

International Hazard Datasheets on Occupation



Driver, Truck/Heavy

What is a Hazard Datasheet on Occupation?

This datasheet is one of the International Datasheets on Occupations. It is intended for those professionally concerned with health and safety at work: occupational physicians and nurses, safety engineers, hygienists, education and Information specialists, inspectors, employers' representatives, workers' representatives, safety officers and other competent persons.

This datasheet lists, in a standard format, different hazards to which driver, truck/heavys may be exposed in the course of their normal work. This datasheet is a source of information rather than advice. With the knowledge of what causes injuries and diseases, it is easier to design and implement suitable measures towards prevention.

This datasheet consists of four pages:

- Page 1: Information on the most relevant hazards related to the occupation.
- Page 2: A more detailed and systematized presentation on the **different hazards** related to the job with indicators for preventive measures (marked as numbered shields and explained on the third page).
- Page 3: Suggestions for **preventive measures** for selected hazards.
- Page 4: **Specialized information**, relevant primarily to occupational safety and health professionals and including information such as a brief job description, a list of tasks, notes and references.






Who is a driver, truck/heavy?

A worker who drives a truck with the capacity of more than 3 tons, to transport materials to and from a specified destinations, and may also do jobs to keep the truck in working order.

What is dangerous about this job?

- Truck Drivers are at increased risk of road accidents due to lengthy driving periods, especially at night, under bad weather and road conditions.
- Truck Drivers may get injured while doing field repairs, changing tires, climbing and descending from a high truck, etc.
- Truck Drivers may suffer from back, legs, arms and hands pains, caused by uncomfortable seating for long times and vehicle vibrations.
- Truck Drivers may sometimes be at risk of physical violence in the roadside rest places; they may also be targets of crime aimed at a valuable load, etc.

Hazards related to this job

<p>Accident hazards</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slips, trips and falls from a tall cabin, cabin ladder or trailer • Overturning of heavily loaded truck due to mechanical failure, difficult road conditions and/or excessive speed, head-on collisions, etc., with resulting life-threatening trapping of driver inside cabin or under the truck • Injuries due to accidental bumping into unguarded rigid parts of truck or cargo • Injuries while performing various functions of a heavy truck driver (e.g., field repair-work, tire change, unfastening tight bands and ropes, etc.) • Danger of being crushed between tractor and trailer, or between trailers, while trying to disengage one from another • Accidents caused by uncoupling the locking device securing the tractor to the trailer 	
<p>Physical hazards</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traumas, such as hernia rupture, due to physical overexertion (changing tires, moving heavy pieces of cargo, fastening ropes, etc.) 	1
<p>Chemical hazards</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explosions, chemical burns, acute intoxication by dangerous chemicals, etc., caused by hazardous cargo, such as explosives and flammables, strong chemicals, toxic substances and dust-forming bulk solids 	2
<p>Biological hazards</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acute poisoning by exhaust gases, including carbon monoxide • Increased risk of road accidents due to lengthy driving periods (esp. for long-haul truck drivers), incl. at night, under bad weather and road conditions, and through traffic jams (risk is increased by fatigue due to long driving hours, short rest periods, drowsiness, hunger and thirst, use of alcohol, driving at high speeds due to the bonus wages system)[See Note] • Fire hazards from spills and leaks of inflammables (usually in tank-trucks) that may ignite on contact with open flame, hot surfaces, electric sparks, atmospheric or electrostatic discharges, or as a result of mechanical shock following collision, etc. • Explosion of over-inflated tires • Explosion of car battery 	
<p>Ergonomic, psychosocial and organizational factors</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposure to prolonged engine noise of high amplitude (> 80 dBA) and/or low frequency, resulting in early (severe headache) or delayed (hearing loss, etc.) detrimental effects • Exposure to ionizing radiation while transporting radioisotopes (frequently kept, for security reasons, inside the driver's cabin) • Exposure to direct and reflected ultraviolet (solar) radiation • Exposure to potentially health-detrimental climatic factors, such as extreme cold or heat, or combinations of temperature, humidity and wind, resulting in frostbite or heat stroke • Exposure to sudden ambient temperature changes when leaving and entering the climatic-conditioned cabin, resulting in colds and/or rheumatic effects • Whole-body vibrations that may impair functions of chest, abdominal organs, and musculoskeletal system, contribute to driver's fatigue and decrease his/her • Exposure to various toxic substances (in solid, liquid, or gaseous state) while transporting hazardous cargo • Skin diseases/conditions (dermatitis, skin sensitization, eczema, etc.) caused by chemicals: cleaning compounds, antifreeze and brake fluids, gasoline, diesel oil, oils, etc. • Chronic effects caused by inhalation of gasoline and diesel-fuel fumes, and other exhaust fumes, containing carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides (NOx), hydrocarbons, etc. • Exposure to dust (esp. on desert roads, etc.) • Exposure to various automobile fluids (e.g. battery fluid, brake fluid) • Contamination and infection caused by exposure to biologically hazardous cargo • Pains in the low back and in the joints (of legs and hands/arms) caused by prolonged driving, sometimes over bumpy roads, and/or inadequate seat • Overexertion while moving or otherwise handling bulky and heavy loads, equipment, etc. • Digestive tract disorders caused by irregular eating, bad diet habits and stress • Hypnotic hallucinations during periods of drowsiness, and psychic disorders caused by mental and emotional stress factors • Smoking inside cabin, contributing to health deterioration • Visual discomfort and eye problems caused by inadequate illumination and eyestrain (esp. when driving at dark time on interurban roads) • Exposure to peer violence (e.g., in roadside cafeterias, etc.) and to petty and gang (incl. organized) crime attracted by valuable cargo • Development of lumbago due to poor vehicle suspension, uncomfortable seat, etc. • Psychological discomfort, as a result of possibility of permanent control by cellular phone or radio communication equipment 	<p>3</p> <p>4</p> <p>2</p> <p>5</p> <p>1</p> <p>6</p> <p>7</p>

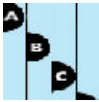
Preventive measures

- 1 Learn and use safe lifting and moving techniques for heavy or awkward loads; use mechanical aids to assist in lifting
 - 2 Avoid breathing exhaust fumes when standing near vehicle; switch-off engine when parked under a roof
 - 3 Use good-quality sunglasses for driving in strong sunlight
 - 4 Protect hands with chemical-resistant gloves; if impractical, use a barrier cream
 - 5 Install an ergonomically-designed driver's seat; interrupt driving periodically for rest and exercises; learn relaxation techniques for long driving
 - 6 Avoid smoking when driving or, if impractical, ventilate the cabin during and after smoking
 - 7 Train employees how to recognize and respond to threat of violence; provide alarm or other means for summoning help, or escort if needed
-

Specialized information

Synonyms Driver, heavy truck; lorry driver; road-transport driver; teamster; trailer-truck driver; truck driver, heavy; trucker; truckman

Definitions and/or description Drives truck with capacity of more than 3 tons, to transport materials to and from specified destinations: Drives truck to destination, applying knowledge of commercial driving regulations and area roads. Prepares receipts for load picked up. Collects payment for goods delivered and for delivery charges. May maintain truck log, according to applicable regulations. May maintain telephone or radio contact with supervisor to receive delivery instructions. May load and unload truck. May inspect truck equipment and supplies, such as tires, lights, brakes, gas, oil, and water. May perform emergency roadside repairs, such as changing tires, installing light bulbs, tire chains, and spark plugs. May position blocks and tie rope around items to secure cargo during transit. When driving truck equipped for specific purposes, such as fighting fires, digging holes, and installing and repairing utility company lines, may be designated Fire-Truck Driver (petrol & gas); Hole-Digger-Truck Driver (construction; tel. & tel.; utilities). When specializing in making deliveries, may be designated Delivery-Truck Driver, Heavy (any industry). May be designated according to type of truck driven as Truck Driver, Flatbed (logging). May be designated according to kind of cargo transported as Water Hauler (logging) ["Truck driver, heavy (any industry)", DOT]



Related and specific occupations Truck driver, light (including: food-service driver; liquid-fertilizer driver; etc.); concrete-mixing truck driver; dump-truck driver; truck driver, inflammables (including: explosives truck driver; powder-truck driver; tank-truck driver; etc.); trailer-truck driver (including: tractor-trailer-truck driver; log-truck driver; semi-trailer or full-trailer driver; etc.); truck driver, heavy (including: milk driver / hauler; garbage collector driver; water-truck driver; van driver; etc.); bus, tram (streetcar) and trolley-bus drivers

Tasks Adjusting; applying; arranging; assembling; assisting; attaching; banding; braking; camping; carrying; changing; checking; cleaning; collecting; communicating; computing; connecting and disconnecting; controlling; delivering; digging; directing; disengaging; dispatching; disposing; distributing; dividing; documenting; driving; dumping; elevating; emptying; examining; fastening; filling; fueling; gauging; greasing; handling; hauling; hoisting; honking; inspecting; jerking; lifting; loading and unloading; locating (shipment addresses); logging; lubricating; maintaining; maneuvering; measuring; mending; metering; mixing; monitoring; moving; observing; operating; overseeing; packing and unpacking; padding; parking; performing; placing; positioning; preparing; pulling and pushing; pumping; raising; recording; recovering; refilling; registering; regulating; releasing; repairing; replacing; reporting; reversing; roping; sampling; securing; servicing; serving; spraying; sprinkling; stacking; steering; sterilizing (containers); storing; submitting; supervising; testing; towing; transporting; tying; warning; washing; wrapping; wrenching

Primary equipment used Barrow; cellular phone or radio-communication equipment; fire extinguisher; first-aid kit; jack and other lifting/hoisting equipment; levers; mechanic repair-kit; portable emergency warning lights and signs; securing ropes and straps; spare tires; tarpaulin and canvas sheets; tire-replacing equipment; trailer; truck (lorry)

Workplaces where the occupation is common Agriculture; all kinds of industry, esp. "heavy industry", such as mines and quarries, metal-works, petrochemical industries, etc.; governmental and municipal transport departments; local and intercontinental transport and shipping companies; etc.

Notes Important risk factors in road accidents include: loss of control while driving heavily loaded truck on steep and slippery roads at extreme temperatures and other climatic conditions; driving while using tranquilizers, chemical stimulants, or drugs against common diseases whose side effects include drowsiness, sleepiness and impairment of sensomotoric functions (esp. delayed reaction and inadequate coordination); etc.



References Encyclopaedia of Occupational Health and Safety, 4th Ed., ILO, Geneva, 1998, Vol. 4, p.103.18 - 103.19.



Motor trucks for Mines, Quarries and Construction. Datasheet I-330 Rev. 90, National Safety Council (USA).

Managing Vehicle Safety at the Workplace: a Guide for Employers. INDG 199*. HSE (UK), 1995.
