

# SPACE MANAGEMENT



Managing the space around the truck is challenging. From driving in congested traffic to navigating a crowded parking lot, truck drivers must constantly track the hazards around them to prevent a collision. Read the information below and ask yourself how you can improve your driving style in any of the hazard categories.

## RECOGNIZE THE HAZARDS

### ENVIRONMENT

Ice, mud, dirt, frost, and water can obstruct mirrors and windows, making it difficult to track the location of other vehicles. Road vibration can also knock mirrors out of alignment.

### EQUIPMENT

A truck's blind spots are directly in front of the tractor, the tractor's right-front passenger side, both sides of the trailer from front to rear, and directly behind the trailer. Missing, damaged, or misaligned mirrors hinder the driver's ability to monitor vehicles around the truck, while an inoperable turn signal prevents warning other drivers of an impending lane change.

### PERSONAL BEHAVIORS

#### Unsafe Driving Behaviors:

- Tailgating
- Making abrupt lane changes
- relying solely on mirrors and blind-spot warning systems
- Not checking mirrors regularly for vehicles and objects around the truck

#### Unsafe Non-Driving Behaviors:

- Failing to conduct a proper pre-trip inspection
- Not using spotters or checking behind the truck before backing
- Not keeping windows and mirrors clean and adjusted properly

## KNOW THE DEFENSE

### REACT PROPERLY TO HAZARDS

To avoid hazards around the truck, use the "lean and look" method to verify a vehicle is not hidden in the tractor's right-front blind spot. Also, avoid frequent or abrupt lane changes. Stay in one lane as much as possible. If a lane change is needed, signal your intent well in advance. Lastly, remember to "Get Out And Look" (GOAL) behind the truck before backing. Always use a spotter or traffic control assistance. Never back up across traffic lanes without assistance.

### MAINTAIN PROPER FOLLOWING DISTANCE

Keep a minimum of six seconds following distance behind the vehicle in front of you. Add more space if additional hazards, such as traffic congestion, construction zones, rain, fog, etc., are present.

### BE ATTENTIVE TO THE ROAD AHEAD

Make quick glances to side mirrors to monitor the traffic around the truck, then return your focus to the road ahead to avoid a rear-end crash.

### VEHICLE INSPECTIONS

Ensure turn signals on the tractor and trailer work properly. Clean windows and mirrors of debris, and ensure mirrors are adjusted properly before and during each trip. Make sure the backup beeper functions properly when the vehicle is in reverse.