

# 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. We have 3 separate fact sheets on vehicle maintenance standards that cover systematic maintenance, pre-trip inspections and post trip inspection reports, and annual inspections. This fact sheet addresses annual inspection requirements.

### General Standards

Minnesota has adopted most of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations for Inspection, Repair, and Maintenance found in 49 CFR, Part 396. Minnesota Statutes, Section 169.781 (M.S. § 169.781) contains requirements for annual inspections of vehicles registered in Minnesota and bearing Minnesota license plates.

### Intrastate Carriers Who Must Comply

A carrier who operates a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) with a Minnesota license plate is required to have the vehicle inspected annually. A CMV includes:

- Vehicles or vehicle combinations with a gross vehicle weight (GVW) over 26,000 pounds;
- Vehicles transporting hazardous material (HM) of a type or quantity that requires the vehicle to be placarded;
- Vehicles designed to transport 16 or more passengers, including the driver;<sup>1</sup> and
- Special Transportation Service (STS) vehicles.<sup>2</sup>

A CMV, when inspected by a Minnesota State Patrol certified inspector, must display a current state inspection decal.

**Note:** *A CMV that operates and is inspected outside the state may obtain a Minnesota decal from the Minnesota State Patrol (651-405-6196) if the vehicle has passed an annual federal inspection.*

A CMV does not include a motor vehicle that:

- Is a school bus or Head Start bus displaying a certificate;<sup>3</sup> or
- Is a bus operated by the Metropolitan Council Transit Operation or local transit commission.

### Intrastate Inspection Requirements

The Minnesota State Patrol certifies a motor carrier's mechanic to perform annual vehicle inspections. A carrier also may use certified inspectors from local dealers or garages. Inspector certification is valid for 2 years. For details on inspector certification, contact the State Patrol at 651-405-6196. A certified inspector may purchase inspection decals from Mn/DOT's Office of Freight and Commercial Vehicle Operations for \$2.00 per decal.

An inspector will issue a decal that is valid for 1 year if the vehicle passes an inspection based on the criteria in 49 CFR, Appendix G.

## Interstate Carriers

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

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

A CMV, as described above and is used in interstate commerce (i.e. one that isn't required to have a Minnesota annual inspection), must be inspected annually by a qualified inspector. A CMV must carry documentation of the inspection. The documentation may be an inspection report<sup>4</sup> or other form, like 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 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 1 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 1 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.

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 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 Mn/DOT's Office of Freight and Commercial Vehicle Operations.

<sup>1</sup>Excluding school buses, Head Start buses, or buses operated by the Metropolitan Council or certain local transit commissions.

These vehicles have their own annual inspection requirements.

<sup>2</sup> M.S. § 174.30, subd. 6 (b)

<sup>3</sup> M.S. § 169.451

<sup>4</sup> 49 CFR 396.21



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