

# Personal Safety Tips

From Women In Trucking Association Driver Advisory Committee

Your personal safety is totally up to you. No one is going to be around, unless you run team, who is going to protect you or watch your back. Here are some tips to help you stay safe.

## YOUR HEAD

Your mind is where personal safety starts.

1. Always be alert to who is moving around you whether you are driving, walking or just sitting in your truck.
2. Never become complaisant, assume the worst case scenario.
3. Keep your head up and eyes moving.
4. Think before you preplan as to where you are going to park for the night. If you are going into big cities, just assume that it will be dangerous for you and make sure you will have a safe place to park and good directions BEFORE going in.
5. Do not think that just because another person looks like they are innocent that they are.
6. Think about how you look to others; how are you dressed, are you wearing expensive looking jewelry, are you wearing too heavy of makeup. How you look can attract predators.

## YOUR HANDS AND FEET

1. Are you carrying a purse that someone can grab? Do not unless you know how to use it as a weapon.
2. Have your keys ready to unlock the truck before you get to it.
3. Can you hit someone effectively? If not, then find someone to teach you or take a personal defense course.
4. What kind of shoes are you wearing? You should only wear shoes that you can run in without slipping such as: sneakers, boots, moccasins, loafers, or work shoes.

## YOUR TRUCK

1. Always keep your doors locked.
2. Use a device such as running your seatbelts thru the door handles or use a ratchet strap to hold your doors closed while you sleep especially in dangerous areas.
3. Do not have things hanging in your truck windows that can identify you as female. This can alert predators that you are female and they may target you.
4. Leave your sleeper curtains open if running solo, this way you can see if someone is hiding in there before you get in the truck.
5. Never walk around behind your truck at night even to do a pretrip, wait and do it later, or pull thru the fuel islands and do a walk around.
6. Do not advertise where you are parked for the night.
7. Do not talk on your CB at night while parked in a truck stop. Even with a small radio, someone driving around the truck stop can pin point you within a truck or two.
8. Never allow anyone into your truck unless it is a mechanic or law enforcement officer.
9. It is better to call information and get the local police number in a town than to get on the CB and ask for assistance.
10. If you are broken down on the side of the road, put out your triangles, and then stay in your truck and keep the doors locked until help arrives.
11. Avoid sleeping with your windows or vents open.
12. If you have to park and sleep in a dangerous area, sleep with your head to the passenger side of the sleeper.

## **THE TRUCK STOP**

1. Try to avoid parking on the back row.
2. Avoid as much as possible leaving your truck after dark.
3. Never sleep where you get your money from either cash advance or ATM.
4. Always carry identification when out of the truck especially at a truck stop.
5. Do not flirt with another driver while inside the truck stop, or out of it either for that matter.
6. If another driver offers to walk you inside or back to your truck, do not allow them alongside of your truck where people cannot see.
7. While it is ok to be pleasant if spoken to by another driver, do not engage in conversation standing in the parking lot after dark.
8. Never get into another driver's truck.
9. Keep a list of the safe truck stops you run across.
10. Always watch for suspicious activity around your truck when you are walking up to it. If you see anything suspicious return inside and alert the truck stop personnel.
11. If you see suspicious activity while in your truck, stay in your truck and either call the truck stop or dial 911.
12. If anyone approaches your truck, do not roll down your window, just wave them away.
13. Walk around the ends of the parked truck rows, not between the trucks.
14. If your clothing is dark, get some of that reflective tape and put it on when walking at night, or wear a reflective vest.

## **ODDS AND ENDS**

1. If you are driving at night and see whirling lights behind you and it is a police officer trying to stop you and you are unsure if he/she is real or not; slow down, put on your flashers, and dial 911 with your location to make sure the officer is legitimate. Tell the 911 operator that you will stop at the next lighted exit if there is one close.
2. If someone breaks into your truck while you are sleeping, try to get to the air horn lanyard and blow the horn. You can run a fishing line from the lanyard to the sleeper attaching it with fishing swivels and making a loop on the sleeper end.
3. While many things like mace and pepper spray are illegal in some states, other things do as well as they do and are legal. Lacquer hair spray, perfume, windex, deoderant, spray air freshener, and a fire extinguisher are all legal and can be used to spray in an attacker's face to give you enough time to run.
4. If you have a pet, walk them before dark or only in well lit areas.
5. One of those canned fog horns sold in sporting sections of stores works well as an emergency alarm to attract help.
6. Make a list of your common stopping places and give it to your family. Use I.C.E. (In Case of Emergency) in your cell phone to designate your emergency contacts.