

Loading and Unloading Trailer Safety

Carefully loading and unloading your trailer is critical to your safety and the safety of those sharing the road with you. This informational sheet, along with the Growing Safely Loading and Unloading video on the Monsanto Off-the-Job Safety YouTube Channel, can help you prevent serious or fatal injuries: www.youtube.com/watch?v=1VZJYTssD1A



When pre-loading, securing equipment, and using tie-downs, always follow manufacturer guidelines.

Pre-Loading Reminders:

- “Know What You Tow” – Confirm that the load weight is within the gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of the trailer, GVWR of the truck, and the gross combined weight rating (GCWR) of the truck and trailer
- The truck and trailer should be positioned on a flat level surface
- The parking brake should be set
- The trailer tires of the last axle should be chocked
- A jack stand should be utilized if the trailer does not have loading ramps that support the back of the trailer when the ramp is lowered into place
- Identify the proper placement of the load so that you do not overload the axles, the GVWR of the truck or trailer, and mark the trailer to indicate this placement
- If the truck/trailer begins to move, do not attempt to stop it from rolling if doing so poses any risk to you or others
- For trailers equipped with them, make sure to set the electric brakes
- Make sure the trailer is secured to the vehicle and that safety chains are securely connected
- If there is a break-away cable, make sure it is connected directly to the truck and trailer so it will disconnect and engage the brakes if the two become separated while loading/unloading

Driver and Vehicle Pre-trip Inspection

- Brakes and brake connections
- Parking brake
- Steering mechanism
- Lights and reflectors
- Tires
- Horn
- Windshield wipers
- Rear view mirrors
- Coupling devices
- Wheels and rims
- Emergency equipment
- Health card – check expiration
- Drivers license
- Log book and/or time sheet

Trailer / Load Pre-trip Inspection

- Brakes and brake connections
- Lights and reflectors
- Tires
- Wheels and rims
- Condition of binders
- Ramps stored and secure
- Wheel chocks
- Condition of tie-down straps and/or chains

Loading and Unloading Trailer Safety

Loading

- Loading should always be done on a flat level surface
- The emergency brakes of truck and trailer (if equipped) should be applied
- The tires should be chocked to prevent rolling (it is best to chock the last axle). If there are multiple axles on the trailer, the last axle should be chocked.
- If observing, stay away from the vehicle and do not approach the loaded trailer until the implement is in park with the brakes locked.
- If the vehicle or implement rolls or shifts while loading ... **DO NOT PUT YOURSELF IN DANGER.**
- Trucks, trailers, and equipment can all be replaced ... you cannot.

Cargo-Securing Reminders

- Make sure any chains or hooks used to secure the cargo are Grade 70 or higher.
- Tie downs that are at least 50% of the weight load limit (WLL) should be used. (Nylon straps have a WLL of 1000 pounds to every inch wide.)
- The correct binders should be used and always secured in an A pull.
- When securing pallets, the top bags of a pallet should be covered by using a bag protector or an empty pallet to keep the straps from bulging or cutting into the bags.
- The cargo securing devices should be positioned inside the stake pockets/rub rails.
- Actions to secure the cargo should be continued until the cargo cannot shift, blow, or fall off the vehicle. Only then is it secure.

Check for anything that could fall off the trailer. You are responsible for all of your load! *i.e. rocks, mud, blocks*

Securing Equipment

- All tie-down straps, chains, and binders should be inspected
- Make sure load is balanced
- One binder is needed at each corner of the equipment
- An “A”-shaped pull rather than “V”-shaped should be used

Tie-Downs

- Cargo under 5 feet in length or under 1,100 pounds needs at least one tie-down
 - Articles of cargo over this length or weight need to be a minimum of 2 per 10 feet increment
 - Minimum of 2 per 10 feet if the rating is at least 50 percent of the weight load limit (WLL). **THIS IS THE MINIMUM!**
- The load should always be secured until it doesn't shift, slide, or move.

Roadside Emergency: Placement of Hazard Warning

- Hazard flashers should be turned on
- One triangle – traffic side, 10 feet from stopped vehicle in direction oncoming traffic
- Second triangle – in center of occupied traffic lane or shoulder, 100 feet in direction of oncoming traffic
- Third triangle – in center of occupied traffic lane or shoulder, 100 feet in direction away from traffic

