









# Log Truck Driving Safety Series

The purpose of this safety series is to highlight the most common hazards associated with log truck driving. We know YOU KNOW how to stay safe. These 5-minute fact sheets guide your crew in brief discussions to help bring safety to the forefront.

## Topics

 <p><b>Curves &amp; Load Shifting</b></p>	 <p><b>Distracted Driving</b></p>	 <p><b>Load Securement</b></p>	 <p><b>Overhang &amp; Flagging</b></p>
 <p><b>Seatbelt Use</b></p>	 <p><b>Trailer Clean Up</b></p>	 <p><b>Trimming</b></p>	 <p><b>Turning</b></p>

## How to Use



- Incorporate into safety trainings
- Deliver tailgate trainings
- Include in new employee orientation
- Post fact sheets in highly visible locations

## Regulations



- Federal regulations govern seatbelt use, distracted driving, and overhang/flagging rules
- States may have additional regulations in addition to those listed above



Company Name

---

This Training Booklet Belong to:

---



# Trainer Notes

Review these key points before delivering information to log truck drivers.

According to the National Safety Council, each death due to a crash (not just limited to log truck crashes) costs nearly \$1.9 million. This includes wage and productivity losses, medical expenses, administrative expenses, vehicle damage, and employer's uninsured costs. The costs of a nonfatal injury range from \$26,000 to over \$160,000 depending on severity.

Reference: [Costs of Motor-Vehicle Crashes - Injury Facts \(nsc.org\)](#)

## Overhangs



- In the Ark-La-Tex area, about half of multi-vehicle crashes are rear-end crashes with the other vehicle often hitting the log truck.
- Federal regulations require:
  - Logs extending more than 4 inches beyond the sides of the truck or 4 feet beyond the truck must be marked with flags during the daytime and lights at night. If the overhang is less than 2 feet wide, a single flag or light is required.
  - Flags must be 18 inches square and red or orange fluorescent color.
- While a single flag might meet the federal regulation, multiple flags can help other drivers see the end of your truck and your load and require little time to install.
- Although a dirty flag meets the federal requirements, a clean bright flag is more effective.
- Each state may have stricter requirements for wide loads, but these usually don't come into play for logging trucks. For logging trucks, the most relevant issue is the overhang of the logs.

### References:

*FMCSA Regulations and Interpretations – 49 CFR Parts 300-399 | FMCSA (dot.gov)*

*Seat Belt Safety: Buckle Up America | NHTSA*

*No Texting Rule Fact Sheet | FMCSA (dot.gov)*

## Seatbelts



- Seatbelt use reduces the chance of death or serious injury by about 40-65% for adults in the front seat of a passenger vehicle or truck.

## Distraction



- In the Ark-La-Tex area, distraction was listed as a factor in crash reports for about 2/3 of single vehicle log truck crashes and about 1/3 of multi-vehicle log truck crashes.
- There are state bans in effect in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas for texting while driving. There are also bans in Louisiana and Texas against handheld cell phone use.
- Based on federal regulations, if a CMV driver is caught using a handheld cell phone, they can receive a disqualification and be fined \$2,750. Their employer can also be fined \$11,000.

# Crash Facts

Know the facts before you hit the road!

## agriculture, forestry & fishing sector

**>6x**

**HIGHER  
FATALITY RATE  
THAN ALL U.S.  
WORKERS**

**50%**

**OF FATALITIES  
ARE  
TRANSPORTATION  
RELATED**

## Rural Roads

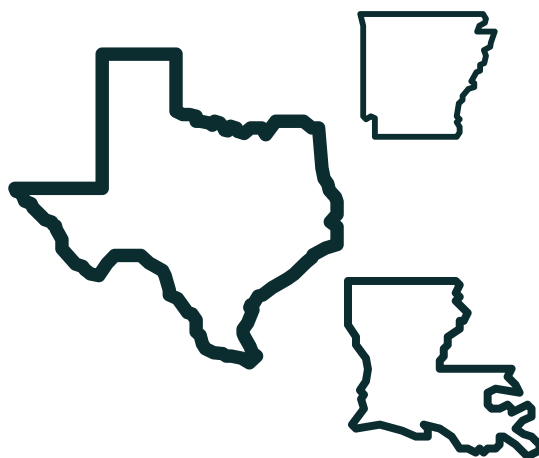
- Undivided , 2 lane roads
- Limited shoulders
- Narrow lanes
- Tight curves
- Short visibility

**RURAL ROADS  
2x  
FATAL CRASH  
RATE VS URBAN  
ROADS**

**400  
CRASHES PER  
YEAR IN ARK-  
LA-TEX**

## Rural Areas

- Lower access to post-crash care
- Longer response times
- Longer distances to hospitals
- Increase risk of death & serious injury





# Log Truck Driving Safety Series

Use the following fact sheets to discuss safety topics.  
Sign-in sheets are provided after each fact sheet to record attendance.

**Contact Us**



903.877.5998



[www.swagcenter.org](http://www.swagcenter.org)

# Curves & Load Shifting

## Incident Summary

Luke was driving his log truck to a mill in a neighboring town. He noticed a sign ahead indicating a sharp curve. Luke failed to adjust his speed appropriately. As he began to take the curve, the load shifted. The truck began to roll over causing the logs to spill out. Luke was transported to the hospital by EMT personnel. He was lucky to be alive but was out of work for months while he recovered. His medical bills put a burden on his family.

## Discussion Questions

- What was Luke's mistake?
- Who was impacted by his incident?

## Take Home Message

Pay attention to roadway signs and make further adjustments based on your truck's load and weather conditions. The driver is not the only person impacted by the incident. Drive safely to protect everyone.





# Sign-In Sheet

Training Date \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_

Trainer Name \_\_\_\_\_

Workers who attended training:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

# Distracted Driving

## Incident Summary

Max was driving his log truck to the job site. He attempted to call the crew leader to notify him that he was on the way. When the crew leader did not answer the phone call, Max decided to send him a quick text message. He did not notice that there was a car pulling out in front of him. When Max realized that he was about to hit the car, he slammed on the brakes, but it was too late to avoid the collision. Max hit the car on the driver's side. Once emergency medical services arrived, they pronounced the driver of the car dead. Max was immediately taken to the hospital with minor injuries.

## Discussion Questions

- When is it okay to send a quick text message while driving?
- What are the long-term consequences of Max's decision to text and drive?

## Take Home Message

A quick text can become a quick wreck. According to the National Center for Statistics and Analysis, distracted driving claimed 3,522 lives in 2021. Protect lives by never texting or talking on the phone while driving.

If you are caught driving while using a hand-held cell phone, you can be fined up to \$7,500 and your employer can be fined up to an additional \$11,000.







# Sign-In Sheet

Training Date \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_

Trainer Name \_\_\_\_\_

Workers who attended training:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

# Load Securement

## Incident Summary

On July 28th, around 3:00 p.m., Carl was preparing to leave the logging site to deliver a load of logs. While securing his cargo, he noticed that one of his two tie-down straps was not working properly. Unfortunately, Carl did not have any extra straps and needed to drop off the load by 5 p.m., so he decided to haul the load with only one working strap. In route to the mill, part of his load slipped out onto the road, causing a car on the incoming lane to hit one of the logs. At approximately 4:30 p.m., police and EMT personnel arrived at the scene of the incident, where the driver of the car was seriously injured. The log driver did not make it to the mill by 5 p.m.

## Discussion Questions

- What was the mistake Carl made?
- List the consequences of Carl's decisions to haul a load that was not secured properly.
- What is the proper way to secure a log truck?

## Take Home Message

Securing your load is crucial for your safety and others on the road. Even after tightening the straps, logs can settle, causing the strap to loosen. It is critical to take the time to stop and ensure that everything is securely fastened. Remember, it's always better to be safe than sorry. Compromising safety can cost you time and money.

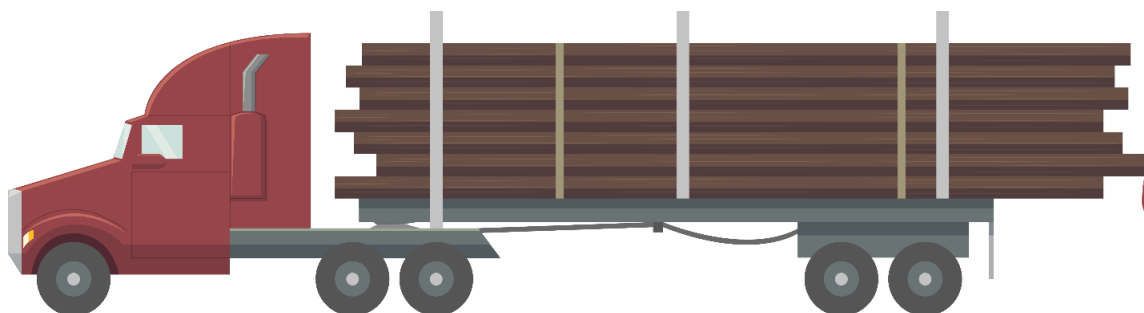
# Load Securement Cont.

## Tips

1. Logs must be transported on a vehicle designed and built, or adapted, for the transportation of logs.
2. Tiedowns must be used in combination with the stabilization provided by bunks, stakes, and bolsters to secure the load.
3. Logs must be solidly packed, and the outer bottom logs must be in contact with and resting solidly against the bunks, bolsters, stakes, or standards.
4. When two tiedowns are used, they must be positioned at approximately one-third and two-thirds of the length of the logs.

## Resources

[67 FR 61225, Sept. 27, 2002, as amended at 71 FR 35833, June 22, 2006]



Log truck properly loaded with operational tiedowns and a flag.



# Sign-In Sheet

Training Date

Location

Trainer Name

Workers who attended training:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



# Overhang & Flagging

## Incident Summary

Fred is in a hurry and doesn't bother to flag the overhanging log in his otherwise secured load. The mill is not that far, and he'll only be on the main road a short distance. Unfortunately, Sally is also in a hurry and doesn't see the protruding overhanging log as she comes up on Fred's truck from behind. The protruding logs went through Sally's windshield, and she was pronounced dead at the scene by first responders. Fred was uninjured however he lost his job as a result of the incident.

## Discussion Questions

- What was the mistake Fred made?
- List the consequences of Fred's decision?
- Why does load securement include flagging?



## Take Home Message

Properly flagging overhanging logs only takes a minute and can save a life. The driver is responsible for making sure overhanging logs are properly flagged.

## Tips

1. Flags should be 18 inches square and fluorescent orange or red. Avoid using dirty flags; they cannot be seen.
2. Local / regional requirements may vary. Know the rules for your state.
3. Ensure that flags are attached properly.
4. When in doubt, put a flag out.



# Sign-In Sheet

Training Date

Location

Trainer Name

Workers who attended training:

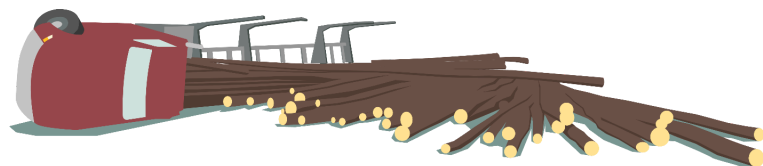
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

# Seatbelt Use

## Incident Summary

Derrick was on his way to deliver a load in his logging truck. As he was driving, a storm moved through his area with strong winds and heavy rain, making it difficult to see the road. Despite the challenging conditions, Derrick decided to continue driving rather than stop. While on the road, Derrick suddenly noticed a fallen tree blocking his path, causing him to brake suddenly and lose control of his truck. Derrick's truck skidded off the road and rolled over. Police and EMTs arrived at the scene of the incident, where Derrick was pronounced dead. It was later revealed that Derrick was not wearing his seatbelt while driving.

## Discussion Questions



- Why is it important to always wear your seatbelt?
- Apart from not wearing a seatbelt, what other safety precautions should Derrick have taken?

## Take Home Message

For your safety it is crucial to buckle your seatbelt, regardless of the distance of your drive! Driving a big truck doesn't guarantee your safety. According to the National Center for Statistics and Analysis, "regardless of vehicle type, seat belt use is the single most effective way to stay alive in a crash." Also, it is the law. Click it or ticket.

Crashes on rural roads are more likely to result in death or serious injury making seatbelt use even more important where logging is common.

Wearing a seatbelt can decrease death and serious injury among adults in the front seat of a vehicle or truck by 45-60%.



# Sign-In Sheet

Training Date Location

Trainer Name

Workers who attended training:




# Trailer Clean Up

## Incident Summary

Hunter had just finished unloading at the mill and was getting his trailer ready to hit the road again. He quickly checked his trailer for any leftover log trash, but unfortunately missed a few smaller pieces in his haste to get to the next job. As he was driving down the road, he noticed a car behind him suddenly swerve and pull over to the side of the road. Hunter realized that some of the smaller pieces of log trash had flown out of his trailer and hit the car behind him, cracking its windshield. Hunter felt terrible and immediately stopped to check on the driver of the car. After assessing the damage, he knew that he would have to pay for the windshield replacement and possibly face an insurance claim that would increase his policy rates. Although it was an unfortunate situation, Hunter learned a valuable lesson about the importance of thoroughly checking his trailer before hitting the road.

## Discussion Questions

- What could Hunter have done to prevent this incident?
- What are some of the consequences of Hunter's actions?
- Is this incident considered Hunter's fault?

## Take Home Message

It is important to be thorough and careful when checking your trailer before hitting the road. Even small pieces of debris can cause damage to other vehicles and lead to costly insurance claims or repairs. Follow posted signs or instructions from the mill on where to clean out your trailer and dispose of logging debris.





# Sign-In Sheet

Training Date \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_

Trainer Name \_\_\_\_\_

Workers who attended training:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

# Trimming

## Incident Summary

After loading his trailer, Micheal noticed a small branch protruding from the side of his load. He doesn't think it will be a problem since it's not that far to the mill. Unfortunately, after the load settled, the branch broke off, flew into the road, and hit the vehicle in the lane next to him. This caused the driver of the vehicle to lose control and swerve into on-coming traffic, leading to a multi-vehicle collision.

## Discussion Questions

- What was the mistake Michael made?
- List the consequences of Michael's decision to skip trimming his load.
- Why does load securement include trimming?

## Take Home Message

The driver is responsible for trimming the load to ensure that there are no limbs hanging down, sticking out or falling off. Protruding limbs could cause a roadway incident.





# Sign-In Sheet

Training Date Location

Trainer Name

Workers who attended training:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# Turning Safely

## Incident Summary

Eric was driving his log truck on the highway. He was preparing to turn left into a logging site, but he failed to use his turn signal. The car behind him tried to pass his log truck on the left. By the time both drivers understood where the other driver was planning to go, it was too late. The car collided with the driver's side of the log truck. Both vehicles were damaged, and both drivers sustained injuries that required medical attention. The log truck driver was unable to work for six weeks.

## Discussion Questions

- What could Eric have done differently to avoid the incident?
- What costs were associated with the incident?

## Take Home Message

Turn signals not only tell other drivers what you plan to do, they can also prevent a costly incident. It does not take any more time to use a turn signal; however, a crash can cost time, money, pain, and suffering.

Each year about 400 crashes occur in the AR-LA-TEX region. Many result from problems related to turning.





# Sign-In Sheet

Training Date \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_

Trainer Name \_\_\_\_\_

Workers who attended training:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Congratulations!



You completed the Log Truck  
Driving Safety Series.