

Personal and vehicle safety

Keep drivers safe on the road, off the road,
and everywhere in between

Hide your valuables!

10 tips for truck
parking and security

FMCSA proposes changes to
Safety Measurement System

Information and resources to help your drivers operate safely

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MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Keep it secret. Keep it safe.

So maybe not everyone is a huge *Lord of the Rings* fan, but I think we can all appreciate the advice to keep precious things secret and safe — especially when it comes to personal and vehicle safety!

After coming to a full stop and before exiting the vehicle, it's important for drivers to make sure all valuable items are stowed away and placed out of plain sight. Otherwise, the urge to break a window and grab those valuables might be too strong for a thief to resist.

And personal items can be just the beginning. If a thief notices valuable items just from looking into the cab of a truck, what's to stop that thief from getting curious about the valuables in the back of the truck? Hijacking is a serious issue for truck drivers who are idled or stopped, and thieves have become quite sophisticated. Without the driver even realizing it, a hijacker can unhitch a trailer from the cab and then hitch it to their own tractor without notice.

To stay safe:

- Keep items like laptops, wallets, tablets, cash — and even rings — out of sight when stepping away from the vehicle;
- Keep windows up and doors locked;
- Don't have detailed conversations about goods around other people; and
- Be aware of any shady characters who may be eying precious items and cargo.

Whether they're on a long haul or just making a quick trip, drivers should remember this sage advice about valuables from a 2000-year-old wizard: Keep it secret. Keep it safe. ♦



Jen Loomis

Jen Loomis joined J. J. Keller in 2021 on the Content & Consulting Services Transportation Team. As an Associate Editor, Jen edits a variety of products including the *Transportation Safety Training Advisor*, *Driver Report*, and *Driver Training Awareness Program* newsletters. She also provides regulatory support in the area of DOT drug and alcohol testing.



TRAINING BLUEPRINT — PERSONAL/VEHICLE SAFETY

Stay safe on the road

Each and every year, thousands of drivers are injured and millions of dollars are lost in theft and robbery.

The best way to stay safe is to recognize and avoid potentially harmful situations *before* they occur. Start with careful trip planning and a heightened sense of awareness.

TIP: Check if a local law enforcement agency has officers who can talk to your drivers on this topic and/or offer helpful training materials.

Trip planning

Before getting started, drivers should have a thoughtful trip plan in place. This includes taking time to map out a safe location for each rest or refueling stop. In addition, the driver should note other locations where it is safe to stop in case the first choice is unavailable or an unexpected stop is needed.

There should also be clear communication between the motor carrier and shipper or receiver. All involved should be aware of who is picking up or dropping off the load, as well as the carrier-assigned number of the vehicle and trailer (if applicable).

When arriving at a shipper or receiver, the driver should:

- **Take time** to become aware of the surroundings and watch out for suspicious onlookers,
- **Supervise** the entire loading/unloading process,
- **Report** discrepancies to the carrier as soon as possible, and
- **Review** and verify all documentation.

TIP: Review any aspects of your company policy that address procedures at the shipper and/or receiver.

On the road

It can't be said enough: When on the road, a driver must remain alert and pay attention. This is especially important when stopped at a stop light, stop sign, or railroad crossing — prime areas for vehicle hijackings.

On ramps, off ramps, and signal-regulated highways are other prime vehicle hijack areas.

Many cargo thefts and hijackings occur within a few miles of a load's origin. Because of this, all doors should be locked, all windows should be rolled up until the driver

is on the road, and the driver should remain alert when leaving the shipper.

Here are key steps drivers can take to ensure on-the-road safety:

- **Check** in with the motor carrier regularly;
- **Vary** the route of travel;
- **Watch** for vehicles that may be following;
- **Be suspicious** of anyone who is signaling to stop or pull over;
- **Never** share information about the load, pick-up/delivery schedules, or routing;
- **Park** in well-lit, high-traffic locations;
- **Lock** the vehicle when stopped; and
- **Inspect** the vehicle and its seals/locks at the end of each stop/rest period.

TIP: Distribute and review copies of your company policy on personal and vehicle security. Review any questions drivers may have during or after your presentation.

Personal safety

When stopping for breaks, the truck should be parked in a well-lit area, near the door of the establishment, or near security cameras. If possible, the truck should be backed against a wall so the trailer's doors are difficult to access.



Items of value such as a tablet, laptop, or wallet should not be left in plain sight.

When outside, drivers should walk in clearly visible areas and avoid walking between trucks (especially at night). Drivers should walk with purpose and always be aware of the immediate and nearby surroundings.

Drivers should never share load-specific or routing details in a public place where others may be able to hear the conversation. If a driver needs to discuss information with a dispatcher, shipper, or receiver, the conversation should be done inside the truck or when no one else is around to hear the conversation. ♦



TRAINING HANDOUT — PERSONAL/VEHICLE SAFETY

Keeping you and your vehicle secure

Planning the trip

- Map out a safe place for each rest or refueling stop
- Make note of some alternative safe stopping locations, just in case



On the road

- Be alert and pay attention, especially at stops and on ramps
- Watch out for anyone following you
- Be suspicious of anyone trying to get you to pull over
- Vary your route
- Check in with your carrier regularly
- Never share info about your load, route, or schedule



When stopped

- Park in a well-lit, high-traffic area
- Lock your doors, roll up your windows, and inspect seals/locks
- Never leave valuables in plain sight
- Don't discuss any details of your work outside of the truck
- Walk in places where others can clearly see you ♦





TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE — PERSONAL/VEHICLE SAFETY

Directions: Read each statement or question carefully and mark the best answer.

1. Which two places do you need to pay extra attention to when on the road?
 - A. School zones and construction zones
 - B. Weigh stations and police stops
 - C. Stops and ramps
 - D. Highways and back roads

2. It's okay to talk freely about where you're going and what you're carrying.
 - A. True
 - B. False

3. How many safe stops should you map out ahead of time?
 - A. One or two
 - B. Two or three
 - C. Seven or eight
 - D. Zero

4. You should leave your windows down when stopped to allow fresh air in the cab.
 - A. True
 - B. False

5. It's best to keep your valuables hidden so you don't attract thieves.
 - A. True
 - B. False

NAME: _____ DATE: _____



Truck parking and security still a concern

It has been over a decade since Jason's Law was included in the Highway Restoration Bill of 2012.

The bill was introduced as the result of the senseless death of Jason Rivenburg in 2009. Rivenburg was ahead of schedule for a delivery and was forced to park at an abandoned gas station because there was no alternative. He was robbed and killed for just \$7.

Even though funds were allocated under Jason's Law to create additional commercial motor vehicle (CMV) parking, state and federal governments are still working toward solutions to the parking problem. Meanwhile, drivers should continue to take personal security at rest areas and truck stops seriously.



10 practical security tips for drivers

1. Use reputable, safe truck stops, if possible:

- Look at available truck stops on your route and check their reviews.
- Use internet maps to get a satellite view of a truck stop.
- Avoid locations that are not well lit.
- Avoid locations in high crime areas.
- Select facilities with security cameras and/or security guards, if feasible.

2. Avoid stopping on dark freeways or deserted areas while waiting to make deliveries.

3. Plan your trip approximating your location based on hours-of-service limits. Find suitable truck stops in the vicinity in advance.

4. Prevent entry into your truck while at a truck stop by:

- Keeping the truck doors locked, including when in the cab, sleeper, and away from the vehicle.
- Pulling your seatbelt through the armrest and clicking it in place when in the sleeper berth.

5. Swivel your head when walking to and from the truck. Be aware of your surroundings, even if you are familiar and comfortable with a truck stop:

- Don't walk between trucks unless you have to.
- Look for individuals hiding under trucks.
- Remember that no one will hear an attack over the noise made by running engines and auxiliary power units.

6. Don't leave your truck if someone approaches your vehicle:

- Open your window just a crack to hear what the person has to say.
- Don't fall for ploys to get you out of the truck.

7. Minimize the amount of time you spend out of the truck at night.

8. Don't leave anything of value in view in the cab, even in the sleeper berth.

9. Never carry large amounts of cash.

10. Always have one driver stay with the truck when team driving. ♦



Key to remember: With the continued shortage of truck parking, drivers must remain vigilant. Personal safety requires being proactive.

FMCSA proposes changes to Safety Measurement System

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) has announced proposed changes to the Safety Measurement System (SMS) methodology used to prioritize motor carriers for Agency intervention.

- The proposed changes include:
- Reorganized “BASICS,”
- Reorganized roadside violations,
- Simplified severity weights,
- Improved intervention thresholds,
- Proportionate percentiles,
- Greater focus on recent violations,
- Updated utilization factor,
- New segmentation, and
- Accounting for non-preventable crashes.

The Agency is asking motor carriers and other stakeholders to preview how the new methodology impacts their prioritization results by logging in to the CSA Prioritization Preview website at <https://csa.fmcsa.dot.gov/prioritizationpreview>.

Stakeholders are encouraged to submit their comments at <https://www.regulations.gov/docket/FMCSA-2022-0066>. The comment period is open from February 15-May 16, 2023. ♦



Answers to quiz on page 5:

1.) C 2.) B 3.) B 4.) B 5.) A



Next Month's Topic: Slips, Trips, and Falls

As well as being painful and potentially embarrassing, a slip, trip, or fall can be costly for both drivers and motor carriers. ♦

Expert Help: Question of the Month

Question: When do I have to stop for a load check?

Answer: In Section 392.9, the motor carrier safety regulations require drivers to periodically check their cargo and securement devices to ensure that the cargo is properly secured and to make adjustments as necessary. Under that standard, these load checks must occur:

- Before driving;
- Within the first 50 miles after beginning a trip; and
- At every change in duty status, every 3 hours, or once the vehicle has been driven for 150 miles, whichever occurs first.

Enroute load checks are not required of:

- Drivers of sealed commercial motor vehicles who have been ordered not to open the vehicles to inspect the cargo, or
- Drivers of vehicles that have been loaded in a manner that makes inspection of the cargo impracticable. ♦



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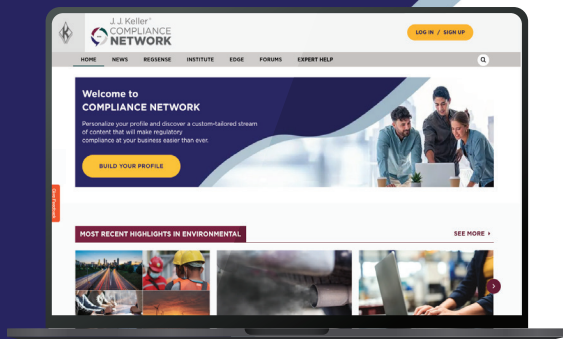
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