

Vehicle Inspection Requirements

All vehicles over 10,001 lbs. involved in interstate commerce (crossing state lines) must be inspected annually for safety. Either, the inspection sticker or inspection report must be in the vehicle at all times. The vehicle must be inspected by a certified mechanic. The report or sticker should include the date of the inspection and not the date of the next inspection.

Inspection includes: brake systems, coupling device, fuel systems, lights, steering, suspension, frame, tires, wheels, windshields and wipers.

Trucks Which Must Be Inspected Annually include:

- ♦ A vehicle or combination vehicle with a GVWR of 10,001 lbs., or more, that is crossing state lines.
- ♦ A vehicle which must be placarded for transportation of hazardous materials regardless of the GVWR.
- ♦ A passenger-carrying vehicle with a seating capacity of 16 passengers or more including the driver.

Trucks Subject to Inspection

If your truck meets any of the preceding criteria, your vehicle is subject to inspection and therefore, must meet minimum federal safety standards.

U.S. DOT Number — If your truck meets any of the preceding criteria and you cross state lines, you must have a U.S. DOT number from the U.S. DOT.

CONTACT:

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
640 Grassmere Park, Suite 111
Nashville, TN 37211
615-781-5781

Apply on-line for a DOT number at:

<https://www.mchqecom.com/mcs150v5/welcome.asp>
or
<http://www.safersys.org/>

**Federal regulations enforced by
Department of Safety,
Commercial Vehicle Enforcement.**

Interstate Driver Must Have:

- ♦ State driver license;
- ♦ Health card certifying that the driver meets the minimum physical qualifications;
- ♦ Vehicle inspection sticker or report;
- ♦ Logs for the past 7 days;
- ♦ Log for the current day;
- ♦ Shipping papers for any hazardous materials.

Farmers are exempt from several safety regulations such as certain brake, safety chain, etc. requirements. However, it is the recommendation of Commercial Vehicle Enforcement that farmers should still comply with regulations feasible to them for their personal safety and the safety of other motorists.

Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) — the value specified by the manufacturer as the loaded weight of a single vehicle. Usually there is a tag with this information on the inside driver's door. On trailers, it must be on the front. Otherwise, it should at least be on the registration papers.

Interstate Commerce — means across state lines, including international boundaries.

Hazardous Materials — those materials which have been designated by U.S. DOT to be capable of giving an unreasonable risk to health safety and property when transported.

Private Motor Carrier — is a person who provides transportation of property or passengers, by commercial motor vehicle, and is not a for-hire motor carrier.

For-Hire Motor Carrier — is a transporter of goods or passengers by motor vehicle for **compensation**. For-hire motor carriers must comply with **ALL** federal trucking regulations even when hauling agricultural supplies and equipment.

Loose Material — includes any substance that could spill, drop off, or blow away from the open bed when the vehicle is operated. It does not include materials such as sand or salt for weather conditions.

Direct questions to:

**TENNESSEE FARM BUREAU
FEDERATION**
Department of Public Affairs
Stefan Maupin, Director
Kevin Hensley, Associate Director
P.O. Box 313
Columbia, TN 38402
931-388-7872 ext. 2231

**TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY**
Commercial Vehicle Enforcement
P.O. Box 463
Manchester, TN 37349
931-723-5062
or
1148 Foster Avenue
Nashville, TN 37210
615-687-2322



08/02

Guide to Trucking Laws and Regulations in Tennessee



Do They Affect You and Your Farming Operation?



Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation

Commercial Driver License (CDL)

You are a commercial driver and **DO NEED** a CDL if you operate one of the following:

- ♦ A vehicle or vehicle combination with a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) of 26,001 lbs. or more.
- ♦ A vehicle that must be placarded for transportation of hazardous material regardless of the GVWR.
- ♦ A passenger-carrying vehicle with a seating capacity of 16 passengers or more, including the driver.

Farm Vehicle Exemption:

(TCA 55-50-102)

You are exempt if you meet **ALL** of the following criteria:

- ♦ Controlled and operated by the farmer or farmer's employee and used exclusively for farm use;
- ♦ Used to transport agricultural products, farm machinery, or farm supplies, both to and from the farm;
- ♦ Not used in operations of common or contract for-hire motor carriers;
- ♦ Not carrying hazardous materials of a type or quantity that would require the vehicle to be placarded;
- ♦ Used within 150 air miles of the farmer's farm.

(**For Example:** A farmer owns a backhoe he has previously used for his own personal use on his farm or property. Someone asks the farmer to do some backhoe work. The first time the farmer transports the backhoe to the other person's property he has crossed the line from being a farmer to a private/for-hire motor carrier and must comply with **ALL** applicable federal regulations.)

Health Card Requirements

You will need a health card signed by your doctor, which verifies that you are physically fit to drive, if any one of the following applies to the vehicle you are driving:

- ♦ A vehicle or combination vehicle with a GVWR of 10,001 lbs. or more.

- ♦ A vehicle which must be placarded for transporting a hazardous material regardless of GVWR.
- ♦ A passenger-carrying vehicle with a seating capacity of 16 passengers or more, including the driver.

Farm Vehicle Exemption:

You are exempt if you meet **ALL** of the following criteria:

- ♦ Used within 150 air miles of the farmer's farm.
- ♦ Not in the for-hire business. You are carrying your own agricultural products, farm machinery, or farm supplies, either to or from the farm.
- ♦ Not transporting hazardous material.

(A person driving a vehicle which is involved in a custom harvesting operation is exempt from the health card requirements.)

Requirements for Hauling Loose Material in an Open Truck Bed

Any truck with an open bed operated on any highway, road, and street open for public use in this state, shall be loaded so that any material remains at least 4" below the sides of such bed, measured at the front, back, and sides (but such load may be piled higher in the center). * **This does not apply to farm produce going to market.** (TCA 55-7-109)

Any motor vehicle hauling loose materials **shall** be required to have such material either in an enclosed space or fully covered by a tarpaulin, **unless** the loose material is secured in such a way as to reasonably ensure it will not fall or be blown off the vehicle.

Motor vehicles hauling crushed stone, fill dirt and rock, soil, bulk sand, coal, phosphate muck, asphalt, concrete, other building materials, forest products, unfinished lumber, agricultural lime and agricultural products which are loaded in compliance with the 4" requirement, are allowed to haul such material uncovered **without** a tarpaulin.

* **However, this exemption will not apply if a law enforcement officer sees any part of the material blowing off the vehicle.** (TCA 39-14-503)

Width & Height Requirements

No motor vehicle or any trailer or semi trailer, with a width, including any part of the load, exceeding 8' 6", or height, including any part of the load, exceeding 13' 6", shall be operated on any highway. This **shall not** apply to farm tractors or farm machinery temporarily moving on any highway. The maximum width restrictions **shall not** apply to a trailer utilized for transporting seed cotton or rolled alfalfa bales; provided, that the width, including any part of the load, shall not exceed 10', and is performed during daylight hours within a 50 mile radius of the point of origin, and not upon an interstate highway system. (TCA 55-7-202)

Safety Chain Requirements

Any trailer, semi trailer, utility trailer, or pole trailer operated on the highways of Tennessee is required to have a safety chain of sufficient strength.

* **However, gooseneck trailers, trailers attached by fifth wheels, field seeding, tillage, and harvesting equipment are exempt.** (TCA 55-7-114) Safety chains **are required** on these items:

- ♦ If such implements were equipped with safety chains at the time of manufacture, or
- ♦ If they are being towed on state or local roads at a speed greater than 25 mph.

Trailer Brake Requirements

Every trailer or semi trailer of gross weight of 3,000 lbs. or more operating on a highway shall be equipped with brakes on all axles and a breakaway device so that in case of an accidental breakaway, the brakes shall be automatically applied. Trailers between 1,500 and 3,000 lbs. shall have brakes on one axle. Trailers under 1,500 lbs. need not be equipped with brakes. These requirements **shall not** apply to trailers that are not required to be registered and licensed and which are used by or on behalf of farmers. (TCA 55-9-204)

- ♦ Transporting farm products or livestock from farm to market;
- ♦ Transporting agricultural products, equipment, materials or supplies from market to farm or from farm to farm;
- ♦ Delivering such trailer to any farm.

Trailer Tag Exemption

License tags are not required on trailers owned by farmers and used for agricultural purposes or hauling livestock between farm and market in Tennessee. **Note:** Other states may require license tags on trailers. (TCA 55-4-111)

Log Book

Farmers operating a vehicle or vehicle combination with a GVWR of 10,001 lbs. or more and traveling over 100 air miles from home must keep a duty status record (driver's log).

No one is permitted to drive a motor vehicle after having worked 60 hours in any 7 consecutive days or after having worked 70 hours in any period of 8 consecutive days.

Driver is exempt from the log requirements if:

- ♦ Travel is within a 100 air mile radius of the farm;
- ♦ The farmer, except as a salesperson, returns to the farm and is off work within 12 consecutive hours;
- ♦ At least 8 consecutive hours off duty separate each 12 hours on duty;
- ♦ Does not exceed 10 hours maximum driving time following 8 hours off duty;
- ♦ Has a work schedule record for the past 6 months.

Title and Registration for Farm Vehicles

Motor vehicles used **exclusively** for the movement of farm products for the grower from the point of production to the first market, or operated as farm trucks, or as a logging and lumbering truck are eligible for a joint tag for combined farm trucks. However, motor vehicles operated commercially as part of a business venture or for delivery service to customers by dairies, hatcheries, and the like are not eligible for a joint tag. (TCA 55-4-113)

- ♦ "Logging and lumbering trucks" are those trucks used for hauling logs, pulpwood, bark, wood chips, and wood dust from the woods to the mill or for hauling lumber, bark, wood chips, and wood dust from the mill to a loading or storage place.