

Truck Hijacking Prevention FactSheet

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Hijack Prevention

Although many trucking companies already have security procedures and cameras in place, there remains a need to further educate their employees on how to prevent a hijacking or what to do when a hijacking occurs.

The National Safety Council warns that some commercial vehicles (such as pick-up and delivery trucks, tractors and trailers, armored vehicles, mail and package delivery vehicles, etc.) may be especially vulnerable to hijacking attempts. Hijackers may target these vehicles not for the cargo they contain, but for the purpose of using the vehicle for other illegal purposes, such as for committing robberies, transporting explosives or other materials of destruction, and/or perpetrating various types of terrorist activities. These vehicles may be targeted because they are commonly used in large urban areas and are therefore easier to hijack, less conspicuous and more likely to get past security guards at various businesses and industries. In short, these types of vehicles are vulnerable because it is “natural” to see them in these locations.

Employers should practice safety procedures to prevent hijacking.

- Do employee and contractor screening and background checks and conduct periodic updates of background checks.
- Increase the use of high quality seals and padlocks.
- Enforce a “no stop” policy for their drivers when possible, especially within two to three hours of the trip origin.

Drivers should be trained to adhere to strict security measures to prevent hijacking.

- Keep fixed driving routes.
- Know alternative routes.
- Designate predetermined checkpoints.
- Be aware of safe areas in case they believe they are being targeted.
- Do not assume technology like the global positioning system will not fail.
- Park in secure areas with ample lighting.



Photo courtesy Karen Little

- Carry a 24-hour emergency telephone number at all times.
- Know or learn the route, especially if it is a new one or has a drop-off location never visited before.
- Know the cargo, especially when carrying a potentially hazardous or high-value load.
- Check the load as it is loaded to make sure that what is in the vehicle is what is supposed to be there.
- Inform the dispatcher of route and then follow it. If the route changes the driver should inform someone.
- Remember, there is safety in motion. Be cautious when moving, but know the most dangerous times for hijacking are when a vehicle is stopped.
- Lock the vehicle every time you make a stop. Keep the trailer unit locked securely from the moment the vehicle is loaded. Lock the cab and roll up the windows when parked or in slow moving traffic.
- Unlock the truck for as short a time as possible when stopped to rest, eat, or make a delivery.
- Only stop in designated rest areas where there are other trucks parked.
- Avoid stopping at the same places every trip.
- Do not stop to help motorists in trouble, but call

for assistance.

- Be aware of surroundings. Watch for suspicious vehicles at the pickup point, cars, or vans that follow the vehicle on the highway or anything that seems out of line.
- Never pick up hitchhikers.
- Don't leave a vehicle at the customer's dock.
- When making a delivery, don't leave cargo on the street even for a minute or two.
- Keep the vehicle, license plate and Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) numbers of the vehicle on their person at all times for both the tractor and trailer. They will be valuable information to provide to law enforcement should the vehicle be hijacked.

If a driver starts to feel uncomfortable, they should lock up and get out if it is safe to do so, or call for help if feeling threatened by being in the vehicle.

If a hijacking does occur, drivers should follow these precautions:

- Do not resist.
- Do whatever the hijacker says.
- Report the incident to the company and law enforcement authorities IMMEDIATELY.

- Get a good description of the hijackers and report the details to law enforcement authorities: such as the of clothing; exact location where the crime occurred; the vehicle type, year, VIN number and color; and the unit number and license plate number for both the tractor and trailer.

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) reminds the transportation industry to report information concerning suspicious activity to their local Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) office through the website <http://www.fbi.gov>.

This factsheet was published with information from Baldwin & Lyons "The Quill", National Safety Council, American Trucking Association and Texas Department of Insurance/Division of Workers' Compensation.