

Commercial Vehicle Safety Equipment: What You Need

by Mark Conroy

Commercial vehicles require certain safety equipment for vehicle protection and safety of persons onboard. As a service technician, you should help ensure that each vehicle has the following safety equipment:

- **Portable Fire Extinguishers** – proper type, size, and rating
- **Emergency Reflective Triangles** – warning devices for stopped vehicles
- **Wheel Chocks** – prevent accidental movement of vehicle while parked
- **First Aid Kits** – to match the maximum capacity of persons per vehicle

The US Dept of Transportation, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), regulates the safety of commercial motor vehicles used on highways for transporting passengers or property. FMCSA regulations 49 CFR Part 393.95 requires safety equipment on all of the following trucks, truck tractors, and buses:

- Vehicles with GVWR, GCWR, or gross vehicle weight over 10,000 lb
- Buses for compensation with over 8 persons and non-compensation buses with over 15
- Vehicles transporting hazardous material requiring placards

Fire Extinguishers

All buses, trucks, and truck tractors require portable fire extinguishers for compliance with FMCSA. A 10-B:C unit is required for vehicles with hazardous materials and 5-B:C for all others. Also an extinguishing agent that doesn't freeze is required, and each unit must be secured in a manner that prevents sliding, rolling, and vertical movement. An extinguisher in a vehicle bracket is typically installed for compliance.

BC Rated Extinguishers with Vehicle Brackets

Rating	P/N	Size	Valve/Cylinder
10-B:C	AX403T	2.5 lb	Aluminum/Steel
10-B:C	23471B	2.5 lb	Brass/Steel

ABC Rated Extinguishers with Vehicle Brackets

Rating	P/N	Size	Valve/Cylinder
1-A:10-B:C	AX417T	2.5 lb	Aluminum/Steel
1-A:10-B:C	23384B	2.5 lb	Brass/Steel
2-A:10-B:C	AX500T	5 lb	Aluminum/Steel

Emergency Reflective Triangles

FMCSA requires warning devices for stopped vehicles. Although flares are acceptable, the following equipment is most commonly carried on each vehicle, as a minimum, for compliance:

- At least 3 bidirectional emergency reflective triangles (P/N TKB1)

Wheel Chocks

Wheel chocks (P/N HDLWC) are typically carried on all commercial motor vehicles to prevent accidental movement while vehicles are parked and during loading and unloading. Chocks are used against the rear tires in the direction of grade. On even surfaces, chocks are placed on both sides of tires. Chocks should always be used in pairs.

First Aid Kits

FMCSA does not mandate first aid kits, but many states do. Even where not mandated, Brooks first aid kits are typically installed to match the maximum number of vehicle occupants (passengers plus driver). Also check existing first aid kits for proper contents and replace depleted kits after getting the owner's consent.

First Aid Kits	Deluxe Vehicle FA20924	Standard Vehicle FA20424
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Every commercial motor vehicle should carry a complement of the right safety equipment. Your customers will appreciate your knowledge of the federal safety requirements and your recommendations for products and equipment that will help ensure the safety of vehicles, passengers, and drivers.

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