

# CDL

## update and clarifications

*The rules regarding traffic violations and CDLs became tougher as of October 2005.*

**ALTHOUGH THE RULES** about alcohol use for CDL holders have not changed, there is still some confusion. When driving a private vehicle, CDL holders have the same sobriety standards as any other driver. When operating a commercial vehicle (CMV), the standards **are** stricter. Drivers cannot drink alcohol four hours prior to operating a CMV or have any trace of alcohol on their breath, and they are legally drunk at a blood alcohol level of 0.04% or greater.

### **H endorsement changes**

The hazardous materials (H) endorsement rules have changed recently. The good news is that governmental agencies transport-

ing hazardous materials are not required to have a placard on their equipment, and their drivers are not required to obtain the "H" endorsement.

On the other hand, there are some new requirements and fees for obtaining a Hazardous Material endorsement. After passing the knowledge test and the vision test, a driver must also have a background check and prove citizenship or permanent resident status. Additional fees for the background checks total about \$80, and the process can take 60 days or more. Finally, the "H" endorsement expires after four years, even though the CDL is good for eight years.

### **Renewing may take longer**

Don't wait until the last minute to renew your CDL. The Patriot Act requires state DOTs to validate your Social Security number with Social Security Administration records. Be sure you have your number with you when you apply, and double check that it is correct on the forms.

"Any minor mistake will cause a red flag and stop the process," says Gary Krueger, instructor at the TIC Winter Maintenance Workshops. "It's a good idea to leave time to deal with any problems." ►

*"Highway Watch® is about being alert for the protection of your community."*

## Wisconsin Highway Watch® numbers 8,000

**WISCONSIN** now has over 8,000 volunteers trained to recognize potential safety and security threats on our nation's roads by the American Trucking Association's Highway Watch® program. More than 200,000 others across the country have joined in the last two years.

"Our staff had a very, very positive response to the training," says Randy Scholz, Highway Commissioner in Lincoln County. After the training last October everyone in the crew and all the supervisors signed up to be watchers, about 48 in total. They were already on alert after pipe bombs were found last summer in the Hwy 17 right-of-way.

Lincoln is one of nearly two dozen Wisconsin counties and cities so far who have completed the free group training. Self-learning modules are also available in DVD, VHS, audio CD, or cassette tape formats.

"Highway Watch® is about being alert for the protection of your community," says Bob Young the instructor for Lincoln County.

"It's similar to the neighborhood watch and crime stoppers programs. We train interested people who then keep a vigilant eye for suspicious activity, like those pipe bombs in Lincoln County." Young works on Highway Watch® for the Wisconsin Motor Carriers Association (WMCA).

During the one-hour program, instructors talk with participants about local facilities and infrastructure and about what might be a threat to them. They cover other potential terrorist targets, like bridges, tunnels, and hazardous materials locations, along with safety topics and traffic issues like suspicious disabled vehicles, major debris on the roadway, reckless driving, road rage, erratic driving, and especially crashes.

After the training, participants receive a personal Highway Watch® Identification number, an ID card, and a certificate of completion. When they see suspicious activity or hazardous conditions, they are asked to call 911 and the toll-free Highway Watch® hotline. They identify

themselves using their ID number and report the incident. Call center personnel will also immediately contact law enforcement for the incident area if the highway watch member has not called 911 first.

When a call involves a security issue, call center staff alert the Highway Information Sharing and Analysis Center. Transportation security professionals there analyze the report and will forward it to government intelligence officials and other law enforcement agencies if it seems to pose a threat to national security.

"It makes you feel a part of something bigger," says Randy Scholz. "Our guys are always watching for something suspicious and we would call the sheriff anyway. Now we have a clear avenue for reporting these things."

For more information and to request the Highway Watch® training call Bob Young or Sue Webb at the WMCA: 608-833-8200, ext. 18. The Web site [www.highwaywatch.com](http://www.highwaywatch.com) has general information.

When renewing a CDL, the state checks with the national CDL registry to ensure there is no problem with the driver's CDL from any state.

### **Tougher CDL standards and penalties**

The rules regarding traffic violations and CDLs became tougher as of October 2005. Several major offenses and serious traffic violations were added and consequences have been made more severe.

You can lose your CDL if convicted of a major traffic violation while operating any vehicle, commercial or other, and if either your private driver's license or your CDL is suspended, revoked, or cancelled.

"Basically they are saying that you have only one license and if you lose your personal driver's license, your CDL goes too," says Krueger. There are no more "occupational" CDLs, although you may still be able to get an "occupational" private license.

Also, at the first offense you lose your CDL for one year (three years if operating under the H endorsement). Conviction for any subsequent offense means you lose your CDL for life.

For more details on CDLs, contact the TIC for a copy of Gary Krueger's handouts from the Winter Road Maintenance Workshop.

### **Publications**

Transportation Information Center publications helpful for in-service signing safety reviews include:

*Signing for Local Roads*, No. 7

*Pavement Markings*, No. 9 (revised 2005)

*SAFER Manual, Safety Evaluation for Roadways*

**NEW** *Work Zone Safety: Guidelines for*

*Construction, Maintenance, and Utility Operations* (2006) in a convenient flipbook format. Pages can also be viewed on the TIC Web site.

### **Web sites**

*Highway Watch*®  
More information at:  
<http://www.highwaywatch.com/>

### **Plants**

See "Rare Plants in Wisconsin Right-of-Ways" on the TIC Web site for maps, photos, and details.

The official DNR list of Wisconsin's endangered and threatened vascular plants is at <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/er/>

Click on "Threatened and Endangered Species" and then on "Vascular Plants." Click on the scientific name for details. No search function.

For more information on endangered and threatened plants, including identifying information, photos and maps, see the UW-Stevens Point herbarium page. Search for common or scientific plant name under "vascular

plants". This general herbarium site covers 200,000 Wisconsin plants. <http://wisplants.uwsp.edu/index.html>

Find information on invasive plant species in Wisconsin at: <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/invasives/>

### **Safety Edge**

Information on the pavement edge treatment to eliminate shoulder drop-off safety hazards is available at the FHWA Road Departure Safety web page at: [http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/roadway\\_dept/](http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/roadway_dept/)

### **Retread Tires**

Information on retread tires, tire maintenance, tire repair, and vendor lists from the Tire Retread Information Bureau at: <http://www.retread.org/>

Suppliers, services, and contract price information for both new and retread tires is on the state Bureau of Procurement's Vendor-Net System: <http://vendornet.state.wi.us>

### **Videotapes/Multimedia**

**NEW** *Gravel Road Maintenance: Meeting the Challenge*, University of Minnesota Center for Transportation Studies, October 2005, one DVD and one CD #18802.

The DVD includes modules on Correct Roadway Shape, Shaping the Roadway, Good Surface Gravel and Dust control. On the CD are the instructor's guide and the FHWA *Gravel Roads Maintenance and Design Manual*.

## **RESOURCES**

Print copies of publications are available free from the TIC while supplies last. Electronic copies may be downloaded from the TIC Web site.

Videos and DVDs are loaned free through county UW-Extension offices.

The Web addresses listed here and elsewhere in this newsletter are live in the electronic version of *Crossroads* on the TIC Web page. Clicking them should take you directly to the indicated page. If you are not able to retrieve a document, contact us and we will get a print version to you.

TIC Web site  
<http://tic.engr.wisc.edu/>

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