

Pre-trip & Your CSA report
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As a *professional* driver you are held to a higher standard than the average driver, which implies that the professional driver is more in tune with safety. That higher standard includes requirements for maintaining a safe vehicle, conducting pre-& post-trip inspections to ensure that the vehicle is safe to operate. A pre-trip is something which the average driver is not required to do...other than to have his or her vehicle inspected once a year...and, of course, driving safely.

We are living in a fast-paced world where we are expected to do more but with less time. As a result we are constantly in a rush. So, the average driver typically does not do more than what is absolutely necessary when they get in their car or pickup truck. They get in, turn on the ignition and drive off. Maybe they put on their seatbelt. At self-service gas stations they get out, pump their gas, get back in and drive off. But, when do they stop to check the washer fluid, the oil, or the tire pressure? For some, it is when they encounter a problem; for others, these are checked when they take their vehicle to be serviced once or twice each year. Is this enough?

More is expected from the professional driver. Keep in mind that your driver is your company representative and your trucks are a big rolling billboard of who you are and what you do. Their safe operation is out there for the whole world to see.

Regardless of the time constraints, the professional driver must make the time to do what the average driver does not do: conduct a pre-& post- trip inspection. A professional driver must address any issues they find by reporting defects so they can be repaired before the vehicle can go out again. The driver who is thinking he won't be stopped for an inspection is putting his company's CSA score at risk.

When FMCSA developed the Compliance Safety Accountability (CSA) program in 2010 it was intended to identify unsafe behaviors that could potentially lead to vehicle crashes, the ensuing bodily injuries, and fatalities. Unsafe driving all too frequently results in a citation, or worse, a collision. A citation will remain on that CSA report for two years. Good inspections will also show up on the CSA report, which will lower the score and help in the long term.

The CSA program is a shared responsibility between the driver and management. So... if you know you need better scores, read your CSA report on a regular basis (i.e., monthly) to determine what needs improvement. In the long run you'll actually save money...and time.

But, consider those annoying mechanical violations. Some of these are so easy to fix it is a wonder why they aren't picked up during a pre-trip. For example, one of the most common citations for defects is lights. Consider how often we check to see if our lights are working before getting into our cars. For commercial drivers, non-operable lights are

among the top vehicle violations. If they aren't being picked up, are drivers doing their pre-trips????

How often does the average driver check the tires on their personal vehicle? Checking tire condition is a basic part of a professional driver's pre-trip routine, or should be.

By conducting proper pre- & post-trip inspections and reporting any defects that need to be repaired, drivers can avoid some of the most common violations and downtime at an inspection site or a breakdown on some lonely highway.

Developing a comprehensive maintenance program whereby any reported defects are repaired before a vehicle is driven again is essential. Use your CSA report as a tool to gauge the safety culture within your company, but also how your drivers are behaving while they are on the road.

Despite all the requirements, there is a percentage of drivers who not only don't perform proper pre-trips but who also don't know HOW to perform a pre-trip. We take for granted that the vehicle is safe to drive as is, or is so well-maintained that it isn't worth the effort to do a proper pre-trip. So, what's a supervisor to do?

One thing a supervisor can do is watch drivers do their pre-trips and the post-trips. How often does a supervisor get out of the office to go watch drivers do what they're

supposed to be doing? If your CSA score is loaded with minor violations that can be easily fixed, maybe supervision should be tightened.

Improving your CSA score involves changing your culture. Make a point of discussing the value of safety on a regular basis. Training is essential for drivers to understand what is expected of them and the impact violations may have on them and the company.

Below is a list of the top 20 violations for Vermont please go to <https://ai.fmcsa.dot.gov/SafetyProgram/spViolation.aspx?rpt=RDVV> for a complete list of violation.

Vermont All Trucks Roadside Inspections, Vehicle Violations (2018 - Calendar)							
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	Violation Code	Violation Description	# of Inspections	# of Violations ↓	% of Total Violations	# of OOS Violations	OOS Percent
1	393.9	Inoperable Required Lamp	1,066	1,253	16.94%	78	6.23%
2	393.11	No or defective lighting devices or reflective material as required	335	350	4.73%	1	0.29%
3	393.95A	No/discharged/unsecured fire extinguisher	326	327	4.42%	1	0.31%
4	396.3A1	Inspection, repair and maintenance of parts & accessories	201	226	3.06%	39	17.26%
5	393.47E	Clamp or Roto type brake out-of-adjustment	190	222	3.00%	0	0.00%
6	393.75C	Tire-other tread depth less than 2/32 of inch measured in a major tread groove	194	211	2.85%	2	0.95%
7	393.53B	CMV manufactured after 10/19/94 has an automatic airbrake adjustment system that fails to compensate for wear	178	187	2.53%	0	0.00%
8	393.201A	Frame cracked / loose / sagging / broken	119	165	2.23%	98	59.39%

9	393.55E	No or Defective ABS Malfunction Indicator Lamp for trailer manufactured after 03/01/1998	165	165	2.23%	0	0.00%
10	396.3A1B	Brakes (general) Explain:	144	158	2.14%	22	13.92%
11	393.9TS	Inoperative turn signal	145	155	2.10%	84	54.19%
12	396.17C	Operating a CMV without proof of a periodic inspection	144	151	2.04%	0	0.00%
13	396.5B	Oil and/or grease leak	145	146	1.97%	1	0.68%
14	393.75A3	Tire-flat and/or audible air leak	137	145	1.96%	143	98.62%
15	393.207A	Axle positioning parts defective/missing	105	144	1.95%	118	81.94%
16	393.45D	Brake connections with leaks or constrictions	130	132	1.78%	23	17.42%
17	393.45B2UV	Brake Hose or Tubing Chafing and/or Kinking Under Vehicle	100	131	1.77%	36	27.48%
18	393.9H	Inoperable head lamps	129	130	1.76%	0	0.00%
19	393.95F	No / insufficient warning devices	127	127	1.72%	0	0.00%
20	393.78	Windshield wipers inoperative/defective	119	120	1.62%	2	1.67%