



Tailgate Safety Training for Landscaping and Horticultural Services

Agricultural Safety Program, 590 Woody Hayes Drive, Columbus, OH 43210

Tractors, Towed Equipment, and Highway Safety

Objective: Use safe highway procedures for tractors and towed equipment.

How to Use This Module

Accidents occur because highway safety precautions are not followed. But you have to travel between job sites on the highway. For this module:

- Read the information below on traveling on highways with:
 - ◆ Tractors
 - ◆ Towed equipment
 - ◆ Wagons
 - ◆ Grinders
 - ◆ Trailers
- Discuss safe practices for driving and hauling on public roads with your supervisor and other workers.
- Review the important points.
- Take the True/False quiz to check your learning.

For more information on slow moving vehicle emblems, refer to the Tailgate Safety Training module *Safety Means SMV (Slow Moving Vehicle)*.

Background

Sometimes you need to move a tractor, lawn mower, or landscaping equipment for some distance. If so, it is best to haul it on a truck or trailer.

Use Safe Highway Procedures for Hauling

- Haul tractors and equipment on a flatbed trailer.
- Lock the brake pedals on any equipment you are hauling.
- Tie down all equipment hauled on a trailer.
- Obey the laws for height and width regulation.
- It is illegal to travel faster than 25 miles per hour (mph) with an SMV emblem. So remove, cover, or turn the SMV emblem when equipment is transported on another vehicle.

- Use the correct flags, lights, and reflectors on the transport vehicle to warn other drivers.
- Lock brake pedals.

Driving on Public Roads

For shorter distances, highway travel is appropriate. You might drive a tractor, pick-up, or other truck. You might tow wagons for debris, grinders, or equipment on trailers. For everyone's safety on the road, some safety provisions should be followed. Only operate machinery in good repair on the highway. Properly hitch implements with adequate safety chains before beginning the journey. Do not use makeshift hitch pins.

Before You Drive on Public Roads, Remember These Tips

- Adjust mirrors for good vision.
- Make sure that all warning flashers, lights, and SMV emblems are in proper operating condition. They should be clean and easily visible for 500 feet.
- Put an SMV emblem on towed equipment if the equipment hides the SMV emblem on the tractor.
- Check tire pressures. Inflate the tires to the maximum recommended pressure for long-distance travel.
- Check the wheels to see if the lug nuts are tight.
- Make sure the tractor and equipment are balanced properly.

When pulling onto a public road, use a wide shoulder if available. If the shoulder is not wide enough, stay on the road. Allow extra time to reach full speed. Tractors do not accelerate rapidly, especially when towing equipment.

When Driving on Public Roads, Remember These Tips

- Watch for potholes or obstacles that could tip the vehicle.
- Listen for cars. Often vehicles will approach rapidly from the rear at three to four times the speed of the tractor.
- Stay alert at all times to avoid a serious accident.
- Keep a constant lookout for pedestrians, animals, and road obstacles.
- Slow down for sharp curves.
- Slow down when going down a hill.
- Be sure the vehicle has proper lighting and an SMV emblem when traveling at dusk or at night.

SMV Emblems and Lighting

Vehicles traveling on public roads at 25 mph or less are legally required to have an SMV sign. SMV emblems must be visible for at least 500 feet to the rear. For more information, refer to the Tailgate Safety Training module *Safety Means SMV (Slow Moving Vehicle)*.

Lighting regulations for SMVs vary. Before installing any warning light system on a tractor, check the regulations. Generally, the lighting and marking laws for tractors or self-propelled machines are consistent with recommendations by the American Society of Agricultural Engineers (ASAE) or the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE):

- Two headlights.
- At least one tail lamp, mounted on the left side facing the rear of the tractor.
- At least two amber warning lights, visible from front and rear, mounted at the same level at least 42 inches above ground level.
- At least two red reflectors, visible from the rear and mounted on either side.

Only one vehicle classified as machinery may be towed by the licensed motor vehicle.

Lights and emblems must be clearly visible. If lights or emblems are blocked during towing, attach lights and emblems to the rear of the implements. Most tractors can be equipped with auxiliary connectors; those all-terrain implement electrical systems to be plugged into the circuit operating the tractor lights.

Review These Important Points

- Most state laws define an SMV as traveling at 25 mph or less.
- Know the law concerning highway travel for tractors.
- Watch for highway traffic.
- Use common sense and obey traffic patterns when traveling on the highway with a tractor.

About These Modules

The author team for the training modules in the landscape and horticultural tailgate training series includes Dee Jepsen, Program Director, Agricultural Safety and Health, Ohio State University Extension; Michael Wonacott, Research Specialist, Vocational Education; Peter Ling, Greenhouse Specialist; and Thomas Bean, Agricultural Safety Specialist. Modules were developed with funding from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, Grant Number 46E3-HT09.

Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Agriculture or the U.S. Department of Labor.

Answer Key: 1 = T, 2 = T, 3 = F, 4 = T, 5 = T.

OSU Extension embraces human diversity and is committed to ensuring that all educational programs conducted by Ohio State University Extension are available to clientele on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, age, gender identity or expression, disability, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, or veteran status.

Keith L. Smith, Associate Vice President for Agricultural Administration and Director, Ohio State University Extension

TDD No. 800-589-8292 (Ohio only) or 614-292-1868

Copyright © 2006, The Ohio State University



Tailgate Safety Training for Landscaping and Horticultural Services

Agricultural Safety Program, 590 Woody Hayes Drive, Columbus, OH 43210

Tractors, Towed Equipment, and Highway Safety

Name _____

True or False?

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. When tractors or equipment must be transported long distances, it is safest to haul them on a flatbed. | T | F |
| 2. Stay alert at all times to avoid a serious accident. | T | F |
| 3. There is no need to use an SMV sign if traveling only five miles. | T | F |
| 4. Slow the tractor speed down when going through a sharp curve or down a hill. | T | F |
| 5. Make sure that all lights and warning signals are in working order before traveling on the road. | T | F |