

LOSS CONTROL

Information Bulletin

VEHICLE MAINTENANCE

Most motor vehicle fleets usually have some system for maintaining the mechanical condition of their vehicles. The systems vary from a general lubrication of the chassis and components to a more rigid and strictly scheduled service and inspection, either on a time or mileage basis. Regardless of what system is followed, the primary purpose is to ensure safe and efficient vehicle performance and to extend vehicle and component life. The fleet safety consultant is never expected to become a maintenance expert or master mechanic, but, he should be knowledgeable concerning the basics of sound vehicle maintenance. Through observation of shop facilities and review of maintenance records, he should be capable of determining the adequacy of the maintenance program.

A fleet safety consultant will encounter a wide variety of maintenance systems. Regardless of the kind of system, his prime concern is that it meet minimum standards for maintaining a safe fleet.

Certain benefits can be emphasized to help convince fleet management of the necessity for a sound vehicle maintenance program, including:

Accident reduction - Accidents caused by brake, tire, steering and other component failures can be substantially reduced by proper vehicle maintenance.

Less down time - Preventive maintenance minimizes interruptions of regular work schedules caused by breakdowns.

Reduced maintenance - Regularly scheduled inspections made at proper intervals will provide opportunities to make minor repairs and adjustments that will help to prevent unnecessary and costly repairs.

Improved driver morale - Commercial drivers, like all good workmen, take pride in equipment that is kept in top operating condition and are more likely to drive safely and to handle equipment with care.

Good customer and public relations - Fleet management should recognize the important sales and public relations value of keeping equipment clean and well maintained. Trucks are traveling billboards and can reflect a safety-minded county image.

DRIVER'S RESPONSIBILITY

The driver should be responsible for the condition and safe operation of his assigned vehicle. The driver should check his vehicle for possible defects and report them for correction in accordance with county policy. Driver vehicle-condition reports furnish valuable information for evaluating the efficiency of the maintenance system.

Important Phone Numbers

Meadowbrook Loss Control

334-954-7260 or 1-800-536-7702

Date

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MAINTENANCE RECORDS

Forms should be designed to serve a three-fold purpose:

1. Show vehicle maintenance needs.
2. Provide a schedule of work to be done.
3. Record completed maintenance and cost.

The following five forms would cover the necessary basic information regarding a fleet's vehicle-maintenance program:

1. *Driver's vehicle condition report* - Checklist of different parts of the vehicle that can be inspected for defect by the driver. It also serves as a written communication between the driver and shop for correction of defects.
2. *Lubrication chart* - What lubricant to use, what parts of the vehicle are to be lubricated and frequency schedule.
3. *Service and inspection report* - What components need repair and when the work is completed.
4. *Delivery ticket* - Records consumption of fuel, engine oil, gear lubricant and grease.
5. *Vehicle history folder* - gives a complete up-to-date history of maintenance, parts and labor costs.

Maintenance forms may be obtained from truck manufacturers and oil companies.

Many of the major oil companies and vehicle manufacturers have useful preventive maintenance literature and forms available on request.

A GOOD FLEET MAINTENANCE PROGRAM WILL PREVENT ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES TO COUNTY EMPLOYEES AS WELL AS TO THE CITIZENS OF THE COUNTY. IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A MAINTENANCE PROGRAM, CONSIDER APPOINTING A FLEET SAFETY CONSULTANT TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE UP KEEP OF ALL VEHICLES.

July 2012

Note

This document is not intended to be legal advice. It does not identify all the issues surrounding the particular topic. You are encouraged to review your policies and procedures with an expert or an attorney who is knowledgeable about the topic.

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