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\$3.97 USD

# Friday Safety Brief®

## ← **Road Tests:** *Good Business practice*

Hiring the right person for a particular job is simply "good business". This requires the development of a job description and qualifications for the job. Applicants should possess these qualifications (education, training, experience, etc.) and the employer should verify this information through references and background investigations.

Next, most effective employee selection programs include some type of testing for prospective employees, to determine whether the applicant can demonstrate their ability to perform the job.

The driving job should require the same type of program. In fact, few employers face more potential liability exposures than those who hire people to drive for their company. If the job involves driving, it can cost companies more than almost any other type of employment.

Don't take it for granted that an applicant can safely operate the equipment he/she is being hired to drive. Make road tests one of the most important parts of your driver selection/qualification process. Develop a road test route that includes as many of the necessary driving maneuvers as possible, such as 2-lane, 4-lane, right turns, hills, railroad crossing, backing, etc. Even those drivers with lots of experience should be road tested because almost everyone picks up bad habits in driving. These should be corrected and noted. Develop a checklist of the various maneuvers and check off how well the applicant did on the test. Then document the road test and keep it on file. Incidentally, well-qualified employees are almost always impressed with a company who requires testing and who provides training and this, in turn, usually reduces turnover.

## From the Federal Register...

August 15, 2011 **Regulatory Guidance Concerning Household Goods Carriers Requiring Shippers To Sign Blank or Incomplete Documents**

**AGENCY:** Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of Regulatory Guidance.

**SUMMARY:** The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) issues regulatory guidance to clarify the appropriate and intended use of blank or incomplete documents under 49 CFR 375.501(d). Carriers may require shippers to sign incomplete, but not blank, documents so long as the omitted information is limited to: (1) The actual weight of the shipment, in the case of non-binding estimates; and (2) unforeseen charges incurred in transit. This guidance also clarifies that carriers may not require shippers to sign "Revised Written Estimates," "Rescissions of Old Estimate," or other documents authorizing the carrier to rescind an estimate unless the shipper and carrier mutually agree to amend the estimate, and the shipper signs a new estimate before the carrier loads the shipment.

**DATES:** This regulatory guidance is effective on **August 15, 2011**.

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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For more information, click here:

<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2011-08-15/html/2011-20665.htm>

## Reducing Accident Frequency Rates

If your accident investigations and analyses produce some baffling results such as no specific trends in types, conditions, etc. and no specific indicators such as driving records, experience, age, etc. of those who are involved in accidents, you might check into some other possibilities. Those could include new routes, new customers, new freight, new equipment, etc. There may be a change in operations that could be adversely affecting the results. Or, it could simply mean that "refresher" training and "awareness" might be due. Your program might need a bit of revitalizing to renew interest and to keep accident "prevention" methods fresh. It's hard to beat formalized training, but there are also other techniques such as safety "campaigns", slogans, games, newsletters, etc. Another excellent technique is to get drivers involved. You can involve drivers in all of the above, and you'll probably get even better results. Here's another tip: Recognition awards and driver elevation programs can be enhanced by requiring the completion of regular training programs.