

DOT Load Securement Requirements

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The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations that went into effect on January 1, 2004 change the methods in which we secure loads of virtually all types when transporting on public highways. In my travels throughout the state following the implementation of this rule, it is obvious that compliance with these rule changes has not been 100 percent.

The vehicle types specifically addressed are straight trucks, truck tractors, semi trailers, pull trailers, and pole trailers, all equipment that contractors would normally operate. The intent of the rule is to eliminate loss of the load or parts thereof, and to prevent the shifting of cargo affecting stability of the power unit or trailer.

The rules governing load securement can be located at 393.5 through 393.134 in the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations. The content of the rule is extensive, and for our purposes here I will identify the most common applications.

First of all, tie downs (cables, chains, straps) must be capable of providing a downward force of 20 percent of the weight of the article to prevent vertical movement. All load-securing devices must meet the requirements in 393.102. No knots in tie downs and securing devices. Devices shall be placed inboard of rub rails if practicable. Edge protectors MUST be used if devices are subject to cutting or abrasion.

In general, all cargo must be immobilized or secured; cargo placed beside each other must be in contact to prevent shifting; cargo that can roll must have wedges, chocks, or cradles; and the minimum-rated strength of tie down devices must equal 50 percent of the weight of the article or group of articles it is intended to secure.

Location of commodity-specific rules that define acceptable practices:

393.116 Logs & Poles

393.118 Lumber & Building Products

393.120 Metal Coils

393.122 Paper Rolls

393.124 Concrete Pipe

393.126 Containers

393.128 Vehicles & Equipment < 10,000#

393.130 Vehicles & Equipment > 10,000#

393.132 Flattened or crushed vehicles

393.134 Roll-off Containers

393.136 Large Boulders > 11,000# or 2cu meter

Specifically addressing; 393.130 Vehicles & Equipment > 10,000#

These vehicles must have four independent points of securement, all accessories and attachments shall be grounded and secured, articulating equipment must be secured either by a brace or additional securement, and vehicles that have the ability to rotate must be secured to prevent rotation.

Copies of the federal regulations referred to can be obtained from ODOT Motor Carrier Transportation Division or can be accessed on the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration website, www.fmcsa.dot.gov.

If you would like assistance in implementation of these rules, contact your AGC Safety and Loss Control Consultant for assistance.

