

Commercial Vehicle Inspections – Dealers Report Violations

Commercial motor vehicles must pass a thorough inspection by a qualified inspector at least once every 12 months in accordance with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations found in Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations 396.17. A commercial motor vehicle is any self-propelled or towed motor vehicle used on a highway in intrastate or interstate commerce to transport passengers or property when the vehicle has a gross weight or gross combined weight greater than 10,000 lbs.

1. What trucks have to be inspected?

Any truck that has a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) or gross vehicle weight of more than 10,000 lbs used “in commerce” must be inspected. “In commerce” means used in the furtherance of a commercial enterprise. This includes farming operations.

EXCEPTION: Trucks that have a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,000 lbs or less used in combination with a trailer and the combined gross vehicle weight rating is 26,000 lbs or less and conducting business only in Iowa are exempt from the annual inspection requirements. This exception would include most pick up trucks and trailers operating only in Iowa. Please check the GVWR of the truck and trailer to be sure.

2. How often must I inspect my truck?

Once a truck is inspected, the inspection is valid for 12 months from the date of the inspection.

3. Where can I get my truck inspected?

Most truck dealers and many major truck stops may be contacted.

4. Is there a charge for the inspection?

The rule requiring the inspection does not establish a fee nor does it prohibit a fee. You should check with your inspection facility prior to having the vehicle inspected.

5. Can I do my own inspections?

There is nothing to prohibit you or your employee from conducting the inspection as long as you or your employee meets the qualifications. For inspector qualifications and a sample copy of inspection certificate see www.iowadot.gov/mvd/omve/inspection.pdf

6. What safety equipment must be inspected?

The inspection must be performed according to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulation found in Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations Chapter III Subchapter B Appendix G. For more information see www.iowadot.gov/mvd/omve/inspectionstandards.pdf

7. Does anything need to be carried in the truck to prove the vehicle has been inspected?

The driver must have a copy of the actual inspection carried in the vehicle or a decal with similar information attached to the vehicle.

8. What happens if I am stopped and my truck is not inspected?

The fine for no valid inspection is currently 25 dollars plus court costs and surcharge.

9. Who can I contact for further information regarding annual inspections?

For further information you may contact the Iowa Department of Transportation’s Office of Motor Vehicle Enforcement Information Line at 1-800-925-6469 or you may contact the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration at 1-515-233-7400.

Upgrading your tow vehicle or trailer may require a CDL operator!

Looking to increase the size of your trailer or towing vehicle? Be aware that these larger combination vehicles may require your employees to acquire a CDL. The Iowa DOT has a helpful flow chart to assist you in determining when you need a CDL or chauffeurs license at www.iamvd.com/omve/truckguide.pdf

A commercial drivers license (CDL) will be required for anyone driving a

- ❖ a combination vehicle with a gross combined weight rating (GCWR) of more than 26,000 pounds when the towed unit is over 10,000 pounds
- ❖ single vehicle with a gross weight rating (GVWR) of more than 26,000 pounds
- ❖ vehicles that transport hazardous materials requiring placards