to reflect the new information on your motor vehicle record. Medical cards can be walked in, mailed, faxed, or emailed (depending on the state). Some states also offer online portals for renewing your medical card, Florida being one of the easiest.

Lastly, some states take at least five days to process new cards and up to 30 days so don't let it get too close to the expiration date without a plan. Being proactive about your medical card expiration can save you from being sidelined and your manager from losing a driver.

## Driver Fatigue Prevention



Driver fatigue mimics alcohol impairment and compromises drivers' alertness, decision making, and reaction times – making driving while drowsy a dangerous risk on the road.

#### Factors in employees' driver fatigue include:

- lack of sleep due to long or irregular shift work hours;
- poor sleep quality;
- driving during normal sleeping hours (midnight to 6 am);
- driving on rural roads and highways; and
- taking medications that can make you drowsy or consuming alcohol before driving.

#### Signs and symptoms of driver fatigue include:

- burning or heavy sensation in the eyes, inability to focus, or frequent blinking;
- muscle twitching;
- back tension;
- yawning;
- wandering or disconnected thoughts, including difficulty remembering the past few miles driven;
- missing an exit, drifting in a lane, crossing roadway lines, or hitting a rumble strip on the side of the road;
- heavy, tingly, or numb sensation in limbs; and;
- shallow breathing.

#### Driving for work requires you to be alert, especially on long road trips. Take these steps to prevent driver fatigue and its harmful effects:

- Get enough sleep. Most adults need about eight hours per night.
- On a break, get out of the vehicle and walk, jog, or stretch.
- Drive with an erect posture, with legs at a 45-degree angle.
- Keep the driver's area cool and well ventilated.
- Plan ahead for time changes in the spring and fall to adjust to the sleep and daylight hour differences.



## February Milestones

### We appreciate your work for all these years and many best wishes on the anniversary of your service this February!

Michael Thompson, 26 years! Burlington, IA  
Jerry Cokel, 19 years! Cement Division  
Gary Cochran, 14 years! Wood River, IL  
Daniel Darragh, 8 years! Burlington, IA  
David Shryack, 8 years! Burlington, IA  
Marissa Crews, 6 years! Driver Recruiting

Jeff Bigger, 21 years! Flatbed Dispatcher  
Michael Torrance, 16 years! Burlington, IA  
Teren Trail, 10 years! Cement Division  
James Lickliger, 8 years! Flatbed Division  
Dan West, 7 years! Bulk Operations Manager  
Benjamin Reynolds, 5 years! Camp Hill Manager

## Driving Safely in Wind and Rain

Driving in conditions that involve strong wind or heavy rain can be relatively common and may not be the most pressing safety concern for many drivers, but professional drivers know that driving in severe weather can significantly increase the risk of a dangerous situation for you and other drivers. Severe weather demands your undivided attention, so be sure to reduce driving distractions by turning the radio down and turning off or stowing your phone to help you keep your attention fully on the road. Keep in mind that sometimes the best decision you can make is to avoid driving altogether and to stay off the road completely until the weather clears.

### WIND



Wind may not seem like it can present a significant risk, but strong wind deserves special consideration from drivers. Strong wind can occur just about anywhere, but it can be more common in wide open spaces. Areas for concern also include highway overpasses, tunnels and “road cuts” through mountainous areas that can act as funnels for wind. The following tips can help keep you on the road and safe if you encounter heavy winds.

- 1. Anticipate gusts.** Take special care when driving through areas prone to strong winds or when weather reports predict severe weather.
- 2. Notice large vehicles.** Be aware of large vehicles on the road such as tractor-trailers and recreational vehicles. They are more susceptible to high winds and drivers may have difficulties staying in their lanes.
- 3. Keep a firm grip on the wheel.** Keep both hands on the wheel in case the wind begins to move your vehicle, especially if you are driving a large vehicle or towing a trailer.

### HEAVY RAIN



In addition to the potentially poor visibility that accompanies most heavy rain, drivers should be ready to protect themselves against hydroplaning. Hydroplaning can occur when a vehicle is traveling too fast in heavy rain conditions, causing the vehicle’s tires to travel on a thin layer of water rather than grip the surface of the road. This has the potential to make steering and braking difficult and could even lead to losing control of your vehicle. Follow these tips to help you stay safe while driving in heavy rain.

- 1. Take your time.** Slow down to help avoid hydroplaning. Also, one of the most dangerous times to drive can be soon after it begins to rain. The rain can cause oils on a roadway to rise to the surface and make conditions slick. Waiting a while after rains begin, rather than rushing to your destination, can be a safer plan when it is raining.
- 2. Turn your lights on.** Turning on your headlights can help you to see more clearly and also helps other vehicles see you. Many states require the use of headlights during rain.
- 3. Give other vehicles more space.** Add 1-2 extra seconds of following time in the rain, which gives you, and the cars behind you, more time to react to traffic.

Source: <https://www.travelers.com/resources/auto/safe-driving/driving-in-heavy-rain-and-wind>