

Where's Your DOT Number?

Is Your Fleet in Compliance with Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration FMCSA Regulations?

Often when I travel the state visiting with contractors I see a large number of Ford F350's and this concerns me greatly. The reason is not because I'm some crazed Chevy fan, rather it's because most do not have the company name and DOT number properly displayed. If your vehicle, or vehicle / trailer combination, exceed 10,000 GVW you have to comply with the following FMCSA regulations. (By the way an F350 alone is rated in excess of 10,000 GVW).

Following are examples of common citations given on vehicles or combinations (trucks and trailers) of 10,000 GVWR or more taken from www.fmcsa.dot.gov -

1. Vehicle identification (Name and US DOT Number)
2. No medical exam certificate
3. Using a radar detector (radar detectors are prohibited)
4. No fire extinguisher
5. No stopped vehicle warning devices (reflective triangles)
6. Driver did not do a pre-trip inspection (need not be written)
7. Driver exceeded hours-of-service limits
8. No time records kept on driver
9. No annual mechanical inspection of vehicle Download Annual Inspection Form
10. No post-trip inspection (must be in writing)
11. Trailers not equipped with required brakes, lights, and reflectors

Frequently asked questions that are explained on this web site include -

Q: What vehicles are subject to these regulations?

A: Vehicles with a GVWR of 10,001 lbs. or more used as part of a business (including a non-profit organization) are considered commercial motor vehicles for purposes of most of the safety regulations. This applies to single vehicles (trucks and vans) and to combinations of vehicles (such as a truck pulling a trailer or other equipment).

Q: My truck (or truck & trailer) that I use for my business has a GVWR of 10,001 lb. or more. Do I need a medical examiner's certificate?

A: Yes. The medical qualification and exam requirements apply. You may download the medical exam form here. <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/registration-licensing/print-forms/print-forms.htm>

Q: My truck (or truck & trailer) that I use for my business has a GVWR of 10,001 lb. or more. Do I need a US DOT Number?

A: Yes. The power unit must be identified with the name of the company and the US DOT Number. If you cross state lines, or otherwise carry interstate freight (such as air freight) the US DOT Number comes from the Federal DOT. If you operate solely in State of Georgia, and are an intrastate carrier, a Georgia U.S. DOT number may be obtained from the Georgia Department of Revenue at <http://www.etax.dor.ga.gov/>

- Online Federal DOT Number Application. http://li-public.fmcsa.dot.gov/LIVIEW/PKG_REGISTRATION.prc_option
- Or download the forms from here. <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/registration-licensing/print-forms/print-forms.htm>

Q: Does my trailer have to have brakes?

A: Yes, if the gross weight of the trailer (weight of trailer and load) is over 3,000 lbs.

Q: What kinds of regulations are there about alcoholic beverages?

A: These regulations apply to all commercial vehicles, 10,001 lbs. or more:

1. The driver may not have any alcoholic beverage (including so called "non-alcoholic" beer) anywhere on the vehicle or combination. There are exceptions if the beverages are part of the legitimate manifested cargo, and for bus and limousine passengers.
2. The driver may not operate the vehicle with any measurable amount of alcohol in their system.
3. The driver may not consume alcohol within 4 hours of reporting to work.

A driver who violates these regulations will be shut down for 24 hours. The vehicle may be impounded.

Q: Do I need to stop at a weigh station in Georgia?

A: If the vehicle or combination is 10,001 lbs. GVWR or actual gross weight or over, you must pull into all open weight and inspection stations. Signs, lighted arrows, or enforcement personnel will guide you.

For further information on these topics please visit www.fmcsa.dot.gov or feel free to contact Graham-Naylor Agency for assistance with these or other risk management needs.