



MONTANA MUNICIPAL INTERLOCAL AUTHORITY

PO Box 6669
Helena, MT 59604-6669

RISK MANAGEMENT BULLETIN

Please distribute to all appropriate personnel and post in a conspicuous place.

Date: November 21, 2022

RM Bulletin #02-23

To: MMIA Member-Owners

From: MMIA Risk Management

RE: Rollaway Vehicles and Winter Driving – Think Smart | Act Smarter!

What is a Rollaway?

An unsecured vehicle that rolls away from where the driver had physical contact with it last, resulting in the vehicle escaping from its last known location while on its way to destruction of persons, property, and itself.

What's The Risk?

With all the distractions in our daily lives, the risk of a rollaway is more prevalent than one might think. If a driver exits the vehicle prior to applying the park brake and moving the transmission into PARK (neutral for manual transmission), the risk involves the potential for:

Property Damage to the Member-Owner's vehicle and equipment. Damage to another entity or person's property.

Bodily Injury to another driver, pedestrian, or bystander.

Injuries to the driver or Co-Workers.

Drivers exiting a vehicle without placing an automatic transmission in PARK, applying the park brake on a manual transmission or automatic transmission, and shutting off the engine, place a significant number of resources at risk. Not to mention life and limb! It appears there are still enough distractions in this world for drivers to continue to exit the vehicle before fully securing it in place. Even heavy commercial truck operators are not immune to distractions. The rollaway danger and risk of severe injury to a driver, passengers, other vehicles and drivers, pedestrians, and property can be catastrophic. Once a commercial vehicle (sometimes weighing up to 80,000 pounds) becomes involved in a rollaway, it might not stop until it hits a very large object of similar size, or it rolls over. The path of destruction left behind is costly. The resulting damage to life and property could significantly hurt a municipality's reputation with the financial impact lasting for several years down the road. As we move into challenging economic times, every dollar saved is critical to the budget.

Recommendations to Consider in Preventing Rollaway:

- Set Standards and Expectations of each employee driving a municipal vehicle.



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- Train new and established employees on existing vehicle operations and new vehicles coming into your fleet.
- Implement Accountability for Operators:
Safety Policies and CDL requirements to operate vehicles should not be circumvented to save time or increase the speed of job duties. Violators should be subject to disciplinary action.
- Reduce and eliminate driver distractions.
- Set the park brake regardless of transmission type, even when temporarily parking, or at the end of a day or shift.
- Vehicles with automatic transmissions should be placed in PARK prior to the driver exiting the vehicle.
- CDL drivers should follow daily pre-trip and post-trip procedures for securing a vehicle prior to leaving the vehicle temporarily or at the end of the shift.
- Consider the use of chock blocks when parking all light duty trucks up to and including extra heavy trucks, wheeled equipment, and parked trailers not connected to a power unit.

Winter Driving Wrap-up

The arrival of ice, snow, and cold is unavoidable, but it does bring skiing and snowmobiling with it! As we try to avoid sliding into the snowbanks and each other this winter, here are some considerations to help you make the transition:

- Brake earlier.
- Decrease your speed.
- Have adequate tire tread.
- Increase the space between your car and the one in front of you.
- Do not use cruise control on snow, ice, or wet roads.
- Use proper lifting techniques when installing and removing heavy tire chains.
- Outfit the vehicle with the appropriate safety gear.
- Wear proper footwear.
- Exit/Enter vehicles with three points of contact.
- Keep headlights free of road grime and dirt.

Think Smart – Act Smarter!