



## **RECOMMENDED PRACTICES: Motor Vehicle Safety**

# RECOMMENDED PRACTICES: Motor Vehicle Safety

## 1.1 Purpose

These recommended practices address relevant considerations and guidelines for Motor Vehicle Safety and they support the Marcellus Shale Coalition (MSC) guiding principles.

The provisions of this document are intended to address all oil and gas transportation activities including all company and contractor vehicles and drivers operating on both public and private roads and premises on company business. It also includes all transport activities, including personnel and freight movements, and mobile plant activities.

## 2.1 Driver Qualifications and Carrier Performance

A pre-hire screening process should be considered to select prospective drivers with driving records that reflect safe driving behaviors, appropriate drivers licenses for the class of vehicle to be operated, proper driver training and the functional capacity to operate the vehicle.

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) Safety and Fitness Electronic Records (SAFER) System offers carrier safety data. It is recommended that MSC Companies utilize the SAFER System in evaluating motor carriers. Additionally, the DOT provides motor carriers with safety ratings and monitors performance of carriers and these data may also be considered when evaluating motor carriers.

## 2.2 Formalized Motor Vehicle Programs and Compliance Documentation

It is recommended that companies with transportation related activities have formalized, written safety programs that address company compliance and promote a strong safety culture. These programs may be reviewed on an ongoing basis to incorporate appropriate revisions.

Companies may maintain files for all drivers that document compliance with DOT requirements, including background checks. It is recommended that all companies with commercial drivers have their drivers maintain log books to document hours of service and on-duty time; however, local drivers may be exempt from maintaining log books.

## 2.3 Substance Abuse Program

Companies may be required to have a substance abuse program in place, as per the FMCSA. It is recommended that substance abuse programs be in writing and that drivers acknowledge the program in writing.

## 2.4 Vehicle Condition and Maintenance

Companies should consider a written maintenance program that describes how often vehicles and trailers should be serviced. Commercial carriers should also consider a method to record vehicle pre-trip and post-trip inspection reports. Appropriate corrective actions would be noted in these reports.

## 2.5 Training Programs

Companies should consider a formalized training program that both meets all regulatory requirements and is consistent with these recommended practices. For companies licensed to transport hazardous materials, training and documentation will be required under DOT regulations and will include training of hazardous materials awareness, emergency response, security, and function-specific training.

Safe driving instruction may include but is by no means limited to the following:

- Review of company policies and standards related to driving;
- Defensive driving techniques;
- “Distracted Driving,” e.g., moving objects inside and outside the vehicle, cell phones, GPS, passengers, multi-tasking;
- Route management techniques;
- Alertness and fatigue management;
- Effects of medication and substance abuse;
- Vehicle restraint systems and safety equipment;
- Pre and post-trip checks
- Proper seating position;
- Local driving hazards, regulations and culture;
- Commentary driving;
- Assessment of driving skill and behavior; and
- Additional training for specialized vehicles as applicable.

## 2.6 Vehicle Safety Equipment

A policy emphasizing use of seatbelts is suggested and in most cases, seat belt use is required by law. Other safety equipment may include fire extinguishers, triangles, first-aid kits, etc. Carriers that transport regulated materials or waste should also include a spill response kit. Safety equipment should be checked regularly.

## 2.7 Speed and Tracking Systems

Drivers should adhere to the posted speed limit on all roads. A hazard assessment should govern speed on private roads where speed limits are not posted. Speed limits in inclement weather or other hazardous conditions should also be considered.

Commercial transportation companies may consider a vehicle tracking system to ensure that drivers follow speed limits and stay on designated roads. Equipping vehicles with “black box” equipment that can be downloaded for review of speed and braking should also be considered.

## 2.8 Road Hazard Assessment and Hazardous Area Assessment

Companies should consider a program to assess road hazards that exist along the routes to various locations. This assessment would include selection of appropriate equipment, qualified personnel and route selection taking into account any special considerations for the journey (terrain, weather, high risk crossings, road conditions, bridge limits, overhead power lines, vehicle dimensions and weights, grade of the road, etc.).

Drivers should check with an appropriate safety representative regarding operation of a vehicle near any wellhead, piping, process vessel or tank containing combustible fluids, or any other potentially hazardous area.

## 2.9 Headlights and Warning Lights

Visibility of the vehicle is important. Drivers should consider driving with their lights illuminated at all times, unless specific risks (security or other identified risks) indicate that doing so would present an unacceptable risk.

## 2.10 Parking and Security

It is generally safer to enter the stream of traffic going forward. When parking, effort should be made to park the vehicle allowing it to leave the parking space moving forward. A vehicle walk-around prior to moving the vehicle can help to mitigate risk.

Appropriate steps should be taken to ensure vehicles are safely parked (e.g. use of park brake, vehicle chocks, angle parking, as conditions dictate).

Depending on the materials being transported, companies should consider a security policy addressing security of both the driver and the cargo and identifying safe havens where drivers may park.

## **2.11 Driver Distractions**

Drivers should adhere to all applicable requirements and consider limiting the use of mobile communications devices while driving. If used, suggested cell phone practices include use of hands-free devices, answering calls when it is safe to do so but not initiating calls, and pulling off the road to a safe location to make calls. Other potential distractions should be managed to maintain safe vehicle operations.

## **2.12 Backing Up**

Backing up and maneuvering vehicles in reverse usually occurs at slow speeds, yet reverse-gear incidents account for a disproportionate number of minor, low-speed collisions. The following are recommended practices when backing up:

- Use a spotter in a congested area;
- Walk around vehicle before backing up, checking overhead, side and rear clearance;
- Apply the brakes while shifting the vehicle into reverse;
- If not equipped with a back-up alarm, honk the horn lightly two times before backing up;
- Back up at a very low speed.

## **2.13 Driver Fatigue and Alertness**

Driver alertness is important. All drivers should be adequately rested and alert. Some drivers may be subject to “hours of service regulations” in which drivers must comply with duty-hour requirements.

## **2.14 Securing of Loads**

Drivers carrying items that may shift during transport should use sufficient restraints to ensure objects are properly secured. Where items are transported in a pickup truck or other cargo vehicle, they should be securely stored and fastened.

## **2.15 Passenger Compartments**

The number of passengers should be limited to the manufacturer’s specifications for the vehicle or the number of seatbelts available.

Cargo should not be carried in the passenger compartment of a vehicle if doing so would pose a potential safety hazard.

*This document provides general guidance on recommended practices for the subject(s) addressed. It is offered as a reference aid and is designed to assist industry professionals in improving their effectiveness. It is not intended to establish or impose binding requirements. Nothing herein constitutes, is intended to constitute, or shall be deemed to constitute the setting or determination of legal standards of care in the performance of the subject activities. The foregoing disclaimers apply to this document notwithstanding any expressions or terms in the text that may conflict or appear to conflict with the foregoing.*



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