



Vehicle Preparation

While it's true that a driver's skills, training, and experience are key to safety on the road, there's plenty that can be done before a vehicle leaves the garage to help a driver stay safe between Point A and Point B. Make sure all your vehicles are prepared — inside and out — for their intended use before you send employees out into traffic.

In the Cab

Ditch the distractions — Distracted driving is a leading cause of accidents, injuries, and deaths on the road. Train your drivers to refrain from using their mobile devices while operating a vehicle and avoid using communication devices (even hands-free ones) unless absolutely necessary.

Keep it clean — It's common knowledge that a clean workspace is a safe and efficient workspace. Make sure to remove clutter that can draw a driver's attention away from the road or impede the use of pedals. Make sure windows are clean, and mirrors and back-up cameras are clear.

Prepare for an emergency — Even a vehicle with an impeccable service record can break down, so keep an emergency roadside kit in each vehicle. Equipment recommendations include a cell phone and charger, a first-aid kit, flashlight, flares or reflectors, jumper cables, water, and blankets.

Under the hood

Get a grip — When the rubber meets the road, your vehicles' tires can mean the difference between disaster and safe arrival. Make sure the tire tread, inflation level, and overall tire condition are safe for use. Swap the tires with new ones if they're getting old or worn. If you do business in a cold-weather state, make sure your vehicles are equipped with the proper tires for the weather.

Practice constant care — Regular maintenance will help ensure that your vehicles are in proper working order. Oil changes, transmission service, and brake service are just a few of the recommended procedures. Consult a trusted technician for frequency and extent of service.

Watch for recalls — Manufacturers often send out notices when a safety recall is ordered, but taking an active role in safety is always the best policy. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration offers a vehicle identification number look-up tool so you can check if your vehicles are under any safety recalls. Simply visit www.nhtsa.gov/recalls and enter your vehicles' VINs.

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. So, before you or your employees head out, make sure all your vehicles are ready for what the road has in store.

This article is for general information and risk prevention only and should not be considered legal or other expert advice. The recommendations herein may help reduce, but are not guaranteed to eliminate, any or all risk of loss. The information herein may be subject to, and is not a substitute for, any laws or regulations that may apply. Qualified counsel should be sought with questions specific to your circumstances. © 2018 Federated Mutual Insurance Company.