

## Maintaining the Safety of Vehicles as Work Sites



### VEHICLES AS WORK SITES



For many workers, a typical day is spent at a desk or on a work site (or workplace) and driving is not considered a major part of their job. But many jobs require some amount of driving, meaning that even if it is minor, knowing how to safely operate and maintain a vehicle is crucial.

There are safety codes classifying vehicles as work sites (or workplaces) that vary between each province. It is essential to follow the necessary steps to prepare for inspections that could occur at any time, especially as OHS Officers are increasing their inspections on vehicles used for work.

However, with or without increased inspections, the safety of the driver and other road users should always be paramount when using vehicles for work purposes.

#### Work sites according to AB OHS

- A location where a worker is, or is likely to be, engaged in an occupation and includes a vehicle or mobile equipment used by a worker in an occupation (AB OHS Act, s. 1(uu)).
- Employers must assess a work site and identify existing and potential hazards before work begins at the site or prior to construction of a new site (AB OHS Code, Part 2, s. 7(1)).



### WHAT VEHICLES ARE "WORK SITES"?

- Vehicles used **away** from work sites within work hours—delivering parcels, driving between offices, etc.
- Vehicles used in jobs with driving as a primary function—truck drivers, delivery drivers, salespeople often on the road, etc.

Regardless of whether these are personal or work vehicles, OHS hazard assessment requirements apply, and safety accessories must be available in the vehicle. (First aid kits, fire extinguishers, etc.)

OHS Regulations for "vehicles as work sites" do not apply to vehicles used **on** work sites for tasks such as hauling material or vehicles driven outside of work hours (i.e., driving to and from work), except otherwise indicated by company policy.

Generally, incidents involving a vehicle being used during an employee's work hours are considered work-related.

## Maintaining the Safety of Vehicles as Work Sites

### Meeting Provincial Requirements

Canada does not have specific federal legislation for vehicles as work sites, but several provincial and territorial regulations and guidelines ensure provincial requirements are met.

- OHS legislation
- Transportation regulations
- Hours of Service regulations
- Vehicle maintenance and inspection
- Distracted driving laws

Specific rules and regulations vary depending on jurisdiction, industry and vehicle type. Workers should refer to their employer's policies and procedures regarding safe vehicle operation.

### Resources

- [AB OHS Vehicles as work sites](#)
- [AB OHS Driving for Work: Developing Safe Practices for Employers and Workers](#)
- [Hazard Assessment and Control: a handbook for Alberta employers and workers](#)
- [WorkSafe BC Campaigner: When you're driving on the job, your car is a workplace](#)
- [BC OHS Regs on vehicles](#)
- [SK The Vehicle Equipment Regulations](#)
- [Cannabis-impaired Driving](#)
- [Unsecured Load Impacts Vehicle](#)
- [Driving Fatalities in the Energy Sector](#)
- [Life-Saving Rule - Driving](#)



### IMPLICATIONS OF VEHICLES AS WORK SITES

#### Employers should consider the following:

- Ensure vehicles used as work sites comply with health and safety regulations.
- Provide a safe working environment and protect employees from harm.
- Ensure vehicles used as work sites are properly maintained and regularly inspected (brakes, tires, lights, etc.) by a competent person.
- Provide appropriate insurance coverage for work vehicles—third-party liability, property damage, injury claims, etc.
- Depending on the industry, comply with Hours-of-Service regulations to prevent driver fatigue and ensure road safety.
- Have clear policies and procedures for using vehicles as work sites—safety practices, emergency protocols, reporting procedures, etc.
- In the event of an incident, follow established protocols for incident reporting and investigation.
- Conduct risk assessments to identify potential hazards of using vehicles as work sites and take steps to mitigate the risks.
- Have clear emergency communication channels—plans for contacting emergency services, providing first aid, etc.

#### Workers should consider the following:

- Disclose business use of personal vehicles with insurance providers to avoid coverage gaps.
- Report safety hazards and defects to appropriate personnel.
- Get enough rest before driving to avoid fatigue.
- Properly secure cargo in transit vehicles to prevent shifting or falling enroute.
- Attend any required safety training for operating in mobile work sites—defensive driving, handling emergencies on the road, job-related skills, etc.
- Keep accurate records of work-related activities—travel, incidents, maintenance, etc.
- Observe the company's policy on smoking. Avoid smoking in the vehicle.