



Weekly Safety Meeting

Safe Trailer Towing

Whether you are hauling equipment, recreational vehicles, or cargo, trailer safety is critical every time you hit the road. The first full week of June is Trailer Safety Week. During Trailer Safety Week, take time to review safe towing practices that help protect drivers, passengers, and everyone sharing the highway.

Long highway trips require preparation. Plan fuel and rest stops and check weather conditions before departure. Allow extra travel time, especially when traveling with children or pets. Be a smart driver. Don't text and drive or tow when you are fatigued.

Trailer Walk-Around Check

Before you hit the road, perform a trailer safety check—inspect both the tow vehicle and trailer carefully. A quick walk-around inspection can prevent major problems on the highway.

Pre-travel Inspection Includes:

- Checking tire pressure and tread on both vehicle and trailer tires;
- Testing brake lights, turn signals, and hazard lights;
- Ensuring safety chains are crossed and properly secured;
- Verifying the hitch and coupler are locked and pinned;
- Inspecting trailer brakes and breakaway cable; and
- Confirming the load is balanced and secured properly.

Proper Loading

Another important safety concern with trailers is loading. An unbalanced trailer can become unstable at highway speeds, and improper loading is one of the leading causes of trailer sway and loss of control on the road. If you have ever seen an off-balance trailer on the highway, it was probably improperly loaded. Most of the weight should go towards the front half of the trailer, directly behind the vehicle towing it.

Safe Loading Tips:

- Keep approximately 60% of the load weight toward the front half of the trailer;
- Secure cargo with straps, chains, or tie-downs;
- Avoid overloading beyond the trailer's Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR); and
- Distribute weight evenly side to side.

Highway Driving Tips

Driving with a trailer requires extra caution and awareness. Towing changes how your vehicle accelerates, brakes, and turns. While driving, watch for trailer sway. If trailer sway occurs, stay calm, gradually decelerate while steering straight, and slowly and safely pull over. After stopping, inspect the load and trailer setup before continuing.

Tips for Driving with a Trailer:

- Drive at a moderate speed — high speeds increase sway risk;
- Avoid sudden steering or braking;
- Use lower gears on steep grades;
- Signal lane changes early; and
- Check mirrors frequently for traffic and trailer movement.

Following Distance

You should have plenty of following distance in front of you to allow more stopping time. Ideally, you should be 8 seconds behind the car in front when passing the same stationary object. If that method does not work you should be TWO car lengths behind the car in front of you for every 10 mph of speed—DOUBLE the amount without a trailer.

Safety Starts with You

Trailer safety is everyone's responsibility. A properly maintained trailer and safe driving habits can prevent crashes, injuries, and costly breakdowns. Take the time to inspect, secure, and drive safely. Having fun this summer starts with being safe!

BALANCE THE LOAD...BEFORE YOU TOW!!

