



HAZARD PERCEPTION

WHY?

As a professional driver you must have a total understanding of how to recognize potential hazards within your driving environment to prohibit or neutralize possible emergency situations.

RECOGNIZING POTENTIAL HAZARDS

Hazards: A hazard is any road condition, driver, pedestrian, bicyclist, or any other road user that can create a potential danger for you and others on the road.

Weather Conditions: Be aware of potential weather conditions that you could face during your trip, and plan accordingly. A good driver always plans accordingly for their trip by checking the potential weather threats along their route.

Roadside Incidents: move over laws in many states, slow down, change lanes, stay out of the adjacent lane, respect emergency personnel's space, and curtail a potential emergency.

Blocked Vision: may not be aware of their limited field of vision! Notice blocked windows and flapping tarps!

Children: Children are considered a serious hazard. Whenever you see children in or around the path are traveling, on and off the road, it is advisable to slow down considerably.

Parked Vehicles: are an unexpected hazard, watch for parked cars with movement inside, watch for flickering brake lights or exhaust.

Unforeseen Conflict: anytime you must abruptly change speed or direction, conflicts can occur in any area where motor vehicles of all kinds can meet. Good examples are merges, slow moving traffic, accident scenes and intersections.

Intersections: approach with caution and be aware of other drivers.

IDENTIFYING HAZARDOUS ROAD CONDITIONS

Pavement Edges: irregularities in the road, or the pavement that cause a threat to professional drivers. A drop off in the pavement near the edge of the road can pose a life-threatening situation. If you get too close to the edge, it can cause your rig to tip which can lead to a chain of events you may not be able to recover from.

Roadway Objects: objects in the roadway pose a huge hazard for commercial motor vehicles, a danger for your tires and wheel rims, a danger to your electrical and brake lines, can get caught between your dual tires and cause damage. Objects can be deceiving! Empty boxes may have heavy objects inside. A tarp may be camouflaging a larger more dangerous object hidden underneath, expect the unexpected to stay safe, keep your eyes peeled for those objects in the road, and make lane adjustments as soon as possible to avoid encountering them head on.

On and Off Ramps: The speed limit signs are posted on freeway or turnpike ramps, are for cars, so they are not a safe speed for a CMV. Reduce your speed drastically as you approach a ramp with a curve in it.

Work Zones: work zones can be unpredictable. The job itself can be a distraction for other drivers. There are a lot of unknowns – smaller lanes to maneuver, poor visibility, workers here and there who may not see you, work equipment moving unexpectedly, sharp turns and uneven road surfaces. It is advisable to put on your four-way flashers to warn others behind you.

Weather Conditions: you should keep a 3 second gap between your rig and the one in front of you. Don't forget to add extra seconds when driving in rain, snow, dark times of the early morning/night, and fog.

IDENTIFYING OTHER ROAD USER HAZARDS

Drivers Signaling: slow down when you see a driver signaling to turn. They may have to wait for oncoming traffic. Slow to avoid potential emergencies.

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IDENTIFYING OTHER ROAD USER HAZARDS CONT.

Driving Below Speed Limit: farm equipment, mopeds, and construction equipment. Use caution to avoid a potential accident.

Confused Drivers: They changed lanes radically without warning. They hesitate a little too long. Where you find them – near exit ramps and tourist areas. What to look for – out of state plates and luggage on top of their vehicles. What to do – approach with caution.

Impaired Drivers: keep your distance. The driver who – swerves, speeds up, slows down or drifts.

Hurried & Distracted Drivers: A hurried driver may impatiently try to pass you without enough of a safe passing distance between him and oncoming traffic. A distracted driver may not see you, so if you see someone who appears to be distracted by looking at their phone, applying makeup or in a heated discussion, use caution.

Accidents: accidents create a hazard. People involved or witnesses of accidents may be in shock. They may totally forget about their own safety. They may put themselves in danger. Keep an eye out for pedestrians running along the side of the road to assist others in an accident. Other drivers may be distracted by looking at the accident.

Talkers and Shoppers: Talkers and shoppers are hazards for they may be moving in your vicinity in a distracted fashion. Shoppers, in and around stores, are easily distracted as well, so approach them with the utmost caution.

HOW TO AVOID HAZARDOUS SITUATIONS ON THE LOG DECK/LANDING

Loading and Unloading: Loading and unloading can create a hazard on the job. Make sure you locate the crew members on the ground in and around the log deck/landing. They should be wearing high visibility vests. If you are unloading your own logs, wait till all crew members are at a safe distance from your trailer.

Communication: Communication is key on the log deck/landing. Eye contact and acknowledgement of the communication can prohibit hazards from turning into emergency situations.

Getting Out of the Cab: removing yourself from the cab during loading and during unloading is a standard for protecting yourself from potential hazards. A free flying chipper knife can be thrown through your cab causing deadly harm. If someone else is removing your load, a falling log can be fatal if it lands on you or your cab. Move away from the loading and unloading area until loading or unloading is complete.

Watch Where You Stand: never stand near an unbound or unsupported load and keep at least two log lengths away from the loading or unloading area.

Wear a Hard Hat: don your hard hat and safety vest when exiting the cab on the landing/deck or at the mill.

Be Prepared for The Worst: When it comes to dealing with potential hazards it's wise to be prepared for the worst. Think to yourself, what's the worst that could happen? Then maybe you can prohibit it from happening by planning, scanning ahead for at least 12 to 15 seconds, searching for potential hazards, and then reacting accordingly.

Name: _____

Date: _____

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