International Hazard Datasheets on Occupation

Driver, sales route (food products)

What is a Hazard Datasheet on Occupation?

This datasheet is one of the International Datasheets on Occupations. It is intended for those professionally concerned with health and safety at work: occupational physicians and nurses, safety engineers, hygienists, education and Information specialists, inspectors, employers ' representatives, workers' representatives, safety officers and other competent persons.

This datasheet lists, in a standard format, different hazards to which driver, sales routes (food products) may be exposed in the course of their normal work. This datasheet is a source of information rather than advice. With the knowledge of what causes injuries and diseases, is easier to design and implement suitable measures towards prevention.

This datasheet consists of four pages:

- Page 1: Information on the most relevant hazards related to the occupation.
- Page 2: A more detailed and systematized presentation on the **different hazards** related to the job with indicators for preventive measures (marked as and explained on the third page).
- Page 3: Suggestions for **preventive measures** for selected hazards.
- Page 4: **Specialized information**, relevant primarily to occupational safety and health professionals and including information such as a brief job description, a list of tasks, notes and references.

Who is a sales route driver (food products)?

A worker who drives truck or other vehicle over an established route to deliver and sell food products to customers and performs various tasks related to this job.

What is dangerous about this job?

- Like other professional drivers, sales route drivers run an increased risk of road accidents due to lengthy periods of driving, particularly under poor lighting, road and weather conditions.
- Sales route drivers may suffer trauma and injuries while performing various functions of a truck driver, like field repairs, tire change, etc.
- Sales route drivers are at risk of back, hand and arm pain caused, over a long time, by poor seating, vehicle vibration, and handling of heavy loads.

Hazards related to this job

Specific preventive measures can be seen by clicking on the respective in the third column of the table.

Accident hazards	• Slips, trips and falls from cab, van, etc.	
	• Overturning of heavily loaded vehicle due to mechanical failure, difficult road conditions and/or excessive speed, head-on collisions, etc.	
	• Injuries due to accidental collision with unguarded rigid parts of vehicle or cargo	
	• Trauma and injury while performing various functions of a truck driver (e.g., field repair-work, tire change, unfastening tight bands and ropes, etc.)	
	• Acute poisoning by exhaust gases, including carbon monoxide	
	• Increased risk of road accidents due to lengthy driving periods, night driving, driving under unfavorable weather conditions, under bad road conditions and through excessive traffic jams [See Note 1]	
	• Increased risk of being injured by other vehicles during loading/unloading operations	
	• Explosion of over-inflated tires	

Physical hazards	Exposure to prolonged excessive engine noise, resulting in early (severe headache) or delayed (hearing loss) detrimental effects	
	• Exposure to direct and reflected UV (solar) radiation	1
	• Exposure to extreme climatic conditions that can cause heat or cold stress [See Note 2]	
	• Exposure to whole-body vibration from the vehicle [See Note 3]	
Chemical hazards	• Exposure to cleaning and rinsing compounds, antifreeze and brake fluids, gasoline, diesel-oil and oil that may cause various types of dermatitis, skin sensitization, eczema, oil acne, etc.	2
	• Chronic exposure to exhaust fumes containing carbon monoxide, sulfur oxides (SOx), nitrogen oxides (NOX), aldehydes, etc.	3
Biological hazards	• Exposure to high concentrations of certain vegetation pollen, in the open air, may cause, in sensitive people, various allergic and respiratory effects	
Ergonomic, psychosocial and organizational factors	• Low back pain and pain in the joints (of legs and hands/arms) caused by prolonged driving, sometimes over bumpy roads, and/or inadequate seating	4
	• Rheumatic disorders (including sinistral scapulohumeral arthrosis or periarthritis) due to the habit of resting elbow on the window frame during driving	
	• Digestive tract disorders caused by irregular eating and bad diet habits	
	• Hypnotic hallucinations during periods of drowsiness and psychic disorders caused by mental and emotional stress factors	
	• Smoking inside cabin, contributing to health deterioration	5
	• Visual discomfort and eye problems caused by inadequate illumination and eyestrain (esp. when driving at dark time on inter-urban roads)	6
	• Development of lumbago caused by vibrations, inadequate vehicle suspension, uncomfortable seat, etc.	
	• Pathologic changes and premature aging of the lumbosacral part of the spine, which may cause accelerated creation of intervertebral lumbar discs (also possibly related to routine handling of heavy loads)	
	• Problems related to conflicts with unsatisfied customers, accounts irregularities, etc.	

Preventive measures

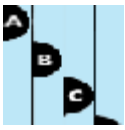
1. Use good-quality sunglasses for driving in strong sunlight
2. Protect hands with chemical-resistant gloves; if impractical, use a barrier cream
3. Avoid breathing exhaust fumes when standing near vehicle; switch-off engine when parked under a roof; install exhaust-emission control device (e.g., catalytic converter)
4. Install an ergonomically-designed driver's seat; interrupt driving periodically for rest and exercises; learn relaxation techniques for long driving
5. Avoid smoking when driving or, if impractical, ventilate the cabin during and after smoking
6. Test eyes regularly and use or change spectacles to accommodate changes in eyesight

Specialized information

Synonyms

Delivery-route truck driver; route driver; truck driver, sales route: agricultural produce, food products, beverages, dairy products, meat products

Definitions and/or description



Drives truck or automobile over established route to deliver and sell products or render services, collects money from customers, and makes change. Drives truck to deliver such items as bakery products, beer, soft drinks, specialty foods and dairy products to place of business or customer's home. Collects money from customers, makes change, and records transactions on customer receipt. Writes customer order and instructions. Records sales or deliveries information on daily sales or delivery record. Calls on prospective customers to solicit new business. Prepares order forms and sales contracts. Informs regular customers of new products or services. Listens to and resolves service complaints. May place stock on shelves or racks. May set up merchandise and sales promotion displays or issue sales promotion materials to customers. May collect or pick up empty containers or rejected or unsold merchandise. May load truck. May issue or obtain customer signature on receipt for pickup or delivery. May clean inside of truck. May perform routine maintenance on truck (DOT)

Related and specific occupations

Bus, tram (streetcar) and trolley-bus drivers; concrete-mixing truck driver; dump-truck driver; garbage collector driver; tractor driver, heavy (incl.: milk driver/hauler; water-truck driver; van driver; etc.); trailer-truck driver (incl.: tractor-trailer-truck driver; log-truck driver; semi-trailer or full-trailer driver; etc.); truck driver, inflammables (incl.: explosives-truck driver; powder-truck driver; tank-truck driver; etc.); truck driver, light (incl.: food-service driver; liquid-fertilizer driver; etc.

Tasks

Adjusting; arranging; attaching; banding; braking; carrying; changing; checking; cleaning; connecting; controlling; delivering; directing; disengaging; dispatching; distributing; driving; dumping; elevating; emptying; examining; fastening; filling; fueling; gauging; greasing; handling; hauling; hoisting; jerking; lifting; loading; lubricating; maintaining; maneuvering; measuring; moving; observing; operating; overseeing; packing; padding; parking; performing; placing; positioning; preparing; pulling; pushing; pumping; raising; reading; recording; refilling; registering; regulating; releasing; repairing; replacing; reporting; reversing; roping; securing; servicing; serving; spraying; supervising; testing; towing; transporting; warning; washing; writing

Primary equipment used

Barrow; cellular phone or radio-communication equipment; fire extinguisher; first-aid kit; jack and other lifting/hoisting equipment; levers; mechanic repair-kit; portable emergency warning-lights and signs; securing ropes and straps; spare tires; tarpaulin and canvas sheets; tire-replacing equipment; truck or other motor vehicle

Workplaces where the occupation is common

Wholesale and retail trade

Notes

1. The risk is of accidents is increased due to driver's physical and mental fatigue and boredom resulting from long driving hours, short rest periods, drowsiness, irregular eating and bad diet habits, etc.
2. Exposure to potentially health-detrimental climatic factors, such as extreme cold or heat, or combination of temperature, humidity and wind, may result in frostbite or heat stroke. Exposure to sudden ambient temperature changes, when leaving and entering the climatic- conditioned cabin, may result in colds and/or rheumatic effects.
3. Whole-body vibrations may impair functions of chest, abdominal organs, and the musculoskeletal system, contribute to driver's fatigue and decrease his alertness.

References

The Workplace. Vol. 2, CIS/ILO, 1997, p. 239 - 265.

Occupational Outlook Handbook, 1996 - 1997 Edition, US Dept. of Labor, p. 455 - 457.

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