

Minnesota Commercial Truck and Passenger Regulations Fact Sheet

Annual Inspection Requirements

Vehicle inspection, repair, and maintenance standards are critical to the safe operation of commercial motor vehicles. They are designed to reduce accidents, injuries, and fatalities resulting from unsafe vehicles operating on the highways. There are three separate fact sheets on vehicle maintenance standards: Systematic Maintenance, Pre-trip Inspections and Post-trip Inspection Reports, and Annual Inspections. This fact sheet addresses annual inspection requirements.



General Standards

Minnesota (MN) has adopted most of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSR's) for inspection, repair, and maintenance found in 49 CFR, Part 396. Minnesota statute section 169.781 contains requirements for annual inspections of Minnesota based vehicles.

Annual Inspection Required

It is unlawful for a person to operate or permit the operation of:

1. A commercial motor vehicle registered in Minnesota, or
2. Special mobile equipment as defined in section 168.002, subdivision 31, and which is self-propelled, if it is mounted on a commercial motor vehicle chassis, unless the vehicle/vehicle combination:
 - Displays a valid safety inspection decal issued by an inspector certified by the commissioner; or
 - Carries proof that the vehicle complies with federal motor vehicle inspection requirements for vehicles in interstate commerce and a certificate of compliance with federal requirements issued by the commissioner.

Note: A MN licensed CMV that is not housed or maintained in MN may obtain a certificate of compliance (Minnesota decal) from the Minnesota State Patrol (651-405-6196) upon submitting proof that the vehicle has passed an annual federal inspection and paying a fee.

For purposes of the Minnesota annual inspection, a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) includes:

- A vehicle/vehicle combinations with a gross vehicle weight (GVW) over 26,000 pounds;
- A vehicle/vehicle combinations transporting hazardous materials (HM) of a type or quantity that requires the vehicle to be placarded; or,
- A vehicle/vehicle combinations designed to transport 16 or more passengers, including the driver.

For purposes of the MN annual inspection, a CMV does not include a motor vehicle that:

- Is a school bus or Head Start bus displaying a certificate; 1 or
- Is a bus operated by the Metropolitan Council transit operation or local transit commission.

Intrastate Inspection Requirements

A MN annual inspection may only be performed by a person certified to conduct such inspections. Persons eligible to be certified to perform MN annual inspections include an owner, or an employee of an owner, who has one or more CMV power units, a dealer engaged in buying/selling CMVs, a person engaged in the business of repairing and servicing CMVs or an employee of a governmental agency that owns CMVs. Inspector certification is valid for two years. For details on MN annual inspector certification, contact the Minnesota State Patrol at 651-405-6196.

A MN certified inspector will issue an inspection decal if a vehicle passes an inspection based on the criteria in FMCSRs 49 CFR, Appendix G. An inspection decal is valid for 12 months after the month specified on the decal. ¹ M.S. § 169.451 ₂

Interstate Carriers

The following vehicles, when operated by motor carriers engaged in interstate commerce, are required to have annual inspections:

- Vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross combination weight rating, or gross vehicle weight or gross combination weight, whichever is greater, over 10,000 pounds;
- Vehicles designed to transport 16 or more passengers, including the driver;
- Vehicles designed to transport more than 8 passengers (including the driver) for compensation; and,
- Vehicles used to transport HM of a type or quantity that requires the vehicle to be placarded.

A vehicle used in interstate commerce (as described above) which is not of a size or type requiring a Minnesota annual inspection must be inspected annually by a qualified inspector. The vehicle must carry documentation of the inspection. The documentation may be an inspection report² or other forms of documentation, such as a sticker or decal, which contains the date of inspection, carrier's name and address, a vehicle ID number, and certification that the vehicle passed the inspection in accordance with FMCSRs 49 CFR 396.17.

Interstate Inspector Qualifications

A motor carrier must ensure that the individual(s) performing an annual inspection is qualified. The inspector must:

- Understand the inspection criteria and be able to identify defective components;
- Be knowledgeable of and have mastered the methods, procedures, tools, and equipment used when performing an inspection; and,
- Be capable of performing an inspection by reason of experience, training, or both. This includes:
 - Successfully completing a state or federal sponsored training program or having a certificate from a state or Canadian province which qualifies the person to perform CMV safety inspections; or,

- Having a combination of training and/or experience totaling at least one year. Such training and/or experience may consist of:
 - Participation in a truck manufacturer-sponsored training program or similar commercial training program designed to train students in truck operation and maintenance;
 - Experience as a mechanic or inspector in a motor carrier maintenance program;
 - Experience as a mechanic or inspector in truck maintenance at a commercial garage, fleet leasing company, or similar facility; or,
 - Experience as a commercial vehicle inspector for the federal government, a state, or a province.

The motor carrier must retain evidence of an inspector's qualifications for the times the individual is performing annual motor vehicle inspections for the carrier, and for one year thereafter. However, motor carriers do not have to maintain documentation of inspector qualifications for those inspections performed either as part of a state periodic inspection program or at the roadside as part of a random roadside inspection program. Questions pertaining to the MN annual inspection program should be directed to the Minnesota State Patrol's Commercial Vehicle Section at 651-405-6196.

¹ M.S. § 169.451

² 49 CFR 396.21

This Fact Sheet is intended as a resource. It is not intended to explain all the requirements of Minnesota or Federal law. The actual Statutes, Rules and Regulations are recommended as a resource, and can be purchased at the Minnesota Bookstore (phone number 651-297-3000 or 1-800-657-3757). For additional assistance contact the US DOT at 651-291-6150 or MnDOT's Office of Freight and Commercial Vehicle Operations at 651-215-6330. Visit us at www.mndot.gov/cvo.