

# Section 14: Special Requirements for Texas Commercial Motor Vehicles

## 14.1 SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS (PAPERS, PERMITS)

**Papers.** All commercial motor vehicles, truck tractors, trailers, or semitrailers must carry registration papers (receipt for license plates) on the vehicles while operating on a public highway. These papers shall show the weight of the vehicle empty and how much it is registered to haul.

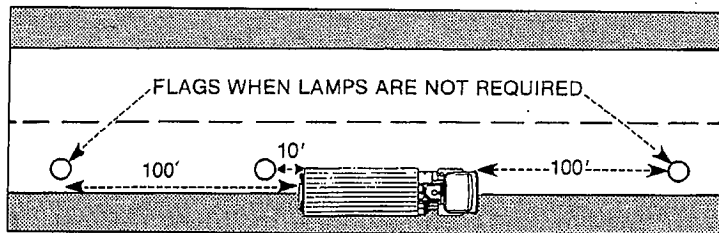
**Special Permits.** If you wish to haul a load or move equipment that is heavier, longer, wider, or higher than the law allows, you must obtain a special permit from the Texas Department of Transportation. A permit will not be granted if the load can reasonably be dismantled.

## 14.2 SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS (EQUIPMENT)

**Flares, Fusees, or Reflectors.** No person shall operate a truck, bus, truck tractor, or any motor vehicle towing a house trailer, upon any highway outside the city limits or upon any divided highway at any time from a half hour after sunset to a half hour before sunrise unless there shall be carried in such vehicle the following: at least three flares, or three red electric lanterns, or three portable red emergency reflectors. During times when lighted lamps are not required two red flags must be used in place of flares, lights, or reflectors. Motor vehicles transporting explosives or any cargo tank truck used for the transportation of any flammable liquid or compressed flammable gases, or any motor vehicle using compressed gas as a fuel shall not use flares, fusees, or any signals produced by flame. D.O.T. approved triangular reflectors can be used in lieu of the above equipment.

The first thing the driver of a disabled vehicle must do is put out the proper flares, flags, or reflectors.

### TWO WAY ROADWAY



**Hazard Warning Signal Lights.** When any truck, bus, truck tractor, trailer, semitrailer, or pole trailer 80 inches or more in width or 30 feet or more in overall length is stopped upon a roadway or adjacent shoulder, the driver shall immediately actuate electric hazard warning signal lights, flashers which flash simultaneously. These lights need not be displayed, however, by a vehicle legally parked inside the city limits or when stopped to receive or discharge passengers.

### Fire Extinguisher

All school buses, buses, taxis, and other vehicles hauling passengers for hire or lease, must carry a chemical type fire extinguisher of at least one quart capacity.

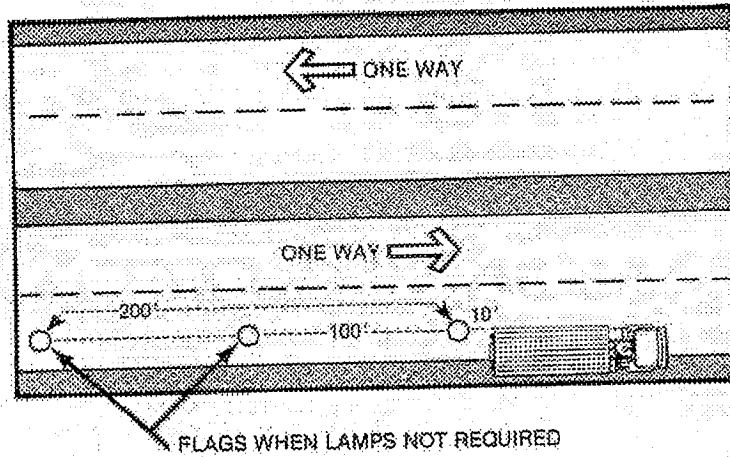
Commercial vehicles that are subject to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations must be equipped with a fire extinguisher that is properly filled and located so that it is readily accessible for use. The fire extinguisher must be securely mounted on the vehicle. (Note: Extinguishers, when required, must meet the standards of 393.95 of the Code of Federal Regulations.)

**Lighting and Reflectors.** Reflectors must be mounted not less than 24 inches nor more than 60 inches in height above the ground on every pole trailer and on trucks, buses, truck tractors, trailers, semitrailers which are 80 or more inches in width.

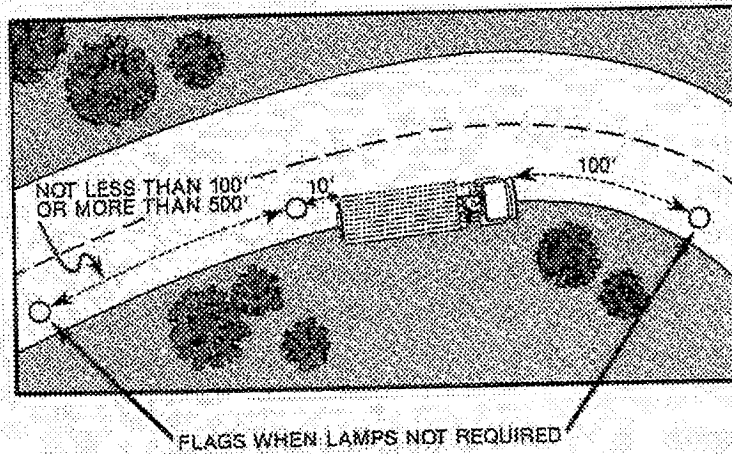
See diagrams for lighting and reflector requirements for your type vehicle.

Under certain conditions, farm, fertilizer, and boat trailers are exempt from lighting requirements. Mobile homes being moved under permit are exempt from lighting and reflector requirements. For further information concerning lighting requirements for these vehicles request the Department's publication on lighting and reflector requirements for trailers. This publication is available at any Department of Public Safety office or by writing to the Austin headquarters.

### DIVIDED HIGHWAY



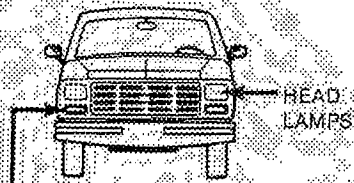
### VISION OBSCURED



# VEHICLE LIGHTING AND REFLECTOR REQUIREMENTS

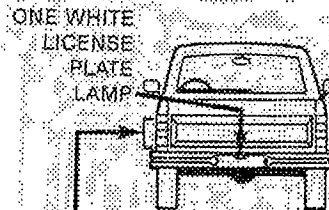
ON EVERY  
TRUCK OR BUS LESS THAN 80" IN WIDTH

## FRONT



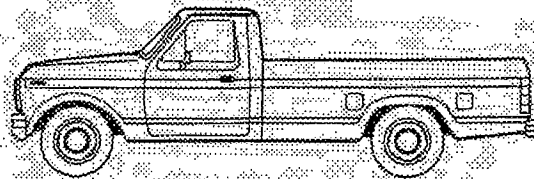
Electric turn signal lamps  
one on each side (Color  
white to amber)

## REAR



Two red tail lamps one each side  
Two red stop lamps one each side  
Two red reflectors one each side  
Electric turn signal lamps one on  
each side at rear (Color amber to  
(lamps and/or reflectors may be  
incorporated)

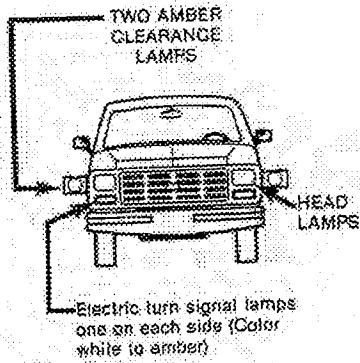
## ON EACH SIDE



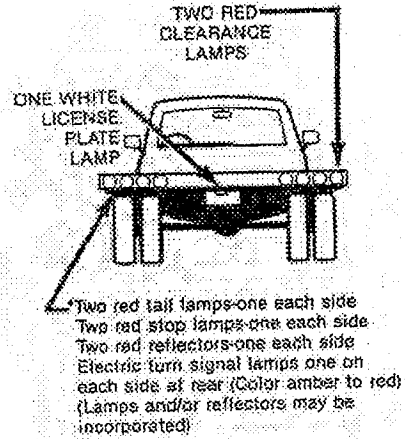
NO REQUIREMENTS

**ON EVERY  
TRUCK OR BUS 80" OR MORE IN WIDTH**

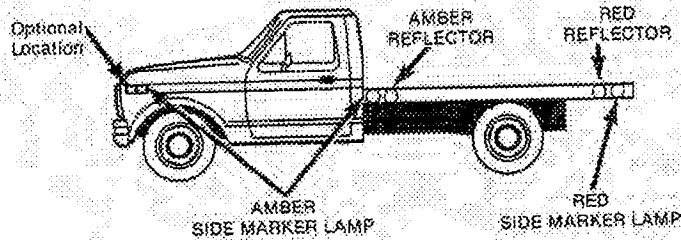
**FRONT**



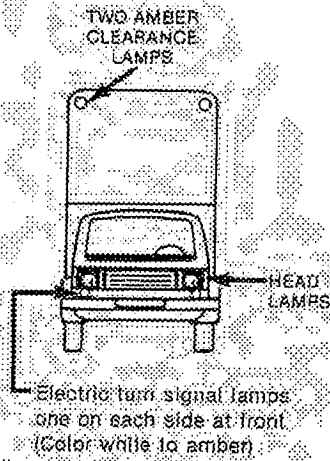
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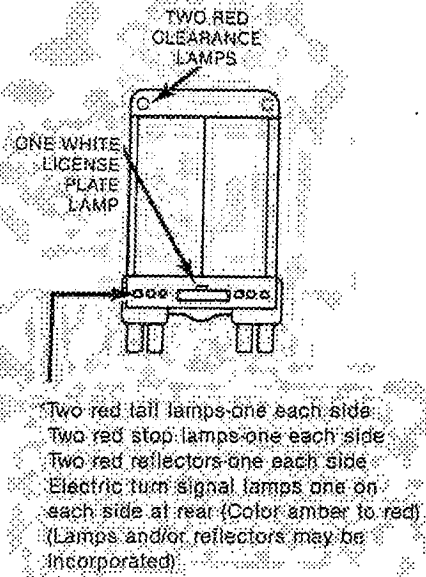
**ON EACH SIDE**



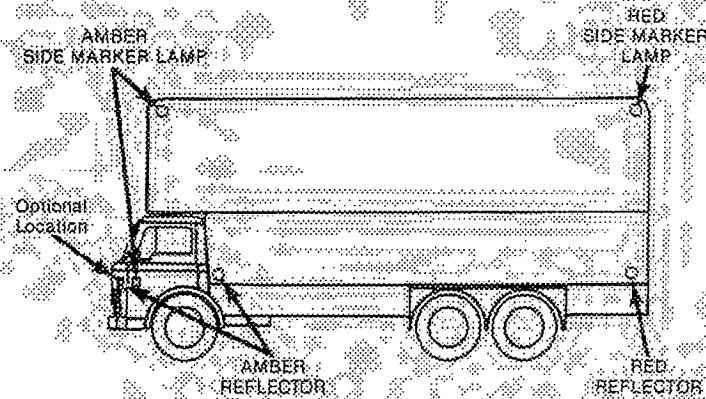
### FRONT



### REAR

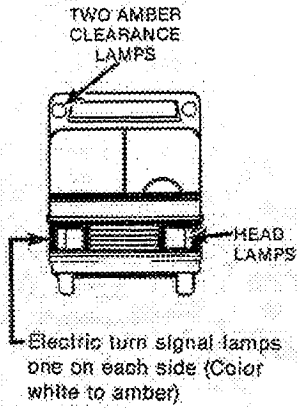


### ON EACH SIDE

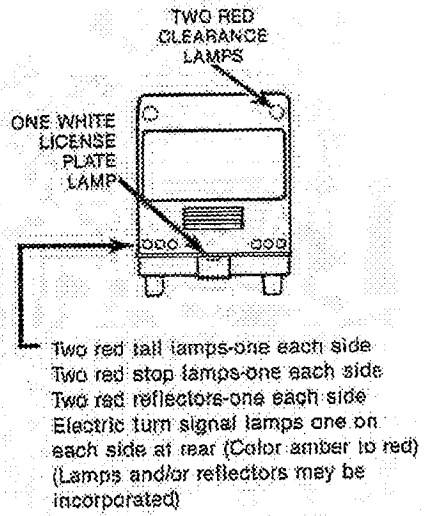


\*Trucks manufactured or assembled prior to model year 1960 required to have at least one taillight.

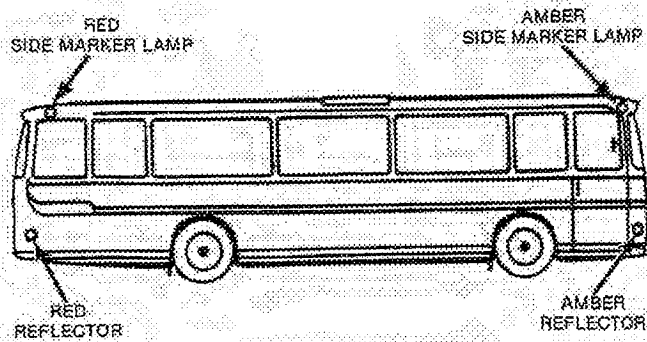
## FRONT



## REAR

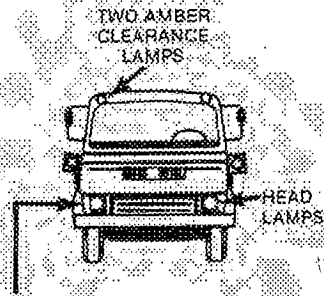


## ON EACH SIDE



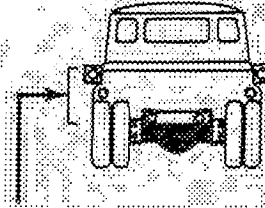
# ON EVERY TRUCK-TRACTOR

## FRONT



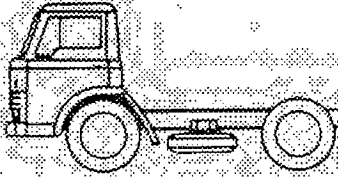
\*\*\*Electric turn signal lamps one on each side (Color white to amber)

## REAR



\*\*\*Electric turn signal lamps one on each side of rear (Color amber to red) (Lamps and/or reflectors may be incorporated)

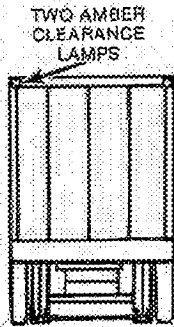
## ON EACH SIDE



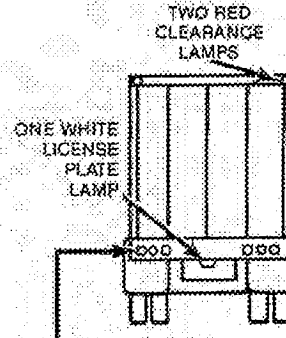
NO REQUIREMENTS

**ON EVERY  
TRAILER 80" OR MORE IN OVERALL WIDTH**

**FRONT**

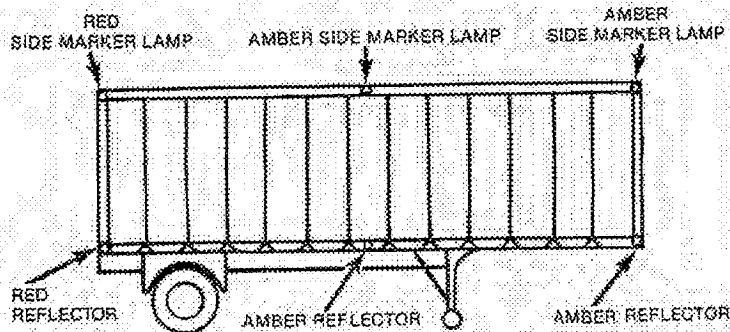


**REAR**



Two red tail lamps-one each side  
Two red stop lamps-one each side  
Two red reflectors-one each side  
Electric turn signal lamps one on each side at rear (Color amber to red)  
(Lamps and/or reflectors may be incorporated)

**ON EACH SIDE**

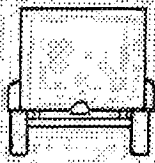


Intermediate side marker lamp and reflector required only on trailers measuring 30 feet or more in length.



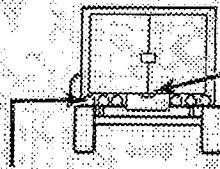
**ON EVERY TRAILER LESS THAN 80" IN WIDTH**

**FRONT**



NO REQUIREMENTS

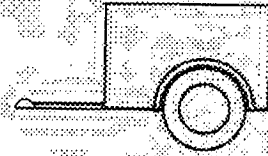
**REAR**



ONE WHITE  
LICENSE  
PLATE  
LAMP

Two red tail lamps one each side  
Two red stop lamps one each side  
Two red reflectors one each side  
Electric turn signal lamps one on  
each side at rear (Color amber to red)  
(Lamps and/or reflectors may be  
incorporated)

**ON EACH SIDE**

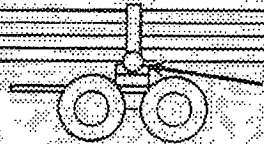


NO REQUIREMENTS

**ON EVERY POLE TRAILER**

**ON EACH SIDE**

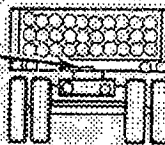
AMBER  
SIDE MARKER  
LAMP  
  
FRONT  
OF LOAD  
  
AMBER  
REFLECTOR



Combination lamp  
showing amber to the  
front, red to the side  
and red to the rear

**REAR**

ONE WHITE  
LICENSE PLATE  
LAMP



Two red tail lamps one each side  
Two red stop lamps one each side  
Two red reflectors one each side  
Electric turn signal lamps one on  
each side at rear (Color amber to red)  
(Lamps and/or reflectors may be  
incorporated)

5. **Flashing Lights.** Flashing lights are permitted on emergency vehicles, on snow removal equipment, and on school buses when stopping or stopped for children to board or alight. These lights are also allowed to be used by tow trucks under the direction of a law enforcement officer at the scene of an accident or while hooking up a disabled vehicle in the roadway.

6. **Special Regulations for Certain Vehicles.** When operated on the highway at night all animal-drawn vehicles, implements of husbandry, road machinery, road rollers, and farm tractors not otherwise required to have lamps or lighting devices must have a white light on the front visible for 1,000 feet and two red lights on the rear visible for 1,000 feet, or one red light to the rear visible for 1,000 feet and two red reflectors visible for 600 feet.

#### 7. Brakes

a. Trailers, semitrailers, and pole trailers with a gross weight of 4,500 pounds or less are exempt from brake requirements. Trailers, semitrailers, and pole trailers with a gross weight in excess of 4,500 pounds and which do not exceed 15,000 pounds and operated at speeds of 30 miles per hour or less are not required to be equipped with brakes. Trailers, semitrailers, and pole trailers with a gross weight in excess of 4,500 pounds and which do not exceed 15,000 pounds and are operated at speeds in excess of 30 miles per hour must have brakes acting on both wheels of the rear axle.

b. Every motor vehicle, trailer, semitrailer, pole trailer, and combination of such vehicles equipped with brakes shall have the braking system so arranged that one control device can be used to operate all brakes. This does not prevent the use of additional control devices to operate brakes on the towed vehicles. Surge or inertia brake systems may be used on trailers and semitrailers with a gross weight of 15,000 pounds or less.

c. Under all conditions, the combination of vehicles must be capable of complying with the performance requirements. Generally, if the trailer and the combination is 3,000 pounds or less, the combination must be able to stop within 40 feet when traveling 20 miles per hour; if the trailer and the combination is in excess of 3,000 pounds, the combination must be able to stop within 50 feet when traveling 20 miles per hour.

8. **Turn Signal Indicators.** All motor vehicles, trailers, semitrailers, or pole trailers except motorcycles and certain trailers shall be equipped with electrical turn signal lights, except that passenger cars or trucks

under 80 inches in width and manufactured prior to the year model 1960 need not be equipped with electrical turn signals unless the body or load of the vehicle or combination of vehicles extends to side more than 24 inches from the center of the top of the steering wheel, or the rear limit of the body or load exceeds more than 14 feet from the center of the top of the steering wheel.

9. **Mud Flaps.** All trucks and trailers with four or more tires on the rear axle must be equipped with safety guards or mud flaps behind the rear wheels. These flaps must reach to within 8 inches of the surface of the highway and are for the purpose of preventing the slinging of mud and slush. This provision does not apply to pole trailers or to a truck tractor when it is being operated alone and without being in combination with a semitrailer.

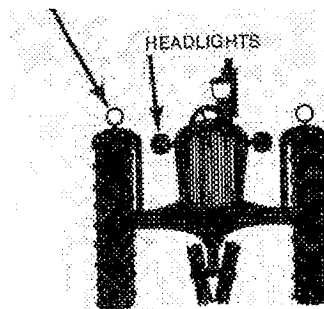
10. **Lighting Requirements for Farm Tractors and Implements of Husbandry.** Every farm tractor and every self-propelled unit of farm equipment or implement of husbandry manufactured or assembled after January 1, 1972, shall be equipped with the following lamps and reflectors:

- a. Two head lamps.
- b. One taillight mounted as far to left as practicable.
- c. Two red reflectors.
- d. Vehicular hazard warning lights (flashers) which show white or amber to the front, and red or amber to the rear. These lights must be activated when the vehicle is being operated on any highway. See diagram.

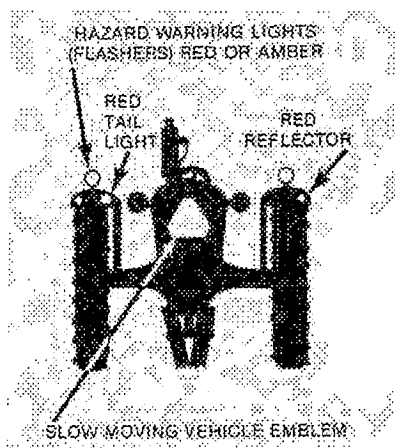
*Slow Moving Vehicle Emblem*

FRONT

HAZARD WARNING LIGHTS (FLASHERS)  
WHITE OR AMBER TO THE FRONT



## REAR



**11. Slow-Moving Vehicle Emblem.** This emblem is now a requirement for all slow-moving vehicles. Slow-moving vehicles are those designed to operate at a maximum speed of 25 mph or less, and the term includes all vehicles, farm and other machinery, and road machinery being drawn by animals or by slow-moving motor vehicles.

a. The use of this emblem is prohibited on any other than a slow-moving vehicle. It must not be used on other vehicles or on stationary objects.

b. Exceptions. The following do not need the special emblem:

1) A vehicle being used in actual construction work while traveling within the limits of a construction area marked as required by the State Highway Commission;

2) An implement or machinery being towed by a slow-moving vehicle bearing an emblem if this emblem remains visible.

**12. Unlawful Equipment.** It is unlawful to operate on a highway any vehicle with wheels having cleats, lugs, flanges, studs, spikes, or other extensions on the rim which would damage the road. This does not prevent the use of tire chains for safety.

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### 14.3 SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS-LIMITATIONS (note Exceptions)

**1. Speed Limits.** (See Appendix A, page 14-16)

**2. Height.** No vehicle, including the load it is hauling, may be more than 14 feet in height from ground to the top of the load. The driver is responsible for determining that his load will safely pass under any bridge or

overpass on his route.

**3. Width.** Vehicles including loads transported may not exceed 102 inches in width. (See exceptions.)

#### 4. Maximum Lengths:

a. Single motor vehicle other than a truck tractor is 45 feet. (See exceptions on page 14-12).

b. A semitrailer may not exceed 59 feet when operated in a truck tractor and semitrailer combination.

c. A semitrailer or trailer may not exceed a length of 28-1/2 feet each when operated in a truck tractor, semitrailer, and trailer combination.

d. No combination of vehicles, other than a truck tractor-trailer combination may exceed 65 feet. (See exceptions.)

**5. Vehicle Combinations.** No passenger vehicle or other motor vehicle with an unloaded weight of less than 2,500 pounds may be coupled with more than one other vehicle. Not more than three vehicles may be operated in a combination.

**6. Load Limits.** The greatest weight allowed for any vehicle or combination of vehicles including the load is 80,000 pounds. Load limits are based upon the size of the vehicle, the number and distance between axles, and also on the tire size. (See exceptions.) Under certain conditions, vehicles may legally exceed 80,000 pounds by obtaining an oversize/overweight permit through the Texas Department of Transportation Permit Office.

**7. Unloading and Additional Registration.** If the gross weight of your vehicle is found to exceed the maximum gross weight allowed by law plus a tolerance of 5%, you may be required to unload to the limit provided by law plus the tolerance, or if the axle weight is found to exceed the maximum allowed, the driver may be required to rearrange the cargo or unload the vehicle to the limits provided. Trucks carrying livestock, timber or pulpwood, or agricultural products in their natural state from the place of production to the place of market or first processing shall not be required to unload any portion of the load. Trucks registered for less than the load they are hauling must secure additional registration up to the legal limit from the nearest County Tax Assessor-Collector or the nearest practical point if hauling livestock or perishables.

**8. Extensions Over Front and Rear.** No vehicle may carry a load extending more than three feet beyond

the front nor more than four feet beyond the rear, unless a special permit is obtained. When any load extends more than four feet beyond the rear, there must be attached on the extreme rear of such extension, a red flag at least twelve inches square during daylight hours and at night a burning red light visible for 500 feet. (See exceptions.) Motor vehicles or combinations thereof used exclusively for the transportation of poles or pipes may exceed the length or extension limits over front and rear of a vehicle, except that such vehicles may not exceed 65 feet in length and may be operated only between sunrise and sunset.

9. **Towing.** When one vehicle is towing another, the drawbar, chain, rope, cable, or other connection must not be longer than fifteen feet from one vehicle to the other. This 15-foot limit does not apply to pole trailers. When a chain, rope, or cable is used as a connection, a white flag not less than twelve inches square must be attached to it.

10. **Metal Tires.** Vehicles, trailers, etc., weighing 5,000 pounds or more, with metal tires, may not be operated on a highway without a special permit.

11. **Transporting Loose Materials.** No person shall load or transport any loose material on or over the public highways, such as dirt, sand, gravel, wood chips, or other material except agricultural products in their natural state, that is capable of blowing or spilling from a vehicle unless:

a. The bed carrying the load must be completely enclosed on both sides and on the front and on the rear by a tailgate, board or panel, and all must be so constructed as to prevent the escape of any part of the load by blowing or spilling.

b. The top of the load must be covered with a canvas, tarpaulin, or other covering firmly secured to the front and the back to prevent the escape of any part of the load because of blowing or spilling. This requirement does not apply to any load-carrying compartment that completely encloses the load or to the transporting of any load of loose materials that are not blowing or spilling over the top of the load-carrying compartment.

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#### 14.4 SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS EXCEPTIONS TO STANDARD VEHICLE SIZE REQUIREMENTS

1. Water well drilling machinery, highway building or maintenance machinery, farm tractors, and implements of husbandry or vehicles hauling same are exempt from width limitations on all highways except

the Interstate system when operated during daylight hours.

2. A single motor vehicle used only to transport seed cotton modules, cotton, or equipment used in transporting or processing of cotton may operate up to 120 inches in width provided the vehicle is registered with a "Cotton Vehicle" license plate. Vehicles carrying cylindrically shaped bales of hay may not exceed 144 inches in width.

3. Motor buses with air brakes that have three or more axles or four tires on the rear axle may be 45 feet long; otherwise 35 feet.

4. The length requirements for vehicles and combinations of vehicles do not apply if they are operated only within city limits.

5. Load limits may vary according to the size of the vehicle, the number of axles and distance between the axles, and the size of tires that the vehicle is equipped with.

6. The State Highway Commission may lower load limits on farm- and ranch-to-market roads. Signs showing limits allowed are posted to give notice of such action.

7. A combination of vehicles, other than truck tractor combinations, of not more than 90 feet long may be used from sunrise to sunset to haul poles, piling, and unrefined timber from the forest to a mill not more than 125 miles away.

8. For a fee of 120 per year, a combination of vehicles, other than truck tractor combinations, of not more than 75 feet long may be used to haul poles for electric power line maintenance from sunrise to sunset at a speed not to exceed 50 mph.

Exception to the rear extension. A load may extend more than four feet beyond the rear of a trailer if the load consists of a motor vehicle that:

a. is designed and intended to be carried at the rear of the trailer;

b. is used or intended to be used to load or unload a commodity on or off the trailer;

c. does not extend more than seven feet beyond the rear of the trailer; or

d. complies with each applicable Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulation.

9. A single motor vehicle used only to transport seed

cotton modules, cotton, or equipment used in transporting or processing of cotton may not exceed a length of 48 feet.

10. Fire department vehicles are exempt from length, width, and weight regulations.

11. A combination of vehicles used to transport a combine that is used for farm custom harvesting may have an overall length of not more than 75 feet.

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#### 14.5 SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS OPERATING RULES

1. **Coasting.** It is unlawful for a commercial motor vehicle to coast down any grade even with the clutch disengaged while the transmission is left in gear. If it is necessary to shift to a lower gear, do so before starting down the hill.

2. **Following.** When one truck is following another truck or vehicle, it must keep far enough back to allow another vehicle to overtake and enter the space between them safely. This does not prevent a truck from overtaking and passing another vehicle.

#### 3. Railroad Grade Crossing.

a. Outside a business district or residence district any school bus carrying a school child and all other buses carrying passengers for hire must stop at all railroad grade crossings unless a traffic control signal or police officer directs traffic to proceed.

b. All super-heavy equipment such as crawler type tractors, steam shovels, derricks, rollers, etc., must stop for all railroad grade crossings.

Trucks carrying explosives must stop at railroad grade crossings. These provisions do not apply to streetcar crossings, abandoned tracks, industrial switching tracks, or where a traffic signal or officer directs traffic to proceed.

4. **Vehicles Transporting Hazardous Materials.** The Department has adopted the U.S. Department of Transportation Hazardous Materials Regulations. Copies of these regulations may be obtained from the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.

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#### 14.6 SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS SAFETY PRACTICES

1. **Right Turns with Large Equipment.** Tractor-trailers and long wheelbase trucks and buses, when turning right, must have curb clearance for the rear wheels. Since they cannot stay in the proper lane while

turning, they should turn by one of these methods:

a. Approach the corner in the proper lane, about four feet from the curb (close enough to keep a car from passing on the right). As soon as the front wheels pass the corner, turn wide to the right, swinging over the center of the side street if necessary, in order for the right rear wheel to clear the curb.

b. If the street into which you are turning is narrow, it may be necessary to approach as above, then swing left enough to place the right rear wheel in position to miss the curb (but not far enough away to invite passing on the right), then turn sharply right into the narrow street or driveway.

You cannot watch too carefully when you are on your own side of the road. This is even more true while turning in a large vehicle, when you must be on the wrong side of the road part of the time.

2. **Safe Backing Practices.** A large or long vehicle is much more difficult to back safely than a smaller one. These practices are recommended.

a. When you must back, get out and walk around your truck and make certain there is nothing behind. Then back immediately and watch carefully.

b. Use both rearview mirrors. You can't see the right side while hanging out the left door.

c. If necessary to back some distance, stop part way, then get out and check your progress.

d. Try to have someone standing in a safe place to guide you by signaling.

e. Park where you will not have to back to get away from the parking place.

f. Never back around an intersection corner to turn around.

g. If you have to back in or out of a driveway, where possible, back into the driveway from the street so that you can drive out forward and see where you are going.

h. When backing over a sidewalk into a street, stop at the sidewalk to make especially certain that there is no child playing behind or close by. Stop again at the curb to make a last check on traffic before backing into the street.

i. Don't depend entirely upon your rear vision mirror.

**3. Safe Passing of Two-Wheeled Vehicles.** Motorcycles and bicycles are lighter and more subject to wind effects than 4-wheeled vehicles are. Due to this, special care must be taken when passing.

a. Aerodynamic effects around a large vehicle can cause a two-wheeled vehicle to be suddenly pulled toward the larger vehicle by two or three feet, depending on the relative speed between the two vehicles. You should always allow at least six feet to the left of the two-wheeled vehicle when you are passing.

b. When passing a two-wheeled vehicle, do not attempt to share the lane with that vehicle. Move into the next or oncoming lane to pass. If there is oncoming traffic, then slow and follow the two-wheeled vehicle until oncoming traffic clears.

4. Nonresident truck owners may be issued 30-day temporary registration permits for certain movements of farm products and machinery during harvesting season.

5. Under certain conditions, temporary registration permits and reduced registration rates for special vehicles may be obtained. See your County Tax Assessor-Collector or the Motor Vehicle Division of the Texas Department of Transportation for information.

6. Buyers temporary cardboard tags are recognized for 20 days; dealers metal registration plates may be used on any dealer-owned motor vehicle, except for commercial purposes -- vehicle inspection is required. Manufacturer's metal registration plate may be used for testing purposes only -- vehicle inspection is required. Dealers temporary cardboard tag may be used for demonstrating a vehicle for sale with motor vehicle inspection certificate attached, or for transporting or servicing vehicles without motor vehicle inspection certificate.

7. Farm registered vehicles, in addition to use for farm and ranch purposes, may be used as a means of passenger transportation for members of the family to attend church or school, to visit doctors for medical treatment or supplies, or for other necessities of the home or family - but not for gainful employment.

8. The period for which out-of-state registration plates are recognized in Texas after establishing residency or entering into gainful employment is 30 days.

9. For registration applications and detailed information, consult your County Tax Assessor-Collector or the Motor Vehicle Division of the Texas Department of Transportation. Additional information may also be obtained from Department of Public Safety publications pertaining to commercial vehicles.

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#### **14.7 SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS REGISTRATION OF VEHICLES**

1. All vehicles must be registered in the county of residence.

2. The following vehicles are not required to be registered or inspected or to display a license plate when operated temporarily upon the highways:

a. Farm tractors.

b. Farm trailers, farm semitrailers, and certain fertilizer and cottonseed trailers weighing not more than 4,000 pounds gross.

c. Implements of husbandry.

d. Power sweepers.

e. Certain golfcarts.

3. The following vehicles when operated temporarily upon the highways are not required to be registered or inspected if the owner annually secures a distinguishing \$5.00 license plate and complies with other special conditions in the law:

a. Machinery for drilling water wells and construction machinery.

b. Farm trailers, farm semitrailers, cotton trailers, cottonseed trailers, and certain fertilizer trailers weighing over 4,000 pounds and not over 20,000 pounds gross.

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#### **14.8 SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FEDERAL REGULATIONS**

The Texas Department of Public Safety has adopted by reference the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations, 49 Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 390-393 and 395-397. The Department has also adopted the Federal Hazardous Materials Regulations, Parts 171-173, 177, and 178. For detailed information concerning these regulations adopted by the Department of Public Safety, see Rule §3.59 and Rule §3.62 which are on file with the Texas Secretary of State.

## Truck Drivers Sharing the Road with Automobiles

Professional truck drivers can't just be good truck drivers. You have to be better than anyone else on the road. Truck drivers have the responsibility not only to safely deliver the nation's freight on time, but are industry's front-line defense against a bad image. Truck drivers should share the highways with automobiles and adhere to the following guidelines.

### ● Tailgating

Tailgating is the most common complaint car drivers have against truck drivers. It may not always be justified, but it is a frequent one. The professional:

- Keeps a gap between his or her truck and the car ahead in heavy traffic because the truck needs more space to stop. Remember, your truck looms frighteningly large in the mirror.
- Maintains a four-second following distance on the open road.
- Increases the distance of the gap to 6-8 seconds in bad weather (more reaction time) to compensate for poor traction and actions of less experienced car drivers.
- Remains alert to the driver who cut into the open space in front of the truck.
- Knows that tailgating or forming convoys promotes unsafe passes by groups of cars stacked up behind. If they do attempt to pass and don't make it, you and others could be involved in a serious accident.

### ● Speeding

Speeding by trucks is a common cause of accidents and another major complaint by motorists. Driving too fast for conditions - regardless of the posted speed - is dangerous. Remember, obeying the speed limit:

- Saves lives, injuries, and property damage.
- Increases fuel economy by as much as a mile per gallon at 55 mph rather than 65 mph.
- Saves wear and tear on tires, brakes, and engines.
- Allows sufficient time and space to stop after a hazard is sighted. Remember, your stopping distance increases at a much faster rate than your speed. If you double your speed, your stopping distance will be four times greater.

### ● Passing

The following are basic reminders truck drivers should follow when passing and dealing with slower traffic:

- Signals alone aren't enough. Before making a move, the professional truck driver makes sure that a lane change or passing maneuver can be made safely and without interfering with others.
- Don't alarm a car driver by overtaking too closely before moving into the passing lane. Leave some extra space before you pull back in.
- Remember that a truck pushes a wall of air ahead of it. To avoid buffeting cars, keep as much space as possible between the vehicles you pass.
- Slow traffic and congestion are facts of life to the professional truck driver. Keep cool and lay off the horn and flashing of the headlights.

### ● School Buses, Recreational Vehicles, and Others

The professional truck driver should be especially watchful for drivers of school buses, recreational vehicles, and drivers of rental trucks. These groups of drivers' levels of experience vary a great deal. Therefore, truck drivers should:

Give school buses as much room as possible. Watch for frequent stops to load and un-load children. Remember, the driver can be distracted by the children on the bus.

Realize drivers of RV's and smaller vehicles pulling trailers can be a problem because they may not have the professional skills or knowledge of the professional truck driver. These vehicles are especially susceptible to turbulence from big trucks, so reduce your speed and give them plenty of room. Pass these vehicles with care and as far to the left as safely possible.

### ● Hot and Cold

Summer driving has its own perils. Truck drivers should especially be on the lookout for:

- Lost, fatigued motorists on vacation who may suddenly stop, or swerve across several lanes of traffic to an exit.
- Overloaded cars with poor visibility and/or drivers distracted by kids and pets.

- Highway construction projects where roads suddenly turn into narrow lanes with confusing signs. Heavy equipment and pedestrians are often nearby.
- Winter ice and snow mean gearing down on grades to avoid wheel-spinning and brake lock-up which can lead to jackknifing. If you find a traffic jam-up and multiple vehicle accidents, stay back and wait for them to clear before trying to get your rig through.

• **Attitude**

A good attitude is a professional truck driver's badge of honor. Sharing the roads with automobiles must be a safety concern for the professional driver.

<b>Test Your Knowledge</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is the maximum speed limit for heavy trucks on the highway at night?</li> <li>2. What should be the first action of the driver of a disabled truck or bus?</li> <li>3. Clearance lamps, side marker lamps, or reflectors mounted on or near the front of a vehicle should be what color?</li> <li>4. What is the greatest height allowed by state law for a vehicle including its load?</li> <li>5. What should you do when hauling equipment that is wider, heavier or longer than the law permits?</li> <li>6. What type of vehicle must stop at all railroad crossings?</li> </ol>
<p>These questions may be on your test. If you can't answer all, reread sections 14.1 thru Appendix A.</p>

**APPENDIX A:**

**SPEED LIMITS**

All drivers are required to obey posted maximum and minimum speed limits. These limits are designed to provide for the orderly flow of traffic under normal driving conditions. During periods of heavy traffic, inclement weather, low visibility, or other poor driving conditions, speed must be adjusted so that accidents will be avoided. The following chart shows the maximum speed limits for all vehicles under different conditions. **Drivers must be aware that cities and counties have the authority to change these limits.**

	Daytime (MPH)	Nighttime (MPH)
<b>URBAN DISTRICT</b>	30	30
<b>ALLEY</b>	15	15
<b>BEACHES</b>	15	15
<b>COUNTY ROADS</b> adjacent to a public beach (if declared by the commissioners court of the county)	15	15
<b>HIGHWAY NUMBERED BY THIS STATE OR THE UNITED STATES OUTSIDE AN URBAN DISTRICT</b>		
Passenger cars, motorcycles, light truck, passenger car or light truck towing a trailer or semi-trailer, truck or truck-tractor, truck or truck-tractor towing a trailer or semi-trailer, buses, school activity bus	70	65
School buses that have passed a commercial vehicle inspection	60	60
<b>FARM TO MARKET AND RANCH TO MARKET ROADS</b>		
Passenger cars, motorcycle, light truck, passenger car or light truck towing a trailer or semi-trailer, buses, school activity bus	70	65
School buses that have passed a commercial vehicle inspection	60	60
<b>FARM TO MARKET AND RANCH TO MARKET ROADS</b>		
Trucks or truck-tractor, trucks or truck-tractor towing a trailer or semi-trailer	60	55
<b>HIGHWAY NOT NUMBERED BY THIS STATE OR THE UNITED STATES AND OUTSIDE AN URBAN DISTRICT</b>		
Passenger cars, motorcycles, light truck, passenger car or light truck towing a trailer or semi-trailer, truck or truck-tractor, truck or truck-tractor towing a trailer or semi-trailer, buses, school activity bus	60	55
School buses that have not passed a commercial vehicle inspection or are traveling on a highway not numbered by the United States or this state	50	50