



## ToolBox Talks from the SWPA Safety Committee

Each day across America millions of truck drivers haul products to support our economy. Trucking plays a huge role in the wood products industry from logs to finished furniture. Trucking is the way our industry moves its products to market. Once the truck leaves the logging job or mill, drivers are on their own and away from direct supervision. There is a huge amount of responsibility and liability based upon the driver's decisions and actions.

The US Federal Highway Administration releases data each year that we must take to heart. Driver safety is extremely important and we must do all we can to reduce the number of accidents. **Make safe driving a lifelong habit. EVERY 21 MINUTES, a road departure fatality occurs.**

As we investigate the ever-increasing numbers of truck accidents, Two main causes were found – SPEED and driver distractions. Items such as using a cell phone or CB radio, becoming sleepy from long hauls, and boredom are all dominos in the accident process. The driver has direct control of both the speed and distraction factors. **Control them and you make it home to family and friends.**

*Do nothing and the end result is you become a statistic for us to talk about.*

**Hazard recognition can help reduce the number of accidents. Discuss the topics below:**

- Animals on the road - do not try to swerve suddenly to avoid them as the center of gravity can move and cause rollovers.
- Fog and heavy rain - slow down when visibility is not good. These conditions reduce the distance you can see in front of you.
- Gawking at the scenery –avoid this distraction and keep your attention on the road in front of you.
- Road conditions – pot holes, loose gravel and uneven surfaces create hazards that can lead to flat tires, or loss of control of the truck. Scan ahead to avoid them.
- Narrow roads – slow down to navigate areas on bridges and country roads.
- Farm equipment in road – if you drive in rural areas, this is a way of life. Be prepared for unexpected slow moving vehicles.
- School buses – always be aware that school buses make frequent stops & that children do not always follow the rules when crossing high traffic areas.
- Curves – slow down. More trucks rollover due to excessive speed for road conditions. You may be doing the posted “speed” as you enter a curve or ramp but it may be too fast for your load.

**Accidents can be avoided.** Lowering risk through safety awareness reduces the chance of an accident. Taking the time to hold safety discussions and reminders help.

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Toolbox Talks are provided as a courtesy to SWPA members. Please remember they are to assist you in developing a safety plan. Keep in mind OSHA, Department of Labor and Insurance requirements may change over time and it is your responsibility to make sure your safety plan is up to date. Reference: OSHA, CAT, FM Insurance.



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