



# TRUCKER

## *Focus*

2020 | VOLUME 11 ISSUE 1



AND THE  
WINNERS ARE!

## NATIONAL TRUCK DRIVER APPRECIATION WEEK

# CONTEST HIGHLIGHTS TOP TRUCKING TOPICS

National Truck Driver Appreciation Week was September 8-14. This annual event is when America takes the time to honor our professional truck drivers for their hard work and dedication in tackling one of our economy's most demanding and important jobs. The trucking industry helps fuel our nation's economy and without it, things would certainly change rapidly.

To help commemorate this event and celebrate drivers nationwide, Acuity Insurance again sponsored its annual National Truck Driver Appreciation Week Essay and Video Contest. The contest is an opportunity for high school students to celebrate truck drivers and recognize them for their hard work and the contributions they make to America. This year, contestants chose one of the following topics to explore:

- Hours of service
- Truck parking
- ELD mandate
- Driver distraction
- Driver retention
- Driver health and wellness
- Driver shortage
- Automated truck technology
- Transportation infrastructure/congestion/funding
- CSA

Students were invited to submit an essay of up to 1,000 words and an accompanying video of up to one minute. Acuity awarded over \$5,000 in prizes this year, including a grand prize of \$2,500.

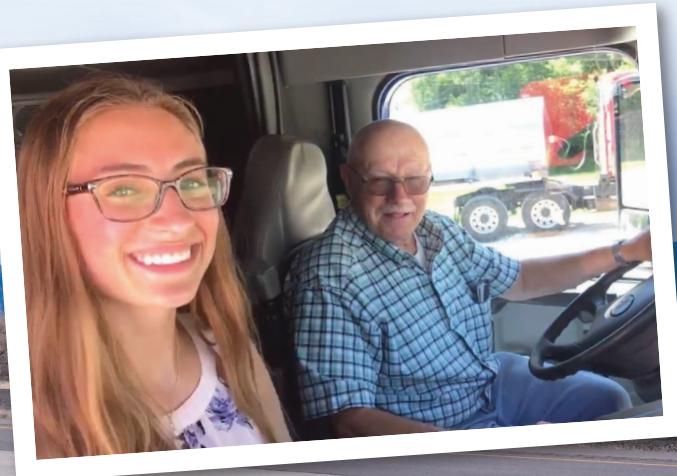
Submissions were judged on originality and uniqueness of the story, use of language relevant to the topic, and creativity in how ideas were expressed. We are happy to announce six winners from this year's contest:

- First Place Winner - \$2,500:  
**Sara Mears, Appleton, WI**
- Second Place Winner - \$1,500:  
**Gibeon Robbins, Coalville, UT**
- Third Place Winner - \$1,000:  
**Ashlyn Smith, Marion, UT**
- Honorable Mention Winner - \$150:  
**Jimmy Fields, Orland Park, IL**
- Honorable Mention Winner - \$150:  
**Karmyn Jarzemski, De Soto, WI**
- Honorable Mention Winner - \$150:  
**Gabrielle Robbins, Coalville, UT**

You can find a video highlighting our winners by visiting our Facebook page, [facebook.com/acuitytrucking](https://facebook.com/acuitytrucking), or the Acuity Insurance YouTube channel. And, you can read all the winning essays at [acuity.com/contest](http://acuity.com/contest).



*Sara Mears, shown here with her Great Uncle Roland Koenig, was our first prize winner.*



# TRUCKING FACTS

- Over **3.5 million** professional truck drivers are responsible for delivering our goods.
- In 2018, the American trucking industry generated nearly **\$800 billion** in revenue.
- Approximately **6% of all full-time jobs** in America are related to trucking.
- In 2018, trucks moved nearly **11.5 billion tons** of freight.
- It is estimated that most grocery stores would start to **run out of food** in three days if truck drivers were unable to make their deliveries.
- The average long-haul trucker drives more than **100,000 miles** per year.



The form is a white document with black text. At the top, it reads "U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION MOTOR CARRIER SAFETY PROGRAM ANNUAL REVIEW OF DRIVING RECORD 391.25". Below this, there are fields for "Name (Last, First, M.I.)" and "(Soc. Sec. No.)". A large section of text follows, starting with "This day I reviewed the driving record of the above named driver in accordance with 391.25 of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations. I considered any evidence that the driver has violated applicable provisions of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations and the Hazardous Materials Regulations. I considered the driver's accident record and any evidence that he/she violated laws governing the operation of motor vehicles, and gave great weight to violations, such as speeding, reckless driving and operation while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, that indicate that the driver has exhibited a disregard for the safety of the public. Having done the above, I find that:". There are two checkboxes below this statement: "[ ] the driver meets the minimum requirements for safe driving, or [ ] the driver is disqualified to drive a motor vehicle pursuant to 391.15". At the bottom, there are sections for "Date of Review" and "Motor Carrier's Name", followed by "Reviewed by: Signature and title". This pattern repeats three times for three different drivers.

## Motor Carrier TOOLBOX

### Annual review of driving record

Motor carriers are required, at least once every 12 months, to obtain the motor vehicle record of each driver they employ. A copy of the motor vehicle record must be maintained in the driver's qualification file.

Acuity's Motor Carrier Toolbox gives you access to this document and over 140 other tools, programs, and policies designed to help you comply with government regulations, address maintenance and safety issues, aid drivers in navigating today's complex trucking business, and more. The tear-off page at the back of this issue features another resource that is available. For more great tips, check out Acuity's Motor Carrier Toolbox at [www.acuity.com/mctb](http://www.acuity.com/mctb).

# BEST OF THE BLOG

By Cliff Johnson, Trucking Consultant

## Add a Dash!

Motorists seem more distracted than ever with gizmos and gadgets to check Facebook, Twitter, text messages, map directions, and more. And I've noticed a decrease in overall courtesy to others on the roadway. Perhaps it is just a lack of understanding that playing cat and mouse with their 3,500-pound sedan against an 80,000-pound tractor-trailer is not a game they should want to play. With that weight difference, a loaded truck has a massive kinetic energy advantage over the car. Perhaps this very advantage is what pushes DOT regulations on our industry to select, train, and support qualified drivers and entrust them to operate safely and professionally on our public roadways.

But sometimes safe, professional driving is not enough. Through no fault of their own, a truck driver and motor carrier can be immersed in a crash and left to deal with the consequences.

Whether you're an owner-operator, have a small fleet, or drive for a large motor carrier, dash cameras allow motor carriers to better manage their fleet safety with powerful features designed to support the driver, increase visibility, reduce crashes, and lower collision costs. We have all heard stories of how truck cameras served as an indisputable eyewitness to crash causation and other driving hazards, providing video evidence to help increase fleet safety, lower motor carrier liability, exonerate not-at-fault drivers, and even help subrogate back to at-fault parties.

On the dash of my Western Star, sits my camera. It is there to protect me from other drivers. A dash camera is something I would no longer drive without, and I would recommend others do not either.

There are many different types of dash cameras you may want to consider, including:

- Front-facing dash cams
- Dual-facing dash cams
- Multi-camera systems
- Exterior cameras
- Interior cameras



### Selecting dash cams and multi-cam systems

There are literally hundreds of providers and options when it comes to dash cams, including Lytex Smart Drive, Peoplenet, Qualcom, Samsara, Falcon, Garmin, and many more. So, which type is right for you and your fleet? This is a very important question you must ensure is answered correctly. For example, you may not wish to introduce a more expensive system when you already have an ELD provider that has their own system. Keeping the same technology in place that your fleet is already using can save you time and money.

That said, the cheapest systems may not work well and could end up costing more over the long haul.

Whatever you choose, it's important to ensure your cameras record high-quality footage that's available when you need it. Below are some important features to consider when choosing the right dash cam for your fleet operations.

- Storage. Dash cams will be useless if the recorded footage is not available for future access.
- Internet connectivity. Wi-Fi or truck-embedded Internet connections allow dash cam footage to seamlessly upload to the cloud for future access.
- Mounting. Adhesive and velcro, similar to your E-ZPass or PrePass attachments, may be a good option that offers quick, easy, and secure installs over the suction cup method.
- Image resolution. For optimal quality, consider dash cams with a wide-angle lens or wide dynamic range (WDR). Consider FHD or HD 1080p video if you want best-in-class resolution capable of reading vehicle license plates.

Check out more entries at [acuity.com/trucker-focus](http://acuity.com/trucker-focus).

# FMCSA'S NEW

## COMMERCIAL DRIVER'S LICENSE DRUG AND ALCOHOL CLEARINGHOUSE

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) has established the Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse, mandated by the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) highway bill of 2012. Motor carrier registration is now open, with full compliance effective January 6, 2020.

The Clearinghouse rule requires FMCSA-regulated employers, medical review officers (MROs), substance abuse professionals (SAPs), consortia/third-party administrators (C/TPAs), and other service agents to report to the Clearinghouse information related to violations of drug and alcohol regulations, CFR 382.701.

The Clearinghouse will provide FMCSA and employers the necessary tools to identify drivers who are prohibited from operating a CMV based on DOT drug and alcohol program violations and ensure such drivers receive required evaluation and treatment before operating a CMV on public roads. Clearinghouse information will enable employers to identify drivers who commit a drug or alcohol program violation while working for one employer, but who fail to subsequently inform their new employer. Records of drug and alcohol program violations will remain in the Clearinghouse for five years or until the driver has completed the return-to-duty process, whichever is later.

So, what does this mean for motor carriers and drivers? Pre-employment and annual review requirements will change. Beginning January 6, 2020, employers must conduct electronic queries within the Clearinghouse as well as manual inquiries with previous employers to cover the preceding three years of a CDL holder's history. As of January 6, 2023, employers will only have to query the Clearinghouse and will no longer be required to make manual inquiries.

Motor carriers will be required to query the Clearinghouse for current (limited) and prospective (full) employees' drug and alcohol violations before permitting those employees to operate a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) on public roads and will also be required to annually query the Clearinghouse for each driver they currently employ.

To provide some guidance on these changes, we have outlined a few of the new requirements here.

### **The Clearinghouse requires the following:**

#### **Motor carriers**

1. Register as a user in the fall of 2019. FMCSA will charge employers a fee of approximately \$1.25 for conducting queries in the Clearinghouse. Employers must purchase a query plan to ensure they can conduct queries.
2. Selecting a C/TPA is required for a self-employed driver or owner-operator. A query plan must be purchased, so their designated C/TPAs can conduct queries. C/TPAs cannot purchase queries on behalf of motor carriers.
3. Obtain consent from all new drivers and current drivers requiring full Clearinghouse queries. Employers are required to query all current employees at least annually.
4. Report drug and alcohol program violations.
5. If applicable, report on return-to-duty (RTD) process and ensure completion of follow-up testing.
6. For new hire drivers, in addition to annual electronic queries in the Clearinghouse, employers are required, until January 6, 2023, to conduct a one-time offline inquiry to previous employers for pre-employment driver investigations.

#### **Truck drivers**

1. Truck drivers do not have to create an account if they are not looking to switch jobs, but if they are, they must register in the Clearinghouse.
2. Though all drivers switching employers need to register, only failed tests or refusals will be entered into the Clearinghouse database.
3. To remain eligible to perform safety sensitive functions, drivers must provide consent to limited query requests and, when required, full query requests.
4. If required, drivers are now able to register as a user.
5. Drivers will select substance abuse professional (SAP) only if they have a drug or alcohol violation in the Clearinghouse and enter the return-to-duty (RTD) process.

As information on the Clearinghouse may change, it is important to be alert to any changes or approaching deadlines. Visit the Clearinghouse for guidance at [clearinghouse.fmcsa.dot.gov](http://clearinghouse.fmcsa.dot.gov).

# ASK THE SPECIALIST

**Cliff Johnson**  
is Acuity's  
Trucking Consultant.  
Contact him at  
[trucking.news@acuity.com](mailto:trucking.news@acuity.com).



## Ask Cliff

### **How will FMCSA's proposed hours of service changes affect me?**

On August 22, 2019, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration published a notice of proposed rulemaking seeking comment on possible revisions to its hours of service (HOS) rules for commercial truck drivers. The proposed revisions are intended to provide greater flexibility for drivers subject to the HOS rules without adversely affecting safety.

The proposal includes five main changes:

- 1** Change the short-haul exception available to certain commercial drivers by lengthening the drivers' maximum on-duty period from 12 to 14 hours and extending the distance limit within which the driver may operate from 100 air miles to 150 air miles.
- 2** Modify the adverse driving conditions exception by extending by 2 hours the maximum window during which driving is permitted.
- 3** Increase flexibility for the 30-minute break rule by tying the break requirement to 8 hours of driving time without an interruption for at least 30 minutes and allowing the break to be satisfied by a driver using on duty, not driving status, rather than off duty.
- 4** Modify the sleeper-berth exception to allow drivers to split their required 10 hours off duty into two periods: an 8 and 2 split or a 7 and 3 split, either off duty or in the sleeper berth. Neither period would count against the driver's 14-hour driving window.
- 5** Allow one off-duty break of at least 30 minutes, but not more than 3 hours, that would pause a truck driver's 14-hour driving window, provided the driver takes 10 consecutive hours off-duty at the end of the work shift.

Several trucker organizations are supportive of the proposed changes. For example, the American Trucking Associations (ATA) lauded Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao and FMCSA Administrator Raymond Martinez. ATA President and CEO Chris Spear said, "We look forward to studying and understanding how these proposed changes will impact our industry so we can provide relevant data and information to strengthen and support a good final rule that bolsters safety and provides drivers needed flexibility."

However, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters General President Jim Hoffa voiced his opposition, citing serious concerns the labor union finds with the proposal. In an August 14 press release, he stated, "In an effort to increase so-called 'flexibility' for trucking companies, the FMCSA is abandoning safety and allowing drivers to push themselves to the limit even further. Changes for short-haul truckers, for example, would extend their days from 12 to 14 hours on the job. That means a longer and more exhausting workday for tens of thousands of American workers. The Teamsters are also concerned about language changing the 30-minute rest break and the ability of drivers to press the pause button on their hours of service clock."

You, as motor carriers or drivers, know better than anyone. What are your thoughts? Is this good for the trucking industry and our people, or will it erode safety on our roadways? Let me know at [trucking.news@acuity.com](mailto:trucking.news@acuity.com).



# FIND THE FLAGPOLE FOR A CHANCE TO WIN \$100



**Winner of last  
issue's contest was:**  
**Sally Lorden - Sequin TX**

Acuity's headquarters in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, is known for hosting the World's Tallest Symbol of Freedom: a 400-foot flagpole that flies a 70- by 140-foot American flag.

In each issue of the *Trucker Focus*, we'll hide a miniature version of our flag: . In our last issue, the flagpole was hidden in our Ask the Specialist article on page 5. Find the flag hidden elsewhere in this issue, then send an email with its location to [flagcontest@acuity.com](mailto:flagcontest@acuity.com) by March 1, 2020. We'll choose a winner of \$100 at random from among the correct entries received.

This contest is not open to employees of Acuity or their immediate family members. For a complete list of rules, visit [www.acuity.com/flagcontestrules](http://www.acuity.com/flagcontestrules).



## ACUITY AT TRANSPORTATION SUMMIT

Recently, Acuity's **Shannon Van Roo** participated in a panel discussion hosted by the Women in Trucking Association at Cottingham & Butler's Transportation Summit. Shannon is a Regulatory Analyst with a background in trucking. Her background includes having been a professional driver, a co-owner of a family-operated trucking company, as well as other entrepreneurial business ventures.

To see highlights from her appearance, check out Acuity's trucking Facebook page at [facebook.com/acuitytrucking](https://facebook.com/acuitytrucking).

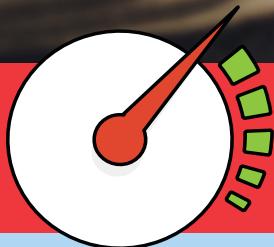


# WORD OF MOUTH

Will automation make truckers obsolete? Experts say no. Join in the discussion and read more about other trucking topics at [facebook.com/acuitytrucking](https://facebook.com/acuitytrucking).

In addition to all the great online resources for truckers Acuity makes available at [acuity.com](https://acuity.com), we also feature the latest news, trucking trends, and lively discussions on our Facebook page.





## Acuity Knows Trucking!

Check out our dedicated trucking-focused online channels!

- Trucking Web Page**  
[acuity.com/trucking](http://acuity.com/trucking)

- Facebook**  
[facebook.com/acuitytrucking](https://facebook.com/acuitytrucking)

- Blog**  
[acuity.com/trucker-focus](http://acuity.com/trucker-focus)

- YouTube**  
[youtube.com/acuityinsurance](https://youtube.com/acuityinsurance)  
(Trucker Focus playlist)

- LinkedIn**  
[linkedin.com/company/acuity-insurance](https://linkedin.com/company/acuity-insurance)

- Twitter**  
[twitter.com/acuityinsurance](https://twitter.com/acuityinsurance)

**TRUCKING  
QUESTIONS?**

Acuity's on-site trucking consultant provides over 30 years of industry experience to your business.

**Email**  
[trucking.news@acuity.com](mailto:trucking.news@acuity.com)

**Phone**  
800.242.7666, extension 1740





# ARE YOU READY FOR WINTER?

TRUCKER TALK AHEAD ➔

## DRIVERS

- Inspect your chains for defects at the beginning of each winter season and after each use.
- Practice chaining each truck you drive.
- Stay drier while chaining by using a small tarp or sheet of Visqueen to lie or kneel on.
- Keep a flashlight or mining lamp and backup batteries in your truck.
- Keep extra food, water, medications, and clothing (especially socks) in your truck in case you are stuck for an extended period of time.
- Wear reflective clothing when outside the truck.
- Keep footwear with extra traction in your truck and change into it before exiting the cab.
- Always wear gloves to maintain your grip and protect your hands.
- Don't turn your back on traffic while outside the truck

## MANAGEMENT

- Maintain the lighting in your yard.
- Fill potholes and keep the yard debris free.
- Have a snow and ice removal plan for your yard or terminal.
- Develop walking paths to keep pedestrians out of the way of trucks and forklifts.
- Provide headlamps and reflective clothing.
- Require that all chains be inspected for damage and that drivers are familiar with chaining all the trucks they use in your fleet.





**focused on truckers**

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TEAR ALONG THE PERFORATION LINE

# TRUCKER

## *Focus*

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