



CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

POLICY STATEMENT

POLICY NO. E&C - 31
April 8, 2011

SUBJECT: Backing of a State Vehicle

This policy applies to all Department employees operating State vehicles. All vehicle operators are responsible for understanding and adhering to these rules and regulations. Compliance with this policy will result in safer operations for all involved. Violation will result in increased accidents and injuries and also discipline for those involved. The policy is as follows:

1. Types of Vehicles Subject to the Policy

- A. Any Department vehicle which does not have full vision around vehicle or area. This also includes standard automobiles which do not have full vision because of cargo, etc.
- B. Survey trucks that have rear view obstructed by equipment box, etc.
- C. All dump trucks, including permanently-mounted jets.
- D. Rack body trucks.
- E. Bucket trucks.
- F. Sweepers.
- G. Van trucks.
- H. Pickup trucks only when rear view is obstructed by equipment, hydraulic tailgate, towing equipment, cargo, etc.
- I. Low-bed trailers.
- J. Centerline paint machine trucks.

- K. Payloaders - While operating back and forth at work sites such as State sand piles or in work areas protected by traffic control, payloaders will generally have priority over all vehicle and pedestrian traffic in the area and will not require a helper for every backing movement. However, in those instances the payload operator must still exercise extreme caution and good judgement and will be held responsible for the safe operation of the payload. In instances other than those noted above, a helper will be required for backing.

2. Operator's Responsibilities

- A. Avoid backing whenever you can. When parking at the curb, allow sufficient clearance to pull out without backing. Avoid turning into any place where it is necessary to back into traffic.
- B. Backing into intersections or over pedestrian crosswalks should be avoided.
- C. If possible, continue forward for a reasonable distance until you find a safe place to turn around without backing.
- D. Avoid getting yourself into a position where you have to back without a helper.
- E. Have guidance if you must back. If you have no helper, get out and physically check the rear of the vehicle to see if it is clear and then back as soon as possible after sounding your horn.
- F. Warn anyone in the area that you will be backing up.
- G. It is the driver's responsibility to determine conditions and clearance before getting into the vehicle, but also to continue to be cautious while backing.
- H. Drivers will not accept guidance from an employee while that employee is inside the vehicle, dump body, or on the cab steps.
- I. If the helper decides to check for obstructions on the blind side of the vehicle, stop the vehicle while the helper is checking. If these conditions cannot be met, an additional helper shall be used.
- J. The driver of a vehicle is responsible for all actions of the vehicle and all personnel in the vehicle.
- K. If the driver loses sight of his/her back-up helper during the backing process, he/she must stop the vehicle immediately, and wait to re-establish communication with the helper. If the operator cannot re-establish communications with the helper within a few seconds, the operator must secure the truck and then exit the truck and look for the helper.

3. Helper's Responsibilities

- A. In any situation where an employee is requested by the operator to guide him in a backing situation, the employee must render assistance. If the employee refuses to assist without good cause, he/she will be subject to disciplinary action.
- B. While giving guidance to a backing vehicle, the preferred position for the helper to stand would be on the ground at the left rear of the vehicle. However, in some instances, if the helper would be exposed to significant danger at that position, it is acceptable for the helper to back the vehicle from the passenger side rear of the vehicle. It is still essential that the helper stand far enough behind the vehicle to observe the backing path and any obstructions, including pedestrians, and also allow for sufficient stopping distance of the truck in an emergency. The helper and the driver must clearly establish in the beginning on which side of the vehicle the helper will stand. If the helper must switch sides during the backing process, the helper must signal the driver to stop the truck. Once the truck has stopped, the helper must clearly communicate the intended position change to the driver and receive the driver's acknowledgement of the intended position change. The helper must keep an eye on the rear of the truck as he/she walks to the other side. Once safely re-positioned, the helper must re-establish contact with the driver, and then signal the driver to resume backing.
- C. Use hand signals - not voice.
- D. While backing the truck, the helper will remain in full view of the driver AT ALL TIMES. If the helper is going to move out of sight of the driver, he/she must have the driver stop the vehicle first. The helper will not motion the driver to begin backing until the helper is safely positioned, and communication has been clearly re-established.

4. Supervisor's Responsibilities

- A. Although it is the responsibility of our drivers to obey Departmental rules, it is also the responsibility of our supervisors to enforce them.
- B. When an observation is made and there is evidence that Departmental procedures have not been followed, the employee shall be notified by the supervisor at the time of the infraction or as soon as possible thereafter. If it is determined that the Department Backing Procedures have been violated, appropriate disciplinary action shall be taken. Depending on the circumstances, this action may involve the driver, his/her helper, or supervisor.
- C. The degree of discipline issued for individual violations will depend on the severity of the backing infraction. The minimum level of discipline for an initial violation will be a two (2) day suspension. More severe discipline will be issued for repeated violations, or those involving property or vehicle damage or personal injury. Such increased discipline could include lengthier suspensions, demotions, unsatisfactory service ratings, or termination of employment.

5. Vehicles Backing Across Limited Access Highway Ramps

It shall be the policy of the Department of Transportation that no vehicle covered in this policy shall back across Limited Access Highway Entrance and Exit Ramps unless the following criteria are met:

1. Such operations are within an established workzone and all other Backing Policy requirements are in place; or
2. When such Limited Access Highway Ramp is closed to traffic; or
3. Under emergency conditions with the express authorization of the supervisor (Crew Leader or above).

(This Policy Statement abolishes Policy Statement No. E&H.O -34 dated May 1, 1998)

James P. Redeker
Acting Commissioner

