



SAFETY TIP MAY/JUNE 2019

Drive for Conditions

Normally on this subject a motor carrier will speak of slowing down in rain or heavy snow. But we want to address a different condition in this brief article. That condition is mountain driving. This can be one of the most treacherous driving conditions a professional truck driver will face. Every driver should always conduct a proper and legal pre-trip inspection and a post trip inspection, but it is even more important when you are going into the mountains. Steep grades, other drivers, wind and other factors can turn mountain driving from enjoyable to nerve racking in the blink of an eye.

Slow Down – A semi does not corner or handle like a Ferrari. For this reason, SLOW DOWN is probably the most important safety tip for a driver. Always take curves, corners and ramps very slowly. In fact, if the speed limit states 45 mph, then as a truck driver you should navigate that curve at 35-40 mph. Don't worry about slowing some traffic behind you. The most important item is to navigate the curve with your rig still upright and not rolled over or blocking the other lanes.

Never drive as fast as you think you can get away with. Driving fast really never helped anyone get to a destination all that much quicker. Drive slow and purposeful and maintain control of your rig.

Take regular Breaks and Check your Truck – Stop and take regular breaks as needed. Fatigue can cause bad or slow reactions, and this is no way to operate behind the wheel in mountainous terrain. When you pull over for a break, stretch and take a walk around your equipment. Inspect the tractor and trailer for abnormalities and anything out of the ordinary (low tires, air leaks, cargo, etc.).

Professional drivers should not ever skip any safety steps when driving. If steps are skipped, you are compromising your safety and the safety of others traveling with you on the road. Remember, no matter how hot your load is, it's always better to arrive safely. Nothing is worth risking your life for, not even your driving job.

Remember, no matter what, always pay attention, drive defensively and slow down and be in control of your rig. Not paying attention in the mountains is dangerous and your truck can get away from you without warning. Be alert at all times, be ready for the unexpected and watch out for the actions of others.



Don't be a statistic. Make sure you and the others get home.