

# SAFETY GAZETTE

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## THANK YOU TO AMERICA'S UNSUNG HEROES

Thank you to all of the hard-working men and women of the trucking industry for coming to our nation's aid. Because of you, grocery stores and businesses are able to remain open across America to supply essential goods. Because of you, hospitals and vital medical supplies are being delivered to those who need it most. We appreciate all of the drivers that continue to move America forward during these uncertain times. We need you now, more than ever.

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## How to Keep Yourself Safe During this Novel Coronavirus - A Guide for Truck Drivers and Others

by Nancy Ross-Anderson, Loss Control Specialist

### Self-Quarantine: Admirable, but Impossible for Truckers.

In recent days, life as we know it has been shaken across the globe because of the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic – the same is especially true for America's truck drivers. Sure, the average truck driver may not interact with as many people as a retail worker, but the idea that they perform their duties in isolation is a myth. Truck drivers face some unique challenges in protecting themselves from the millions of germs, viruses, and bacteria we live with, including COVID-19. Our truck drivers are facing a large burden as they move essential goods our country depends on during this time. If you're a truck driver, here are some tips to help keep you safe:

#### Basic Protective Measures:

- Keep your hands clean. You've heard the basic most important rule – wash your hands for a minimum of 20 seconds. If for some reason you can't wash your hands, hand sanitizer is the next best thing; however, hand sanitizer is in short supply these days.
  - To make your own hand sanitizer, use  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of rubbing alcohol and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of Aloe Vera gel. Don't use vodka or other consumable alcohol, the alcohol content is not high enough. If making it in large quantities, always use a 3 to 1 ratio
- Practice social distancing. Keep a six-foot distance from other people and avoid anyone who looks ill. A single sneeze can transmit airborne particles 10 feet.
- Wear a face mask if possible. Normally, you can purchase a package of masks at a drug store or Walmart. But these days, masks are hard to come by in some metropolitan areas. If necessary, one can be made of cotton quilting fabric. Free sewing patterns are available on the internet. Some home improvement stores also have safety masks that are good alternatives.
- Wear gloves when possible. When fueling your truck, walking into a building, and more – wear gloves. The fuel dispense handle carries more germs than anywhere else you encounter, including a public toilet seat. If gloves aren't available, use a plastic bag to maneuver the dispenser and the door handle.
- Consider what you touch in and on your truck daily.
  - Truck door handles, steering wheel, buttons, and controls
  - Keys
  - ELD device
  - Cell phone
  - CB radio
- Disinfect these daily (at a minimum) with sanitizing wipes, disinfecting spray, or in a pinch, hand sanitizer. Do this more frequently if you are climbing in and out of your truck many times during the day.



Source is [www.thetrucker.com](http://www.thetrucker.com), a 5-part series on the Coronavirus by Kris Rutherford

### Hygiene Beyond Handwashing:

Trucks carry an enormous population of germs. Germs live for one reason – to reproduce and cover every habitable surface in sight. Cleaning your truck from head to toe sounds like an impossible feat, especially in these demanding times for our truckers. What you can do is:





## Tips on Vehicle Storage for Fleet Owners

by Tim Unger, Loss Control Specialist

No doubt the recent COVID-19 outbreak has led all companies – including fleet owners – to review their operations. Now more than ever, the concern of safeguarding employees and customers is paramount and has driven the need to reevaluate daily operations. There are other concerns that the pandemic also brings to light for fleet owners. Particularly, the slowing of the economy and perhaps the need to reduce the size of operations. When considering this, there may be a need to remove some vehicles from active involvement to remain competitive.

If the need arises to park and store some of your vehicles, here are some tips to consider:

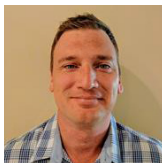
- Designate an area for vehicle storage. Best practice is to have vehicles stored in a designated area that provides some security (fenced, gated). Ensure that the area has adequate lighting. Use of cameras is also recommended and vehicles should be in a location where they can be clearly seen by cameras. If cameras are used, post appropriate signage that reflects security cameras are in use.
- Storage within parked vehicles. It can be tempting to store equipment or freight in idle vehicles and trailers; however, this should be avoided. Having storage in the cab and/or trailer can increase the likelihood of theft resulting in loss or damage to your vehicles. In addition, a loss caused by fire or water will have a larger financial and operational impact with articles stored in the vehicle.



- Storage of multiple vehicles. When multiple vehicles are stored, they should be stored with ample distance between each vehicle. Storing vehicles back to back or side to side with limited spacing could increase the number of vehicles damaged or lost in a fire event, or even in the event of theft/vandalism. An alternative is leaving significant space between small (three to four) groupings of vehicles.
- Disconnect batteries. Do this on all idle vehicles to prevent electrical shorts.
- Inspect parked vehicles. Set up a procedure to inspect the vehicles from time to time for damage or vandalism. It is recommended that a documented inspection of the vehicles be completed weekly.
- Develop a plan to bring vehicles back on line. Ensure all vehicles receive proper inspections and maintenance needed before they return to the road. Having a formal, written “post-storage” maintenance program in place will ensure all vehicles receive the same attention needed.



In the challenging days ahead, many businesses will be faced with difficult decisions. You're not in this alone. This is an unfamiliar time for us all. As insurance providers, we are committed to being here when you need us. As people, we are here to help.



## Cargo and Equipment Theft Prevention

by Jared Fritts, Loss Control Specialist

In 2018, there were 592 cargo thefts in the United States with an average loss of \$142,342. Full truckload thefts accounted for 74% of these losses. This is nothing new. All transportation companies must be vigilant in preventing theft. Through best practices and continued awareness with drivers and employees, you can help to minimize the risk.

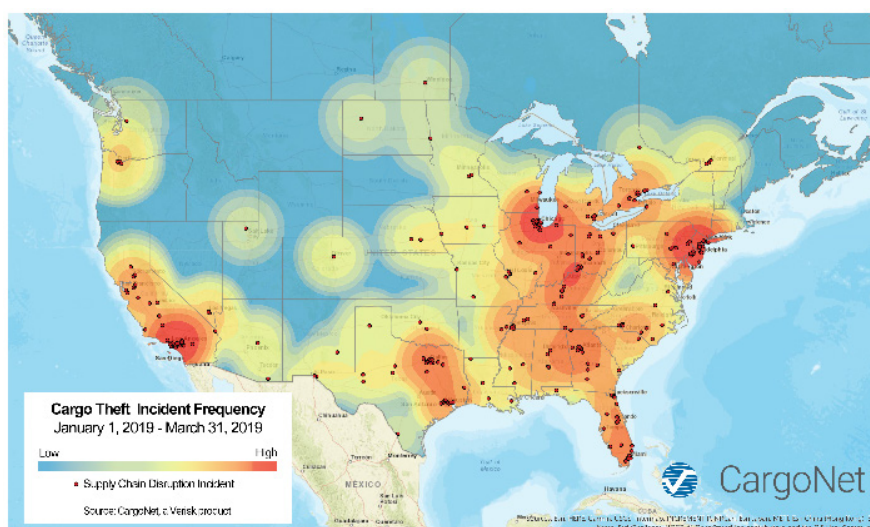
The first step to preventing theft is education and awareness. Understand the products you haul, the routes you travel and the dangers along the way. Talk about theft in your new hire orientation process. Develop talking points and have a plan in place to ensure drivers, dispatchers, and everyone in your organization understands their responsibilities to prevent cargo and equipment theft.

Does your company have these best practices in place?

- Develop effective hiring standards that include complete background checks, including criminal background checks for all employees.
- Identify high-crime areas for cargo theft in transit and look for alternative travel. Plan routes to minimize stops and delays. Work with your customers to eliminate excessive layover time, especially when hauling high value/high-risk freight. Remember the adage, "Cargo at rest is cargo at risk."

- Never drop loaded trailers in unsecured lots, including truck stops.
- Create dispatch checklist procedures for high value/high-risk freight that is relayed to the driver on dispatch.
- Ensure drivers understand the importance of not stopping for at least 200 miles after leaving the shipper. This will lessen the risk if thieves are trailing the load. Drivers having adequate fuel in the tank(s) before picking up the load and having the available hours to drive is vital in this step.
- Drivers should be reminded to never speak to anyone about their load or their destination.
- Lock it or lose it. Always use padlocks on trailer doors and consider using kingpin and air cuff locks to lower the risk of cargo and equipment theft. One thing thieves don't have on their side is time.
- Use technology advances to your advantage. Tractor and trailer satellite tracking, embedding tracking in cargo, and geofencing technologies that alert drivers and dispatch when the tractor and trailer leave a preset location are all tools that can prevent cargo theft and help in the recovery if one occurs.

By implementing these procedures, you'll be a step ahead of equipment and cargo thieves.



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