

Good Business Safety Practices

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations don't apply to everyone, but they are good, basic safety practices for almost any type of transportation operation, or any company that uses vehicles in their business. We talk a lot about those rules because we get a lot of questions regarding their application to particular operations, and, how the regulations are interpreted. Since the states have adopted the rules (with some exceptions) almost all companies involved in commercial transportation, using vehicles over 10,000 lbs., are subject to most of the rules. It's our goal to assist readers in understanding which rules apply, and, how to comply with those rules. On the other hand, whether the safety rules apply or not, they are good basics for a safety program. If employees drive any type of vehicle for your business, there are some safety related practices that should be followed to protect your liability exposures, your employees, the public and your potential losses. Quite simply, some of the elements of a basic program should be; the experience and driving record of the driver (this would require some background checking with past employers and state driver license records), driving test, training (both for the job and for the driving part of the job), vehicle/equipment familiarization, and, at least some of the basic, most important written company policies regarding expectations and job performance. Written procedures greatly assist, in this regard. There should also be a procedure for properly handling accidents, from conduct at the scene to the investigation and actions taken to prevent further accidents. Maintenance of the vehicles is another important factor. A program can be relatively simple and still be very effective.

Safety Defined

1. Freedom from hazard (Webster's Intercollegiate Dictionary)
2. Freedom from those conditions, which can cause injury/damage to personnel, equipment, or property. (Anon)
3. The protection of men and equipment from the hazards that exceed the normal risks within the operational requirements of a healthy transportation community.
4. Maintaining efficiently, the physical and mechanical well being of men and equipment to the degree acceptable within the operational requirements of a healthy transportation community.
5. The elimination of preventable accidents.
6. Confidence of mind and reliance on equipment that is sustained only by active and aggressive pursuit of all paths to maximum proficiency.
7. The optimum degree of freedom from danger or hazard to life, health or property; or from the occurrence of undesired incidents or events in any element of the system's operations. (Anon)
8. Action taken toward the prevention of loss in manpower, material, and time during transportation activities.
9. A specialized form of overall reliability, which involves actual or potential loss of the vehicle, and/or a high level of emotion.