

### In this newsletter...

We are not too far away from that warm weather that helps to heat up the tires and promotes them to blow. It is time to think about preventing this problem in your fleet. Within this newsletter is an article about tire maintenance. Taking into consideration some of the information I have provided might help to prevent a possible tire problem. Avoiding even one problem in a small fleet this year will help you get the ROI you need.

If you are still not convinced and you have a few sceptical drivers in your fleet, here's an idea for you. In a recent article that I read, Goodyear took 3 tires and a hammer, inflated one to the correct air pressure, one under-inflated and one over-inflated and asked drivers to show off their skills and guess what tire is properly inflated. Try this with your drivers, maybe turn it into a contest and give a small token to the driver that gets it right.

Let me know what the results are I would find it to be interesting.

### Tragic Events

On February 6, 2012 Ontario experienced one of the worst vehicle collisions on record. This incident occurred in the little hamlet of Hamstead just north east of Shakespeare resulted in the death of 11 people. Both vehicles involved were company vehicles and each had victims. No matter how much we think we know, senseless workplace accidents like this can result in the death of many people.

First off, I would like to extend my condolences to the families of the victims. Secondly, I cannot imagine what the impact is on the co-workers of these victims

Less than 2 days after this tragedy police have stated that this was a preventable collision. That does not make accepting what took place any less painful for the family.

One question that I have for owners of companies or the safety people is, "are you prepared for anything like this to happen at your workplace?" This was a tragedy to an extreme level and likely no one in their worst nightmares would think something like this is going to happen. In your next manager's meeting, while this is still fresh in everyone's mind, I would suggest that you start thinking about a plan to prevent such a nightmare from coming true in your workplace.

Think about your Due Diligence and enroll G licensed drivers into a defensive driving course. The next one is Monday April 8<sup>th</sup>.

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formula for safety  
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### Coming events:

**Lift Truck Training for  
experienced operators**

Saturday April 14

**Defensive Driving for  
G Licensed Drivers**

Monday April 9

**Defensive Driving for  
Professional Drivers**

Saturday May 12

**Managing a Safety  
Department**

Monday June 4

**Commercial Vehicle  
In-cab Trainer**

Saturday June 16

Check out website for details  
regarding this session and others  
offered by TS&CS

[www.transportationsafetycs.ca](http://www.transportationsafetycs.ca)

## Tire maintenance advice

Tires may be the most neglected part of your trucks and trailers? If you have not noticed, tires are not getting any cheaper; in fact, tires are rising in price.

Do you know for a fact that drivers are properly checking tire inflation as part of the daily vehicle inspection, routine vehicle inspections and the post trip inspection?

Do you know how they are checking the tire inflation? Do you know the best way to check tire inflation?

Question to you: What is the proper and best way to check tire inflation?

- a. A good swift kick with the steel toe boot?
- b. A whack with a wood bat/tire thumper?
- c. A swing of a good hammer?
- d. Any of the above?

Whatever answer you gave, it's incorrect. The answer was "e" None of the above. Sorry, a little bit of a cheap shot but then again so were all the options that I gave you. The best way to check tire inflation is with an air pressure gauge.

So what is the big deal if a tire is a little over-inflated or a little under-inflated? I will tell you what the big deal is.

1. Under or over inflated tires can eat away at your fuel mileage. Another big expense that eats away at your bottom line.
2. Under or overinflated tires will wear unevenly.
3. When one tire is under inflated the one beside it in a dual tire combination picks up the load and wears prematurely. Under heavy load, it may blow because it is taking the extra weight.
4. A blown tire sends debris in all directions which may cause or result in a collision.
5. A driver that hikes it down the road with a flat or blown tire could face an Out Of Service violation, costing money and potential points on the company C.V.O.R.
6. A driver at the side of the road is not going to make an appointment and the customer may not understand or really care about your problems.
7. My experience is that most tires do not go during the business day of the local tire shop. Therefore now you are faced with the extra charge of an afterhours service call.
8. With under-inflated tires or over-inflated tires there is a potential for a tire fire that can spread and quickly take out a whole tractor trailer unit as well as cargo.

What is the solution to the problem?

1. You can get all your drivers an air pressure gauge.
2. When a truck or trailer is in the shop have them check the tire air pressure.
3. On a weekly basis have a tire vendor in to check your tire pressures of equipment in the yard. (this could also be a good modified work assignment depending on the injury)

## Not done in safety

In the 2011 Winter edition I started this new section. This time I am pointing out some of the bad habits of drivers that I will do an in cab evaluation with.

Most of the in cab evaluations are for pre-employment purpose, some that are conducted for post-collision reasons and then there are the fleets that will routinely evaluate their drivers on scheduled time period.

Before I get into this I want to point out that from the pre-employment aspect this is one of the first lines of defence as a carrier that you have not to hire the wrong person for the job. As well this is an excellent due diligence should you hire a driver and they have the biggest collision of the company history. You can say that at the time of hiring this driver was a competent driver and demonstrated some quality characteristics as a safe professional driver. Now between hiring and the day that the unpleasant event should take place there are a few things that you as a carrier must provide. First and foremost is ongoing training. This can be covered in annual safety meetings and tailgate talks. You can also do periodical or routine driver ride-alongs to check up on your drivers. Just doing them is not enough they must be documented and any problems discovered must be addressed.

One thing that I am finding as an in-cab evaluator is that drivers are not in full understanding of their role and responsibility in the daily vehicle inspection. They do not have to be a mechanic but they must understand the basics and then do the basics.

Drivers tell me they are listening for air leaks which is good that they are checking but if the system is not charged they will not hear air leaks.

Many drivers do not know what the travel of the pushrods should be on a brake application. They overlook what may appear to be minor such as working windshield wipers, checking for a functioning horn. Most forget to check that they have brake lights that are working.

Once they get onto the road there are many things. Here is my list, in no particular order:

- Following at less than 4 seconds between them and the vehicle ahead. At highway speed they can be travelling at 90 feet per second with a reaction time of possibly 7 seconds. I think that maybe this paints a good picture for you.
- Rolling stops. In some cases it is a very fine line between stopping and a rolling stop. However, I think the judge would believe the police officer before the driver when in court.
- Drivers not paying attention to cyclists and pedestrians.
- I do not see this on any evaluations but I know that there are drivers of commercial vehicles out there playing with electronic devices and being distracted by them.
- Impeding traffic. When traffic passes on the right you are impeding them.
- On occasion I have found drivers that are speeding in rural areas as well as in city areas.

In the Summer issue of Safety Lane, I will discuss how you will know whether your drivers are doing a daily vehicle inspection.

*An open mind to new ideas is the foundation for growth. ~Andy Roy*

If you would like this newsletter sent to a second e-mail address or someone else in your organizations, please let us know at [mike@transportationsafetycs.ca](mailto:mike@transportationsafetycs.ca)