

# Are Your Trucks in Compliance with DOT Regs?



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This has been the Summer of the Landscaper. Landscape and lawn service vehicles pop up everywhere in and around my neighborhood. They're at the intersections, parked in front of homes, gassing up at the local Speedway or Shell stations, in the parking at McDonalds, clattering up and down my town's usually quiet street.

There are box trucks, dump trucks and pickup trucks towing open trailers crammed mowers, trimmers, blowers, racks and brooms. I see more pickup trucks with trailers than anything else. The trailers are loaded with mowers of various makes and models, trimmers, blowers and the usual assortment of yard tools.

Some of the trucks are new and clean, and the trailers are well organized. Some are beat up, dirty and look like something featured on Redd Foxx's 70's television sitcom Sanford & Son. Regardless, all must adhere to the DOT requirements of their respective states.

Recently, I came across Florida's DOT requirements for commercial trucks (below), including trucks used by landscapers and lawn service companies.

Are surprised by large number of requirements? Do you know the DOT requirements for the trucks in your service fleet?

1. All loads must be secured with DOT approved straps (no bungy cords).
2. All equipment and tools must be secured with DOT approved straps.
3. All gas cans must have a spout cap or an automatic spout stop.
4. All gas cans must be secured to the vehicle.
5. All lights must be working.

6. Vehicle must not be leaking any fluids.
7. Must have 3 reflective devices cones or triangles.
8. Windows must have at least 70 percent transparency.
9. Must have an approved fire extinguisher and it must be mounted.
10. The vehicle must be registered for the proper tax class for the vehicle GVWR or maximum weight or it's \$0.05 per pound fine over the registered weight.
11. Gas cans must be FDOT approved and cannot be more than 8 gallons.
12. All opened bags of fertilizer must be closed and sealed to prevent spillage.
13. Vehicles over 8 feet wide must have center marker lights on rear; all lights must be working.
14. FDOT can put your vehicle "out of service" which means you cannot move it unless the condition is corrected or have the vehicle towed.
15. If you move the vehicle other than it being towed without the corrections being made the company will be fined \$2500, the driver could lose his CDL and could go to jail. Fine also depends on driver or driver/owner.
16. After corrections are made the mechanic or the owner must complete and sign the inspection report and send it to Tallahassee.
17. Water tanks should be marked "water only" or "non-potable water" and the gallon capacity.
18. You cannot have any alcoholic beverages even unopened in vehicles in commerce.
19. Any vehicles over 10,000 pounds must stop at weigh stations and must follow "no trucks in left lanes" signs.
20. Front tires must have at least 4/32-inch tread on front tires and 2/32" on rear tires.
21. Your license plate must be secured and unobstructed.
22. Mirrors must be in working condition.
23. Placarded vehicles require the driver to have proper license endorsements and possess a valid medical card.
24. Fertilizer spreader with fertilizer still in must have a cover on it during transportation as to not allow spillage.
25. Hoses not on a hose reel must be secured properly.
26. FDOT also checks the vehicle suspension and brakes.
27. Cans or bottles must be secured against movement.

– Ron Hall, Editor-in-Chief

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