TRUCK & TRAILER

Safety is your responsibility – the driver is responsible

1. Pre-Trip Inspection
    a. Tires should be properly inflated without excess wear
    b. Make sure the trucks hitch, the trailer coupler and electrical connector for the lights are solid and in good repair.
2. Proper Hookup Procedures
    a. Make sure the ball size and the coupler size are the same
    b. Make sure the chains are properly hooked up and the light connection is secure and properly seated.
3. Loading the Trailer
    a. Know the weight of the equipment or landscape materials you are loading
    b. Never exceed the maximum load or rating for the trailer or tow a trailer that exceeds the maximum load rating for the truck.
    c. Keep the load balanced and recognize the signs of too much or too little tongue weight.
4. Securing the load
    a. All equipment must be tied down in both the front and rear allowing little or no movement.
    b. All loose items must be secured to the trailer
5. Driving the Truck and Trailer
    a. Your truck will have less acceleration and less breaking power when towing a load
    b. Allow more time and space for getting through intersections
    c. Allow more time and space for merging into traffic.
    d. Breaker earlier and leave plenty of distance between you and the vehicle in front of you.
    e. Use your mirror to periodically check the trailer
        i. Look for loose tie downs
        ii. Watch for an indication that the load has shifted
    f. Stay alert – if something does not feel right pull over and check it out.
6. Safe Backing Procedures
    a. Whenever possible have someone assist you
    b. If you are alone always secure the truck and get out to check the area behind you.
    c. Turn the wheel in the opposite direction that you want to go – make gradual corrections.

Be aware of blind spots

Remember it is just as important to practice safety procedures when unloading as when loading.

If you have a breakdown or need to pull over to make adjustments or repairs, use safety cones to make sure other drivers can see you. Be careful when exiting the truck and when working around the trailer

Safety is serious business, so stay alert, use common sense and follow the guidelines discussed.

<u>Landscape Vehicle and Trailer DON'T'S.</u>

1. Never leave fuel cans loose in the truck bed/trailer. You can secure them using bungee cords.
2. Never neglect to tie down tools such as rakes, shovels, hoes, picks, ladders, etc. with tie-down straps or bungee cords.
3. Never assume your coworkers secured everything in the pickup bed/trailer properly. If you are driving a loaded vehicle, you are responsible for the way the cargo is secured, whether you placed it on the vehicle or not. As the driver, you should inspect the way equipment, materials, and plants are tied down before getting behind the wheel.
4. Never tow a trailer with a vehicle not properly rated for the job. Check the truck's owner's manual

for the maximum weights allowed. Don’t exceed the gross combination weight rating of a trailer. This limit should be stated on the trailer or in its operating manual. If you’re unsure, ask your employer or supervisor.

5. Never accelerate quickly. This can cause the load to shift.
6. Never exceed the speed limit or 55 MPH.

Safety should be at the forefront of all activities.

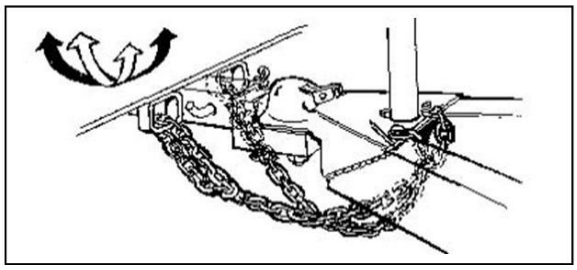
Pre-trip Trailer Inspection Checklist

The Hitch

Before towing anything, determine what the maximum tongue weight can be. This is usually 10% of the hitch’s rated capacity. Note the correct term is hitch, not ball. A ball is rated by its own towing capacity. A hitch is rated by not only its towing capacity but also by the tongue weight.

Trailer Ball and Safety Chains

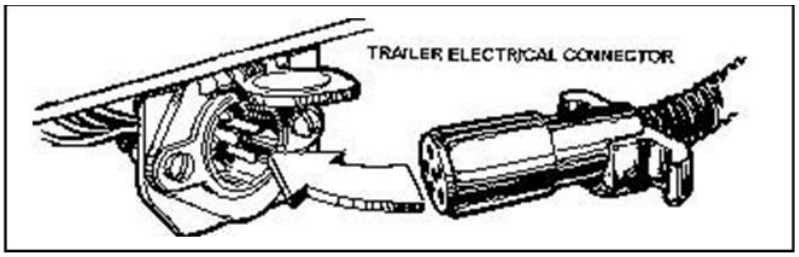
The ball should be located so the trailer sits level when connected to the tow vehicle. The vehicle should be able to accept this weight without a major change of altitude. The ball should be lightly greased, so the hitch rotates smoothly on it. Safety chains should be long enough for tight turns and be crossed (right to left and left to right). This will help create a "saddle." if you have a tongue failure and will help maintain control while stopping. Do not allow these chains to drag on the pavement. They can be ground to an unsafe condition in a very short amount of time.



Always inspect the hitch and tongue for cracks when hooking up. Rust is your enemy and can cause premature failures. Check lights and brakes each time the trailer is hooked up. Try to do things in the same order each time and use a checklist. Remember to retract the jack. Don't ever hook a trailer up halfway or you may forget to finish the job. Do not start if you can’t finish, and don't ever leave the receptor pin out for a minute.

Trailer Lighting and Connections

All your lights must work to be legal and safe. The weakest link is the connector. They corrode easily and need constant attention to keep the system working. (Be careful when cleaning connectors not to short them out.) The wiring to the connector should be carefully routed so that it can’t come aprt in tight turns or chafe through and short out. Remember, electric brakes also run through this connector. Have an observer confirm your brake lights, turn signals, and running lights are working properly each time you hook up.



Tires and Wheel Bearings

Tires must be checked frequently with a trailer because a flat can go unnoticed on multiple axle trailers while it is being towed. Running with a flat can cause it to catch fire and burn up your rig. With multiple axles or tandem wheels, it is hard sometimes to see a flat tire as the other tires are supporting the weight of the rig and the flat spot is less noticeable. A quick check can be made by "thumping" each tire with a tire iron or rod to make sure they all sound the same. Each time you gas up, walk around the trailer, and give a quick check by feeling each tire with your hand. A tire that is getting low will be hotter than the rest.
There is no substitute for measuring tire pressures but to make sure they are all within safe limits. This should be done before each trip.

The most common causes of tire failure are **overloading and under inflation**. Both result in excess flexing of the sidewall which causes heat buildup, excessive uneven wear, and eventual failure. Continuing to run with a flat can cause it to catch fire.

Tandem axles do not steer, and wheels are subjected to high twisting side loads in tight, slow turns. This causes the wheel to flex which tends to loosen wheel lug nuts over time. Always check lug nut torque. Aluminum wheels are more likely to have the lug nuts loosen then steel wheels, especially after the initial installation. Torqueing order for various wheel lug nut patterns as suggested by a trailer manufacturer in their owner's manual.

Axle wheel bearings also occasionally need attention. Feel with your hand at the hub to check for one that may be running hotter than the rest. (Be careful. If the bearing is adjusted too tight or is running without grease it can get **VERY hot!)** A hot bearing needs immediate attention. Most often either more grease or proper adjustment will ease the problem, but replacement may be necessary.

Recommended Weights

Type of Trailer	Percentage of Weight on Tongue
Single Axle	10% Min., 15% Max.
Tandem axle	9% - 15 %
Travel Trailer	11% - 12%
5th Wheel/Gooseneck	15% - 25%

Pre-trip TRUCK Inspection Checklist

Check Truck Owner Manual to confirm that the truck is properly rated to tow the trailer for both maximum the gross trailer weight (GTW) and the tongue weight (TW). When measuring GTW, you want to make sure you are weighing a fully loaded trailer.

Tire Inflation and Wear - Walk around truck to check the tire pressure and inspect the tire for excessive wear. Worn or underinflated tires can lead to a potentially dangerous situation.

Check the Trucks Trailer Hitch to make sure that it is solid and that all fasteners are securely tightened.

Inspect the Light Hookup Socket for loose wires or corrosion that may cause a poor connection. A small wire brush and spray can of electronic contact cleaner are recommended to keep socket and plugs in operating condition.

Operate ALL Truck Lights including headlights, taillights, brake lights, and blinkers are operating properly before hooking up a trailer.

Brakes are put under additional stress when they are towing a trailer. Confirm that are working properly. Be aware of excessive noise, a metal-to-metal sound, or a soft feeling when the brake is applied.

Trucks with a Gross Weight *over 10,000 pounds* are required by law to have: *
First aid kit – check that it is properly stocked.

* **Fire extinguisher** – with a current inspection tag
* **Emergency flares** – with expiration dates that have not passed.
* **Emergency triangle or safety cones** – to warn oncoming motorists of hazards or equipment being loaded or unloaded.

Truck Back-up Checklist:

Back the truck with an assistant, working as a team, to make the job easier, faster, and safer.

1. **Adjust Mirrors** so you can easily see your assistant.
2. **Chock Trailer Tires,** front, and rear while the truck is being positioned and during hookup.
3. **Use Mutually Understood Hand Signals** (not shouting) This is the best way to communicate during back up. The assistant should stand well away from the trailer and truck, never get between the truck and trailer, or attempt to hook up the trailer until the truck is stopped and secure.
4. **Secure Truck** (once in position) by turning off the ignition, setting the parking brake, and putting the truck transmission in park. Trucks with manual transmissions should be put in low gear or reverse (with the engine turned off and keys removed from the ignition switch) while the trailer is being hooked up.

Trailer Attachment Checklist:

If it is necessary to move the trailer to get it into position, temporarily remove the wheel chocks and then replace them once the trailer is in position.

1. **Check the Trailer's Coupler** to see if it is solid and properly intact. If using a ball type hitch, it is critical that the size of the ball on the truck hitch EXACTLY MATCHES the size on the trailer coupler.
2. **Engage the Coupler** by using the trailer's jack. Lower the tongue until it is fully engaged, close the hitches locking mechanism making sure that the lever has traveled to its fully locked position, and insert the safety pin to make sure that the mechanism cannot come open.
   Attach the Safety Chains to the points provided on the trucks hitch assembly. The safety chains should be crossed below the hitch to hold the tongue off the ground until the truck and trailer can come to a safe stop if the trailer would ever separate from the truck. When hooking up the safety chains leave just enough slack to allow the truck to fully turn without pulling on the chains.
   Twist the chains to take up slack. Be aware that chains that pull when turning can damage the

trailer or the truck hitch assembly. **Chains should NOT be allowed to drag on the ground.** Many trailers are equipped with an emergency brake away brake hook up, which engages the trailer brakes if the truck and trailer become separated. The brakes cable should be attached to the trucks frame or the to the safety chain hook up points on the hitch assemble and NOT to the safety pin of the trailer coupler.

4. **Connect the Trailer Lights** and confirm the plug is fully seated in the socket.
5. **Operate ALL Truck and Trailer Lights** including headlights, taillights, brake lights, and blinkers to assure they are operational. Improper wiring, short circuit or improperly seated or corroded connection can cause failure of both the truck and trailer lights.

Loading Equipment onto the Trailer

It would be overly simplistic to say, "put the heavy items over the axles". Sometimes a lot of little items can far outweigh one big one. Do not put big, heavy items in a place where they can't be securely tied down. Start with top-heavy items if you have them. That is usually a good place to start because you must have plenty of room available to properly tie them down. Tying them straight down is not secure enough. They need to be tied off at several angles or they could fall over in an abrupt change in speed or direction.

Once you have the heavy items located, check the tongue weight with a scale. If the load is radically off, make the changes necessary to get close. The smaller items can be loaded in such a way that they balance out the load.

Items should be located so that they will stay put. Placing them next to items that have already been tied down helps, but your main concern should be to not lose the balance of the trailer. Do not forget you can also get one side of a trailer a lot heavier than the other without a little planning. This can cause a very serious problem when cornering, even causing the trailer to turn over in a sudden turn.

Top heavy loads can cause problems not only in cornering but also in hard braking. They tend to make the trailer "dive" in hard braking conditions. This suddenly increases tongue weight and can decrease front axle loading just when you need steering and those big front disc brakes the most. Center top heavy items or arrange the remainder of the load to act as a counter weight to minimize this effect.

Top heavy loads can cause trailer "dive" under hard braking, possibly reducing steering and braking control.

Never place heavy objects on add-on devices hung on the rear bumper or placed across the tongue frame. This places heavy objects where they will dramatically affect handling in corners or bumps. Heavy weights placed well behind the axle can also aggravate swaying in turns.

It is not possible to cover every conceivable loading or trailering situation. The best advice is to use good common sense and to always allow plenty of margins for safety. The purpose behind this text is

to try to give you the necessary information to make intelligent, informed decisions when loading. The ultimate responsibility for using that information correctly lies with you and you alone.

Tongue Weight of a Trailer

Tongue weight is the amount of downward force applied by the trailer to the rear suspension of the towing vehicle. Moving the load on a vehicle forward increases tongue weight, while moving it back decreases tongue weight. All trucks are rated for a maximum amount of tongue weight. Too much or too little can lead to unsafe driving conditions. A properly balanced trailer should only exert only a slight amount of downward travel of the truck's rear suspension.
Excessive downward movement is an indication of too much tongue weight in which case it must be reduced or rebalanced. Too little tongue weight can cause a trailer to tract poorly while being towed. Check for a trailer coupler that pulls up the hitch or a trailer tongue that is too light; the load requires rebalancing.

Approximately 10-15 percent of a trailer's gross weight is designed to be loaded in front of the front axle and onto the hitching mechanism. This ensures needed stability for road handling. If your trailer is not stable, you may have a problem with not enough weight on the hitch.

Securing Equipment on the Trailer Checklist

1. Inspect tie downs and look for frayed straps, weaken chains, broken ratchets, or damaged chain tighteners. Elastic and rubber straps should NEVER be used to tie down heavy equipment.
2. Secure equipment from BOTH the front and the rear at each corner. The tension from the tie downs should pull against each other allowing little or no movement. Attach tie downs to the equipment frame or another solid part and never to steering or movable parts. Tie downs should NEVER push against or rub across hydraulic hoses or cylinders; this can cause serious damage to those parts. Use a designated tie down point or confirm that you are using a solid point on the trailer.
3. Place binders and other tie down mechanisms on the driver's side where they will be visible in the truck's mirror. However, if unloading on a busy street, place these items on the curb side to make unloading safer. When tightening straps, chains or other tie downs make sure your body is out of the way in case a tie down breaks and snaps back. Lock ratchets and other binders with wire and bundle ties. Wrap extra chain around tighteners as an extra precaution against tightening.

Loading Landscape Materials and Loose Items

It is very important to know the weight of the material to be loaded. It is recommended to keep a list of commonly hauled material in the glove box of the truck; to make educated estimates of the load weight. If the trailer's suspension looks overloaded or if the trailer is riding too low, it is very likely overloaded. Nursery stock is deceptively heavy. Know the weight of commonly hauled items and **NEVER** exceed the maximum load rating of the trailer or tow a trailer that exceeds the maximum load rating for the truck; both can cause loss of control of the tow vehicle causing serious injury or death.

Use tarps to cover loads of loose materials, like dirt, mulch, or sod to prevent dust and dirt from blowing into traffic or obscuring the visibility of other motorists. Secure tarp with rubber tie downs. Any item falling from the trailer is a serious road hazard. All loose items including wheel chocks and load blocks must be secured to the trailer.

Over Sized Load Requirements
Florida law designates the maximum load weights and maximum back and side overhangs. Loads

that extend beyond the rear of the trailer more than four (4) to eight (8) feet require a red warning flag at the end of the load. The maximum load requirements are regulated by the Florida Department of Transportation.

Transporting Equipment and Materials

Traveling with even relatively small items such as rakes or gas cans unsecured or with mulch or yard waste uncovered could prompt a traffic ticket, which would raise your company's insurance costs. Equipment and materials not secured properly on trailers or in truck beds also can cause serious traffic accidents.

Wrong moves when hauling a loaded pickup truck and/or trailer can have dire consequences. Depending on the time of day, vehicle speed, and the amount of traffic on the road, such accidents could result in fatalities. Small to mid-size landscape companies might not survive the subsequent litigation.

If the weight of a pickup truck, trailer, and load exceeds 10,000 pounds, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration considers it a commercial motor vehicle and your company must comply with the associated regulations. These include having U.S. Department of Transportation markings on the truck, properly securing cargo, and stopping at roadside inspection stations. The driver must have a copy of a medical examiner's certificate stating he/she is physically qualified to drive a commercial motor vehicle.

Driving the Truck and Trailer

Towing a trailer has a responsibility like properly driving your car. You would not think of letting your children drive on the road without the proper training, and you shouldn't take a fully loaded trailer that could be improperly loaded onto a busy road to learn with. It is a skill that must be developed and a responsibility that shouldn't be taken lightly. **NEVER** allow a passenger to ride on the trailer; it is very dangerous and illegal.

Driving in Windy Conditions

Wind can create havoc when towing a trailer, causing oscillations or sudden pulling to one side. Thirty mile an hour crosswinds can blow you off the road if there is a sudden gust. For example, say a hard gust of wind hits your rig from the left. Your rig pitches to the right and moves towards right. In order to stay on the road you turn left. With the rig leaning to the right, the centrifugal force generated by the left turn can be the added ingredient that puts you on your side or worse yet, down the side of a ravine.

The only way to help lower the risk traveling in these conditions is to slow down. This eliminates the centrifugal force that happens when you correct, and if the wind did blow you over it wouldn't be such a violent crash. The safest way is not to drive in extremely windy conditions.

Handling Trailer Sway

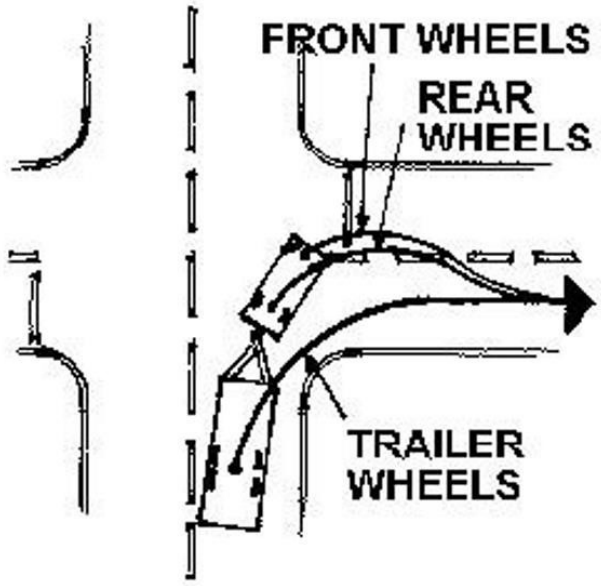
If swaying occurs, steer as little as possible while you slow down. Because of your natural lag in reaction time, quick steering movements will actually make things worse and cause the oscillation to increase. Application of the trailer brake usually tends to help keep the vehicles aligned, while

heavy braking with the tow vehicle may reduce trailer stability. Until the problem is identified and solved, travel at reduced speeds.

Heavy items loaded to one side of the trailer can cause oscillation or handling problems in turns.

Watch Your Trailer's Wheels in Turns

The longer the trailer, the wider you must swing in a turn to make sure the trailer wheels clear the inside curb.



A temporary increase in loading occurs during dips or bumps in the road. A severe dip causes increased weight to suddenly be placed on hitch, axles, and tires. Though hitch manufacturers take this into consideration in their designs, an overloaded or old, cracked and rusted hitch or tongue can be suddenly stressed beyond capacity, causing it to fail. Watch for bumps and large dips in the road and try to slow down for them. A conservative safety margin in loading will also be helpful in this type of unforeseen circumstance.

Tools and Parts

The tools and spare parts included with the crew depends on the equipment used, the skill of the operators or supervisor to diagnose and repair problems in the field, and the distance to the shop. Space is always at a premium, therefore anything carried is considered valuable. At a minimum, carry pre-gapped spark plugs for each piece of equipment and a spark plug wrench, pliers and a reasonable selection of box and/or open-end wrenches. Metric wrenches are necessary to work on imported machines. Include a selection of bolts, nuts, washers and cotter keys or pins.

The inventory of equipment for maintenance trucks or teams varies widely between companies and even among crews within a company. Different firms provide different services and each team within a company may be faced with unique responsibilities according to the needs of each job site. Include pre- wound reels of line for line trimmers. Supply replacement nozzles, strainers and hose fittings to crew working with sprayers. **Hardhats, safety glasses, gloves, and earplugs help prevent injury.**

Keep the tools in a quality tool chest that can be secured to the truck. The toolbox should be able to be removed quickly when tools are needed at the work site or transferred between vehicles. Mark all tools and equipment or paint them a bright color. Establish responsibility for replacing tools that are stolen or abused.

Parking a Truck and Trailer

Park on level ground with ample room behind the trailer for unloading. Place safety cones around the vehicle accommodating sufficient room to load and unload. Confirm local ordinances concerning safety cone requirements. FNGLA recommends basic Maintenance of Traffic training for more specific guidelines.

Driving Checklist

1. Seatbelts – confirm that the truck has properly working seatbelts for the driver and passenger.
2. Decrease acceleration of truck pulling trailer because of the weight of the extra load.
3. Because overall length is longer it requires more time to move through intersections.
4. Reduced braking power will require a greater distance to stop. Allow for this by breaking earlier than normal and keeping a generous space between vehicles in front.
5. Make wide turns and leave extra space between the truck and the curb when turning corners.
6. Always use turn signals, especially when making extra wide turns it is very important that other vehicles know your intentions.
7. Use mirrors to occasionally confirm the load is secure. Look for signs of loose tie downs, a shifting load or for items that are at risk of falling from the trailer. However, your primary responsibility is to the traffic in front and to the sides of the truck
8. Recheck the trailer and load after driving a few miles. Recheck the hitch to confirm that it is securely connected and check the load for tie downs that may have loosen
   Check for a trailer that is swaying or a load that is tracking improperly with the use of the mirrors. This is often an indication of trouble with the trailer suspension or an unbalanced load.
10. Be Aware. Listen for unusual noises, feel for unusual vibrations and be aware of unusual odors like burning rubber or hot oil.

Backing Up Checklist:

Backing up a truck and trailer combination is a skill that requires time and practice to master. Most backing accidents occur before the truck and trailer have left the loading area.

1. Turn the wheel in the **OPPOSITE** direction to the desired trailer direction
2. Steer with gradual corrections. The biggest mistake that beginners make is over correcting.
3. Always be alert and aware of people and obstacle nearby.
4. Practice in an area free of obstacles. Place two rubber cones in an area of the lot free of obstacles and practice backing the trailer between the cones, repeating until you are confident with your ability to backup the trailer
5. Practice with an assistant and work as a team. Adjust the mirrors to see the assistant and use mutually understood hand signals. The assistant must **NEVER** get between the truck and trailer, until the truck is fully stopped and secure. If you have no option but to practice alone, **ALWAYS** check the area you will be backing into before proceeding. Secure the truck, get out of the vehicle and check the area for people, obstacles and hazards. Look for uneven terrain, beware of blind spots. Often when backing a trailer, the truck gets turned in such a way that mirrors no longer give you full view of the trailer and the area you are backing into. If necessary, secure the truck and get out of the truck to check the area you cannot see before proceeding.
6. If backing into or through traffic **ALWAYS** have a flag person to stop traffic until you are clear of the roadway and underway.

Vehicle Breakdown

If you need to stop on the roadway to check or adjust the load or if your truck is broken down:

1. Use safety cones or reflectors to increase your visibility to oncoming traffic
2. Use your hazards (flashing warning lights)
3. At dusk or dark use flares or warning lights (plus hazards)
4. Watch for traffic when you exit the truck and when working around the truck or trailer.

Unloading Equipment Checklist:

Many of the same safety precautions used for loading a trailer are also relevant for unloading a trailer.

1. Park the trailer on level ground for unloading and make sure there is ample level ground to the rear of the trailer for safe unloading.
2. Chock the tires in the front and rear
3. The engine should be off and in park with the emergency brake applied.
4. **ALWAYS** keep the heaviest end of the equipment facing uphill when driving down a ramp and keep the center of gravity low by lifting implements only high enough to clear the trailer deck and ramp. When unloading a compact excavator, use the boom arm as the stabilizer and to avoid tipping forward as it moves down the ramp.

Covered Trailer Issues

All the same rules apply when loading and unloading a covered trailer.

1. Properly secure and balance the load. An unbalanced or shifting load can cause the trailer to sway or to make sudden and erratic moves that can put your life and others at danger.
2. A covered trailer limits your rear view so ALWAYS use extra caution when backing a covered trailer.

Checklist for Employers and Supervisors:

- Demonstrate to workers the proper way to secure equipment, materials and plants as well as the proper way to drive while towing a trailer. Also teach employees how to back up a trailer.
- Create a written policy regarding proper cargo securement or safe driving and ensure every employee receives a copy. Hold employees accountable by making adherence to the policy part of their performance evaluations.
- Randomly observe/inspect each crew's driving/cargo securement practices on at least a monthly basis.
- Take seriously and follow up on any complaints regarding employees' driving and equipment/material tie-down procedures.
- If an employee repeatedly violates your safe driving or cargo securement policies, consider terminating his/her employment. Your insurance company will probably recommend this.
- Only use trucks and trailers with side rails for transporting equipment, supplies, and plants. Provide chains or straps with ratchet load binders for use in securing equipment.

Maintenance of Traffic (MOT)

FNGLA recommends that landscape companies secure **MOT** training to operate their trucks and trailers safely on roadside conditions. Work zone traffic control is an important function necessary in providing a safe environment in those areas where workers and transportation modes may compete for common or adjacent space. Every reasonable effort should be made to reduce the risk of injury to both the worker and the transportation system user in these areas of potential conflicting interests.

To achieve this goal, proper training of all personnel involved in the planning, design, supervising, implementations and maintenance of basic (at a minimum) work zone traffic control is necessary.

The objective of the **MOT** training courses is to provide every person involved with Work Zone Traffic Control with constant and consistent education to ensure that Department standards are followed in planning, designing, supervising, implementing, and maintaining work zone traffic control.

Work zone traffic control schemes and devices shall not be implemented or installed in the field unless performed by or under the direct supervision of a person who has satisfactorily completed the training requirements prescribed.

The Department of Transportation will require documentation of successful completion of a Work Zone Traffic Control training course. This requirement is included in such documents as construction, maintenance, design or inspection contracts, specifications, special provisions, the Utility Accommodation Manual, Topic No. 710-020-001, and permits. Depending on your business operation, the landscape professional will most likely to be interested in the Basic and Restricted Activities MOT training. Approved MOT training is available at
http://www.dot.state.fl.us/rddesign/MOT/Approved-Providers-for-Internet-with- Web.pdf

1. *Basic MOT Training*
   The minimum basic training areas to be covered shall be field demonstration of a dexterity test using hand-signaling devices (STOP/SLOW paddle and flag) during flagging type operations and placement of traffic control devices. In order to successfully complete Basic Training, the instructor shall determine that the flagger has demonstrated knowledge and proficiency in flagging operations. A person who has successfully completed the Restricted Activities, Restricted Activities Refresher, Intermediate, Intermediate Refresher, Advanced, or Advanced Refresher Course and holds a current valid and verifiable, wallet card may provide training for flaggers.

2. *Restricted Activities MOT Training*
   The minimum Restricted Activities training classroom and field demonstration areas includes a workshop exercise selecting and setting up sample work zone. Flagging operations shall be covered in enough detail that a person who successfully completes this course is capable of providing basic training as described above. A written test with at least 15 questions on traffic control devices, 30 questions on the minimum design standards for traffic control on the State Highway System. No prerequisite.

SUMMARY

Safety is your responsibility – the driver is responsible

1. **Pre-Trip Inspection**
   Tires should be properly inflated without excess wear
   Make sure the trucks hitch, the trailer coupler and electrical connector for the lights are solid and in good repair.
2. **Proper Hookup Procedures**
   Make sure the ball size and the coupler size are the same
   Make sure the chains are properly hooked up and the light connection is secure and properly seated.
3. **Loading the Trailer**
   Know the weight of the equipment or landscape materials you are loading
   Never exceed the maximum load or rating for the trailer or tow a trailer that exceeds the maximum load rating for the truck.

keep the load balanced and recognize the signs of too much or too little tongue weight.

4. **Securing the load**
   All equipment must be tied down in both the front and rear allowing little or no movement. All loose items must be secured to the trailer
5. **Driving the Truck and Trailer**
   Your truck will have less acceleration and less breaking power when towing a load
   Allow more time and space for getting through intersections Allow more time and space for merging into traffic.
   Breaker earlier and leave plenty of distance between you and the vehicle in front of you.
   Use your mirror to periodically check the trailer
      Look for loose tie downs
      Watch for an indication that the load has shifted
   Stay alert – if something does not feel right pull over and check it out.
6. **Safe Backing Procedures**
   Whenever possible have someone assist you
   If you are alone always secure the truck and get out to check the area behind you.
   Turn the wheel in the opposite direction that you want to go – make gradual corrections. Be aware of blind spots

Remember it is just as important to practice safety procedures when unloading as when loading.

If you have a breakdown or need to pull over to make adjustments or repairs, use safety cones to make sure other drivers can see you. Be careful when exiting the truck and when working around the trailer.

Safety is serious business, so stay alert, use common sense, and follow the guidelines discussed.

<u>Landscape Vehicle and Trailer DON'T'S</u>

1. Never leave fuel cans loose in the truck bed/trailer. You can secure them using bungee cords.
2. Never neglect to tie down tools such as rakes, shovels, hoes, picks, ladders, etc. with tie-down straps or bungee cords.
3. Never assume your coworkers secured everything in the pickup bed/trailer properly. If you are driving a loaded vehicle, you are responsible for the way the cargo is secured, whether you placed it on the vehicle or not. As the driver, you should inspect the way equipment, materials, and plants are tied down before getting behind the wheel.
4. Never accelerate quickly. This can cause the load to shift.
5. Never exceed the speed limit or 55 MPH.
6. Never tow a trailer with a vehicle not properly rated for the job. Check the truck's owner's manual for the maximum weights allowed. Don't exceed the gross combination weight rating of a trailer. This limit should be stated on the trailer or in its operating manual. If you are unsure, ask your employer or supervisor.

Safety should be at the forefront of all activities.