

Check Your Steering and Suspension Systems

Do you routinely check your truck's power steering fluid, hoses or linkage? Do you check spring mounts for damage? If not, now is the time to do so.

The Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance's (CVSA) 2019 Roadcheck will take place from June 4-6, and this year's focus is on steering and suspension systems. "[They] are safety critical systems for any commercial motor vehicle," said CVSA President Chief Jay Thompson. "Not only do they support the heavy loads carried by trucks and buses, but they also help maintain stability and control under acceleration and braking."

A properly functioning steering and suspension system keeps tires in alignment, reducing the chances of uneven wear and possible tire failure. It also maximizes contact between the tires and the road to provide good handling.

During last year's CVSA Roadcheck, nearly 12,000 vehicles were placed out of service (OOS). Suspension and steering violations accounted for a combined 6.4% of all vehicle OOS violations. In addition, more than 2,600 drivers received OOS orders during the 2018 Roadcheck.

Avoid being placed out of service by:

- Checking the power steering fluid level and topping it off as needed
- Making sure the power steering cap is tight and the dipstick is seated properly
- Making sure the power steering pump is undamaged and securely mounted
- Checking power steering hoses for leaks, cracks or damage
- Checking the steering linkage and all connecting parts for any missing nuts, bolts, bent or broken items



- Inspecting your tires for signs of uneven wear
- Checking for any missing or broken spring hangers, bushings or bolts
- Looking for any leaking shock absorbers
- Looking for any missing, shifted, cracked or broken leaves (for trucks with leaf springs)
- Looking for any broken or distorted coil springs (for trucks with coil springs)
- Looking for any unsecured, bent or broken torsion bars or torque arms (if your truck has them)
- Checking for damage and leaks to air suspension systems (if your truck has them)

If you're selected to participate in a CVSA Roadcheck inspection, cooperate with the inspector. Expect that the inspector will perform a North American Standard Level I inspection, but he or she may opt to conduct a different level of inspection instead.