

17% of drivers, 11% of trucks pulled off highway for safety violations

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

According to preliminary statistics, 505 inspections resulted in 54 vehicles and 85 drivers placed out-of-service for equipment and driver-related safety violations during last week's three-day interagency commercial vehicle inspection at the Interstate 5 southbound Woodburn Port of Entry. This inspection and enforcement effort was the 12th truck check operation since the program began in 1998 targeting impairment and vehicle safety.

11% of 505 commercial vehicles, and 17% of the truck drivers were placed out-of-service for equipment or driver safety violations during a three-day inspection period - OSP photo Operation Trucker Check XII began 12:01 a.m., Tuesday, April 10th, and concluded April 12th at 11:59 p.m., involving a team of law enforcement officers and ODOT commercial vehicle inspectors targeting driver impairment related to alcohol, drugs, or fatigue, and vehicle equipment safety. Participating agencies included Oregon State Police (OSP), ODOT-Motor Carrier Transportation Division (MCTD), Marion County Sheriff's Office (DRE), Clackamas County Sheriff's Office (DRE), Portland Police Bureau (DRE), Beaverton Police Department (DRE), Gladstone Police Department (DRE), and Gresham Police Department (DRE). The first Operation Trucker Check was held in 1998 at the Ashland Port of Entry and has been held at other locations including Ontario, Cascade Locks, and Klamath Falls. This is the second time the operation has been held at the Woodburn Port of Entry. During Operation Trucker Check XII, a total of 505 commercial motor vehicles were inspected of which 54 (11%) were placed out-of-service for critical safety violations. Eighty-five (17%) drivers were also placed out-of-service for assorted safety violations ranging from excessive hours, log book deficiencies, DUII, and driver qualifications. During one evaluation, officers detained a driver who performed poorly on standard field sobriety tests and determined the driver was severely hyperglycemic. Medical aid was summoned for that driver. In addition to the vehicles and drivers placed out-of-service, officers and inspectors issued 35 citations and 439 warnings. Three drivers were arrested for Driving Under the Influence of Intoxicants (Methamphetamine). These statistics were consistent with previously held Operation Trucker Checks. During Operation Trucker Check XI in Ontario, a total of 480 commercial trucks were inspected of which 53 (11%) were placed out-of-service for critical safety violations, and 61 drivers (13%) were placed out-of-service. During Operation Trucker Check X in Ashland, nearly 400 inspections resulted in 43 trucks (11%) and 98 drivers (25%) were placed out-of-service. Another aspect of this operation was to determine the extent of substance use by commercial drivers through voluntary collection of urine samples for forensic testing. This unique feature of the operation was done during the first Operation Trucker Check, and OSP took this as an opportunity to validate previous studies or see if there have been any changes in drug use trends. Unlike the first operation in 1998 when nearly 20% of the drivers refused to provide a voluntary urine sample for testing, only 4% of the 484 drivers refused to provide a voluntary sample this year. Testing results may not be available for several weeks. According to statistics provided by ODOT MCTD: * The total number of truck crashes increased in 2006 from the previous year by nearly 7% * 59,064 truck safety inspections were conducted in Oregon, up from 55,840 in 2005 * During inspections, critical safety violations were found in 23.4% of the vehicles and 9.7% of drivers * Most common mechanical violation found during inspections is brake-related * Over 5,000 truck drivers were caught during inspections falsifying log books or keeping inaccurate driver logs books

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