



# TIMBER TALK

*Your Voice for South Carolina Timber Harvesting*

APRIL 2020

## AS WE SEE IT ... APRIL 2020

### FORESTRY: MEETING ESSENTIAL NEEDS DURING A GLOBAL PANDEMIC



By: Nick Smith – Healthy Forests,  
Healthy Communities



COVID-19 is challenging our society in many ways. Today we appreciate the men and women who are serving on the front lines of this epidemic and making personal sacrifices to provide care to those in need. Judging by shortages of medical supplies and many household items, the epidemic should give us an appreciation for the basic resources we depend on- and those who provide them. Foresters and loggers practiced social distancing long before the pandemic response required it. But there are good reasons why the U.S. Department of Homeland Security identified the forest sector as an essential critical infrastructure workforce as the nation responds to COVID-19. Those who harvest, manufacture and transport wood-based products are helping ensure our medical professionals, first-responders and the rest of us have

the essentials we need to weather this crisis. These essentials include, but are not limited to:

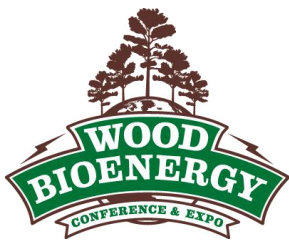
- Masks
- Filters
- Tissue papers
- Disinfecting wipes
- Cleaning products
- Cellulose-based pill fillers
- Latex gloves and other protective products
- Wood pallets to move food, medical supplies and other critical goods
- Lumber and plywood for emergency structures and shelters
- Fuel for energy production and heating

We are all in this together. We all have a role to play, even if that is simply staying home and staying healthy to protect others. Our forests and those who work in the woods are also doing their jobs, and hopefully our society will remember our important connection to this natural resource long after our nation has recovered.

[www.amloggers.com](http://www.amloggers.com)

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## American Loggers Council Leader Provides Big Picture of Loggers

**D**anny Ductor executive president of the American Loggers Council, spoke on the Health of the Logging Ranks and Staying Ahead of Environmental Encroachment at the Wood Bioenergys Conference & Expo. Ductor said ALC and its members appreciate the promotion of wood for bioenergy, whether in the form of a pellet, biochar, cogeneration or biofuels, because it provides new markets to participate in.



Environmentally, he said most loggers just keep doing what they have been doing for most of their careers, practicing sustainable harvesting practices that includes caring for the land, the flora and fauna on the landscape, and taking pride in their professionalism and ability to overcome change.

He noted that environmentalists have taken well intentioned laws such as the National Environmental Policy Act, the Endangered Species Act and the Clean Water Act and have abused them in liberal courtrooms and negotiated settlements with federal agencies as a means to paralyze the industry, especially on federal lands.

"We have also seen attempts to stymie operations of private lands through a host of misinformation meant to stop the wood energy markets from developing," Ductor said.

Ductor reported on the results of the ALC 2019 Logger Survey, which received 580 responses nationwide. He said (pre COVID-19) nearly 35% of the loggers indicated they were financially worse off than they were a year ago and 16% were better off. A whopping 97% said it is virtually impossible to replace or add new hires to their operations, and 73% said the wages and benefits were not sufficient to attract the right kind of workers to the industry.

Loggers ranked finding quality drivers, trucking rates and insurance costs as the three most important impacts in being able to move wood from the landing to the mill. Insurance, equipment costs, trucking and labor ranked one through four on the list of increased operational costs.

With a choice of seven items, another question asked loggers to rank to what extent landowners or mills (or the clients they work for) valued those seven items: Low logging costs scored highest, followed by consistent production, high production, safety, environmental quality, professionalism and certification.





# Interim Guidance for Implementing Safety Practices for Critical Infrastructure Workers Who May Have Had Exposure to a Person with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19

To ensure continuity of operations of essential functions, CDC advises that critical infrastructure workers may be permitted to continue work following potential exposure to COVID-19, provided they remain asymptomatic and additional precautions are implemented to protect them and the community.

A potential exposure means being a household contact or having close contact within 6 feet of an individual with confirmed or suspected COVID-19. The timeframe for having contact with an individual includes the period of time of 48 hours before the individual became symptomatic.

Critical Infrastructure workers who have had an exposure but remain asymptomatic should adhere to the following practices prior to and during their work shift:

- ▶ **Pre-Screen:** Employers should measure the employee's temperature and assess symptoms prior to them starting work. Ideally, temperature checks should happen before the individual enters the facility.
- ▶ **Regular Monitoring:** As long as the employee doesn't have a temperature or symptoms, they should self-monitor under the supervision of their employer's occupational health program.
- ▶ **Wear a Mask:** The employee should wear a face mask at all times while in the workplace for 14 days after last exposure. Employers can issue facemasks or can approve employees' supplied cloth face coverings in the event of shortages.
- ▶ **Social Distance:** The employee should maintain 6 feet and practice social distancing as work duties permit in the workplace.
- ▶ **Disinfect and Clean work spaces:** Clean and disinfect all areas such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment routinely.

If the employee becomes sick during the day, they should be sent home immediately. Surfaces in their workspace should be cleaned and disinfected. Information on persons who had contact with the ill employee during the time the employee had symptoms and 2 days prior to symptoms should be compiled. Others at the facility with close contact within 6 feet of the employee during this time would be considered exposed.

Employers should implement the recommendations in the Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 to help prevent and slow the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace. Additional information about identifying critical infrastructure during COVID-19 can be found on the DHS CISA website or the CDC's specific First Responder Guidance page.

## INTERIM GUIDANCE

This interim guidance pertains to critical infrastructure workers, including personnel in 16 different sectors of work including:

- ▶ Federal, state, & local law enforcement
- ▶ 911 call center employees
- ▶ Fusion Center employees
- ▶ Hazardous material responders from government and the private sector
- ▶ Janitorial staff and other custodial staff
- ▶ Workers – including contracted vendors – in food and agriculture, critical manufacturing, informational technology, transportation, energy and government facilities

## ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- ▶ Employees should not share headsets or other objects that are near mouth or nose.
- ▶ Employers should increase the frequency of cleaning commonly touched surfaces.
- ▶ Employees and employers should consider pilot testing the use of face masks to ensure they do not interfere with work assignments.
- ▶ Employers should work with facility maintenance staff to increase air exchanges in room.
- ▶ Employees should physically distance when they take breaks together. Stagger breaks and don't congregate in the break room, and don't share food or utensils.





## TEAM SAFE TRUCKING RELEASES TIMELY COURSE COVID-19 TRAINING

April 17, 2020

**TEAM Safe Trucking** announces the release of a free, up to date COVID-19 Course designed to give forestry transportation professionals vital information regarding signs, symptoms and precautions in order to protect themselves, their coworkers and their families.

TEAM Safe Trucking is a non-profit that develops online, app based interactive safety training courses for the Forestry Transportation Industry and Supply Chain. "Keeping our forestry transportation professionals as safe as possible, strengthens our forest products supply chain" says Miranda Gowell, TEAM Safe Trucking Safety Director/Special Project Manager. "It's our mission to give our professionals up to date, vital information to keep them and the general public as safe as possible."

The TEAM Safe Trucking COVID-19 Course takes approximately 20 minutes to complete, and can be taken online via personal computer, or through our convenient App downloaded onto a smart phone.

In this short, easily executed course, professional drivers can gain the following knowledge:

- How to recognize COVID-19 symptoms
- How to report symptoms
- Safety tips for working in a COVID-19 world
- Proper hand washing techniques
- How to properly sanitize surfaces on tractor trailers

This training will assist employers and independent contractors by providing the knowledge to educate forestry transportation professionals in order to keep them, their coworkers and the general public as safe as possible. TEAM Safe Trucking's COVID-19 Course offers procedures to implement to help drivers take proper precautions when dealing with this dynamic health hazard.

The TEAM Safe Trucking COVID-19 and other valuable courses can be accessed online for free by going to [teamsafetrucking.com](https://teamsafetrucking.com) to sign up. Once online, drivers can download the Talentlms App, then type "teamsafe" in for the domain and enter a username and password, created online, which gives access through the driver's smartphone. For help with this process or to learn more, call Miranda Gowell at 207-841-0250 or via email at [Miranda.gowell@teamsafetrucking.com](mailto:Miranda.gowell@teamsafetrucking.com).

TEAM Safe Trucking has published 25 courses to date for the Forestry Transportation Community and Supply Chain. The additional courses are available through TEAM Safe Trucking's Educational Sponsors, or by becoming a supporter of TEAM Safe Trucking as an Education sponsor.

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**Commentary by Michael J. Hicks, Ph.D.**

## **ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTY SURROUNDING COVID-19**



**P**recautionary steps to stop the spread of Coronavirus have obviously affected the world's economy. I use the term 'affected' instead of 'hurt' because this is a policy choice between two bad options. I think it is clear we chose the least damaging option. Over the past few weeks, the center in which I work, as well as others around the nation, have attempted to model the economic, fiscal and labor market effects of this less painful option. As with any economic analysis, there is uncertainty about the depth and persistence of the path we have chosen. The source of some of this uncertainty is obvious, but much is not. As we look forward to more normal economic times, it is helpful to think about what we cannot yet know, and what this means for our projections about the economy.

The first and most obvious source of uncertainty is just how long this first onslaught of the Coronavirus might be. Right now, the economic shutdown most states have ordered is designed to preserve lives. However, even if we manage to keep the death toll down to an astonishing 100,000 this spring, it is pretty clear the economy will not magically rebound back to the pre-COVID-19 levels.

As long as this disease can run largely unchecked through our populations, we will experience a much different level and type of economic activity. Until we develop a vaccine, a robust treatment or broad immunity, a significant level of reduced economic activity must be expected.

Many economists, myself included, believe a short duration shutdown would not leave lasting scars on the economy. With a well-designed relief bill, most businesses would restart, displaced work-

ers would find new employment and government services would continue unabated. However, the notion that this will be a brief shutdown seems increasingly improbable. A longer shutdown, even one with a known end date, introduces more uncertainty to our economic conditions.

The type of economic disruption we now experience falls unevenly upon American families. I don't mean to suggest that this is easy for anyone. A family can face minimal financial disruption and still bear great burdens of sorrow, fear and stress. But, economically, COVID-19 largely strikes at small business owners and employees working in restaurants, retail, hotels and motels and in other leisure sectors. Workers in these sectors are generally less well-paid and well-educated than the typical American.

Uncertainty about jobs persisting after COVID-19 will also weigh heavily on the strength of the recovery. If the disease suppresses these sectors for a year or more, we should anticipate much expanded automation of service sector jobs, and loss of many smaller businesses. Prospects for works and business owners largely depend on their ability to improve educational attainment in preparation for better jobs. The lengthier the COVID-19 shut downs, the more likely will be the permanent loss of lower wage service sector jobs.

There is little certainty over the size of the effect of school closings on the long-term prospects of the economy. The direction is pretty clear. School closings pull more than 7.0 percent of adult workers out of the labor force. That alone would push the unemployment rate to Great Recession peak. Worse still, is the share of students not accessing education. As many as one third of American students will have missed five months of school in 2020. We know that learning losses over a short summer are large; five months of missed school can affect a lifetime for many children. Most troubling here is the likelihood that the most affected kids are those already facing challenges in schooling.

It is a smaller share of the economy, but this fall will likely force the closure of many American colleges. Most at-risk are those small, private institutions that are already relatively expensive and have little capacity for online learning. The spread of the disease will also limit international travel, which will have outsized impacts on higher education.

*(Continued on page 6)*



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The productivity impacts of the current anti-COVID-19 measures are uncertain. We will surely find that some tasks, and maybe some entire occupations, are easily performed at home. Others require an in-person presence. A year or more of mostly work-at-home will change the way we use urban space and where families can live.

Finally, the conduct of business is a complex and varied affair. Institutional knowledge, the skills developed from interacting with other workers and the relationships with customers and suppliers are not easily built from scratch. This makes a long closure damaging to businesses ranging from a food truck to a technology firm.

These few uncertain effects imply a high variance in economic forecasts for the coming months and years. While a quick rebound in economic activity is certainly possible, so too are several protracted and damaging years of slow, or even negative, growth. Readers should brace themselves for many different predictions, based on only modestly different as-

sumptions about the duration of the downturn, and its affect on families, businesses and institutions.



*Michael J. Hicks, PhD, is the director of the Center for Business and Economic Research and the George and Frances Ball distinguished professor of economics in the Miller College of Business at Ball State University. Hicks earned doctoral and master's degrees in economics*

*from the University of Tennessee and a bachelor's degree in economics from Virginia Military Institute. He has authored two books and more than 60 scholarly works focusing on state and local public policy, including tax and expenditure policy and the impact of Wal-Mart on local economies.*

## Employer Liability Protection Crucial to Re-Open the Economy

PRESS RELEASE | American Tort Reform Association (ATRA), April 21, 2020

**P**resident Trump is considering employers' liability concerns surrounding the planned re-opening of U.S. businesses in the wake of COVID-19.

ATRA is pleased that President Trump is taking into consideration the issue of employers' liability concerns surrounding the planned re-opening of businesses across the country while the nation continues to address the coronavirus pandemic.

The administration, Congress and individual states should foster a reliable and predictable business climate that will allow companies to re-open for business without fear of potential legal repercussions should an employee contract COVID-19 while at work.

Employer liability is an important topic that must be addressed now, before urging businesses to re-open without specific guidelines or clarity on what sort of liability they may face.

ATRA's policy recommendations and liability concerns were relayed to the Trump Administration, Congress, and state government leaders in the early weeks of the outbreak, and we have since issued a comprehensive white paper detailing those policy prescriptions.

We (ATRA) look forward to the continuation of these critical conversations while President Trump works with Congress and the states and proceeds with his "Opening America Again" plan.

**SCTPA Comments:** SCTPA is a member of the SC Coalition for Lawsuit Reform. The Coalition is working to enact further tort reforms in South Carolina. Tort reform is difficult to get passed when 30% of the SC House of Representatives is attorneys and 50% of the SC Senate is attorneys. It's a slow process to enact meaningful tort reform. There are discussions in Washington, DC regarding another stimulus package. Details at this point are sketchy. And there is discussion to include liability protections for business, medical professionals, front line professionals and others impacted by the pandemic in the package.

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## FOREST RESOURCES ASSOCIATION

The Forest Resources Association (FRA) represents diverse segments of the wood fiber supply chain, promoting forest products industry members' ability to compete successfully in the global marketplace.

### Woods To Mill

March 5, 2020

## ARE WE PLAYING MUSICAL CHAIRS WITH LOGGING CAPACITY (AND IF WE ARE, WHAT HAPPENS?)

By Eric Kingsley  
FRA Northeast Region Coordinator

I got a call from a logger a few mornings ago, and the conversation has stuck with me. This logger – a larger contractor with multiple crews, millions invested in equipment, and a great reputation with landowners – was concerned about where the next generation of employees will come from. Of course, that's not news – we know that workforce issues are a growing challenge for loggers, truckers, and mills.

What caught me off-guard is when he told me he had run the numbers, and it was much more beneficial to his business to go out and use cash to entice an employee from another logging crew than bring someone on and provide them on-the-job training. The productivity lost while someone learns to safely and efficiently operate logging equipment is a cost to the logger, and it can be quantified. So can the cost of looking at another company's employees and paying to move them onto your crew. I didn't ask the logger to back this up with data, but I know him well enough to know that he knows his numbers, probably better than most of his peers.

What this tells me is that if he and his peers act rationally, they are playing a game of musical chairs with logging capacity, where every time someone leaves the industry there are just fewer loggers. What's rational in the short-term can be devastating in the long-term, and it's easy to see how this leads to a severe lack of logging capacity.

At the same time, while it's against the logger's short-term interest to hire and train a new employee, it is clearly in the forest industry's long-term interest for him to do so. Both the landowners he harvests for and the mills that he supplies need a stable,

maybe even growing workforce to provide a sustainable supply of wood for decades to come.

I've mentioned this dilemma to a few folks, who have all told me some version of "don't worry, the market will work this out." I'm trained as an economist and I couldn't agree more – the market will work this out.

However, I think most folks think that means that as logging capacity gets constrained logging revenues will rise; loggers will have more revenue and be able to hire and train new employees. If you were paying attention above, you'll know that rising revenues might make the problem worse – the loss of productivity from a new employee becomes a bigger problem, not a smaller one.

There are many ways that the market can "solve" this issue, but they may not be ones we like. Not enough loggers, mills running out of wood and landowners unable to get a harvesting crew are all possible solutions that a well-functioning market could bring. Functioning markets can have all sorts of outcomes, and assuming that it's the one you want is always risky.

I don't know the solution to the "it's a better financial move to hire an employee away from another logging crew than to hire and train a new employee", but I know it's a problem. And if we don't think about it, and talk about it, it's a problem that will get worse. I don't pretend to have a solution, but would love to hear your thoughts. I also know this is an issue in the Northeast, but don't know if other parts of the country are seeing the same dynamic.

If you are part of – or rely upon – the forest industry supply chain and have some ideas, I would appreciate hearing from you at [ekingsley@forestresources.org](mailto:ekingsley@forestresources.org). I'll take some of the comments I receive and publish them in a future blog (I won't post your name or company, but will say what part of the supply chain and where you are located; e.g., "Landowner, Lakes States"). Thinking about this problem (if it is a problem) and solutions (if any exist) is probably the next step, and I look forward to that dialogue.





## FOREST RESOURCES ASSOCIATION

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**Woods To Mill**

### RESPONSES TO "ARE WE PLAYING MUSICAL CHAIRS WITH LOGGING CAPACITY"

By Eric Kingsley  
FRA Northeast Region Consultant

Last month, I wrote about the challenges of logging capacity. If you haven't read Are We Playing Musical Chairs with Logging Capacity (And If We Are, What Happens?), you might want to before reading further. In the blog, I asked readers for their thoughts and received page after page of thoughtful responses. It is clear that logging capacity – and workforce issues more generally – are an issue across the industry. I am grateful for everyone who took the time to share their thoughts with me.

Here's some of what I heard:

"Unfortunately, the dynamic you describe has been the way for most industries. The "best" financed firms, those with the deepest pockets, always try to hire away talent from less well-financed firms. It is the smallest, newest companies who shoulder the burden of finding unskilled talent and suffer the instability of poor performance. Those operators who succeed look for a better job, with nicer, newer equipment, and trade up. Some loggers buy new equipment and trade it at two to three years while others thrive on used equipment and invest in maintenance. This is the flip side of the coin, with some loggers forced to rely on less expensive, less productive employees and training them on the job. Your contact is right, it's extremely expensive to suffer poor production. Ironically, the larger companies are probably better positioned to absorb the negative impact a starting employee will have on their production. Poor performing companies can't always afford the talented employees needed to

right the ship."

Industry Analyst, Southeast

"I'd say that this is a game every business plays. When hiring a new forester, we weigh the options of either:

- hiring experience with better productivity than a new graduate, and who may bring new thinking and perspectives;
- hiring a new graduate, who would be less expensive and less productive, but that we can train from the start to be [a fit for our company].

The decision is driven by many things, including expected duties and the experience profile of my group at the time. Unlike a logging contractor, I don't have new hires at the controls of million-dollar machines, but they make decisions that add up to millions rather quickly.

You are correct in pointing out that loggers, like any well-run business, will make decisions that maximize their income. Right now, that means frequently hiring experienced operators. If that process continues, experienced help should get more expensive, making trainees more economically viable."

Land Manager, Northeast

"I've been in this industry for 35 years and worked with loggers in some form or fashion during this entire time. There are a few truths that are self-evident:

- Labor (both skilled and unskilled) will flow to the highest and best opportunities.
- Millennials are increasingly disinterested in manual work because they are unaccustomed. They are not lazy or passive, just unaccustomed...and will, therefore, avoid the environment unless the environment changes. You must first create or spur interest to increase participation...i.e. marketing the opportunity that is tailored to the audience.

Loggers are overwhelmed today and have an endless list of business accountabilities that they struggle

*(Continued on page 10)*

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gle, already, to attend to. Most of this work is contained within themselves or, historically, their families, who are primarily captive to the cause and have a unique familial interest. This, too, is beginning to fade. Assuming that a logger can continually solicit and train successive employees is not reasonable. How many have human resource officers?

This is an industry-wide problem that can be associated with manufacturing wood products just as well as logging. The problem does not start and end in the woods nor do the answers.

Although we represent two different stations in the supply chain, the starting place for us both, categorically, is the same.

You begin with education. The most effective programs are based in secondary school grades, long before the students (employees) graduate from high schools. The community educational systems must place an emphasis on technical training and simulation. We have to build both skills and familiarity to grow an accustomed base and interest. Enter our community colleges and technical schools. These institutions can and will implant dual enrollment, skills-based programs in just about any high school across our country. But first, we must want them. Far too many have an unfounded and flawed belief that every student in America should go to a university for study.

What we should be saying is that every student in America needs to be fit for work. That work may include medicine, law, science, electrical programming, plumbing or logging. There's a role for every single productive student in our free and open economy... and that's a fact. We simply have to build acquaintances and expertise with the profession. And we must not be afraid to introduce the work of our industry to

a young and dynamic generation."

Sawmill, Southeast

"Our focus should not just be on how to train new loggers with harvesting skills, but rather how to remove the barriers...so they can grow their businesses. The allure of logging for young rural men is to be able to run their own businesses and be their own bosses. They are willing to work very hard if it translates into becoming successful business owners. If they can establish this, then they will convince their high school buddies to come work for them and the training will be natural."

Pulp and Paper Mill, Lakes States

"What we need is workforce development to bring young employees into the logging and trucking profession. It will take understanding that lifestyle considerations are far different for many entry-level workers. We have had to modify our approach to training, working conditions and demands to meet the expectations of young foresters we hire. While a different set of parameters, including the college debt implications that young foresters have, entry-level logging staff have a different set of goals in many instances than their older brethren.

I also would suggest that the availability of financing for equipment and opportunities to support training is crucial as well if we hope to maintain a viable and experienced workforce...The enormous cost of harvesting and trucking equipment has made entering the logging profession far more difficult than when I started over 40 years ago."



## ***Timber Talk***

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April 2020

## UNDERSTANDING THE “INTERCONNECTEDNESS” OF THE FOREST PRODUCTS INDUSTRY SUPPLY CHAIN

By David West | Wood Supply Chain Specialist and Southwide Region Manager

Most, if not all states have designated the forest products industry as “essential services” in our battle with the COVID-19 pandemic. It is easy to understand how towel and tissue, packaging and absorbent products are necessary in today’s circumstances. But in recent conversations I have had with non-forest industry acquaintances, they have questioned me on why a sawmill, for example, is considered essential. At that point, I was able to explain to them how the supply chain works, and how each segment is dependent on the others.

But even when you are deemed essential, you must have a market for your products. Many of our markets - particularly those related to housing - have been negatively impacted by the pandemic, and quite a bit of downtime is occurring or planned, which in turn disrupts the supply chain.

In Washington State, while the forest products industry was designated essential, most construction was not. With construction being the primary outlet for lumber and other solid-wood products, demand has fallen quickly, resulting in downtime for many facilities. Concerning the pulp and paper industry in the Western region, the very facilities that make the towel and tissue, packaging, etc. that we need are much more heavily dependent on residuals from solid-wood mills than other regions in the US, so the downtime is much more impactful to them.

Industry organizations in the West have done a good job of trying to educate the key decision makers and media on this issue. A great example of the fruits of their efforts is an editorial from The Seattle Times. As my coworker Eric Kingsley remarked, “This is well done, well explained and well-reasoned. It is a pleasure to see this from the editorial board of an urban newspaper.” I agree. Please read the editorial below.

The Seattle Times editorial is titled, “Resume residential construction to keep mills, and toilet paper, going.”

# Essential Services

# AMERICAN LOGGERS COUNCIL (ALC) PROGRAM DETAILS



Peterbilt is pleased to offer the American Loggers Council (ALC) the following rebate incentive:

## Program Details:

- Members receive a \$2,000 **CASH** rebate on Models 567, 367, or 365.
- Limited to three (3) rebates per member for calendar year 2020.
- ALC members must be in good standing for at least 90 days prior to taking retail delivery.
- ALC members must take retail delivery between **January 1, 2020** and **December 31, 2020**.  
Retail delivery is defined as the time the ownership of the truck is transferred from the Peterbilt dealer to the customer.

## Other Details:

- Request for customer rebate incentives must be **received by ALC** within 90 days of taking retail delivery.
- Allow 6 to 8 weeks for check to process.
- This program may not be combined with any other rebate offers from Peterbilt.







# Interstate

TIRE SERVICE

**Pelzer,**

**South Carolina**

**888-641-6058**



**K516 Model,  
11R22.5 30/32nds - \$237 Ea\***

**K516 Model,  
11R24.5 30/32nds - \$253 Ea\***

**All Tires Are →  
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**ah13rn**



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**K216 Model  
295/75R22.5 • 19/32nds  
← All Tires Are  
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**\*While Supplies Last**

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

SCTPA welcomes our New Members & Restart Members.

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**Shealy's Truck Center, Inc. is your Western Star Log Truck dealer located in Columbia, SC.**

**Contact:** David Shealy ■ Office 803-771-0176 ■ Cell 803-467-7605

Jonathan Myers ■ Office 803-744-3711 ■ Cell 864-436-0198.

**SC TIMBER PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION ACTIVE MEMBERS CAN RECEIVE UP TO A \$ 2,000 DISCOUNT.**



## SCALISE, NEWHOUSE LEAD 130 MEMBERS TO SUPPORT NEPA MODERNIZATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. — On March 4, 2020, House Republican Whip Steve Scalise (R-LA) and Rep. Dan Newhouse (R-WA) led a joint House Energy Action Team (HEAT) and Congressional Western Caucus letter signed by 130 Members in support of the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) efforts to modernize the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

"In our districts across the country, we constantly hear about the opportunities lost when projects are stalled by NEPA's increasingly time consuming and unnecessary red tape," the letter reads. "As we travel throughout our communities, we experience these failures as we encounter crumbling roads and closed-off bridges that may wait years for repair. We all want better roads, stronger bridges, and improved infrastructure, but without NEPA reform that reality is years away."

The letter, spearheaded by Whip Scalise and Rep. Newhouse, is an effort on behalf of the House Energy Action Team and Congressional Western Caucus to encourage and support the Trump Administration's efforts to streamline and modernize NEPA in order to encourage environmental leadership while eliminating the negative effects of permitting delays for critical infrastructure projects in communities across the United States.

The Unlock American Investment Coalition, comprised of 40+ trade associations and organized by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, supports NEPA modernization in order to incentivize American investment in modern, efficient infrastructure and create middle-class sustaining jobs while advancing good environmental stewardship.

"Projects should not take longer to permit than they do to construct," said Marty Durbin, Senior Vice President for Policy at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. "American businesses and labor or-

ganizations from across the economy stand ready to provide the infrastructure our nation needs—from roads and bridges to broadband and renewable energy. However, we won't be able to meet our growing infrastructure challenges without restoring the NEPA permitting process back to its original intent. We're thankful for the support of so many members of Congress and we look forward to the Administration finalizing the new rule without delay."



The letter was signed by Rep. Dan Newhouse (R-WA), House Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA), House Republican Whip and HEAT Co-Chair Steve Scalise (R-LA), House Republican Conference Chair Liz Cheney (R-WY), HEAT Co-Chairs Jeff Duncan (R-SC) and Markwayne Mullin (R-OK), Western Caucus Chairman Paul Gosar, D.D.S. (R-AZ), and Reps. Jodey C. Arrington (R-TX), Greg

Pence (R-IN), Doug Lamborn (R-CO), Bill Flores (R-FL), Randy K. Weber (R-TX), Guy Reschenthaler (R-PA), Troy Balderson (R-OH), Debbie Lesko (R-AZ), Kelly Armstrong (R-ND), Bruce Westerman (R-AR), Michael C. Burgess, M.D. (R-TX), Michael Cloud (R-TX), Larry Buschon, M.D. (R-IN), Tim Walberg (R-MI), Mike Simpson (R-ID), Mike Kelly (R-PA), Greg Gianforte (R-MT), Scott Tipton (R-CO), Tom McClintock (R-CA), Ron Wright (R-TX), Rick W. Allen (R-GA), John Ratcliffe (R-TX), Daniel P. Meuser (R-PA), Alex X. Mooney (R-WV), Pete Olson (R-TX), Kevin Hern (R-OK), Doug LaMalfa (R-CA), Billy Long (R-MO), Blaine Luetkemeyer (R-MO), John Joyce, M.D. (R-PA), Tom Rice (R-SC), Carol D. Miller (R-WV), Mike Johnson (R-LA), Sam Graves (R-MO), Steve Womack (R-AR), Dan Crenshaw (R-TX), Mike Bost (R-IL), Jim Jordan (R-OH), Jim Hagedorn (R-MN), Adam Kinzinger (R-IL), David P. Roe, M.D. (R-TN), Brett Guthrie (R-KY), Tom Cole (R-OK), Jack Bergman (R-MI), Steve Chabot (R-OH), French Hill (R-AR), Virginia Foxx (R-NC), Trent Kelly (R-MS), Andy Barr (R-KY), George Holding (R-NC), Ralph Abraham, M.D. (R-LA), Glenn 'GT' Thompson (R-PA), Louie Gohmert (R-TX), Chris Stewart (R-UT), Garret Graves (R-LA), Russ Fulcher (R-ID), Ralph Norman (R-SC), Earl L. "Buddy" Carter (R-SC), Rob

*(Continued on page 18)*



(Continued from page 17)

Bishop (R-UT), Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA), Frank Lucas (R-OK), Michael Waltz (R-FL), Robert E. Latta (R-OH), David Rouzer (R-NC), Jenniffer Gonzalez-Colon (R-PR), Tim Burchett (R-TN), Don Young (R-AK), Rick Crawford (R-AR), Roger Marshall, M.D. (R-KS), Ken Calvert (CA-42), H. Morgan Griffith (R-VA), Jason Smith (R-MO), Steve King (R-IA), Paul Cook (R-CA), John Moolenaar (R-MI), Bob Gibbs (R-OH), Dusty Johnson (R-SD), Bill Johnson (R-OH), James R. Baird (R-IN), Ken Buck (R-CO), John Curtis (R-UT), Brian Babin (R-TX), Gary Palmer (R-AL), Rodney Davis (R-IL), John Shimkus (R-IL), Greg Walden (R-OR), Andy Biggs (R-AZ), Ted S. Yoho, D.V.M. (R-FL), Roger Williams (R-TX), Robert Aderholt (R-AL), Mark Amodei (R-NV), Neal Dunn (R-FL), Doug Collins (R-GA), Clay Higgins (R-LA), Chuck Fleischmann (R-TN), Daniel Webster (R-FL), Glenn Grothman (R-WI), Scott Perry (R-PA), Barry Loudermilk (R-GA), Susan Brooks (R-IN), Martha Roby (R-AL), Rob Woodall (R-GA), Michael Guest (R-MS), Gus M. Bilirakis (R-FL), John Rose (R-TN), John R. Carter (R-TX), Jody B. Hice (R-GA), John H. Ruther-

ford (R-FL), Ron Estes (R-KS), Fred Keller (R-PA), Ross Spano (R-FL), Steve Watkins (R-KS), Mike Gallagher (R-WI), Adrian Smith (R-NE), James Comer (R-KY), and William Timmons (R-SC).

**Background:** In January, the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to modernize and clarify the regulations of NEPA to facilitate a more efficient, effective, and timely NEPA review process. CEQ has not comprehensively updated its regulations since their promulgation in 1978, more than four decades ago. The proposed amendments in this rulemaking would advance the original goals of CEQ regulations to reduce paperwork and delays of implementations of the policies set forth in NEPA. [Click here to learn more.](#)

**SCTPA Comments:** SC U. S. House of Representatives members who signed the letter are Jeff Duncan, Tom Rice, Ralph Norman and William Timmons. Thanks to these Congressmen for supporting NEPA Reform.

## TRUCKERS COULD TAKE HOME \$25K IN COVID-19 HAZARD PAY UNDER NEW 'HERO' PROPOSAL

By Ashley -April 7, 2020, CDL Life

**S**enate Democrats have proposed a major hazard payout for workers at the front lines of the fight against Coronavirus.

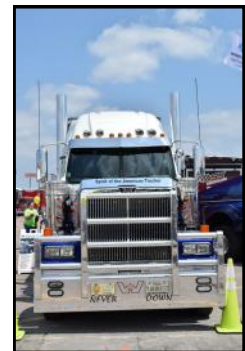
On Tuesday, April 7, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and other Democrats proposed a "Heroes Fund" for workers proving essential services in the U.S. during the Coronavirus pandemic, including workers in the medical field, grocery store workers, pharmacists, and truck drivers.

The fund would allow for the payment of \$25,000 to essential workers who earn less than \$200,000 per year and a \$5,000 payment for those who earn more than \$200,000 per year.

The funding would be provided directly to employers, who would then be responsible for directly paying out workers and providing proof of those payments to the federal government.

Schumer said during a conference call on the "Heroes Fund" proposal, "As the COVID pandemic has reached alarming new levels, our health care system is strained to the max, our economy is strained to the max. Doctors and nurses, medical personnel of all types are putting their lives on the line every single day to fight this disease and save others. And so are people not in the medical profession but in essential services: grocery store workers, truck drivers, drug store workers and pharmacists. For these Americans, working for home is not an option. Social distancing is not an option. We're calling it a 'Heroes Fund' because that's who it's for, our heroes"

Senators are pushing for the hazard pay benefit to be added to a Coronavirus relief bill to be negotiated later this month.





## 2020 Western Star Association Rebate – US ALC Associations

Western Star is proud to support and extend the association rebate for members of the American Loggers Council (ALC) and its affiliates. Dealers can apply the rebate to the truck purchase or process a direct rebate to the customer. ALC Members may qualify for a rebate when they purchase a brand new Western Star 4900 logging service truck; the leading brand in the logging industry.

Members can now enjoy the power and versatility of a Western Star truck, which have been manufactured for higher payloads, better maneuverability, serviceability, and equally important, durability and dependability.

Western Star Trucks reserves the right to terminate this program at any time without notice. Transactions submitted and approved for this offer are subject to audit at any time. Western Star reserves the right to charge back any incentives provided if found that the transaction does not fully meet the program requirements.

### **Rebate amount is based on truck model and configuration:**

- \$3,000 for 4900 model with vehicle service code of A85-012, logging service truck

### **Requirements:**

- **Valid only on vehicle service data code of A85-012, logging service truck.**
- **Valid only on StarQuote pricing.**
- **Not valid with stock truck concession or other program incentive claims.**
- Verification of membership or affiliation status with ALC.
- Association membership must be valid for at least **90 days prior** to retail sold date.
- Trucks must be **new** and never been retail sold regardless of model year or mileage.
- Maximum of **five (5)** trucks per customer/company in a calendar year.
- Rebate claim must be processed within **30 days** of retail sale date.
- No gliders or used trucks are eligible.
- Only one association rebate can be applied per claim per truck.





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# TRIAL LAWYER GREED IN TIME OF NEED

By Victor Schwartz  
April 14, 2020

Many trial lawyers, like most people, are doing everything they can to abate the coronavirus. Others, however, appear to see this pandemic as a major business opportunity. As with other types of litigation, their goal is to find a way to externalize responsibility for someone's disease upon a solvent and ideally "deep-pocketed" business or industry.

When this pandemic runs its course, litigation will likely follow. How much it spreads, much like the coronavirus, remains to be seen. Lawsuits, however, will likely take many forms. They will range from individuals suing thoughtless neighbors who sneezed in public while exhibiting symptoms, to actions against large entities who said or did virtually anything that facilitated the virus's spread. It is only a matter of time until we see daily trial lawyer advertisements asking, "Have you or a loved one been harmed by the coronavirus?"

Manufacturers of protective equipment could be another litigation target. Lawmakers have already seen this coming with respect to the manufacturers of N95 respirators and other respiratory devices. One little noticed provision in the CARES Act, the federal government's \$2.2 trillion stimulus package, is a liability protection for respiratory devices approved by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. Even so, the public's rush to obtain masks and other protective gear, even gear not advertised to safeguard against the coronavirus, leaves many manufacturers vulnerable to lawsuits.

Owners of cruise ships have already been sued. The allegation there is that they did not do enough to protect passengers. Similar theories can be de-

ployed against any business where people still gather and become exposed to the coronavirus — for example, drug stores and supermarkets. Walmart, for instance, has already been targeted. Although it is not easy for a person to prove he or she "caught" the virus in such a place, one need only convince a jury sympathetic to the widespread harm of this pandemic. Lawyers may also put forth experts who advance highly attenuated causation theories, which some judges may entertain in this unusual situation of a global pandemic.

So what can and should be done to stop an onslaught of unsound coronavirus litigation? First, the public should be made aware of the havoc such litigation could sow in exacerbating already challenging and uncertain economic times. Simple exposure of abusive lawsuits could prevent their spread.

Second, federal and state lawmakers should establish enhanced liability protections for affected front-line industries — for example, medical facilities, pharmaceutical suppliers, and other manufacturers and providers of life-saving products and services. Broader general immunity for businesses that have not acted recklessly or intentionally to infect patrons should also be considered.

This pandemic has already caused enormous devastation. No one should be allowed to exploit it by using litigation to cash in on a crisis, inflict greater economic harm, and slow our nation's path to economic recovery.

*Victor Schwartz is an attorney in Washington, D.C., and co-author of the most widely used torts casebook in the United States.*





# Legal Issues for Logging Businesses: Covid-19 Edition

**Webinar**

**Tuesday, May 19, 2020  
1:00-4:00 PM**



Experts from Setliff Law will discuss employment law, workers' compensation, and premises liability in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. 3 SHARP Logger CE Credits.

**Class will be delivered via Zoom**

**Registration is required at:**

[https://viriniatech.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_JVL8Uh1wSgyqx7K7uQNFkA](https://viriniatech.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_JVL8Uh1wSgyqx7K7uQNFkA)

Once you register, you will receive a confirmation email with a link to join the workshop.

## Zoom Directions:

About 15 minutes before the webinar, go to the website address above to prepare for the webinar. If this is your first time joining a Zoom webinar, you will be prompted to download the Zoom Launcher. Upon completion, enter your name and hit the "Join" button. You will then be placed in the meeting. You will be prompted to connect to audio, with instructions given on how to do so based on the audio option you select. During the webinar, questions can be typed into the chat box.

Questions?: contact  
SHARP Logger  
Program  
[sharplogger@vt.edu](mailto:sharplogger@vt.edu)



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## Legal Issues for Logging Businesses: COVID-19 Edition Webinar

SC Timber Producers Association, Virginia Loggers Association and Carolina Loggers Association have partnered to present a Webinar entitled:

### ***Legal Issues for Logging Businesses: COVID-19 Edition.***

The webinar is **Tuesday, May 19, 2020, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.** and will be delivered via Zoom.

As the Coronavirus pandemic has brought about many, many changes and challenges to all people and businesses, it is important to know that there could be individual business issues with employee health, insurance and legal liability.

Stephen Setliff of Setliff Law is a noted defense attorney in Virginia and has spoken at the Carolina Loggers Association and Virginia Loggers Association annual meetings. SCTPA's president has built a relationship with Mr. Setliff as well. Stephen and his expert attorneys will present the webinar.

The flyer enclosed in this newsletter provides the information for the webinar. Loggers, wood dealers and others are encouraged to take the time to participate in the webinar.

## VERIZON CONNECT FLEET SCTPA MEMBER PROGRAM

SC Timber Producers Association is partnering with Verizon Connect Fleet to offer a Member Benefit Program for GPS and On Board Camera Systems. This program offers members the opportunity to purchase GPS and On Board Cameras at member pricing which may be less than other companies offering similar technologies.



Verizon Connect Fleet has multiple service platforms for GPS technologies for tracking trucks and equipment. Several On Board Camera technologies are offered as well.

GPS and On Board Camera Systems for a business vehicle fleet can increase safety of fleet operation, used as a training tool and assist in possibly reducing potential liability risks.

Active SCTPA members are eligible for the Verizon Connect Fleet Program. Members may contact the SCTPA office for member information, member period and member number, to provide Kevin Schwartz, Fleet Management Consultant, at Verizon Connect Fleet to verify active membership.

Contact Kevin Schwartz at Verizon Connect Fleet for information regarding their products.

**Kevin Schwartz**  
**Fleet Management Consultant**  
**5821 Fairview Road, Suite 401**  
**Charlotte, NC 28209**  
**Mobile – 419-356-7529**  
**Office – 704-967-8401**  
**[Kevin.Schwartz@verizonconnect.com](mailto:Kevin.Schwartz@verizonconnect.com)**



# Verizon Connect Fleet and Asset Workforce Management

**Kevin Schwartz**  
Fleet Management Consultant

Verizon Connect  
5821 Fairview Road  
Suite 401  
Charlotte, NC 28209  
Kevin.Schwartz@verizonconnect.com  
M 419-356-7529  
O 704-967-8401

## Fleet management

Use one interactive, easy-to-navigate screen to see all vehicles and crews. Report on critical behaviors and compliance.



### Increase visibility and efficiency

- Manage ELD compliance
- See vehicle and driver location on a live map
- Know when vehicles are moving or running outside of normal hours
- Instantly find the nearest vehicle at any given time
- Report on fuel efficiency and charges
- Track off-highway vehicle mileage
- Receive DVIR alerts

### Help improve safety and reduce liability

- Monitor driver behaviors like speeding and harsh braking
- Set up safety alerts and review driver scorecards
- Help protect against false incident claims

### Streamline processes and navigation

- Track and create automated maintenance plans
- Help optimize delivery routes and provide navigation to and from job sites

## Asset management

Improve equipment utilization, report on engine hours and help reduce asset loss and theft.



### Track asset utilization and generate reports

- Quickly and accurately report on asset use
- Track equipment fuel use and unproductive idling
- Collect data and report on engine hours
- Link existing OEM-installed hardware through AEMP connectors

### Provide more accurate billing and increase utilization

- Provide more accurate invoices for equipment rentals
- Better use existing resources with improved location data
- Build geofences around key business locations to track asset movement

# Go beyond the dash cam with Integrated Video

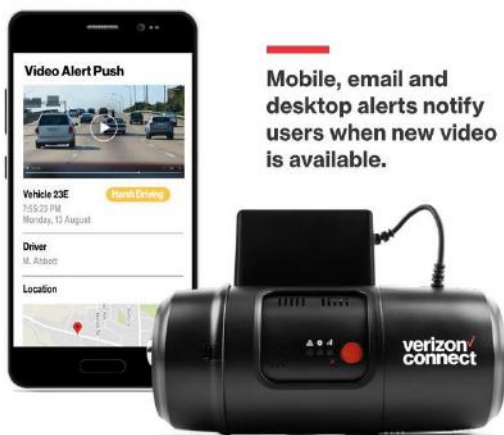
HD video, AI and driver data join forces to help you coach drivers and mitigate risk.



When driving is a large part of your business, it's important to have context for unsafe driving incidents and to help protect yourself against false claims.

Verizon Connect Integrated Video brings together high-quality, smart video with the power of a fleet management system to deliver video clips of harsh driving events within minutes of them happening. Our AI engine sorts through video footage, so you only receive relevant clips, while machine learning takes user feedback to help make future videos even more beneficial.

Whether a driver is braking hard, cornering too fast or rapidly accelerating, you'll have the video to better understand the context and be able to take the appropriate action. Plus, that footage flows seamlessly into Reveal, where you can see other fleet data and get the full story.



Mobile, email and desktop alerts notify users when new video is available.



Review video footage within minutes of an unsafe event – no sorting through hours of video



Coach drivers on better behaviors with video replay and downloads



Seamless video transmission into Reveal within minutes



Choose a simple self-install or have our pros do it for you



Request on-demand clips from available video footage



Know right away how severe an event was with harsh driving classifications



Help mitigate accident risk and liability with unbiased footage



Mobile and desktop alerts to notify users when new video is available



A 150° field of view in HD means you see what your drivers see



See vehicle speed while the video plays

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## **SAFETY IS A CORE VALUE OF THE FOREST PRODUCTS INDUSTRY**

By Deb Hawkinson, FRA President

**S**afety is a core value of the forest products industry. Whether it's workers in the mill, truck drivers hauling fiber, or loggers harvesting trees, we should make every effort to ensure that work environments are safe and that good, safety first, decisions are being made by owners and employees. Safety awareness does not stop, repetition is good, and we must work towards continuous improvement every day, every month, every year.

When the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries released its findings for 2018, there were 5,250 fatal work injuries recorded in the United States. This is a two percent increase from the 5,147 in 2017. In addition, the report noted in "2018, logging workers, fishers and related fishing workers, aircraft pilots and flight engineers, and roofers all had fatality rates more than 10 times the all-worker rate of 3.5 fatalities per 100,000 FTE workers."

The ranking of occupations, based on the number of fatal accidents in 2018 per 100,000 full-time equivalent workers, has the logging occupation listed as the most dangerous job in America for 2018. This critical sector in the forest products industry edged up from being second last year, and it is not new to this top placement on the fatal occupational injury ranking.

Logging has long been known to be a dangerous job. However, this high ranking does not tell the full story in today's operations. Logging looks very different from decades ago with the continuous advancement in mechanized

equipment. Safety has been at the forefront of these operational improvements, and most of the logging jobs today are much safer and at a lower risk for injury than the recent past. There are locations and terrains, or high-value trees where mechanized equipment cannot be used that require chainsaws fell timber, and I want to commend the professionals that practice safety first.

FRA provides a variety of information that can be used to improve safety awareness and help show continuous improvement throughout the entire wood supply chain. We want to continually share information with our members about how FRA is advancing the message of safety through our communications, technical releases and partnering with organizations to raise safety awareness in our industry. Below is a list of material available on FRA's website as well as a link to the National Timber Harvesting and Transportation Safety Foundation website:

- Safety Alerts
- Technical Releases
- THATS Website Resources

One work fatality is too many. The people of the wood supply chain are what make this industry. Together we need to continue to make every effort to keep safety as a core value and not just a priority, in good times and bad. Priorities change. Values are embedded in our culture. As an industry, we have shown great progress and will continue to make continuous improvement in the safety arena. When it comes to safety, repetition is good.





# ***Timber Talk***

## ***Your Voice for South Carolina Timber Harvesting***

Contact Crad Jaynes at  
1-800-371-2240 or [bcjpaw@windstream.net](mailto:bcjpaw@windstream.net)

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**MAC** - Dumps, Refuse Trailers, Flatbeds  
**Wilson** - Hopper Bottom and Conveyor Belt Trailers  
**Stoughton** - Dry Vans  
**Kentucky** - Moving Vans  
**Trailstar** - Dump Trailers

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560, C5000, Q70 & Q80

### HYDROAX

411B2, 611B2, 411E, 511E, 611E,  
411EX, 511EX, 611EX, 711EX & 570

### JOHN DEERE

440B, 540B, 548B, 648B, 648G, 648GII,  
648GIII, 748GII, 748GIII, 643, 643D,  
643G, 843G, 843H, 653E, 753 & 848

### PEERLESS

2770

### PRENTICE

210C, 210D, 210E, 310E, 325, 384,  
410C, 410D, 410E & 410EX

### TIGERCAT

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726, 726B, 620, 630B, 845 & 845B

### TIMBERJACK

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460D, 608, 608S, 618, 735, & 850

### TREEFARMER

C6D & C7F



# How to Rein in Rising Insurance Costs

By David Cullen  
HDT, Heavy Duty Trucking

January 8, 2020



Insurance is one of those things you may not really think about until your business needs it. That is, unless you're facing skyrocketing premiums or, worse, shrinking access to coverage itself, which is what's happening to truck fleets. Negative trends impacting the insurance market's view of trucking are forcing more fleet managers to think a lot more about insurance.

Fleets are facing what commercial-insurance broker Hub International defines as a "hardened insurance market," in which premiums have not only gone up, but in many cases have doubled. "With increases between 10% and 15% for the third year in a row, policies are no longer just 3% to 4% of a fleet's annual revenue — they can be north of 75%."

Reining in insurance costs requires looking at your operation the way an underwriter does. Is your fleet, at bare minimum, a calculated but acceptable risk for an insurance carrier to take on? Or does everything about your operation scream disaster about to happen?

To be sure, you are not alone in facing the insurance juggernaut. In its latest survey on the top issues confronting trucking, the American Transportation Research Institute, which is part of the ATA Federation, identified insurance cost and availability as an emerging issue.

Since 2013, per ATRI data, fleets surveyed have been walloped by insurance premium costs that have jumped over 17%. ATRI states that rate hikes are being "driven by a number of factors, including increasing costs associated with: equipment repair, rising medical costs, higher jury awards and settlement costs, and greater safety and legal exposure."

Underscoring how serious the threat is, ATRI has

pegged as a top research priority the impact of so-called "nuclear verdicts," massive punitive damages of over \$10 million, on truck fleets. The researchers will document and quantify historical trends associated with growing jury awards and out-of-court settlements resulting from negligence cases and other tort suits brought against trucking companies.

While the rise in nuclear verdicts can be, and are, blamed on personal-injury lawyers who are very good at their jobs, the fact that trucks can be involved in horrific accidents is arguably the biggest factor. Some crashes can't be avoided, and no driver or employer should be blamed for them. But in the current tort-happy legal climate, it behooves all truck operators to do all they reasonably can to prevent or mitigate accidents on the road, especially calamitous ones.

## Risky Environment

"Significantly minimizing the cost of insurance is unlikely in the current environment," contends Keith Dunlap, transportation practice leader and senior vice president for Gallagher Bassett, a global claims-services provider. "There are too many issues insurers are facing today, from the high cost of defense, to unreasonable plaintiffs' attorneys with unreasonable demands, to year-over-year escalating loss costs. And until there is meaningful tort reform implemented by state legislators, I don't think it is possible to lower insurance pricing significantly."

That being said, he also points out that, "exceptionally well-run trucking companies with experience, owned equipment, low driver turnover, minimal loss activity, a commitment to a telematics investment, and impeccable CSA scores are in a better position to gain access to more insurers with better pricing than those that don't stand out as best-in-class companies."

Dunlap adds that commercial insurers have "a much higher chance of achieving better outcomes on claims with focused third-party [claims] administrators managing expectations" of liability claims.

Third-party claims administrators for commercial liability insurance providers act much like claims adjusters. They may work with the insurance company's internal claims adjuster as well as outside claims investigators and defense counsel in the event of law-

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suits.

Speaking of defending against the rise of nuclear verdicts, Dunlap warns that “hiring marginally acceptable employees” has helped lead to “exploitation by skilled plaintiff’s lawyers.

“This leads to negligent hiring and retention claims against the motor carrier, all in a concentrated effort to support gross negligence and punitive damage claims, maximizing recovery,” he says. “These efforts can result in higher jury awards, adversely affecting insurers who write [policies] in the trucking space. Those insurers then increase their rates across their entire book of commercial auto business.”

Dunlap advises that the “only way any motor carrier can truly protect themselves against allegations of negligent hiring today is to maintain a driver qualification file that can withstand scrutiny. Truckers need to comply with each of the seven hiring processes outlined in the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations [49 CFR 391], which outlines the minimum requirements for hiring commercial motor vehicle drivers.”

### **Eyes and Minds**

Whenever a driver is involved in an accident, both driver and employer can be targeted by a break-the-bank personal injury suit. One way to combat that is to do all you can to prevent distracted driving, advises law firm Franklin & Prokopik in its transportation-practice blog.

The firm states that “in trials that result in massive civil judgments, awards for punitive damages, if sought, far exceed awards for compensatory damages....the reason for this trend may be rather simple: With an increase in commercial vehicle accidents involving a distracted driving component, the transportation industry has seen an increase in nuclear verdicts.”

As Franklin & Prokopik sees it, there’s a common thread to nuclear verdicts. “There exists some act leading to distracted driving, whether visual, physical, or cognitive, and an element of preventability and accountability on behalf of the carriers and trucking companies. There is no dispute that distracted driving significantly increases the likelihood of catastrophic accidents. The recent nuclear verdicts in cases involv-

ing commercial vehicle accidents with a distracted driving component make clear that juries will hold not just the driver accountable, but the motor carrier accountable as well for the safety of the public on the roadways.”

Although distracted driving can be the root of many horrific crashes, it is of course not the only cause of poor safety performance that can drive up insurance premiums and even lead to a denial of coverage for a truck fleet.

Here’s where managers roll up their sleeves and dig into their safety stats to identify what needs fixing first and foremost to make their fleet attractive to insurers. The tools used may be soft-touch, such as improving driver recruitment and retention to hire the best possible drivers, or hard-edged, like leveraging telematics and spec’ing advanced safety equipment.

The results of these efforts need to be measured and the goals set for them continually updated to present the fleet to insurance underwriters with the most flattering loss-ratio profile possible.

### **Tell a Positive Story**

“Insurers want to work with fleets. Particularly insurance brokers. They want to make sure their customer [risk profile] is attractive to underwriters,” says Mark Murrell, co-founder of CarriersEdge, which works with a number of insurance providers that resell the company’s online driver training modules. CarriersEdge also co-produces the annual Best Fleets to Drive For program.

Murrell says there are “starting points” to building a positive profile, including showing proof of documented safety policies for drivers and managers and proof they are followed, such as by documenting training.

“More training equals a better safety profile,” Murrell contends. “And insurers want to see how much is done in terms of follow-up to any training. Some may want to see it in print or electronic form. But my guess is they will take what they can get to work with.” They’ll also want the training regimen organized with drivers methodically tracked. “They don’t want to see a room full of boxes” of training material.

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"Keeping the materials online will make it easier to pull up reports," he adds. "Since it can be billable work for a broker to work up profiles, being organized will save the trucking company money — as will the broker being able to tell a better story about the fleet to an underwriter."

"Improving a fleet's safety profile is seldom a one-time fix," says Chad Hoppenjan, assistant vice president of Safety Management Services Company, a safety and risk-management consultancy. "We see the most success with clients who continuously work on it."

He says when SMSC presents its safety assessment, customers "more often than not are very receptive. We work with them, but we can't tell them what to do." Improving a risk profile is a process, "not something you can change overnight. What you do is work in this policy year to improve for the next year."

For Hoppenjan, key elements of a safety review should include top-down management commitment; hiring quality drivers and then retaining them; making sure operational, sales, and driver-manager teams are all accountable for safety; and focusing on reducing "loss leaders" in the fleet and zeroing in on "real safety issues, not perceived ones."

### **Don't Hire Problems**

Drivers are at the heart of the safety equation, or as Hoppenjan puts it, "You don't want to hire problems and then continue to have problems throughout their employment. What I stress is to not take your current qualified drivers for granted. If you can retain them, you will not have to hire so many later on."

"And you don't want to set up drivers to fail," he continues. "Basically, that means not putting them into a bad position, such as loads scheduled too tightly, that can push them to be unsafe by driving too" Hoppenjan stresses holding accountable everyone who may impact driver safety. "For example, evaluate driver-managers on crashes/injuries per driver and moving violations per driver. See who stands out and why. And address those [managers] who may be a part of causing safety issues." Similarly, don't let sales "overpromise shippers."

Determine your loss leaders (vehicles and injuries) in terms of both losses and compliance. "Base this on

your real data, not data distorted by the one severe incident that may have happened recently," he recommends. "For example, if you're using event recorders, are you seeing an upswing in following too close? If you can control these kinds of losses, it can only help with insurance rates."

Keep in mind that the latest technology developments, everything from event recorders to collision-mitigation systems, "are all huge" in helping drive up safety performance, Hopperjan notes.

### **Technology Teaches**

The various active safety systems now available on trucks, as well as event recorders and cab-mounted video systems fleets install, are constantly delivering a rich flow of actionable data to inform a fleet's safety assessment and training efforts.

"Of the top fleets in the United States, the majority have implemented some type of telematics," points out Gallagher Bassett's Dunlap. "These motor carriers understand how collision-avoidance technology, auto braking systems, and video captures help reduce both the frequency and severity of loss. They also understand how implementing telematics helps protect against meritless claims by third-party attorneys. In my view, this is a key risk-management investment."

The electronic logging device mandate has almost every fleet now using some type of telematics, points out a Hub International trend report. "There is an incredible amount of information that can be harvested to improve both operations and safety if used correctly," the brokerage states.

Telematics can include video systems to improve safe driving practices and to exonerate drivers in crashes that could not be prevented, as well as information about the speed, location, and mechanical condition of trucks. "How this information is shared with drivers, management, and customers can have a direct impact on the performance of the organization," Hub says.

### **Attitude Adjustment**

"I met with several underwriters recently, and they are hot about telematics," says Terry Lutz, vice president of risk management for Transervice Logistics, which operates trucks on dedicated routes and con-

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tract carriage, along with providing full-service leasing and freight brokering. "Crash avoidance, forward and rear-facing cameras, all play a part.

"Something else that's important to bringing down premiums is the culture of your organization," she continues. "Is management connected with safety? It should not be an issue to get top management to weigh in" on policies and investments.

Lutz agrees it's a tough market for insurance. "Most carriers that score poorly on safety will go out of business because they won't be able to pay for expensive umbrella premiums."

She notes that some insurance firms have exited the trucking market altogether. "Others will only now play at the higher level — fleets with the best safety records — or they may set lower coverage limits, maybe \$3 million to \$7 million instead of \$10 million, or they will put in a 20% to 30% rate hike."

Fleets need to work with their insurance brokers, Lutz advises. "You can't have the attitude, 'That's what insurance is for' when something goes wrong... [do that and] you will eventually be loss-rated and you will pay."



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My experience includes 34 years as a state police officer, 15 of these years as a State Transport Police Captain. I'm a licensed private investigator; I conducted background investigations for SCHP and internal investigations for the SCDPS Internal Affairs Division. I'm also trained as a collision re-constructionist. I recently completed the North American Transportation Management Institute (NATMI) classroom training for Certified Director of Safety (CDS) and Certified Safety Supervisor (CSS) on May 11, 2018, full certification is pending.

**Richard G. Shell, Jr. (864) 720-4832**

**Captain, State Transport Police, Retired**



Please contact our  
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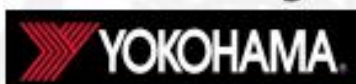


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## ...BREAKING NEWS...

After months of hard work, we have launched our new website. Members will now have access to their SLC invoices 24/7 with a member login! Amongst the new features are the "find the nearest station" to my location feature, an approved national tires and parts dealers with location info, fill out an application on-line and other features that will assist in the improved communication with our members. The SLC's founding "Cost-Cutting Mission" continues!



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# NEW SCTPA MEMBER BENEFIT & SERVICE



**Contact Steve Wilt (843) 566-5463  
or Jalisa Byas (803) 381-2198 to Get  
Your Savings.**

## **NEW Michelin & B. F. Goodrich Tire Discount Program**

SC Timber Producers Association is proud to announce a New Member Benefit Program. SCTPA has partnered with Michelin and B. F. Goodrich (BFG) to offer ACTIVE dues paid members the opportunity to save money on tires through this program.

SCTPA President Crad Jaynes said, "SCTPA is pleased and proud to partner with Michelin North America to offer this valuable and cost saving opportunity for our members. Our members are always our first priority and when our association can provide a cost saving program like this, it is a "win" for everyone. I appreciate Michelin partnering with us in this program."

This program is available to ALL active dues paid members in all SCTPA member categories. Program is effective as June 1, 2019. Members are able to visit any local Michelin dealer. Program requires an application be completed and the use of a credit or debit card.

### **Member Process for SCTPA Michelin & BFG Tire Program**

- 1) Contact SCTPA to receive active member number, membership period and member status (logger, wood dealer, etc.).
- 2) Must be an Active Dues Paid SCTPA Member.
- 3) Interested SCTPA members should reach out to your local Michelin Tire Dealer.
- 4) Complete the application and forward it to Jalisa Byas ([Jalisa.byas@michelin.com](mailto:Jalisa.byas@michelin.com)) or Steve Wilt ([Steve.wilt@michelin.com](mailto:Steve.wilt@michelin.com)) Jalisa is the SC Representative and Steve is the Territory Manager. Application available from SCTPA. Write your SCTPA member number and member period on the application at the top left under Michelin logo. *Example: SCTPA ##### / 01-01-19/20*. Sign and send both the Application and Conditions of Sale pages.
- 5) Either Jalisa and/or Steve will verify active membership with SCTPA's Crad Jaynes.
- 6) Once application is verified, it will be sent to Michelin for approval.
- 7) Michelin will provide the customer with a Bill To and Ship To Number. At that time, the member will have to Register their account at **Michelinb2b.com** and upload the member's Credit or Debit Card.
- 8) Program available to ALL members registered as active dues paid SCTPA members.
- 9) Program available for Michelin and B.F. Goodrich tires. Tires available are Truck, Light Truck, Passenger Car & Agricultural, Industrial & Off Road Tires & Retreads.
- 10) Once a member is registered on **Michelinb2b.com**, member will have access to all their purchase reports and tire pricing.
- 11) Members can go to any Michelin dealer to purchase tires.
- 12) Tires cannot be ordered online or shipped to the customer. Must go through a Michelin dealer.

SCTPA is pleased to offer our members this tire discount program on the high quality tire products offered by Michelin Tire and B. F. Goodrich Tire. Should a member have any questions, feel free to contact SCTPA.



# Tips for Keeping Truck Cab Clean & Sanitized

By Jim Park, Heavy Duty Trucking  
Safety & Compliance

March 31, 2020



Information excerpted from entire article

## Recommended Cleaning Products

The Environmental Protection Agency has published a list of disinfectants that meets its criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2, the novel coronavirus that causes the disease COVID-19. It's a long list that includes dozens of commercial and industrial cleaning products as well as household products. These are disinfectants, as opposed to simple cleaning products. As disinfectants, there is some virus-killing capability, while common cleaning products may just transfer the virus from the surface to the rag or wipe. In either case, wipes and rags should be properly disposed of or laundered after use.

Gearshifts or selectors need to be wiped down frequently. Experts suggest spending at least a minute scrubbing the surface.

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of the recommended products contain sodium hypochlorite, which is the main ingredient in laundry bleach. If the products listed on the EPA site are not readily available, a mixture of 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) bleach per gallon of water or 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water makes an effective substitute. It may not smell as nice as some of the store-bought product, but it will do the job. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser.

Consumer products usually come ready to use, but some commercial products may have to be diluted as per the manufacturer's instructions and allow proper ventilation during and after application. CDC recommends ensuring a contact time of at least one minute.

## Bleach May Not be Best in a Truck Cab

One truck OEM issued a service bulletin late in March outlining recommended cleaning procedures

that cautioned against using bleach in any form (wipes, ready-to-use spray, solution from concentrate). Although these documents normally are confidential to dealers, HDT obtained a copy after it was distributed to fleets in an unusual move. The bulletin also advised against using white spirit/paint thinner as a sanitizer. "[Both] will also cause damage to most surfaces," it noted.

Instead, it recommends the following products for general cleaning and disinfecting, suggesting the surface should remain visibly wet for the duration of the contact time:

- Ethanol wipes: 5 minutes
- Lysol disinfecting wipes: 10 minutes
- Lysol disinfectant spray: 10 minutes
- DS1 Signet Neutral Disinfectant: 10 minutes

According to the OEM, soft surfaces such as cloth, vinyl, leather, and nonwoven materials must be cleaned with ethanol only. It says ammonia-based cleaning solutions such as Lysol brand non-bleach disinfectant wipes or ready-to-use spray, and hydrogen peroxide, must not be used to sanitize soft trims. Isopropyl alcohol must never be used on leather seats or leather steering wheels, use ethanol only.

For hard surfaces, the OEM recommends ethanol for the following cab areas:

- Painted/surface treated plastics: e.g. deco trims, chromed accents, controls like knobs and buttons
- Mold-in-color plastic surfaces: e.g. A/B pillars, non-leather steering wheels, plastic grab handles
- Ammonia-based cleaning solutions such as Lysol brand non-bleach disinfectant wipes or ready to use cleaning spray, and/or ethanol may be used only on painted or enameled metal surfaces, such as exterior door handles, or on unpainted metal surfaces, such as exterior metal grab handles.

Additionally, the OEM named DS1 Signet Neutral Disinfectant as an alternative for washable hard, non-porous surfaces, such as:

- Glass surfaces
- Laminated surfaces
- Metal
- Stainless steel
- Plastic
- Chrome

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- Enameled surfaces
- Formica
- Vinyl (hard plastic ONLY – DS1 is NOT to be used on vinyl-covered upholstery: seats, walls, IP or DP parts, mattresses/cushions)
- Related – TMC: Chlorine Dioxide Effective Cab Disinfectant for COVID-19 Contamination

### Public Spaces

Assume public surfaces could be contaminated. You should wipe down what surfaces you can, but that obviously impractical in many situations. Also, limit the time you spend in closed spaces in the company of others, and stay at least six feet apart at all times.

The bottom line is, take precautions and wash your hands thoroughly after touching any object of which you're unsure, and do not touch your face, put your fingers or anything else near your mouth, nose or eyes. And if you have to cough or sneeze, cover your mouth with a handkerchief or an arm or hand, and wash up afterward.

Hand sanitizer is not as effective as proper hand washing, but is recommended when you can't get to a sink. CDC says these should be alcohol-based products with concentrations of at least 60-70%. Products with lesser concentrations are not as effective, CDC notes.

Commercial sanitizer has been hard to obtain. There are loads of recipes online for making your own alcohol-based sanitizer, but many experts advise against it. They say it turns out too diluted, in which case it would be of little value. It could also be too strong, which could lead to injuries. In addition, the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance has reported some instances where homemade hand sanitizer could be perceived to run afoul of regulations regarding hazardous materials or alcohol in the cab.

Stay safe and help flatten the curve.

**SCTPA Comments:** *Many of these suggestions can be used to maintain healthy logging equipment operator cabs and service vehicles and personal vehicles. Log On, Truck Safe & Stay Healthy!*

## SBA to Make Economic Injury Disaster Loans Available to U.S. Agricultural Businesses Impacted by COVID-19 Pandemic

WASHINGTON – U.S. Small Business Administration

Administrator Jovita Carranza announced May 4<sup>th</sup> that agricultural businesses are now eligible for SBA's Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) and EIDL Advance programs. SBA's EIDL portal reopened yesterday ([sba.gov/funding-programs/disaster-assistance](https://sba.gov/funding-programs/disaster-assistance)) as a result of funding authorized by Congress through the Paycheck Protection Program and Healthcare Enhancement Act. The legislation, signed into law by the President provided additional funding for farmers and ranchers and certain other agricultural businesses affected by the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

"For more than 30 years, SBA has been prohibited by law from providing disaster assistance to agricultural businesses; however, as a result of the unprecedented legislation enacted by President Trump, American farmers, ranchers and other agricultural businesses will now have access to emergency working capital," said Administrator Carranza. "These low-interest, long-term loans will help keep agricultural businesses viable while bringing stability to the nation's vitally important food supply chains."

Agricultural businesses include businesses engaged in the legal production of food and fiber, ranching, and raising of livestock, aquaculture, and all other farming and agricultural related industries (as defined by section 18(b) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 647(b)). Eligible agricultural businesses must have 500 or fewer employees.

The SBA will begin accepting new EIDL applications on a limited basis only, in order to provide unprecedented relief to U.S. agricultural businesses. For agricultural businesses that submitted an EIDL loan application through the streamlined application portal prior to the legislative change, SBA will move forward and process these applications without the need for re-applying. All other EIDL loan applications that were submitted before the portal stopped accepting new applications on April 15 will be processed on a first-in, first-out basis.

For more information, please visit [sba.gov/Disaster](https://sba.gov/Disaster).





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# Mark Your Calendar

## May 2020

- 21 SCTPA Board of Directors Meeting, 10 a.m., SC Forestry Commission Headquarters, Columbia is **Tentative due to the Coronavirus situation.** Possibly be a conference call board meeting or re-scheduled later into the summer.

**Due to the COVID-19 pandemic,  
there are no meetings being held to show on the calendar.**

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District meeting dates may be changed. Meeting notices will be mailed prior to scheduled meeting. Meeting dates will be posted on SCTPA website ... [www.scloggers.com](http://www.scloggers.com).

Members & Non-Members are encouraged to attend our district meetings to know what the issues are affecting the industry.

### Need SFI Trained DVD Class or other training?

SCTPA can provide the New DVD Training Module for SFI Trained status. SCTPA is an approved DVD training class facilitator and will be scheduling classes during the year. Other training programs are available for safety, driver training, equipment lockout & tagout, hazardous materials spill control on logging sites and forestry aesthetics.

Truck Driver Training Workshops will be scheduled. Watch the Mark Your Calendar section of this newsletter for dates. Notices for SCTPA workshops & events will be forwarded.

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\*\*\*\*\*

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### ***Our Mission***

The **Mission** of the *South Carolina Timber Producers Association* is to serve as the voice for timber harvesting and allied timber businesses to advance the ability of its members to professionally, ethically, efficiently, safely, environmentally and profitably harvest, produce and transport timber to meet the timber supply demands of our state by providing continuing educational and training opportunities, distributing timber harvesting, hauling, manufacturing and selling information, representing our members in national and statewide legislative activities, and aggressively promoting, supporting and conducting programs of state, regional and national advocacy.