

Safety Bulletin

Focus on Safety: Surviving Roadside Inspections

You're only 60 miles from home when you hear the dreaded words on your CB. "Eastbound weigh station is open." You pull in and wait your turn. Your mind is filled with questions. Am I over on rear tandems? Is my change-of-duty status updated? Is my rear brake light out?

Roadside inspections aren't enjoyable, and you may think they are an intrusion and a waste of time. Yet they are needed for the safety of everyone on the highway. Drivers are required by federal law to submit to an inspection when requested by an enforcement official. The best way to reduce your worry is to be prepared.



Levels of Inspection

Nearly 4 million commercial motor vehicle inspections are conducted every year throughout North America, ranging from the most complete (Level I) to those with a more specific focus (Level VI for hazardous or radioactive materials). If you receive a Level I (standard vehicle and driver inspection) or Level V (vehicle-only) inspection from a certified Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) inspector, you can receive a CVSA decal. This will be valid for three months and means you generally will not be subject to re-inspection.

8 Ways to Decrease Your Chances for an Inspection

If you haven't had a recent inspection or don't have a current CVSA decal, use these eight tips to decrease your chances of being selected for an inspection.

1. **Keep equipment well-maintained and clean** – A dirty tractor and trailer can be a sign of poorly maintained equipment.
2. **Conduct a thorough pre-trip inspection** – Check for obvious problems like burned out lights, air leaks or flat tires.
3. **Check the vehicle's weight** before your trip.
4. **Drive courteously** – Drive responsibly and stay within the speed limit.
5. **Don't turn on illegal aftermarket lighting at night** – This includes items like neon or black cab lights, purple load lights, red front-clearance lights and ID lamps.
6. **Wear your seatbelt** – If an inspector sees you without one, he may choose you for inspection.
7. **Don't have a radar detector** – Federal regulations prohibit radar detectors in commercial motor vehicles.
8. **Have good luck** – Sometimes luck is your best friend. When approaching the scale house, roll down your window so you can hear and follow any directions given. Also have your logbook and permit binder ready, and be professional.

Once you receive a report from the state of Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), deliver it to your motor carrier at the next terminal or facility, or mail it to the carrier within 24 hours.



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