



**FLEET
MANAGEMENT
FOR
PUBLIC ENTITIES**



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Executive Summary

Operating motor vehicles is integral to virtually every department of municipal government and has become an essential element in the delivery of most, if not all, municipal services. It accounts for a considerable amount of an employee's overall daily work schedule. The potential for loss is significant.

Although the risk of personal injury and property damage are the most frequent causes of loss, negligent operation of motor vehicles is one of the few general exceptions to governmental immunity. This is an exception that can expose a governmental entity to civil liability and losses of greater severity.

Besides the obvious exposures to loss and expected costs, motor vehicle-related incidents frequently generate many hidden costs. Among these costs, both tangible and intangible, are:

- Lost employee work days;
- Disruption of operations or delays in completing projects;
- Impaired ability to respond to requests for service;
- Equipment loss, or loss of use;
- Shaken public confidence;
- Reduced employee morale;
- The diversion of funds earmarked for other purposes to pay for motor vehicle-related losses, and
- Increased insurance premiums.

For these reasons and more, it is essential to deal with the safety and liability exposures inherent in motor vehicle operations. If you do not, you will not have an effective -- and complete -- general risk control program.

This booklet outlines the major components of an effective fleet management program. The discussion emphasizes management responsibility for developing, implementing, and maintaining the program. It also provides practical suggestions for implementing a fleet management program, from guidelines for employee selection to sample policy statements and inspection checklists.

We encourage you to share this information with your managers and supervisors.

INTRODUCTION

Whether your fleet consists of a few or of many vehicles of various types, it represents a sizable investment of your community's tax dollars. As a non-profit entity, you must conserve the resources that tax dollars buy so you can provide the public with the services it requires. A carefully planned and executed fleet maintenance and safety program can help you avoid unnecessary and unexpected expenses.

Vehicle accidents can create substantial financial losses. These losses may include some or all the following:

- Reduced confidence in your Entity on the public's part.
- A delay in providing services to the community.
- The loss of your vehicle's driver to injury.
- Increased expenses for hiring and training a replacement driver.
- Increased expenses for clerical time.
- Time lost to investigating the accident.
- Increased worker's compensation costs.
- The loss of the use of your vehicle if it needs repair
- Loss of or damage to equipment in the vehicle.
- Increased insurance costs.

Collisions generally involve more than one vehicle. Controlling costs to repair physical damage is a straightforward process. The costs of bodily injury, however, can be difficult to estimate. Every organization is vulnerable to lawsuits -- none more so than public Entities. Since you have limited and predetermined income, any unnecessary losses that arise from motor vehicle operations can seriously affect your operating budget.

By developing an effective fleet maintenance and safety program, your Entity can help control potential losses. Such a program heightens safety awareness and results in cost savings. It can save the expense of repairing vehicle damage from accidents, costly repairs resulting from inadequate maintenance, vehicle down time and much more. Although developing and implementing a program takes time, effort and money, future cost savings can compensate for the initial investment.

You can adopt and tailor this sample program to your needs. The program does not cover every acceptable safety practice. It also does not discuss atypical circumstances you might experience that might require additional policies and procedures.

As you read through the sample program, keep in mind:

- The size of your fleet;
- The types of operations you run, and
- The area your fleet travels.

These are key elements that affect the type of program you need to implement. The sample program covers:

- Management Policy;
- Management and Supervisory Accountability;
- Driver Selection;
- Driver Training;
- Driver Supervision;
- Accident Reporting and Review
- Record-keeping;
- Corrective Action
- Awards and Incentives;
- Vehicle Inspection and Maintenance;
- Resource Materials, Employee Meetings and Other Methods of Communicating the Program

MANAGEMENT POLICY

To be successful, it is imperative that top management support and guide the fleet maintenance and safety program. Management should develop and communicate a policy that will direct all aspects of the program. The policy should address the ultimate goals of the program and management's expectations about employee performance in the area of motor vehicle operations. Every employee must receive notification of the policy and training in its requirements. In addition, department managers or supervisors must ascertain that every employee understands the policy. Managers or supervisors should document this action.

If your entity does not currently have a policy concerning fleet maintenance and safety, the first step is to develop one. At a minimum, the policy should contain:

- A statement of management's commitment to the program,
- The goals of the program,
- An indication of how the program will operate, including supervisory responsibility, and
- A statement indicating management's expectations about employee cooperation.

Although the policy statement becomes part of the program's written documentation, each employee should receive a letter announcing the implementation of the policy. You may:

- Send a letter to each employee's home; or
- Attach the letter to each employee's pay check; or
- Hold departmental meetings during which employees receive and discuss the policy.

You should document your action in department records.

If an executive of your entity (for example, mayor, city manager, council president, etc.) signs it, the letter will have greater impact.

A sample announcement letter follows.

SAMPLE POLICY ANNOUNCEMENT LETTER

To All Employees:

[NAME OF ENTITIY] is committed to improving the safety and effectiveness of our motor vehicle operations. You, as a driver, are critical to the success of our mutual effort to reduce accidents involving vehicles.

To help you, we are implementing a [revised] fleet maintenance and safety program. We are confident this program will increase everyone's awareness of the role each of us plays in promoting an effective program.

I believe the program is so important that I will personally direct it. I have directed _____ to carry out the details of the fleet maintenance and safety program. _____ will help you to perform your job more safely.

I ask for your support. I ask you to always be aware of the hazards of operating motor vehicles. Follow the requirements of our new policy and fleet maintenance and safety program. Avoid the careless actions that contribute to motor vehicle accidents. Remember, you, your coworkers or members of the public might suffer injury or loss of property in a collision.

Please feel free to bring suggestions to your supervisor/manager. Together, we can be successful in increasing the effectiveness and safety of our motor vehicle operations. When we do, everyone benefits.

We will be distributing more information about the new policy and fleet maintenance and safety program soon. Ask your supervisor/manager where you can find your department's copy of the program.

Signature

MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISORY ACCOUNTABILITY

If your program is to succeed, managers and supervisors must direct it properly. Because top management is responsible for the efficiency of the entity's operations, you should select one individual to administer and coordinate departmental activities of the fleet maintenance and safety program.

You must inform and provide special training for your supervisors in all aspects of the policy and program. This includes training on selection practices, motivating employees and the requirements of the program itself. Hold supervisors accountable for interpreting the program's requirements for employees under their direction. In addition, supervisors should understand that they are responsible for carrying out the elements of the program as well as any directives the coordinator delivers. Your program can not succeed unless everyone in the organization agrees with, acknowledges, and accepts his or her assigned responsibilities. Managers and supervisors at every level must understand their role and the importance of their individual efforts and actions. They must be able to persuade their subordinates that commitment to and compliance with the program is important.

Supervisors/managers should clearly understand that you will hold them responsible for preventing motor vehicle accidents. For example, if a supervisor allows an employee to break a rule and the violation results in an accident, the public Entity should hold the supervisor as responsible for the accident as the employee.

To assure supervisory and management commitment:

- Empower supervisors/managers, in both policy and practice, to enforce policy directives.
- Articulate your expectations about their designated responsibilities in the policy. Let them know that:
 - Supervisory/management responsibility brings accountability with it;
 - The program's overall success depends on their ability to manage their employees and their activities; and
 - A demonstrated inability to supervise might result in demotion, remedial training, reassignment of duties, or other disciplinary action. Any such action will be consistent with applicable employment and disciplinary policies or collective bargaining agreements.
- Repeat and reinforce this message constantly both in training and staff meetings.
- Give special recognition to managers and supervisors who positively impact motor vehicle related losses in their department or area of assigned responsibility. Use:
 - Certificate or plaque presentations,
 - Press releases and local media coverage,
 - Special notes or articles in the municipal or departmental newsletter,
 - Other incentive, reward or bonus programs,
 - Assignment to the risk control-safety committee.

DRIVER SELECTION

The effectiveness of your fleet maintenance and safety program begins with a thorough and efficient process for selecting drivers.

Establishing performance standards that reflect the experience, knowledge and skills necessary to perform satisfactorily enables you to select the right person for the job. Unless you hire a "problem," the selection process occurs once. Therefore, taking the time to follow selection procedures is worth effort. It will help you to find the best candidate and prevent problems in the future.

To select drivers properly you need to perform the following steps:

1. Perform a task analysis.
2. Use an effective application form and screen applicants carefully.
3. Interview candidates personally.
4. Perform reference checks.
5. Perform Motor Vehicle Record checks.
6. Give candidates a road test.
7. Give candidates a written test.
8. Have the potential driver submit to a medical examination **after making the job offer.**

You must decide how important each step is to developing an effective selection process for your entity. For example, smaller entities may have different needs than larger ones. What is important is that the selection process is effective, consistent in application, and practical.

1. Perform a task analysis.

A task analysis determines the specific requirements of the job. It defines what an employee will do, how the employee will do it, and what knowledge, experience and skills the employee needs to be successful.

2. Use an Effective Application Form.

Use an application form that provides enough information about the applicant for pre-screening purposes. Questions on the form should yield information about the applicant's history, education, experience and **other job related** factors. Information from the form should enable you to determine the applicant's **potential** suitability for the position.

3. Conduct Personal Interviews.

Interview to determine a candidate's general suitability as an employee and to uncover any information about the candidate's ability to operate motor vehicles safely and responsibly. Ask all candidates for the same position the same questions. Asking the same questions helps you to obtain the information you need and provides a means of comparing candidates. The interview also gives you an opportunity to ask questions about information the candidate provided on the application, including such items as gaps in employment.

4. Perform Reference Checks.

Talk to previous employers to obtain information about the candidate's abilities and character. Besides verifying the candidate's work experience, you should obtain information about his or her ability to meet schedules, work independently, drive safely and courteously, and get along with others. You can conduct the reference check by letter or phone. Using a reference checklist allows you to document that you checked references and helps you ask the same questions about all candidates.

5. Perform Motor Vehicle Record checks.

A. Examine applicants' driving records carefully and consistently as a routine part of the screening, background investigation, and hiring process.

The driving record is a good indicator of future performance. Thoroughly evaluate drivers with histories of traffic violations or accidents.

The following is a partial list of conditions or convictions that should cause immediate concern:

- Two at fault accidents in the past 3 years, or
- Two incidents in the past 3 years as a result of which the individual was found responsible for committing civil infractions while operating a motor vehicle, or
- In the past 3 years a combination of 1 at fault accident and 1 incident as a result of which the individual was found responsible for committing a civil infraction, or
- Operating under the influence of liquor or drugs, or
- Operating with an unlawful blood alcohol content, or
- Failure to stop or report an accident, or
- Negligent homicide, manslaughter, assaults involving the operation of a motor vehicle, or
- Driving on a suspended or revoked license.

Check that candidates possess, or can obtain any special license endorsements required by law -- for example, a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) -- for the type(s) of vehicle they will operate in the performance of their duties.

To check a driver's record, submit a written request on your entity's letterhead to the Alabama Department of Public Safety. Your letter should provide the candidate's name, license number, date of birth, and Social Security number. Include a check in the amount of \$5.75.

Submit your request to:

Alabama Department of Public Safety
Drivers' License Division
P.O. Box 1471
Montgomery, AL 36102-1471
Tel: 334/242-4423

B. Develop and consistently use a procedure for checking employees' driving records.

Develop a process for checking the driving status of all current employees. Check all employees' driving records at least annually. Consider reassigning current employees with unacceptable records to non-driving related positions. Assign a specific individual to oversee and manage the license review and screening process. The designated individual should also manage the entity's compliance with Commercial Driver's License, federal random drug testing requirements, and any other legal requirements.

6. Give candidates a road test.

Giving a road test will enable you to evaluate the candidate's ability to perform the tasks expected of him or her. The test does not have to be the only measure of suitability. If the candidate performs poorly, you will probably reject him or her. If the candidate you later select performs well overall but has some weaknesses, you can use this information for training purposes. Use a vehicle that is similar to the one the candidate will use on the job. The test should cover a variety of situations.

7. Give candidates a written test.

The written examination should test candidates' knowledge of accepted defensive driving techniques and critical laws and regulations. The test does not have to be the only measure of suitability. If the candidate performs poorly, you will probably reject him or her. If the candidate you later select performs well overall but has some weaknesses, you can use this information for training purposes. The test should cover a variety of situations.

8. Have the potential driver submit to a medical examination after making the job offer.

Make your job offer in writing and make it contingent on the outcome of the medical exam. The medical examination determines the candidate's physical and mental fitness to operate motor vehicles. The health care provider should be knowledgeable about the requirements of the job.

You may require candidates to take a drug test at any time during the selection process. Under the *Americans With Disabilities Act*, drug tests are not medical examinations.

DRIVER TRAINING

Training is an essential component of an effective fleet maintenance and safety program. You rarely hire an individual who has all the required knowledge, skills, and experience for his or her job. The amount of training you provide will vary depending on your new hires' qualifications and the complexity of their jobs. At a minimum, however, all new employees need training on your entity's policies and procedures.

In addition, existing employees need skills practice as well as updates in procedural changes or changes in the law. Maintaining the skills and knowledge of all employees who operate motor vehicles is very beneficial to fleet maintenance and safety program.

Although training represents an investment in time and money, it can produce real savings:

- (1) Training can make new employees productive more quickly than if they had to "learn the ropes" by themselves.
- (2) Training can improve the performance of current employees, particularly marginal performers.
- (3) Training can significantly contribute to reducing operational disruptions and equipment damage by enhancing employees' skills and knowledge.

Failure to provide sound training can seriously diminish the benefits that you can otherwise receive from an effective fleet maintenance and safety program. In particular, the failure to train can have serious consequences for your entity if one of your drivers has an accident that results in a liability claim. Documented, rigorous training in all areas of motor vehicle operations is necessary to successfully defend against claims of this type.

In addition, failing to train or providing inadequate training can affect employee safety. Ignorance of safety practices and policies, improper use of safety equipment, and unsafe equipment handling are leading and frequent contributors to employee injuries.

You can implement training in a variety of ways. Designating a driving trainer in each department is desirable because using one person contributes to consistency in approach and content. The driving trainer should have an excellent driving record and the respect of his or her fellow employees. In addition, the individual should be able to communicate clearly and interestingly.

Include both knowledge and skills training by providing both classroom and in-vehicle training. Classroom training, regardless of class size, includes: policies and procedures, department rules and regulations, routes, accident and emergency procedures, defensive driving techniques, and basic cargo equipment and trailer handling methods.

In-vehicle training allows you to provide instruction on the vehicle under controlled circumstances. It should include: pre-trip inspections and problem reporting, maintenance schedules, defensive driving, equipment familiarization, and cargo handling.

Train new employees at hire and before assigning them to operate a motor vehicle. Training should include testing for both knowledge and skills to verify that employees can perform acceptably on the job.

Train existing employees at least annually. Even long term employees can become "rusty." Refresher training can improve skills and enhance the driver's experience and knowledge.

Provide all employees with routine, formal training on your organization's written vehicle operations policy. This should include updates on operational changes, new route considerations, new equipment, or changes in laws and regulations.

Provide supervisors with specialized training. This training should clearly define their responsibilities for program and policy implementation, monitoring, oversight, and line level conformance.

Provide all employees with in-service psycho-motor or physical skills training. This training should be:

- prioritized by department or individual need, based on assignment,
- sufficiently systematic to prevent someone from not getting required training,
- relevant to employees' job assignments,
- conducted by qualified instructors,
- conducted at a minimum of once every 3 years, preferably every 2,
- include training or updates in applicable, relevant legal considerations or requirements,

Training should also:

- involve hands-on instruction and practice,
- satisfy any applicable or prevailing training mandates for the driving classification being addressed (for example, Commercial Driver's License requirements, Fire Fighter Training Council driver training guidelines, etc.),
- address any special needs or circumstances your Entity or department supervisors and managers identify.

Use one of the many department specific *National Safety Council* Defensive Driving Courses:

- if you cannot obtain specific psycho-motor skill training for a particular job assignment;
- to supplement skills training for personnel in the off-years of their training cycle,
- as an interim measure until you can identify sources of training and obtain funds.

Document all training appropriately and carefully. Such documentation can be very beneficial in defending a claim. At a minimum, individual training records should include:

- the instructor's name, title or rank,
- the date, time and location of training,
- the trainee's name, rank, or title,
- a copy of the course syllabus, lesson plan or training outline,
- actual copies of (preferred), or reference to, any handout materials, video training tapes, or other instructional aides used in the training presentation, and
- an assessment of the student's performance during training: pass or fail, areas needing improvement, remedial actions, referred for additional training, etc.

Give written tests to evaluate learning. The tests should be

- pass or fail. Because of the seriousness of the exposure, you should require a passing grade. Review all incorrect responses with the employee.
- Specific to the job assignment.

Every training program should include the following components:

The Entity's Policies and Procedures

It is important for all employees to know what their employer expects of them. The entity's formal policy on motor vehicle operations and its fleet maintenance and safety program tells them this and directs motor vehicle operations within departments. All employees should be able to review the policy and program during normal work hours.

Department Rules and Regulations

Every department should establish the rules and regulations for its operations. These rules should be consistent with the entity's formal policies and procedures. Every employee should receive a copy of the department's rules and regulations. Giving a written test on the rules will uncover any areas a new employee does not understand.

Equipment Familiarization

New employees and employee being assigned to a different type vehicle require this type training. Showing an employee the proper way to operate a vehicle efficiently will minimize equipment misuse and abuse. It will also minimize maintenance. Training should include any special controls and devices. Equipment familiarization also provides an opportunity to walk the employee through the pre-trip inspection.

Schedules and Routes

Where applicable, training should tell employees about specific geographic areas they should avoid. It should also provide information on poor road conditions or areas with a high incidence of accidents as well as any times when they should avoid certain routes. Every vehicle should have a map.

Accident and Breakdown Procedures

Your fleet maintenance and safety program should contain procedures that deal with accidents and vehicle breakdowns. In addition, individual departments may have procedures and reporting requirements unique to their operation.

Train drivers in the procedures they are to follow if there is an accident. Training should include information on what they should and should not say to others involved in the incident. Drivers should also learn how to safeguard the scene so that others do not become involved. Equip every vehicle with an accident reporting kit and train drivers on how to use it. Provide training on completing the formal accident report.

Train drivers on what to do if there is vehicle breakdown, including whom to call and what to do with the vehicle.

Defensive Driving Techniques

The National Safety Council defines defensive driving as “. . . driving to save lives, money and time **in spite** of the conditions around you and the actions of others.” Giving a candidate for a driver’s position a pre-employment road test enables you to evaluate his or her defensive driving techniques. Training should reinforce good habits and correct bad ones. Although viewing training tapes on defensive driving is certainly valuable, in-vehicle training is essential to developing appropriate attitudes and habits.

Regulations

Train all employees on traffic regulations, and on state and federal safety regulations. Use a written test to verify a satisfactory level of knowledge. Training should emphasize any regulations that particularly affect your entity’s operation.

Trailers and Equipment

With the variety of equipment available today, it is possible that even the most experienced driver may not have worked with the type of equipment to which you are assigning him or her. Each type of equipment requires the driver to have specific knowledge and skills to load, transport and carry. Therefore, your training program should include training on the general principles of equipment and trailer handling as well as training specific to the equipment or trailer for which the driver will be responsible. Such training should help to reduce losses, equipment damage, and third-party claims.

DRIVER SUPERVISION

Because maintaining a successful fleet maintenance and safety program is a top-down initiative, supervisors and managers are critical to its success. Their lack of commitment can undermine an otherwise effective program. Managers and supervisors at every level must understand their role and the importance of their individual efforts and actions. They must be able to persuade their subordinates that commitment to and compliance with the program is important.

To assure supervisory and management commitment, articulate your expectations about their responsibilities in the motor vehicle operations policy:

- Give supervisors the authority -- in your policy and in practice -- to enforce your entity's motor vehicle operations policy and procedures.
- Let them know that the program's overall success depends on their ability to manage their employees and their activities.
- Communicate your expectations about supervisors' designated responsibilities clearly in your policy. Make sure they understand that supervisory responsibility brings with it accountability. If they fail to enforce the requirements of the policy, it might result in demotion or other corrective action. Any action will be consistent with applicable employment and disciplinary policies or collective bargaining agreements. Repeat and reinforce this message constantly both in training and staff meetings.

Successful supervisors must be successful leaders who can win the commitment of their employees. This is particularly critical to motor vehicle operations since employees do not have direct supervision for much of the time. To be a successful leader, supervisors should:

- Investigate, analyze and consider all the facts before they act.
- Convey a sincere and personal interest in helping their employees succeed.
- Make the best use of each employee's abilities.
- Communicate with employees about their progress.
- Praise employees when they have done a good job.
- Inform employees about any upcoming changes that will affect them.

Supervisors who apply these principles generally succeed in winning the commitment of their employees. Most employees respond positively to fairness and to genuine interest. Most employees want to do a good job. They respond favorably to positive reinforcement and are willing to accept corrective action if it is fair and consistent with other corrective action for similar problems.

Besides overseeing driver activities, management should:

1. Obtain a copy of each driver's Motor Vehicle Record annually. Evaluate the MVR's carefully to determine training needs or corrective action. Review the MVR with the employee. Place the MVR in the driver's file.
2. Require, if possible, that drivers undergo physicals at least biannually. The physical should determine employees' fitness to operate a motor vehicle. All drivers should meet this requirement.

3. Collect and analyze information about accidents in which drivers are involved. Such information can be valuable in determining training and coaching needs.
4. Establish a means of publicly recognizing good driving habits. See the section on Awards and Incentives later in this document.

ACCIDENT REPORTING, REVIEW, ANALYSIS, AND RECORD-KEEPING

Accident Reporting

Your training program should instruct employees on how to complete and submit your authorized Accident Reporting Form. The form should be in triplicate. One copy goes to your entity's automobile insurer; the other copies go to the individuals who are responsible for reviewing and analyzing all accidents. After the review and follow up, file one copy of the report in the department in which the driver works and the other in the Human Resources department.

To reduce future losses, it is critical to establish a procedure for investigating and analyzing all accidents, particularly collisions. Although you can assign the responsibility for reviewing and analyzing all vehicle accidents to one individual, establishing a committee is preferable.

Investigation and Review

The committee should consist of a management representative, one or more drivers, and a mechanic (if your entity employs one). Rotate assignments to the committee so that all drivers have the opportunity to participate in this important aspect of increasing driver safety and responsibility. Members should understand the importance of their contribution to the entity's loss prevention activities. They should have the desire to help their coworkers become better drivers. In addition, reviewers should be objective and impartial.

The key result of the review and analysis should be the identification of ways to prevent similar incidents in the future. The committee or individual reviewing the accident serves in an advisory capacity only and does not have authority to apply corrective action. The responsibility for corrective action remains with the driver's supervisor.

The committee or individual conducting the review should evaluate the driver's accident report against the entity's policy, department rules, and accepted defensive driving techniques. The committee or individual should then prepare a written report of its findings and forward it to appropriate members of management. These might include:

- The driver's supervisor,
- The entity's risk manager or human resource professional, and
- The individual responsible for driver training.

Record-keeping

Thorough and consistent record-keeping benefits an effective fleet maintenance and safety program. The accident report and related documents provide data that can assist management in evaluating the effectiveness of the program. They can also help managers and supervisors to determine trouble spots and implement corrective action. The records can identify drivers who consistently perform poorly.

Accident records should include the Accident Report that the driver submits and the written evaluation of the accident that the review process develops. Each department should maintain records. Human Resources should maintain a duplicate file.

CORRECTIVE ACTION

Responsibility

When an accident occurs, the driver's supervisor/manager must take appropriate corrective action. To be effective, he or she must know all the facts relating to the accident. He or she should review the Accident Report thoroughly and consider any additional facts the Review Committee may have uncovered. In addition, the supervisor may wish to talk to the driver about the accident and, if practicable and appropriate, to any witnesses to the incident.

The nature of the corrective action should depend on the nature of the driver's actions before the accident. Corrective action can range from coaching, to retraining, to suspension or discharge depending on the nature of the accident and the employee's driving record with the entity.

The supervisor should attempt to collaborate with the driver. Unless the driver was obviously careless or openly broke an established rule, the supervisor/manager should assume that the driver meant to be a safe driver. The supervisor should explain the accident investigation process to the driver and ask for his or her account of the accident. If the supervisor/manager approaches the driver helpfully, the driver is less likely to be unhappy with the outcome of the review process. He or she is also more likely to cooperate with the supervisor/manager in determining appropriate corrective action.

The supervisor/manager should document the corrective action discussion. He or she should also inform the driver of his or her right to appeal the outcome of the review process. The supervisor/manager should retain one copy of the documentation for its records. The supervisor should forward a copy to Human Resources.

AWARDS AND INCENTIVES

An award and incentive program can be a valuable tool for promoting and maintaining a successful fleet maintenance and safety program.

Recognizing managers and supervisors who positively impact motor vehicle related losses in their department or area of assigned responsibility can encourage continued success. For managers and supervisors, use:

- Certificate or plaque presentations,
- Press releases and local media coverage,
- Special articles in the municipal or departmental newsletter,
- An incentive, reward or bonus program,
- Assignment to the risk control-safety committee.

Drivers, like most individuals, also need encouragement to perform well consistently. For some drivers, wages alone provide motivation; for others, it is pride or self-satisfaction. Still others require additional forms of motivation.

Incentive programs have proved to be highly successful in maintaining employee commitment to safety programs. An incentive program allows employees to earn increasingly more valuable awards. The awards can be baseball caps, coffee mugs, pins, patches, jackets or trips. The employee receives an award when he or she achieves a specified level of performance. It is very important that all employees understand the requirements of the incentive program. By creating several tiers of prizes, you may motivate employees to perform better and more safely to earn the better awards.

Publicity is an important element in any incentive program. Make sure that your program celebrates every success. You can use bulletin boards, your employee newsletter, your safety bulletin or awards ceremonies. Get media coverage whenever possible.

Employees should receive awards promptly. Top management should present the award to the employee in the presence of fellow employees.

VEHICLE INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE

Operating motor vehicles is integral to virtually every department and is an essential element in the delivery of most, if not all, services.

To assure the safety of employees and extend the life of the fleet, inspections and maintenance should be an important part of any organization's fleet maintenance and safety program.

There are many benefits to conscientious inspections and maintenance. They include:

- **Increased Productivity:**

Preventive maintenance minimizes lost work time as a result of vehicle breakdowns. Regularly scheduled inspections and maintenance are less disruptive than emergency repairs.

- **Reduction in Accidents:**

Brake, steering, tire or other component failure can contribute to accidents. Proper vehicle maintenance can minimize such failures.

- **Good Public Relations:**

How vehicles look can create a positive image with the public. Clean, well-kept vehicles project a positive image about the organization. They also project a safety conscious image.

- **Reduced Maintenance**

Regularly scheduled inspections at appropriate intervals can uncover minor problems before they lead to major repairs. Minor repairs and adjustments are less costly and time consuming than major ones.

- **Increased Employee Morale**

Drivers enjoy and take pride in a well-maintained vehicle. In addition, they are more likely to drive safely if the vehicle is clean and mechanically sound.

Selecting Vehicles

A thorough maintenance program begins with selecting appropriate vehicles. Before buying vehicles, management should analyze the entity's transportation needs and the conditions under which vehicles will have to operate.

Developing vehicle specifications helps management to buy vehicles that can perform the specific tasks for which employees will use them. Not determining vehicle specifications may result in decreased performance and increased maintenance and repair costs.

Management should consider standardizing vehicles within the fleet whenever possible. Selecting a specific manufacturer and model for a vehicle or specific components within vehicles is beneficial because:

- Standardization can reduce the inventory of parts significantly.
- Mechanics will have fewer type vehicles or parts with which to become familiar. This results in easier, faster and more reliable maintenance and repair.
- Drivers can move from vehicle to vehicle easily with less chance of misusing them. This reduces downtime and increases fleet flexibility.
- Management will be better able to assess how well vehicles perform.

There is one important drawback to standardization. Selecting vehicles from one manufacturer can limit your ability to obtain the best price. To overcome this, you can standardize but do so using two or three manufacturers.

Preventive Maintenance

Vehicles perform best when they undergo routine preventive maintenance. This type of maintenance looks for potential problems. It corrects problems before vehicles need major repairs or part failures result in downtime.

Preventive maintenance also allows you to develop a schedule that spreads the work out evenly over time. This stabilizes work flow as well the number of employees you need to perform the work.

An effective routine preventive maintenance program that you consistently follow yields the greatest benefits in low total maintenance costs.

As you develop your maintenance program, consider the following:

- **Manufacturers' recommendations.** It is important, at a minimum, to perform required maintenance at the intervals the manufacturer specifies to maintain the warranty. You may need to modify the maintenance schedule based on the actual experience of the fleet.
- **The vehicle's purpose.** Factors such as speeds, routes, loads, schedule, and traffic conditions influence maintenance requirements.
- ◆ **The number of vehicles in the fleet.** The more vehicles of a specific type available, the easier it is to schedule maintenance without affecting workloads and services.
- ◆ **The types and makes of vehicles.** The more standardization in the fleet, the easier it is to track manufacturer's requirements, to order components, and to obtain information regarding recalls or other matters relating to safe operation.

Emergency and On-Demand Maintenance

Some part failures are difficult to anticipate. Light bulb failure, damage to windshields, electrical wiring problems fall in this category. A procedure for on-demand maintenance allows employees to have vehicle problems fixed quickly without affecting routine or emergency maintenance.

Emergency maintenance is the inevitable result of postponing or failing to provide routine or on-demand maintenance. A poorly maintained vehicle is far more likely to break down than a maintained vehicle. The consequences can include:

- A disruption of routine services because a mechanic needs to go out and repair a vehicle or you need to send out another unit to replace the one that has broken down;
- An accident as a result, directly or indirectly, of mechanical failure;
- Damage to multiple component parts as a result of the failure of one part.
- Significantly increased costs resulting from:
 - Driver downtime;
 - Travel time for the mechanic;
 - Reduce efficiency of mechanic working on the road rather than in the garage;
 - Increased supervisory time spent on a preventable crisis;
 - Handling the public's dissatisfaction if the breakdown results in a missed a repair or schedule.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY

Management should:

- Support the maintenance program, making sure that it is established and well supervised.
- Provide the equipment and facilities necessary for an effective program. Items include tools, instruments and adequate shop facilities.
- Promote training that upgrades employees' knowledge and job skills. Maintenance personnel should receive proper training through special schools, company meetings, retraining sessions and manufacturers' schools.
- Encourage employee participation and compliance through incentive and award programs, information bulletins, meetings, letters of commendation and other means.
- Control the maintenance and operations schedule so that it provides safe equipment for operational needs.

DRIVER'S RESPONSIBILITY

Drivers should be responsible for the condition and safe operation of their assigned vehicles. Drivers should check their vehicles for possible defects and report them for correction according to company policy. Driver vehicle condition reports furnish valuable information for evaluating the efficiency of the maintenance system.

MAINTENANCE RECORDS

Maintenance records serve a three-fold purpose. They provide:

1. A record of vehicle maintenance needs.
2. A schedule of work to be done.
3. A record of completed maintenance and its cost.

There are five forms that are basic to any vehicle-maintenance program: They are:

1. **Driver's Vehicle Inspection Report:** A checklist of different vehicle parts that the driver can inspect for defects. The form allows for a systematic inspection so that the driver does not unintentionally overlook an important area. Drivers should conduct the inspection daily at the beginning of their shifts and keep a copy of the current checklist in the vehicle. It also serves as a written communication between the driver and shop for correction of defects.
2. **Lubrication chart:** Indicates what lubricant to use, what parts of the vehicle require lubrication and the frequency.
3. **Service and inspection report:** What components need repair and when the work is completed.
4. **Delivery ticket:** A record of each vehicle's consumption of fuel, engine oil, gear lubricant and grease.
5. **Vehicle history folder:** Provides a complete up-to-date history of maintenance, repairs, parts and labor costs. The history allows management to analyze vehicle performance and develop needed cost data. Management can also evaluate maintenance work to determine if a vehicle needs or can be expected to need additional work. Analyzing vehicle histories can also uncover problems that routine maintenance has failed to detect.

At a minimum, you should keep these records for ninety days.

Many of the major oil companies and vehicle manufacturers have useful preventive maintenance literature and forms available on request.

At a minimum, preventive programs should require:

- All drivers to conduct daily inspections at the beginning of their shifts.
- A designated individual to conduct a more thorough inspection at regular intervals. The inspection should cover the condition of:
 - Safety equipment (flares, first aid equipment, air bags, seat belts).
 - Braking systems.
 - Lights and signals.
 - Tires and wheels.
 - The body (including hinges, latches, glass, and mirrors).
 - Any accessories.
- The preparation of service and inspection reports. These documents show that drivers have made timely reports of problems and that the mechanic has performed appropriate maintenance or repairs.
- A system for regularly checking, lubricating, washing and replacing certain components either on a time or mileage basis.

RESOURCE MATERIALS, EMPLOYEE MEETINGS AND OTHER METHODS OF COMMUNICATING THE PROGRAM

The National Safety Council has a wide variety of educational materials to assist you in providing defensive driving training. Among them are:

Defensive Driving Course -- DDC-8

This is a 7 hour, multi-media educational program designed to increase driver awareness and to develop sound defensive driving techniques. For drivers of all types of non-emergency vehicles.

Defensive Driving Course Refresher -- DDC-4

A 4 hour, multi-media educational program that provides a review of the topics covered in DDC-8.

Driver Collision Kits

These kits contain collision report forms, emergency request cards, and courtesy cards. Each vehicle should have a kit.

Lists Of Sources Of Information And Educational Materials for:

(1) earth moving equipment, (2) ice and snow removal, (3) backing up, (4) salt spreading, and (5) road grading.

Meetings

Periodic driver meetings can be an excellent means of providing training and maintaining employee interest in your fleet management and safety program. Each meeting should have a definite topic that will interest employees. The leader should encourage employees to participate. The topic should relate to the benefits of good driving habits for your entity and for the employee.

Bulletin Boards

Each department should create a driving bulletin board. Locate the board where all employees can see it and use it to display only items relating to maintaining vehicles, vehicle safety, and good driving habits. Post notices concerning the fleet management and safety program. Have employees initial these notices so you know all employees have seen them.

FLEET MANAGEMENT AND SAFETY PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

Following correct procedures for selecting and maintaining vehicles, and for training and supervising drivers should enable you to run a safe and efficient fleet. You may have a program in place. Perhaps you have not formally documented it or you realize it is not as good as it might be. Maybe you do not have a program at all. Before you take action to implement a fleet management and safety program or strengthen an existing one, you should analyze the status of your fleet operations and determine areas causing you problems.

Use the following checklist as a guide for implementing a comprehensive fleet management and safety program.



1. Review existing motor vehicle accident records or, if you have none, begin collecting them.

This phase of implementation is management's responsibility and requires the cooperation of department managers and supervisors as well as Human Resources. Your investigation should focus on identifying what caused each accident and any significant or contributing conditions. For any driver who has been in an accident, determine length of service, review the driving record, and obtain information about the driver's commitment to safety. You may need to review any records of corrective action arising from the employee's operation of motor vehicles. Review the employee's training record. Determine if the employee received proper supervision. In addition ask:

- Did the employee's record give any indication that he or she might have an accident?
- Did equipment failure contribute to the accident?
- Is there any indication that the equipment did not receive proper maintenance?
- Did the employee's route contribute to the accident?

Your investigation should reveal patterns to accidents, if any, and underscore areas that need either general or specific corrective action.

If you are just beginning to collect records, you can still continue with the implementation checklist. Realize, however, that in the future you may need to modify your program as you analyze accident data.

□ **2. Review current procedures for selecting, training, and supervising drivers.**

The review should identify strengths and weaknesses. In particular, you want to make sure that departmental procedures contribute to your entity's goals for improving fleet management and safety. You also are looking for any areas that might require correction.

As you conduct your review, ask:

Driver Selection:

Do we have a well-defined and documented driver selection process?

Are our managers and supervisors following procedures or do they tend to shortcut the authorized process when they are busy or short of drivers?

Can we centralize all or part of the process to assist managers and supervisors in obtaining well-qualified drivers?

Driver Training:

Do we have a formal training program or do new employees receive training "on the fly"?

Do managers or supervisors check applicants' oral and written statements to determine if they truthfully reported their experience and knowledge?

Do we provide, at a minimum, annual retraining for all employees and immediate retraining or coaching when employees perform below standard or have accidents?

Driver Supervision:

Have we provided adequate training for our supervisors?

Does our performance evaluation system hold supervisors accountable for supporting fleet management and driver safety?

Is supervisory responsibility and authority clear so that employees understand to whom they report?

Can our supervisors improve their relations with their employees?

□ **3. Review current operational procedures for equipment and driving.**

As you conduct your review, ask:

Vehicles and Related Equipment:

Have we selected equipment that can perform the job for which we are buying it?

Have we maintained the equipment in good condition?

Do we have an adequate, well defined and documented preventive maintenance procedure? Do our employees follow it?

Do we maintain an inventory of parts that is sufficient to prevent delays in maintenance and repairs? Is the inventory too large or too small? Can we improve our inventory procedure? Would standardizing vehicles allow us to reduce inventory?

How, where and why is damage to equipment happening? Is it the result of accidents or of other causes?

Routes:

Can we improve routes to increase safety and operational efficiency?

Fleet Operation Costs:

Have we maintained and analyzed records sufficiently to determine the operating costs for a particular vehicle?

Do we know how per vehicle costs compare with the fleet average?

If possible, try to obtain data from other entities whose fleet operations are comparable to yours. If you can, determine how your operating costs compare with theirs. If your costs seem high, you will need to determine why.

Community Response:

Have we kept records of all complaints arising from fleet operations?

Do we know why we are receiving complaints? Do they result from driver carelessness, poor driving, lack of courtesy on the road, poor vehicle appearance, mechanical concerns?

□ **4. Analyze the Results of Your Study and Determine Your Course of Action.**

Assemble and Analyze:

Your careful review should reveal significant information about your fleet operations. Assemble it in such a way that you can study it objectively.

Your first concern is to get a good picture of your status. You want to determine what you are doing right and what needs work. You want to establish what conditions, if any, are creating or contributing to problem areas.

You want to isolate problems that occur frequently or have high costs. This will allow you to continue with the next step in this phase of program implementation.

Prioritize The Actions You Need to Take:

Ideally you can address the problems with high frequency or severity first. However, it is often better to first solve problems that involve little cost and that will yield a significant improvement in a short time. The reason is simple: You operate under significant budgetary constraints and need to prove the importance of a fleet management and safety program. Carefully selecting the areas you will first address can get you the results you need to support your arguments for further action. Continued action will almost certainly require time and additional money.

As you prioritize, look for multiple problem areas that you can correct with a single action. For example, instituting an effective, formal driver training program can:

- ◆ Improve driver skills and compliance with procedures.
- ◆ Convey to employees how important you feel they are to a successful fleet management and safety program.

As a result you should see more employees practicing defensive driving skills, thus reducing accidents, damage to equipment and excessive operating costs. In addition, drivers will be more likely to take care of equipment.

Improving your vehicle maintenance program can:

- Reduce overall maintenance costs.
- Eliminate mechanical failures on the road.
- Improve employee morale because drivers know they are driving safe, well-maintained vehicles.
- Reduce accidents and increase driver safety by eliminating mechanical failure as a contributing factor.

Set Measurable, Achievable Goals:

You can make success more certain by setting goals that supervisors and employees can achieve in a reasonable amount of time. Break down long term goals into short term objectives.

For example, your long term goal may be to establish a comprehensive driver training program for both new and existing employees. This is a goal that can take several years and a considerable commitment of time and expense to achieve. You can, however, after reviewing your accident data, isolate several key problem areas and implement training to address them immediately. For example, you might have supervisors retrain employees on backing up vehicles if this action has been the source of repeated accidents. You might ask supervisors to immediately implement monthly training meetings. The meetings can be as short as 10 minutes and cover one issue or topic.

□ 5. Monitor and Evaluate Your Program

Monitor and evaluate your program to determine if you are achieving the goals you set. You need to communicate with supervisors who are implementing the program to gather suggestions and learn about problems. You need to listen to staff and evaluate data to find out if the program is working as you intended.

You are never done with any program for improving fleet management and safety. Motor vehicle laws change. You buy equipment from a different manufacturer or you introduce a new piece of equipment. These and many other circumstances require your constant vigilance.

When vehicle collisions result in serious injury or death, lawsuits are inevitable. Although governmental immunity affords some protection, public entities are particularly vulnerable to lawsuits because the public mistakenly believes they have a lot of money. Many large settlements have hinged on the plaintiffs' attorneys proving negligence in two areas: driver training and vehicle maintenance. The best pre-accident defense against allegations of driver negligence is training. The best defenses against allegations of vehicle negligence are thorough, consistent records showing all preventive maintenance.

INSPECTION CHECKLISTS AND SCHEDULES

Inspection Forms

An inspection form or checklist contributes to a well-maintained fleet by allowing drivers and their supervisors to point out deficiencies in vehicles. This allows the maintenance staff to correct problems promptly before they lead to accidents.

In addition, the form documents the public entity's intent to provide safe vehicles for its employees and the public.

There is no one perfect inspection form or checklist. As you develop a form, consider the following:

- How frequently employees will inspect vehicles -- daily, twice a week, by shift. The frequency depends on the number of vehicles available and the miles and/or hours employees use them.
- Manpower.
- Number of employees who will use a given vehicle.
- The type of vehicle.

The higher the number of employees who use a vehicle or the harder they use it will get, the more frequent the inspections should be.

As you develop a form, keep these points in mind:

- Make the form usable. Reduce the need to write by designing forms that require checks or other marks.
Periodically inspect vehicles using the form to make certain that drivers are using the checklist properly.
- Make certain that supervisors regularly review the forms. Supervisory monitoring communicates the importance of using the form properly to assure vehicle safety.
Failure to implement supervisory control will seriously reduce the effectiveness of the inspection aspect of your program.
- Develop and communicate a policy that establishes accountability for vehicle inspections. Make clear what corrective action you will take if drivers fail to inspect their vehicles as required.

The following are essential items that you should include as you develop your checklist:

- Identification of the vehicle
- Date of inspection. Time if the more than one person will inspect the vehicle each day.
- Signature of the employee conducting the inspection. The requirement for the employee's signature increases accountability.
- Signature of employee's supervisor.
- Space for remarks.

The following are items that commonly appear on vehicle inspection forms or checklists:

- Department
 - Beginning and ending mileage or hours
 - Beginning and ending fuel level
1. Oil level and condition
 2. Brake fluid level and condition
 3. Brake lines
 4. Brake shoes
 5. Brake pressure
 6. Emergency brake
 7. Washer fluid level
 8. Radiator fluid level and condition
 9. Transmission fluid level and condition
 10. Lights -- all, both interior and exterior
 11. Air filter
 12. Gas filter
 13. Engine belts
 14. Defroster
 15. Heater
 16. Air conditioner
 17. Gauges and warning lights
 18. Mirrors
 19. Windows -- operation, condition, obstructions
 20. Seat belts and other safety systems -- operation and condition
 21. Exhaust system
 22. Tires -- tread depth and wear pattern, air pressure
 23. Clutch
 24. Throttle linkage and operation
 25. Windshield wipers
 26. Wheel bearings
 27. Lug nuts
 28. Shock absorbers and springs
 29. Steering systems
 30. Engine and heater hoses
 31. Battery
 32. Electrical systems
 33. Body damage
 34. Leaks
 35. Unsecured items in vehicle
 36. Latches and locks
 37. Radio
 38. Sirens, horn, buzzers

The following section contains three sample inspection checklists, guidelines for conducting an inspection of heavy equipment and a sample maintenance schedule. You can adopt and tailor these to your needs. Keep in mind the size of your fleet, the number of employees, and the number of shifts.

VEHICLE INSPECTION FORM

UNIT/VIN NUMBER _____ DATE INSPECTED _____ TIME INSPECTED _____

VEHICLE YEAR/MAKE/MODEL _____

DEPARTMENT _____

DRIVER'S SIGNATURE _____

TIRES

- TIRE TREAD DEPTH ADEQUATE FOR SAFETY
- INFLATION PRESSURE ADEQUATE AND EQUAL X FOUR
- NO CRACKS, CUTS OR OTHER DAMAGE EVIDENT

WHEELS

- NO RIM DAMAGE
- TIGHTEN AND INSPECT LUG NUTS
- SECURE OR REMOVE HUB CAPS

ENGINE COMPARTMENT

- OIL LEVEL ADEQUATE
- COOLANT LEVEL ADEQUATE (CAUTION IF ENGINE HOT)
- BRAKE FLUID LEVEL ADEQUATE
- BATTERY CONDITION ACCEPTABLE
- POWER STEERING FLUID LEVEL ADEQUATE
- ALL BELTS TIGHT AND UNDAMAGED

VEHICLE INTERIOR

- BRAKE SYSTEM OPERATION
- STEERING SYSTEM OPERATION
- RESTRAINT SYSTEMS OPERATION
- OCCUPANT HAZARDS (SHARP/PROTRUDING OBJECTS)
- LOOSE OBJECTS SECURED OR REMOVED

TRUNK

- SPARE TIRE AND JACK SECURED
- LOOSE OBJECTS SECURED

LIGHTING/WARNING EQUIPMENT

- EMERGENCY LIGHTS
- HEADLIGHTS
- TAIL LIGHTS AND BRAKE LIGHTS
- DIRECTIONAL SIGNALS
- SPOTLIGHTS
- HORN
- SIREN

FUEL LEVEL TOPPED OFF

-

BODY DAMAGE NOTED

SUPERVISOR SIGNATURE _____

COMMENTS _____

VEHICLE INSPECTION CHECKLIST

Date	Unit #
Mileage for Shift:	VIN #
Start	Fuel Gallons
Ending	Mileage at Fueling:

1. EXTERIOR

OK Needs Attention

Tires (Tread, side walls, lug nuts)

- Headlights (high, low) wipe clean
- Turn Signals (right, left, front, rear)
- Brake lights and/or Stop lights (Clean and working)
- Tail lights and marker lights (Clean and working)
- Back up lights and beeper
- Mirrors (Clean and adjusted)
- Fresh body damage (Doors and windows)
- Cleanliness (Windows clean) _
- Emergency door (Opens and closes)

2. UNDER HOOD

OK Needs Attention

- Oil level _____ Qts/oil
- Radiator overflow _____ Qts/coolant
- Windshield washer fluid
- *Brake fluid
- *Battery
- *Power steering fluid
- *Transmission level _____ Qts/ATF

* The Maintenance staff should check these items on some vehicles.

3. INTERIOR

OK	Needs Attention	
_____	_____	Windshield wipers & washers (high, low)
_____	_____	Heaters (front, rear; high, low)
_____	_____	Check all lights
_____	_____	Check gauges (Oil pressure, temperature, gas, voltage)
_____	_____	Check horn(s)
_____	_____	Check emergency exits (if applicable)
_____	_____	Fire extinguisher (Check gauge)
_____	_____	First aid kit (Check contents)
_____	_____	Flares & reflectors
_____	_____	Seats, floors (Check for damage)
_____	_____	Housekeeping (Dash, windows, floors, seats)
_____	_____	Wheelchair lift or ramp (if applicable)
_____	_____	Radio (Transmit & receive)
_____	_____	Defroster fans (High, low)

4. FINAL CHECKS (With engine running in drive.)

OK	Needs Attention	
_____	_____	Parking brakes
_____	_____	Emergency brakes
_____	_____	Steering
_____	_____	Pressure on air brake system (if applicable)

5. CHECK IN TRANSIT (Report problems to dispatcher or maintenance as soon as possible.)

OK	Needs Attention	
_____	_____	Brakes
_____	_____	Steering
_____	_____	Engine
_____	_____	Speedometer
_____	_____	Other _____

Driver's Signature _____

Supervisor's Signature _____

HEAVY EQUIPMENT-VEHICLE CHECKLIST

VIN #	DATE	DRIVER
LAST CHECK	MILEAGE	FUEL READING

Enter:

- P** If you have checked, found a problem, but cannot repair it.
- R** If you have checked, found a problem and repaired it.
- ✓** If you have checked item and it is O.K.

POWER UNIT EXTERIOR

- _____ Wiper blades (wear)
- _____ Window glass and mirrors (clean, unbroken, adjusted)
- _____ Cab/Doors (Scratches & dents)
- _____ Front & rear lights (Clean, working, incl. headlights, tail lights, signals, stop, backup)
- _____ Reflectors
- _____ Suspension (Satisfactory)
- _____ Tires (Tread, cuts, abrasions)
- _____ Tire pressure (Manufacturer's specs)
- _____ Wheels, rims, lugs (Spare-secure)
- _____ Battery (Connections secure, fluid level)
- _____ Exhaust system (Satisfactory)
- _____ Air lines (Firm)
- _____ Light lines (Secure, shorts)
- _____ Fifth Wheel (Satisfactory)
- _____ Couplings (Satisfactory)
- _____ Tie-downs (Satisfactory)
- _____ Rear-end protection (Satisfactory, sign)

ENGINE COMPARTMENT

- _____ Oil (Level, in need of change)
- _____ Coolant (Level, winterized)
- _____ Belts (Tight, worn)
- _____ Grease
- _____ Brake fluid (Level)
- _____ Windshield washer fluid (Level)
- _____ Power steering fluid (Level)
- _____ Transmission fluid (Level)
- _____ Hydraulic fluid (Level)

IN CAB

- _____ Gauges, warning indicators
- _____ Windshield wipers, washers
- _____ Horn
- _____ Heater and defroster
- _____ Clutch
- _____ Steering (Adequate)
- _____ Service brakes (Operable)
- _____ Parking brake (Operable)
- _____ Emergency brakes (Operable)
- _____ Safety Equipment (Triangles, fire extinguisher, first aid kit, seat belts, spare fuses)

INTERIOR

- _____ Motors (engine, windshield wipers, heater, defroster, air conditioner, etc.)
- _____ Horn
- _____ Radio (transmit/receive)
- _____ Safety Equipment (fire extinguisher, first aid kit, seatbelts)
- _____ Parking brake
- _____ Back-up buzzer
- _____ Maps (current)
- _____ Preplans
- _____ Report forms
- _____ Mutual aid cards
- _____ Flashlights
- _____ Primer tank
- _____ Water tank
- _____ Pump operation
- _____ Power generator (fuel, oil)
- _____ SCBA (Pressure, secure, operation, masks, lines)
- _____ Pac #'s
- _____ Extrication Equipment

Supervisor's Signature: _____

INSPECTION PROCEDURE FOR HEAVY EQUIPMENT

Have all defects corrected before departure.

1. Note general condition of vehicle as you approach it. Look under the vehicle for water, fuel or lubricant leaks.
2. Check water and crankcase levels under the hood. Check fan and compressor belts for cracks and/or signs of excessive wear. Note general condition of engine space.
3. Start engine and set at fast idle for warm up. Listen for abnormal engine noise. Check all gauges for normal readings.
4. Check emergency equipment, horn(s), windshield wipers, seat belts.
5. Turn on all lights including four way flasher switch for turn signals.
6. Check steering wheel action.
7. Leave cab to check headlights and turn signals. Switch headlights on and check both beams. Then turn off headlights ONLY. Leave remaining lights on.
8. Check front clearance and identification lights.
9. Check right front wheels, tires, lugs, or studs. Check for leakage around hubs.
10. Check right side of cab: door, mirrors, and so on. Check lights and reflectors along right side.
11. Check security of trailer light and brake connections.
12. Check hook-up, fifth wheel, jaws, release lever on tractor-trailer, pintle hook, tow bar, safety chains, converter gear on full-trailer unit.
13. Check right trailer tires, wheels, lugs or studs.
14. Check rear of body, mud-flaps, rear lights (clearance and identification, stop, tail, turn signals), rear reflectors, and rear-end protection.
15. Check right trailer tires, wheels, lugs or studs.
16. Check left front wheels, tires, lugs, or studs. Check for leakage around hubs.
17. Check left side of cab: door, mirrors, and so on. Check lights and reflectors along left side.
18. Check left trailer tires, wheels, lugs or studs.
19. Re-enter cab. Re-check all gauges. Make sure that air pressure is at maximum.
20. Check parking brakes.
21. Check brakes and stoplights. With fully charged system, check air brakes.
22. Turn off four way flasher and actuate left and right turn signals. Determine proper operation by checking front ones.
23. Make a test stop before leaving the yard.

Drain air tanks daily. Check tires two times a day or every 100 miles.

PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

A preventive maintenance program also includes a schedule that lists vehicles and the time intervals at which maintenance staff services them.

Servicing includes:

1. Oil change.
2. Lubrication.
3. Checking other fluid levels, such as windshield and transmission fluids.
4. Checking hydraulics and battery.
5. Inspecting brakes.
6. Checking the electrical system; for example, front lights and turn signals.
7. Checking the cooling system.
8. Checking spark plugs.
9. Tire rotation and replacement.

An effective schedule assures that:

1. Routine servicing occurs.
2. Servicing occurs regularly -- at least at the manufacturer's recommended intervals.
3. Servicing is consistent.

Service staff should maintain accurate records of all the work they perform. Documentation should be by vehicle.

You can set up schedules by time interval or by the type of work that needs to be done.

SAMPLE FLEET MANAGEMENT POLICIES

The following "sample fleet management" policies illustrate three key supervisory components of an effective fleet management program. These components are:

- Policy
- Investigation and review board
- Corrective action procedures.

SAMPLE 1

Policy Statement:

(Name of Entity) cannot overstate the importance of our policy statement regarding safe driving. All employees who must drive a municipal vehicle or their own personal car in fulfilling their job responsibilities must follow our policy and procedures and the laws of the State of Alabama. Although [Name of Entity] provides employees with training in safe driving practices, employees remain responsible for observing all safety and traffic regulations when operating our vehicles or their own personal cars on municipal business.

Accident Investigation and Review:

When an employee has a motor vehicle accident, he or she will complete an Accident Report form and submit it to his or her supervisor. The municipality will convene an Accident Review Committee made up of four members. Members will be management and supervisory personnel from the affected employee's department as well as a supervisor from another department that performs similar work. The department Manager will chair the committee. The employee's immediate supervisor will not serve on the Committee.

The Committee will review all motor vehicle accidents within seven working days regardless of the severity of the accident unless [Name of Entity]'s Legal Department instructs the Committee otherwise.

The Committee will review all documentation regarding the accident submitted to it. It may also request the affected employee to provide details concerning the accident and ask witnesses, if any, for their accounts. The employee may not be present when the Committee completes its final review of the accident and prepares its report.

The Committee will not discuss or recommend corrective action for the employee. The employee's immediate supervisor will determine appropriate disciplinary measures, if any, after he or she has reviewed the Accident Report and received and considered the Accident Review Board's completed report.

Corrective Action:

It is impossible to provide a fixed schedule of corrective actions to make certain that supervisors apply progressive discipline appropriately. The manager or supervisors must examine and evaluate each instance of misconduct or negligence individually. The supervisor's goal is to use corrective action to improve the employee's performance.

When applying discipline for a motor vehicle accident, the supervisor's goal is twofold. The supervisor needs to correct the employee's performance and help him or her become a defensive driver so that he or she can avoid future accidents.

Supervisors/managers should apply corrective action discipline after considering the circumstances of each case. The following are general guidelines that supervisors may find useful:

- A. Evaluate the report of the Accident Review Board fairly and objectively.
- B. Consider carefully how a municipal or a departmental rule applies to the circumstances of the accident and to:
 - (1) the orderly, efficient, and safe conduct of the municipality's business, and
 - (2) the performance the municipality might reasonably expect of the employee.
- C. Reinforce the rules and procedures with the employee and apply corrective action fairly and impartially. Avoid discrimination against any employee.
- D. Try to determine if the employee knowingly violated municipal or departmental rules and procedures before applying discipline.
- E. Make certain that the "punishment fits the crime." Supervisors should apply a degree of discipline that is reasonable for:
 - (1) the seriousness of the employee's action, and
 - (2) the employee's record during his employment with the municipality.
- F. Tell the employee what the possible or probable consequences of a repeat offense will be.
- G. Document the corrective action discussion including the oral warning about future infractions of the rules. Place the documentation in the employee's personnel file.

If a supervisor/manager receives a report of or observes an employee driving in an unsafe manner, he or she should discuss this with the employee as soon as possible. First offenses may require only an oral warning, a review of safe driving techniques, and a reminder about municipal and departmental expectations. Correcting poor performance early may reduce the need for further corrective action.

Supervisors should document any corrective action discussion, whether oral or written, and make sure it is placed in the employee's personnel file. Supervisors should inform their employees that written documentation has been placed in their files. Where applicable, supervisors/managers should send a copy to the union.

SAMPLE 2

Policy Statement:

The operation of motor vehicles is essential to [Name of Entity]'s business. The safe and efficient operation and maintenance of vehicles can reduce the likelihood of accidents, breakdowns, delays, injuries to employees and others, and other related problems and costs.

Therefore, [Name of Entity] has established a Fleet Safety Program for the operation of municipal vehicles and employees' personal vehicles used in municipal business. The intent of the program is to reduce or eliminate any conditions that might result in employee injuries or adversely affect [Name of Entity]'s financial ability to provide services.

It is [Name of Entity's] policy that employees operate vehicles for municipal business only:

- (1) when the vehicle is mechanically sound.
- (2) when they are mentally and physically able to operate vehicles safely.
- (3) in accordance with all applicable traffic laws.
- (4) in accordance with applicable municipal and departmental policies and procedures.

In addition, employees must:

- (5) drive intelligently, making proper allowances for traffic and weather conditions.
- (6) drive courteously, respecting the rights of pedestrians and other drivers.
- (7) wear seat belts and make certain that passengers have also fastened their seatbelts.

Accident Review:

A. Accident Review Committee:

[Name of Entity] has established an Accident Review Committee to

- (1) Review all accidents, regardless of severity, to determine how the municipality can avoid similar incidents in the future.
- (2) Prepare a report of its findings, including recommendations for preventative measures, for management review and consideration.

The Committee will forward copies of the report to appropriate members of management. These might include:

- (1) The driver's supervisor,
- (2) The Entity's risk manager or human resource professional, and
- (3) The individual responsible for driver training.

C. Accident Review Committee Membership

Members of [Name of Entity]'s Committee are:

- The Safety Director. The Safety Director chairs the committee but has no vote.
- The Personnel Director or his or designated representative.
- A non-administrative employee selected at large.
- A manager or supervisor from the affected employee's department who does not have direct supervisory responsibility for the employee.

D. Disciplinary Actions

The driver's supervisor is responsible for applying appropriate corrective action. Corrective action, if any, may range from an oral warning or coaching up to discharge. In determining effective corrective action, the supervisor will carefully review the Accident Report and the driver's personnel record and will consider the findings of the Accident Review Committee. The following are suggested guidelines:

- [1] Criminal offenses, driving while impaired or related offenses:
Loss of driving position for a minimum of one (1) year upon conviction. If no further violations within stated time, reinstatement on a probationary basis.
- [2] Two moving violations in one (1) year: ^{1, 2}
Warning.
- [3] Three moving violations in two (2) years: ^{1, 2}
May drive but under probation for one (1) year. Removal from probation contingent on employee performance.
- [4] One moving violation conviction while on probation:
Suspension of driving privilege for one (1) year.³
- [5] Four moving violations in a two (2) year period: ^{1, 2}
Ineligible to drive for one year. Reinstatement if no violations during one year suspension.³
- [6] Revocation or suspension of driver's license:
Immediate suspension from driving for the term of the suspension or revocation.

E. Appeals

Employees may appeal the corrective action in writing. They must submit the written appeal within 30 days of when the corrective action took place. The appeal should include any information not previously included in the Accident Report or considered by the Accident Review Committee and any further explanation of the circumstances surrounding the accident.

¹ Unless otherwise noted, violations are counted at time of conviction.

² Other than criminal offenses, driving while impaired or allied offense.

³ Any employee who receives a suspension from driving for one year or more may be terminated if the suspension prevents him or her from performing the functions of his or her job.