Pre-trip Inspections and Post-trip Inspection Reports

Vehicle inspection, repair, and maintenance standards are critical to the safe operation of commercial motor vehicles. They are designed to reduce accidents, injuries, and fatalities resulting from unsafe vehicles operating on the highways. There are three separate fact sheets on vehicle maintenance standards: Systematic Maintenance, Pre-trip Inspections and Post-trip Inspection Reports, and Annual Inspections. This fact sheet addresses pre-trip inspections and post-trip inspection reports.

General Standards
For intrastate, Minnesota based carriers, 221.0314 outlines the requirements for inspections and reports. Minnesota Statute (M.S.), 169.782 contains requirements for daily inspections of commercial motor vehicles. Minnesota has adopted parts of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSR’s) for inspection, repair, and maintenance and driving of commercial motor vehicles found in Parts 396 and 392. Under these regulations, before driving a commercial motor vehicle, the driver must:

- Determine that the motor vehicle is in safe operating condition;
- Review the most recent vehicle inspection report on the vehicle; and,
- Sign the inspection report only if noted defects and deficiencies were certified as having been corrected or as not requiring correction.

Pre-trip Inspection Requirements (49 CFR 392.7(a))
No commercial motor vehicle shall be driven unless the driver is satisfied that the following parts and accessories are in good working order, nor shall any driver fail to use or make use of such parts and accessories when and as needed:

- Service brakes, including trailer brake connections
- Parking (hand) brake
- Steering mechanism
- Lighting devices and reflectors
- Tires
- Horn
- Windshield wiper or wipers
- Rear-vision mirror or mirrors
- Coupling devices
- Wheels and rims
- Emergency equipment

Intrastate Drivers/Carriers Who Must Comply
Before driving a commercial motor vehicle, a driver of the following types of vehicle(s) must comply with the pre-trip inspection requirements:
• Any size vehicle/vehicle combination for a for-hire carrier; M.S. 221.0314. Except STS providers (8840.5959 / 8840.5975) and limousine operators (8880.0900);
• A vehicle/vehicle combination with a gross vehicle weight (GVW) over 10,000 pounds for a private carrier; M.S. 221.031;
• A vehicle/vehicle combination with a GVW over 10,000 pounds for a carrier providing exempt transportation listed in M.S. 221.025;
• A vehicle (for any type of carrier) transporting hazardous materials (HM) of a type or quantity that requires the vehicle to be placarded; and,
• A vehicle operated for certain transit providers as described in M.S. 221.031 Subd. 3a.

Interstate Drivers/Carriers Who Must Comply
Before driving a commercial motor vehicle, a driver of the following types of vehicle(s) as defined in 49 CFR 390.5, must comply with the pre-trip inspection requirements:
• A vehicle/vehicle combination with a GVW over 10,000 pounds;
• A vehicle/vehicle combination designed or used to transport more than 15 or more passengers, including the driver;
• A vehicle/vehicle combination designed or used to transport between 9 and 15 passengers, including the driver, for direct compensation; and,
• A vehicle transporting HM of a type or quantity that requires the vehicle to be placarded.

Driver Vehicle Inspection Report(s); 49 CFR 396.11
A carrier shall require its drivers to report, and every driver must prepare a report in writing at the completion of each day's work on each commercial motor vehicle the driver has operated. A vehicle inspection report must:
• Identify the vehicle(s);
• List any defects or deficiency discovered by or reported to the driver that would affect the safe operation of the vehicle or result in a mechanical breakdown (if no defect or deficiency is discovered, then the report must so indicate); and,
• Be signed by the driver.

The vehicle inspection report must cover:
• Service brakes including trailer brake connections
• Parking brake
• Steering mechanism
• Lighting devices and reflectors
• Tires
• Horn
• Windshield wipers
• Rear vision mirrors
• Coupling devices
• Wheels and rims
• Emergency equipment

Every motor carrier shall maintain the original driver vehicle inspection report, the certification of repairs, and the certification of the driver's review for three months from the date the written report was prepared.

Intrastate Drivers/Carriers Who Must Generate a Post-Trip Inspection Report
Drivers of commercial motor vehicles are not required to prepare or submit a report if no defect or deficiency is discovered by or reported to the driver. The following drivers, operating in intrastate commerce, must comply:
Operating any size vehicle for a for-hire carrier that is not transporting exempt commodities as listed in M.S. 221.025;

Operating a vehicle with a GVW over 10,000 pounds for a private carrier that is not transporting exempt commodities as listed in M.S. 221.025;

Transporting HM of a type or quantity that requires the vehicle to be placarded;

Driving for certain transit providers;¹

Operating a vehicle with a GVW over 10,000 pounds while transporting solid waste, recyclable materials, or waste tires;

Operating a vehicle designed to transport 16 or more passengers, including the driver;² and,

Providing exclusive transportation of exempt commodities as listed in M.S. 221.025 if operating:
  o A vehicle/vehicle combination with a gross vehicle weight over 26,000 pounds;
  o A vehicle/vehicle combination designed to transport 16 or more passengers, including the driver; or,
  o A vehicle/vehicle combination used to transport HM of a type or quantity that requires the vehicle to be placarded.

The driver of a passenger-carrying CMV subject to this regulation must prepare and submit a report even if no defect or deficiency is discovered by or reported to the driver.

**Interstate Drivers/Carriers Who Must Generate a Post-Trip Inspection Report**

Drivers of commercial motor vehicles are not required to prepare or submit a report if no defect or deficiency is discovered by or reported to the driver. The following drivers, operating in interstate commerce, must comply:

- Operating a vehicle/vehicle combination with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross combination weight rating over 10,000 pounds;
- Operating a vehicle/vehicle combination designed or used to transport more than 15 passengers, including the driver, not for compensation;
- Operating a vehicle/vehicle combination designed or used to transport between 9 and 15 passengers, including the driver, for direct compensation;
- Operating a vehicle/vehicle combination transporting HM of a type or quantity that requires the vehicle to be placarded.

The driver of a passenger-carrying CMV subject to this regulation must prepare and submit a report even if no defect or deficiency is discovered by or reported to the driver.

The post-trip inspection requirement does not apply to a private motor carrier of passengers (nonbusiness), a driveaway-towaway operation, or any motor carrier operating only one commercial motor operating in interstate commerce.

**Transportation of Hazardous Materials (49 CFR 397.1)**

Drivers of vehicles transporting HM, which require the vehicle to be marked or placarded, must examine each tire on the motor vehicle at the beginning of each trip, and each time the vehicle is parked (49 CFR 397.17).

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¹ M.S. § 221.031, Subd. 3a
² Excluding school buses, Head Start buses, or buses operated by the Metropolitan Council or certain local transit commissions.
This Fact Sheet is intended as a resource. It is not intended to explain all the requirements of Minnesota or Federal law or regulations. For additional assistance contact the USDOT Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration at 800-467-4922 or http://www.phmsa.dot.gov/hazmat, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration at 651-291-6150 or http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov, or MnDOT's Office of Freight and Commercial Vehicle Operations at 651-215-6330.