

Vehicle Inspection Guide

Vehicle inspections can help you to identify potential vehicle defects and maintenance concerns that could contribute to an accident. The collection of these inspection and repair records is a critical part of any robust fleet maintenance program.

Additionally, in most states pre- & post-trip inspections are required for any vehicle that meets the definition of a commercial vehicle by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration and depending on the state, can also be required by OSHA.

Below are some tips to improve your vehicle inspection program.

Improved maintenance

Employees who operate a vehicle on a regular basis are more apt to notice if that vehicle is not performing properly which is why regular vehicle inspections by the operator are so critical to having a proactive fleet maintenance program. The inspection helps to identify small issues before they turn into bigger and more costly repairs. This in turn helps your mechanic to perform their job better, save money and to extend the life of the vehicle. Additionally, when employees are driving vehicles that are part of a fleet, it is vital to the safety of the other employees who may operate that same vehicle, that you inspect and communicate any issues to them prior to their shift so the issue can be repaired as soon as possible.

Record keeping

Record keeping is a critical component of any fleet management program. This could include parts and labor costs, state inspection records, as well as regular maintenance and inspection records. These important records should be tracked consistently for all vehicles in your fleet and be easily retrievable should the vehicle maintenance and inspection records ever be called into question following an accident.

Always be sure to follow the manufacturer's recommended maintenance schedule and to document every step. Fleet maintenance software programs are recommended as they are low-cost, easy to use, and typically have the manufacturer's recommended maintenance schedule built into their programming. Most fleet maintenance software programs also include custom pre-shift inspection forms which can immediately notify you based on the mileage of the vehicle if maintenance is needed.

Inspection Procedures

- All entity vehicles should be inspected prior to each shift but at least daily to determine if any repairs are necessary.
- All inspection records, including those where no issues are found should be turned into the mechanic following completion.
- Any vehicles found with potentially dangerous issues should be taken out of service until the mechanic can repair the vehicle.
- If the mechanic is not qualified to perform a particular type of maintenance, then contract it out to a professional.

Below are some sample vehicle inspection forms to assist you in establishing your inspection program. These sample forms should be customized if possible for each vehicle in your fleet.

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