

TRUCK TALK

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Roadcheck 2009

June 2-4, 2009, is the date that has been announced for Roadcheck 2009. During this 72 hour period in the first week of June, 8,522 CVSA-certified inspectors will be inspecting over 60,000 vehicles and drivers in 1,850 locations all across the United States, from Canada to Mexico. That's a little more than 14 vehicles per minute. Roadcheck 2009 is the largest targeted enforcement program on commercial motor vehicles in the world.

During last year's Roadcheck event:

- 67,931 inspections were conducted
- Of the vehicles inspected, 20.8% were placed out-of-service for mechanical problems
- The driver out-of-service rate was 5.3%, mainly for hours of service violations

There are many reasons to have a vehicle inspection and maintenance program that meets high standards. From an efficiency standpoint, neglecting routine maintenance increases costs when minor problems lead to breakdowns and expensive roadside repairs, not to mention poor customer service. It can also lead to DOT fines and have a negative impact on your safety record.

However, beyond these headaches is the most important reason to make sure your maintenance program meets the highest of standards – Safety. A tire with low air pressure, a turn signal that isn't working, an air leak . . . all these have the potential to cause an accident. Five maintenance items have been identified as being the main issues that cause vehicle breakdowns and increase the potential for an accident:

- Brakes are a vehicle's most important safety feature, so there is a good reason why DOT enforcement officials spend so much time examining them.



- Tires can cause you problems in many ways: over-inflation, under-inflation, loose lug nuts, tread separation, etc. Tire violations are second only to those related to brakes.
- Wheel bearings and axle problems are usually associated with poor lubrication, resulting in friction and heat that result in fires.
- Reflectors and lights make it possible for you to see, and for others to see you. When they are not working properly, you run the risk of someone not seeing you or not understanding your intentions.
- Electrical shorts can occur in the cab, generally due to overloaded circuits, or in the trailer, usually due to loose, worn, or chaffed wiring.

Roadcheck 2009 is one very good reason to make sure your vehicle is in top operating condition. However, in addition to the mechanical concerns stated above and the very high probability that you will be inspected somewhere the first week of June, there is another reason to make sure your vehicle is always in top mechanical condition – Safety. Safety for the driver, and safety for the motoring public with which you share the roads.

In addition, poor maintenance and inspection procedures can be a significant source of liability for you and your company. If your vehicle is involved in a serious accident, and the vehicle has not been properly maintained, you and your company could be held responsible, or potentially negligent.

Are you prepared for Roadcheck 2009? Is your pre-trip inspection completed and on line 4, is your logbook current to the last change-of-duty status, is your equipment defect-free, clean and presentable? If so, then you should have no problems come the first week of June 2009 !

