

NRMCA Monthly Safety Initiative

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Seat Belts – Safety Starts With A Click

Why Use Seat Belts?

According to FMCSA, "Safety belt use remains one of the cheapest, easiest, and most important means to protect commercial motor vehicle (CMV) drivers. Safety belts also help prevent serious damage and injury to others, because buckled drivers are better able control their vehicles in emergencies. By law, CMV drivers must use safety belts." Specifically, lap and shoulder belts prevent ejection from vehicles and equipment and keep people from colliding with the vehicle interior during a crash. They are also designed to manage forces on the body. Worn properly, seat belts are designed to spread crash forces across the stronger bony parts of the body, including the shoulder, rib cage and pelvis.



What to Know About Seat Belts

The definition of a safety belt, often referred to as a seat belt, as per FMCSA, "is a harness designed to secure occupants inside the vehicle, and you have to buckle up to use it." Data has shown, "without question, a safety belt is the most important in-cab safety device that will protect an occupant in the event of a sudden stop or crash. Safety belts are not just for light-vehicle and equipment drivers and occupants but must also be worn by CMV drivers." According to NHTSA, seat belts saved an estimated 14,955 lives in 2017, and could have saved an additional 2,549 lives had seat belts been worn. While the vast majority of drivers and front-seat passengers use seat belts, nearly half of people who die in crashes are not belted. Despite these statistics, NHTSA data suggests that the national seat belt use rate in 2021 was at 90.4%.

Seat Belt Do's and Don'ts

- Think First when entering a vehicle and other equipment
- Wear a seat belt at all times while operating vehicles and equipment, even when at the plant or jobsite
- Use seat belts as per the manufacturer's standards
- Don't wear shoulder harnesses under arms or behind back
- Ride with the seat back upright and your lap belt snug and low about the hips
- Keep your shoulder belt snug against your chest
- Never use a single belt for more than one person or across more than one seating position
- Never wear your shoulder belt under your arm or swing it around your neck over the inside shoulder
- Place your seat belt inside the cab before closing the door
- Utilize bright colored belts to verify use
- Have belts replaced if they are damaged or worn

Resources

NRMCA: [Mixer Truck Driver's Manual](#)

NHTSA: [Seat Belts](#)

FMCSA: [Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Belt Program](#)

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