



John Horner
P3 Propane Safety

How to Conduct Driver Safety Training, Without Impacting Billable Hours

I'm willing to bet you'd love a way to have your drivers trained and evaluated without taking them off delivery routes or wasting billable hours this Winter. Driver ride-along inspections are a cost-effective method to evaluate your delivery staff without detracting from productivity. This offers a safety expert a real-life snapshot of your company's delivery procedure to evaluate and report on.

Inspection Benefits

There are many benefits to a driver ride-along inspection, where a propane safety expert accompanies drivers on delivery routes.

Prevent expensive accidents.

Ride-along evaluations with a safety expert will help promote a culture of safety in your company and minimize the risk of equipment damage and personal injury costs. Any mistakes can be corrected then and there, offering an instant feedback loop that will resonate with the driver.

Evaluate performance when it matters most.

It can be easy for seasonal drivers to forget information over the Summer, so waiting until Spring is

risky. Conduct driver evaluations when your team is dealing with poor driving conditions on a regular basis. Your delivery drivers will receive real-time tips and suggestions from their trainer and your management team will get an accurate picture of their Winter driving habits.

Maintain delivery efficiency.

Ride-along driver evaluations are a unique opportunity to provide employees one-on-one training without hurting your productivity. They gain important training without taking time away from daily operations.

Identify training needs.

During a ride-along evaluation, the trainer can observe where drivers are excelling and where they need improvement.

Fine-Tuning Training Needs

As a professional trainer, here are some of the most common issues I correct during driver ride-along inspections:

Lack of familiarization with equipment used on a day-to-day basis.

Many drivers don't fully understand all the functionalities of their truck. They should be familiar with bobtail inspections, safety devices, meter creep tests and other important features designed to keep them safe.

Improper use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Frequently, I see deliveries where the driver forgets or chooses not to wear their safety glasses. I have also seen them not wear gloves, or wear the wrong type of gloves while handling propane.

Bobtail placement at customer locations.

When, where and how we put a truck in a customer's yard has a big impact on both



safety and satisfaction. Hazards including obstacles and inclement weather can determine how best to place the bobtail.

The top providers of driver ride-along inspections even perform inspections of customer locations and educate drivers on National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 58 code compliancy, then provide a report to your management team that covers any code deficiencies that exist at those customer locations.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why should I bother with driver safety evaluations? I think my team has it under control.

A: Having confidence in your employees is great, but accidents can happen. A bobtail accident is an extremely dangerous scenario that can put your driver and company at risk. All it takes is one severe accident to shut down your whole operation.

Q: How will it help my drivers?

A: Ride-along driver safety evaluations are designed to help delivery drivers be the best they can be. They give each driver the opportunity to work directly with a trainer so that they can get feedback that applies to their skills.

Q: How will it help my managers?

A: Driver safety evaluations show your management team how your delivery team operates in the field. Based on the trainer's feedback, they can assess where each driver is excelling and where there is room for improvement.

Q: How often do I have to schedule driver ride-along inspections?

A: Industry best practice recommends a three-year refresher for all delivery drivers. Trying to stick to a budget? Schedule full or half days for your newest drivers, then expand to more experienced drivers. Everyone has to start somewhere and something is always better than nothing.

Book Driver Safety Evaluations Today

Take advantage of your company's busy delivery schedule by booking a driver ride-along inspection with a propane safety expert near you. You'll sleep soundly at night knowing you have enhanced your propane company's Dept. of Transportation (DOT) and NFPA 58 compliance while optimizing safety practices on behalf of your customers, employees and company. **ICM**

John Horner is the Senior Director of Safety & Training at P3 Propane Safety. He has more than 13 years of industry experience providing DOT and other safety and compliance training. You can reach John at john_horner@bostonenv.com or P3Propane.com.