

utah trucking

UTAH'S VOICE IN TRUCKING

2015
UTAH TRUCKING ASSOCIATION
AWARDS
BANQUET

FINANCING
A COMMERCIAL TRUCK
5 QUESTIONS TO ASK

TRUCKING EFFICIENCY
WORKS TO IMPROVE
FUEL EFFICIENCY

PROTECTING YOURSELF DURING WINTER TRIPS

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CHRISTENSEN
& MARTINEAU

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The number of vehicles on the highways during the winter months increases dramatically as many families travel to be with others for the holidays. The Department of Transportation estimates that the number of long-distance trips (to and from a destinations 50 miles or more from home) increases by 54% over the Thanksgiving weekend, and by 23% during the Christmas and New Year's Day period. At the same time of this increase, highway weather conditions can be at their worst.

With the increase in travel and the poor weather conditions, it comes as no surprise that many motorists are involved in serious traffic accidents during the winter months. In 2013, AAA estimated that the nearly 28,000 Americans would be seriously injured and 250 Americans would die during the end-of-year holiday travel period. In order to ensure that as many people as possible can arrive safely at their destinations, trucking companies and drivers should be prepared to navigate through the increased highway traffic amid the sometimes less-than optimal weather conditions. Other motorists should also do what they can to safely share the highways with trucks. In an effort to help motorists stay safe on the highways during the holiday season, the American Trucking Associations released travel tips that include warning motorists about cutting in front of trucks and staying out of a truck's blind spot. It also warned motorists to be aware of poor weather conditions which may make traveling more time-consuming and difficult.

Many times, despite their best efforts, truck drivers are involved in serious winter accidents. In those circumstances, the drivers should be ready to follow their company's policies and procedures with regards to seeking assistance from emergency responders, immediately reporting the incident to the proper person within the company, and managing evidence that may relevant to the cause and effect of the accident. Trucking companies should adopt specific policies and procedures to ensure that accidents are properly reported and evidence is preserved. The failure to timely report or preserve evidence could make it more difficult to defend against a

lawsuit arising from an accident that your driver did not cause. If there is any question as to what steps should be taken to protect the driver and the company, make sure you ask your lawyer for guidance.



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