

Job Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Job Site Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Start Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Finish Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Foreman/Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

## Topic 343: Driving Company Vehicles

**Introduction:** Vehicle accidents continue to be the leading cause of work-related deaths and can be a drain on company profits. The success and profitability of your employer's business, to a great extent, is dependent upon the efficiency of overall company operations, including vehicles. Employees who operate company vehicles have an obligation to properly care for and operate equipment in a responsible manner. Any disruption in the smooth flow of work caused by accidents or lack of maintenance affects the financial stability of any company and jeopardizes employees' safety.

**Vehicle Inspections** are the first line of defense in assuring that a motor vehicle is in safe operating condition. In addition to safety, inspections afford many additional benefits to company vehicle operations. Finding and repairing a defect or deficiency reduces the risk of a mechanical condition contributing to an accident or vehicle breakdown as well as missed deliveries, bad publicity, customer dissatisfaction, or highway break-downs. A regular program of vehicle inspection and vehicle condition reports are an important part of the vehicle maintenance process that keeps company vehicles safely on the road.

**The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations** defines a "Preventable Accident" as follows: "Any accident involving a company vehicle that results in property damage or personal injury in which the driver in question failed to exercise every reasonable precaution to prevent the accident. This is regardless of who was injured, what property was damaged, the extent of injury or damage, or where the accident occurred."

Any company having a fleet, irrespective of size or type, should consider the elimination of all accidents as a major goal.

**The following examples of situations show types of accidents which are preventable:**

- **Intersections** — It is the responsibility of all drivers to approach, enter, and cross intersections prepared to avoid accidents that might occur through the actions of other drivers. Complex traffic movement, blind intersections, or failure of the "other driver" to conform to law or traffic control devices will not automatically determine an accident as not "preventable".
- **Vehicle Ahead** — Regardless of the abrupt or unexpected stop of the vehicle ahead, a driver can prevent collisions by maintaining a safe following distance at all times. This includes being prepared for possible obstructions on the highway, either in plain view or hidden by the crest of a hill or the curve of a roadway. Over-driving headlights at night is a common cause of this type of collision. Night speed should not be greater than that which will permit the vehicle to come to a stop within the forward distance illuminated by the vehicle's headlights.
- **Vehicle Behind** — Reports show that drivers risk being struck from behind by failing to keep a safe interval in their own following distance.
- **Passing** — Failure to pass safely indicates faulty judgment and the possible failure to consider one or more of the important factors a driver must observe before attempting the maneuver. Unusual actions of the driver being passed or of oncoming traffic might appear to exonerate a driver involved in a passing accident; however, the entire passing maneuver is voluntary and the driver's responsibility.
- **Oncoming** — Even if an oncoming vehicle enters a driver's lane, a collision can be avoided by slowing down, stopping, or moving to the right.
- **Pedestrians** — Traffic regulations and court decisions generally favor the pedestrian hit by a moving vehicle. An unusual route of a pedestrian at mid-block or from between parked vehicles does not necessarily relieve a driver from taking precautions to prevent such accidents. School zones, shopping areas, residential streets, and other areas with special pedestrian traffic must be traveled at reduced speeds equal to the particular situation. Keeping within posted speed limits is not taking the proper precaution when unusual conditions call for voluntary reduction of speed.
- **Parking** — Unconventional parking locations, including double parking and failure to put out warning devices constitute a preventable accident. Roll-away accidents from a parked position normally are preventable. A properly parked vehicle should be locked, with the engine off, parking brake set, manual transmission in lowest gear, and wheels blocked or turned toward the curb to prevent vehicle movement.
- **Backing** — Practically all backing accidents are preventable. Even with a ground-guide, a driver must verify all clearances.
- **Miscellaneous** — Damage to the vehicle, cargo, or other property, or injury to persons are preventable when the driver's action or failure to act are evidenced, such as losses from projecting loads, loose objects falling from the vehicle, loose tarpaulins or chains, and doors swinging open.

**Conclusion:** It is more beneficial to your company's public image to appear in a news story because of an accident-reducing safety program and safe driver award presentations, rather than due to a preventable accident. Show your employer appreciation by driving company vehicles safely.

## Work Site Review

Work-Site Hazards and Safety Suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_

Personnel Safety Violations: \_\_\_\_\_

**Employee Signatures:**

(My signature attests and verifies my understanding of and agreement to comply with, all company safety policies and regulations, and that I have not suffered, experienced, or sustained any recent job-related injury or illness.)

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City of San Angelo Foreman/Supervisor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

These guidelines do not supercede local, state, or federal regulations and must not be construed as a substitute for, or legal interpretation of, any OSHA regulations.