

Vehicle maintained:

Trailer maintenance and inspection

Use this guide to help lead a discussion with employees to raise awareness on trailer maintenance and inspections and recognize key areas to ensure safe and efficient operation before pulling a trailer. Use the form on Page 2 to record meeting details.

Effective trailer maintenance, including preventative inspections, helps ensure safe and efficient operation. It can also help with regulatory compliance and early problem detection to prevent costly repairs. Review these 5 key points when discussing effective trailer maintenance.

1 Conduct pre- and post-trip inspections:

Maintenance for any vehicle or trailer should include regular pre- and post-trip inspections. These checks help catch minor issues and repairs before the problem worsens. Inspections should make sure every part of the trailer can support the weight of heavy loads.

2 Check for proper tire inflation:

Maximize tire life by maintaining proper air pressure on trailer tires. Inside dual trailer tires, which are often the least maintained tires on the vehicle, will need special attention. Ensure all tires are regularly checked with a properly calibrated air pressure gauge and that there are no cuts, punctures, or broken/missing valve core stems.

3 Safety features:

In addition to external checks and care, it's essential to check systems that keep the driver safe—including airbags, wiring for lights, and anti-lock braking. Ensure the trailer's safety features are inspected and repaired by a professional and kept in top condition. In an emergency, drivers need every piece of the trailer to work correctly.

4 Coupling devices:

A semi-truck's fifth wheel rarely needs to be adjusted, but if there is play tighten the jaws by loosening the adjustment bolt. The fifth wheel can be moved forward or backward but should always be in front of the centerline of the two axles. Ensure adequate lubrication on the top without over greasing. In addition, don't forget to inspect pintle hooks and eyes using a pintle hook gauge, clean and check the latch and air cushioning system for proper operation, and examine devices for signs of wear, damage, or missing parts. Do not grease or lubricate the pintle hook horn. Lastly, confirm the trailer receiver and hitch ball are compatible sizes and fit securely with pin installed.

5 Check lights and conspicuity tape:

Burned out bulbs can be a major safety hazard to other drivers, especially at night or during low visibility. Ensure all the lights on your trailer are functional before use and look for signs of condensation within light assemblies and housings as this can cause short circuits and corrode electrical connections. Also, verify that the conspicuity tape (if required) is intact and clean.

For additional information related to driver safety, visit MyNSightOnline.com/DriveThe5

For further guidance, refer to the National Trailer Manufacturers-Trailer Maintenance (trailersafetyweek.com/trailer-maintenance).



For assistance with risk management services or safety resources, contact us at RMSolutions@nationwide.com or 1-800-260-1356.

NationwideAgribusiness.com

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Toolbox Talk

Date: ____/____/____

Vehicle maintained: Trailer maintenance and inspection

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Discussion notes:
