

Toolbox Talks 2

027: Motor Vehicles

Discussion leader duties for this session:

Review company policies and procedures related to motor vehicles and lift trucks. Review the site shipping and receiving policies, including security access for deliveries.

What this Safety Talk covers:

Safety practices for motor vehicles, whether driving or working around them.

Discussion notes:

Background

For motor vehicles of all types, the standard safety practices for your normal driver's license apply. Per the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act (CMVSA), you need a valid commercial vehicle license to drive a commercial vehicle.

Motor vehicle safety practices:

- For non-commercial vehicles, follow normal rules of the road.
- Remember the primary rule: the right of way is given, not taken.
- Report safety violations to your foreman, who can follow up appropriately.
- The essence of the CMVSA is this: Don't drive a commercial vehicle unless you have a current Commercial Driver's License (CDL) with authorization for that type of vehicle. Penalties for breaking the laws embodied in this act are severe.
- Don't stand directly behind the truck. The driver cannot see you there.
- Don't assume the driver can see you, no matter where you are standing.
- If you need to move something out of the way of the truck, signal the driver to stop. Then, let the driver know what you are going to do and why. After you have removed the obstacle, inform the driver that it is safe to proceed.
- If you are taking delivery of equipment, offer to assist the driver. Ask the driver where would be the best place for you to stand and signal from.
- Provide traffic direction to other motorists, if needed.
- Don't assume the driver is fully alert and will remember all safety precautions. While this may be true, it's not necessarily true. Help the driver remember what to do. The driver doesn't need to be told how to do it (for example, how to block the wheels). You can improve safety by asking the driver to go over the safety checklist with you before unloading.
- Avoid delays that cause drivers to rush to make up for lost time. If you are expecting a delivery, prepare for it ahead of time so the driver isn't delayed by security issues, equipment not being ready, qualified lift truck operator being unavailable, doors locked, and so forth.
- Do not touch the truck until it has stopped and the driver gives you permission.
- Do not allow unqualified personnel to operate lift trucks. Only qualified personnel may unload a delivery truck.
- Use the appropriate equipment for loading or unloading trucks.
- If appropriate, erect cones or barrier tape around the loading/unloading area.

Review and discussion

1. What rules, at a minimum, should you observe for operating a motor vehicle on any site? What are the added rules for this site?

2. What is the primary rule of motor vehicle operation?
3. What are some additional dangers for motor vehicles on construction sites?
4. What is the essence of the CMVSA?
5. Where should you never stand, in relation to a truck?
6. What should you do if you need to move something out of the way of a delivery truck that is backing up to the dock?
7. How can you avoid delays that cause a driver to rush through the delivery? *[Note to presenter: This may also be a good time to address related issues. For example, what if the driver is in a hurry? What if the driver exhibits an unsafe attitude? What if the driver seems drunk or stoned? What should you do if the driver runs into a structure or damages property?]*
8. What are some security and equipment issues for this job site, and how should you handle those for a delivery you are in charge of accepting? This question assumes there isn't a shipping and receiving department on site. If there is, then for the sake of training assume there isn't. Not every job will have such a team on site.
9. You need to take delivery of a 3,000KVA transformer for a service entrance. It's going to be set on a cement pad outside the building. There is no loading dock. What equipment and personnel need to be on site for this delivery? *[Note to presenter: The project manager normally handles these arrangements, ahead of time. But it's the electrical crew that will need to resolve any errors on delivery day. Anyone who is involved in taking delivery of this transformer needs to review with the electrical foreman ahead of time what each person's role will be and what equipment will be needed.]*
10. Over the weekend, your crew is supposed to install three new switchboards. The delivery truck has arrived, and is waiting to be unloaded. It's a Saturday, and you ask the project manager where the lift truck operator is. The project manager tells you there isn't one, and instructs you to operate the lift truck and unload the delivery truck yourself. You aren't qualified to operate the lift truck and are unsure about how to properly secure and balance the load, but the project manager insists. What should you do? *[Note to presenter: The project manager is out of line to insist on this, no matter what the schedule says. The electrician should notify his or her foreman immediately. The fact that nobody thought to schedule a lift truck operator or the one scheduled for this job didn't show up doesn't mean an unqualified person can risk the safety of personnel or property. Two wrongs don't make a right.]*

Participant's Signature and Date
