

## Cargo Securement Regs Clarified

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OTTAWA -- North America's cargo securement rules have undergone the first of what insiders say will be several clarification exercises.

The rules, while clear enough in their own right, will always be subject to different interpretations by drivers and enforcement personnel. During a meeting in New Mexico in the fall of 2005, officials from Canada and the U.S. met to discuss the rules and to come up with interpretations of how they are to be applied.

Two documents were published late last year offering more or less plain language guides on how individual sections of the rule should be applied. Below are some examples, taken from the first National Safety Code, Standard 10 Interpretation Guide.

This entire document, and another entitled, "Securement of Dressed Lumber and Similar Building Materials on Flatbed Trucks and Trailers," is available at the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators website, [www.ccmta.ca](http://www.ccmta.ca).



-- Inspection of Sealed Vans: Is the driver required to show some proof that there was instruction or an order not to open the vehicle for inspection?

Comments: The NSC Standard does not specifically require some form of written documentation. However, it would be good practice to have documentation from the shipper or carrier that indicates the driver was instructed not to break the seal and inspect the load.

Inspection document standards don't change, but changes in status must be recorded in the logbook

-- Edge Protection: The requirement to use edge protectors is very vague. Are there guidelines on when edge protection must be provided?

Comments: It would be impossible to list every possible type of commodity for which edge protection must be used. As examples, lifts of dressed lumber would not normally require edge protection as the corners are generally rounded. At the other extreme, bundles of flat sheet metal, or fabricated metal structures with sharp edges have been shown to easily cut through synthetic webbing. It would be reasonable to assume that if, on inspection, there is evidence of tiedown abrasion or cutting, corrective measures would be required before the vehicle could continue to operate on a public highway.

-- Securement of Chains and other Equipment: Can chains, load binders, and other equipment be hung from racks or hooks on the vehicle?

Comments: Yes, provided they are firmly immobilized or secured on or within the vehicle by structures of adequate strength, blocking, bracing, dunnage or dunnage bags, shoring bars, tiedowns, or a combination of these.

-- Rub Rails as Anchor Points: Can rub rails be used as an anchoring point?

Comments: Yes, if the tiedown is fitted with a flat hook end and it is not possible to attach the hook to another more suitable anchor point. However, best practices would have tiedowns routed inside the rub rail.

-- Inspections: What documentation is required of the driver to demonstrate inspections have been carried out?

Comments: The Standard does not require specific documentation, but changes of duty status must be recorded in the driver's log book. Section 3(3)(c) specifies that the cargo securement system must be inspected "when the vehicle has been driven 240 kilometres."

Does this mean for each 240 km of the trip, or just at the first 240 km?

Comments: It is for every change in duty status, every 240 km of travel or every three hours, whichever occurs first.