



PACIF has developed Safety Briefs to help municipal highway supervisors maintain a high level of safety and hazard awareness among employees. We recommend using these short “tailgate trainings” on a regular basis – but no less once a month.

If you need a particular safety topic, please contact us at [losscontrol@vlct.org](mailto:losscontrol@vlct.org).

## AVOIDING VEHICLE BACKING ACCIDENTS

### Information for Supervisors

Nearly 25% of municipal auto and related claims are associated with vehicle backing. Municipal highway operations are particularly susceptible to backing incidents, with many claims associated with entry and exit from garages (such as hitting garage doors, backing out with the wing down, etc.), during snow plowing (while turning around) and backing within the yard. Why be concerned? Backing accidents are the most preventable vehicle accident a driver can have. Training employees how to back vehicles safely, adoption of policies that eliminate unnecessary backing and investing in back-up cameras will help prevent many of these costly accidents. Remember that back up cameras are PACIF Equipment Grant eligible!

### Talking Points for Training

All drivers need to practice their backing skills until they become familiar with the way the vehicle handles and their visibility limits. Use the following items as talking points to further discuss how to prevent backing claims at your location:

- Inexperienced drivers, drivers who are working new routes, or drivers using an unfamiliar dump truck are especially at risk of backing and other auto accidents. Have these individuals spend adequate time practicing with new vehicles, driving the intended plow-routes, etc.
- Stress the importance of knowing their specific vehicle's blind spots. In a medium-sized dump truck, blind spots can extend 16’ in front and 160’ behind a vehicle. Mirrors can never show the whole picture. Therefore, it is critical that drivers plan ahead and closely monitor traffic behind the vehicle - especially when they know they need to turnaround soon.
- Require that your employees use a spotter, especially when backing into the garage or other tight spaces. Show employees what hand signals to use and remind them of the importance of clear communication.
- Require employees to walk-around (this may be part of the pre-trip inspection) their vehicle before backing. They can check for children, soft or muddy areas, potholes, tire hazards and other vehicles that may have entered the area. This should include the garage as well!
- Tell employees to avoid risky "backing turnarounds" (especially during snow plowing) when possible. Encourage them to evaluate plow routes in advance to identify if there is an opportunity to alter the route to eliminate the need for backing.

Trainer: \_\_\_\_\_

Training Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Attendee Roster:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_

If you have questions on this, or other safety topics, please contact PACIF Loss Control at 800-649-7915 or [losscontrol@vlct.org](mailto:losscontrol@vlct.org).

Also visit us on the web at: [www.vlct.org](http://www.vlct.org)