

Semi Truck Accident Safety

In the United States, some of the worst automobile accidents involve semi-trailers in some way. These large trucks are also known as big rigs, 18-wheelers, or tractor trailers. There are a number of factors that lead to these dangerous and catastrophic crashes. The preventable causes of accidents include driver fatigue, speed, substance abuse, overloaded freight, as well as many others. An issue that can lead to accidents that drivers do not have control over, however, is maneuverability and visibility. Truck drivers are not able to see certain areas surrounding their truck and may therefore miss nearby traffic and merge into it. Drivers also cannot maneuver the vehicle as fast as a small car, making some accidents harder to avoid.

Safety should be paramount to any person in the truck driving profession. Because of the sheer size of the vehicle, accidents involving big rigs are often fatal to drivers of smaller cars. The freight that a truck is carrying also plays a huge role. Some trucks carry volatile or other harmful substances that can be extremely dangerous when released to the air or jostled around. For example, a trailer that was carrying black powder rolled over in Virginia in the recent past. This event, along with a 1999 train-truck accident in Bourbonnais, Illinois have kept truck safety in the public's mind.

The most basic debate occurring is simply trying to decide if trucks are a safe means of transport on the nation's highway system. Because so many issues can be traced to driver error or non-compliance, it is very difficult to gauge what is meant by "safe." Trucking is most likely here to stay, but the methods and tools used to make it possible need an improvement. Technology is one of the ways in which trucking will become safer to both the drivers, the companies that employ them, and to other drivers on the road. Some possible ideas for the future are to have rollover warning alarms, collision avoidance systems, or even a truck's version of a "black box" data recorder. Any change will take time and money, however, something many companies are reluctant to put forth.

Without improvements though, trucking court cases will continue to be brought up against negligent truck drivers and the companies that they represent. The accidents mentioned above, along with others, have started people questioning the reliability of the commercial driver licensing system. Drivers already must meet higher safety standards than other vehicles, are subject to federal regulations that other vehicles aren't, and have are numerous rules that must be followed, such as log books and time sheets. In the event of litigation against a driver, this information would be invaluable to the defendant. Companies also require background checks and must continuously evaluate employees.

The system, rules, and procedures for a safe trucking company are known to many people, it is just getting the employees to obey those standards that is the problem. The number of preventable accident causes greatly outnumbers the unpreventable ones when it comes to trucking. Truck drivers have a responsibility to follow the regulations placed on them in order to create a safer highway system for everybody.

About the Author

The Minneapolis [Minnesota law firm](#) of Schwebel Goetz and Sieben can provide a [semi truck accident lawyer or attorney](#) to Minneapolis MN semi truck injury victims.

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