



Idealease Safety Bulletin

April 11, 2008

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Turn Around, Don't Drown!



With the recent storms and flooding that has occurred this spring, drivers of any type of vehicle need to be aware of the fact that road conditions can change rapidly with flash floods. Each year, more deaths occur due to flooding than from any other thunderstorm related hazard. Why? The main reason is people underestimate the force and power of water. Over half of all flood related deaths each year occur with victims inside vehicles. Many of the deaths occur in vehicles as they are swept downstream. Of these drownings, many are preventable, but too many people continue to drive around the barriers that warn you the road is flooded. Even when operating a large commercial motor vehicle you can be swept away by the strong force of the waters current. I remember vividly watching a number of years ago a cement mixer which had been caught in a storm water canal in Los Angeles during a flash flood be swept down the canal as if it were a toy boat. To check on weather conditions and flooding, go the National Weather Service website at: www.srh.weather.gov.

Whether you are driving or walking, if you come to a flooded road, Turn Around, Don't Drown. You will not know the depth of the water nor will you know the condition of the road under the water.

- If flooding occurs, get to higher ground. Get out of areas subject to flooding. This includes dips, low spots, canyons, washes etc.
- Avoid areas already flooded, especially if the water is flowing fast. Do not attempt to cross flowing streams. Turn Around Don't Drown.
- Road beds may be washed out under flood waters. NEVER drive through flooded roadways. Turn Around Don't Drown. If your vehicle is suddenly caught in rising water, leave it immediately and seek higher ground.
- Do park your vehicle along streams and washes, particularly during threatening conditions.
- Be especially cautious at night when it is harder to recognize flood dangers
- Avoid low water crossings.
- Use alternate routes to avoid flood prone areas.
- Leave your vehicle immediately if it stalls in flood waters.
- Move to higher ground if you can do so safely.
- Most cars and light trucks will begin to float in as little as 1 to 2 feet of water

UPCOMING IDEALEASE/NPTC SAFETY SEMINARS

May 6 Denver, CO
McCandless Idealease
Contact: Jim McClellan
303-739-9900

May 8 Birmingham, AL
Southland Idealease
Contact: Matt Markus
205-254-1823

May 13 Nashville, TN
Cumberland Idealease
Contact: Otha Quisenberry
615-367-9453

May 15 Landover, MD
K. Neal Idealease
Contact: Bill Caterham
301-772-5111

Proposed Regulations from the FMCSA that May Change your Safety Program

1. FMCSA MEDICAL REVIEW BOARD TO ISSUE SLEEP APNEA PROPOSAL

The FMCSA Medical Review Board is expected to issue recommendations later this month that would require commercial vehicle drivers with obstructive sleep apnea to get treatment before they are allowed to drive. The recommendations are designed to curb drowsiness among CMV drivers by acting on medical findings regarding the sleep disorder. Sleep apnea is connected with obesity. The Board is expected to recommend that drivers be required to undergo a sleep study once they reach a certain level of obesity. But there is no agreement yet on where that threshold might be. If the FMCSA approves the recommendation, then drivers would have to get treatment to be medically qualified to drive a CMV. Treatment could include using a breathing mask while sleeping up to surgery for more severe cases.

2. Proposed Regulation would require a CDL Learners Permit before A CDL is Issued by a State.

Applicants for commercial driver's licenses (CDLs) and commercial learner's permits (CLPs) would be required to provide more documentation of their legal presence in the United States under a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) published by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

The proposed regulation would require that CDL applicants first obtain a CLP, and would mandate additional background checks of CDL applicants by states issuing licenses. Many of the proposal's elements respond to provisions of recent highway and security legislations.

To tighten the rules on legal presence, state driver's license agencies would be required to verify the applicant's Social Security Number with the Social Security Administration. Many of the program areas and issues addressed in the NPRM also are covered by the Department of Homeland Security's final rule implementing the REAL ID Act. FMCSA said it has coordinated its efforts with DHS to avoid overlapping or conflicting requirements, but that there may be a need to further harmonize its rule with the REAL ID rule before it is finalized.

Successful completion of the knowledge test would be required before a CLP is issued, and the proposal incorporates by reference the latest American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators' Model Test package for knowledge and skill standards. To reduce the potential for fraud, FMCSA proposes to ban the use of foreign language interpreters in the administration of the knowledge and skills tests.

Comments on FMCSA's proposal are due June 9. For a copy of the NPRM, visit www.regulations.gov and search Docket No. FMCSA-2007-27659.

3. New Entrant Level Driver Training Proposed Requirements

Proposed regulation announced 12-26-07 that three years from date of final ruling that all drivers without a CDL will be required to have 76 hours of classroom and 44 hours of in cab training before they can apply for a CDL. This will not pertain to drivers with a current CDL license. Comments on the FMCSA's proposal are due by May 23, 2008. . For a copy of the NPRM, visit www.regulations.gov and search Docket No. FMCSA-2007-27748.