

Safety Bulletin

10 Tips to Beat the Heat This Summer

As the old saying goes, “It’s hot enough to fry an egg on the sidewalk.” Extreme summer heat doesn’t only make you sweat; it also adds stress to many of your truck’s components. Try these 10 tips to prepare your truck — and yourself — for the hot months to come:



- 1. Check your engine oil level and temperature** – Oil keeps your engine cool and well-lubricated, so make sure your truck has enough. If your truck has an oil temperature gauge, make sure the temperature stays within normal range during your trip.
- 2. Watch your coolant level** – Before each trip, make sure you have enough water and antifreeze according to the manufacturer’s directions, and always check your gauges to keep your rig from overheating. Remember, never remove the radiator cap until the system has cooled.
- 3. Check your brakes** – Hot weather can cause brakes to fade or lose friction when components can’t absorb additional heat.
- 4. Keep your tires inflated** – Underinflated tires increase the risk for blowouts, and a good rule of thumb is to check your tires every 2 hours or 100 miles. When measuring tire pressure, don’t release any air from your tires. Air pressure will increase as temperatures rise, and releasing air could increase your risk for a blowout once your tires cool.
- 5. Tighten your engine belts** – Loose v-belts won’t properly turn the water pump or fan, which could put you at risk for overheating. Also, check your engine belts for signs of wear.
- 6. Check your hoses** – Make sure coolant hoses aren’t cracked.
- 7. Watch for “trucker’s arm”** – A famous 2012 study showed the damage UV rays can do to a trucker’s skin, especially to the left arm and the left side of the face. So wear sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30 or wear long sleeves to protect yourself from skin damage and skin cancer.
- 8. Drink water** – Water keeps you better hydrated than sugary soft drinks, iced tea or sports drinks.
- 9. Look for bleeding tar** – In very hot weather, tar can rise to the surface of the asphalt and become slippery.
- 10. Watch the weather** – Hot temperatures aren’t summer’s only danger. Thunderstorms, lightning strikes or flash flooding can happen quickly. Track weather reports carefully to steer clear of any surprises.