



1/10/14

Safety Short

As the years go by, farming continues to have larger and larger machinery. This has been going on since the very first tractor was introduced. Along with the tractors and combines, in the last 10 years we have gone from single axle to tandems and now the majority of our farm trucks are semis.

Semis are now used on the farms for toting a sprayer, hauling hay, delivering grain to United Ag Service, hauling equipment, and any other job fit for the big rig. At United Ag Service, along with all other commercial companies, we have many rules and regulations that we must adhere to. Agencies we deal with are Kansas DOT, Federal DOT, EPA, KDHE, and OSHA; all these agencies have rules and regulations that affect Commercial Motor Vehicle [CMV] operations.

We are required to **document** daily pre and post trip inspections, scheduled and unscheduled maintenance, have CDL drivers with proper endorsements, have annual DOT inspections on all trucks, and carry huge liability policies on these vehicles.

Farmers on the other hand, other than needing a CDL, are exempt from most of these regulations. However, and this is something I believe you need to pay very close attention to, in the case of an accident, you on the farm are not exempt from the liabilities, any more than United Ag Service is. It is important that you **document** all maintenance done on your trucks, from major repairs to oil changes and lubrication, to putting in a new marker light bulb. Check your tires and brakes, maybe it would be a good idea to get your trucks DOT inspected. DOT inspection is done by locally certified mechanics. United Ag Service can give you names if you need them. Check your truck over daily for any possible trouble spots, we can provide checklists if you need them.

We are required to carry safety items in our trucks, an ABC fire extinguisher, 3 reflective triangles, and spare fuses. These are pretty basic items that should be in all trucks.

You have all seen the ads on TV, Call 1-800- B#%\$, along with all the other ambulance chasers. Is it really worth not doing the few items listed here and risking the farm? You have to be the judge of that. **Documentation** of maintenance and inspections are the number one defense when it comes to trucks. It also provides a checklist for you, to make sure proper, timely maintenance is being done.

We want to see your smiling faces come thru our doors for a long time so consider the items covered above and start planning now to set up a plan for your trucks.

Stay Warm, Lee