

safety matters

Construction

From your safety partners at Peabody Insurance Agency

Safely Backing Up Vehicles

Backing up a vehicle, whether it is a heavy dump truck or a small automobile, can be a difficult task with a lot of dangers involved. In fact, many accidents occur when vehicles are backing up at only 5 mph, due to blind spots, poor planning and lack of skill.

Tips for Safety

When you can avoid backing up, do so. Otherwise, follow these safety tips:

- Back up slowly and never hurry through the process. Keep the vehicle in control at all times.
- If you have doubts about what is behind you or if space is too tight, do not back up.
- Make use of your rearview mirrors and rear window (if there is one) before and during the process; don't open your door to look behind you.
- Dump trucks and heavy equipment such as bulldozers and graders have blind spots in which the operator has no view. In these cases the back-up route should be planned ahead of time.
- Back up only as far as needed and then proceed forward to move the vehicle the rest of the way.
- Back in and then drive out going forward when parking in a lot.
- Place a cone behind your vehicle when parking if you will need to back out later. This will allow you to maintain clearance if a vehicle parks behind you.

- If you are in a blind spot, beep your horn twice or sound your backup alarm before backing.
- Watch out for overhead power lines or any other obstructions that you may come in contact with.
- Do not back around corners or exit ramps on the freeway.
- Walk around the entire vehicle looking for hazards and remove them if necessary.

Spotters

Strongly consider using a spotter when backing your vehicle. When using a spotter, follow these general rules:

- Maintain contact with your spotter at all times. If you cannot hear and see him/her, do not back up until you can.
- Agree on hand signals that the spotter will use to signal you to back up and stop.
- Ask the spotter to walk around the vehicle and survey the backing area to check for hazards. Have him or her check your overhead clearance as well.
- Make sure the spotter is at least 8 feet away from the vehicle before you begin to back up.
- Some construction sites require flaggers. Stay aware of and work closely with these key members of your team when backing up.

Backing up a vehicle can be a difficult task with many dangers involved.



