



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PREPARE FOR CVSA INTERNATIONAL ROADCHECK

WITH PROACTIVE SAFETY AND MAINTENANCE TIPS FROM BENDIX

Adhering to Routine Maintenance Procedures for Brakes, Tires, and Wheel-ends Can Help Prevent Many of the Critical Issues Commonly Flagged During Inspections

ELYRIA, Ohio – April 26, 2021 – Numbers can tell an important story. According to the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA), one-fifth of the more than 50,000 commercial vehicle inspections conducted during the 2020 International Roadcheck event resulted in a vehicle being taken out of service because of safety violations. And of all violations found during the inspection event, close to 40% were tied to the vehicle's brake system and/or brake adjustment. Other top violation categories included issues related to tires, lights, and cargo securement.

The inspections are part of an initiative by the CVSA to raise awareness of the North American Standard Inspection Program and the essential highway safety rules and regulations in place to keep roadways safe.

As part of its mission to support those same goals, Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC (Bendix) wants to make it easier for fleets and owner-operators to prepare for inspections and to accomplish basic maintenance tasks by providing proactive advice on brake systems and wheels in time for this year's event.

The 2021 International Roadcheck takes place May 4-6, resuming its normal spring scheduling. Last year's event was postponed to September due to the coronavirus pandemic. During the three-day inspection and enforcement initiative, CVSA-certified inspectors in Canada, Mexico, and the U.S. will conduct commercial motor vehicle and driver inspections at

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weigh or inspection stations, examining vehicle mechanical fitness as well as driver operating requirements. As was the case in 2020, in consideration of COVID-19, law enforcement personnel will follow their departments' health and safety protocols during the event.

“A review of the findings from the 2020 International Roadcheck event shows that more than 7,200 vehicles and 2,300 drivers were removed from roadways due to a critical finding either related to the safety of the vehicle or of the driver,” said Fred Andersky, Bendix director – demos, sales and service training. “And of these infractions, problems related to the brake system or to brake adjustment topped the list of violations considered critical enough to put a vehicle out of service. Those violations accounted for 38% of all out-of-service violations found. All told, CVSA’s data shows about 21% of the vehicles inspected were put out of service, and the brakes or brake adjustment were a common reason why. Keep in mind that brakes are one of the foundations for driver safety and for optimal operation of vehicle on-board technologies. That’s why keeping vehicle brakes in good shape is critical in helping to maintain overall safety on the road, and why CVSA’s Roadcheck – along with a regular schedule of preventive maintenance – is so important.”

Andersky continued, “However, many of the critical issues flagged during these inspections are maintenance-related, and many are issues that could have easily been prevented with regular, thorough maintenance procedures. Inspections may find that brakes need to be adjusted or that tires are improperly inflated, for example. Or they may highlight a driver or technical issue that could have been prevented through training.”

International Roadcheck, which was created in 1988, is the largest targeted commercial motor vehicle program in the world, with more than 1.4 million roadside inspections conducted over the history of the event. On average, nearly 15 trucks or buses are inspected every minute of the 72-hour period. Inspectors examine a wide range of vehicle- and driver-related processes and equipment, such as brake systems, steering mechanisms, tires, cargo securement, suspensions, and more to make sure they are compliant with regulations. Inspectors are on the lookout for critical vehicle inspection item violations, as outlined in the North American Standard Out-of-Service Criteria. If these violations are found, then the vehicle will be put out of service and cannot be operated until the conditions are corrected.

With vehicle braking systems, wheel-ends, and tires under scrutiny, Bendix offers the following recommendations on inspecting and maintaining these crucial components.

Brake System Maintenance and Checkups

Brake systems and brake adjustment can contribute to a range of issues that are easily averted through regular pre-trip inspections and preventive maintenance. First, drivers should

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always conduct standard walk-arounds – pre- and post-trip inspections – before and after hitting the road. Look for visible brake system problems such as loose hoses or damaged brake components – air chambers or pushrods, for example. And earlier, in the shop, air brake system inspections should include the following points – all of which relate to items typically inspected during Roadcheck:

- Conducting a 90- to 100-psi brake application and listening for leaks
- Measuring chamber stroke at each wheel-end to ensure proper brake adjustment
- Examining friction for good condition and minimum thickness
- Measuring/inspecting each rotor and drum for wear and heat cracking and/or leopard spotting

Brake friction is another essential component that should be checked for compliance, whether during maintenance or pre-trip. This means inspecting for issues including lining cracks, missing portions of the lining, oil or grease contamination of the lining, and compliant friction lining thickness.

“Keep in mind that not all friction that is marketed as ‘acceptable’ under today’s reduced stopping distance (RSD) regulations will actually perform to that standard,” said Mark Holley, Bendix director of marketing and customer solutions, Wheel-End. “This means that when you replace air disc brake pads or drum brake shoes, you’ll want to select components that will ensure the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) requirements are met, so that your vehicle remains compliant with the standards required of RSD braking systems. For this reason, Bendix recommends replacing like-for-like OEM friction, as it is the best way to maintain your vehicle’s braking performance in stopping distance and wear when replacing linings on vehicles equipped with RSD brakes.”

In addition, Bendix recommends the use of remanufactured drum brake shoes that have been coined back to their OEM-engineered shape, as opposed to those that have simply been relined with new friction. Relining a shoe that’s been exposed to the extreme force and temperature changes of normal use without having been coined can lead to reduced stopping power and premature wear.

“You certainly don’t want to undercut the stopping power of a high-performance brake, but this is what’s at risk when using inferior friction or a twisted shoe,” Holley said. “Using OEM-quality parts ensures you will achieve the best and safest performance from your braking system. Another critical point to keep in mind: The performance of your braking system also affects the performance of connected safety systems. So if the vehicle is equipped with a full-stability or collision mitigation system, it too can be negatively affected if brakes aren’t performing at their peak.”

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Another tip to consider relates to drum brake performance. Fleets spec'ing drum brakes and that incur repeated violations due to out-of-adjustment brakes might consider using air disc brakes instead, Holley noted, citing the Bendix® ADB22X® air disc brake as an example. "The ADB22X brake includes an internal self-adjustment mechanism that can help lower the risk of brakes being found out of adjustment during inspection, which can affect Compliance, Safety, Accountability (CSA) scoring."

Holley continued, "Beyond inspections, however, with advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS) growing in popularity, the demand for air disc brakes is strongly growing as well. Fleets understand that it makes sense to support their ADAS systems with air disc brakes on both the tractor and trailer because of their reliability, ease of maintenance and stopping power. They know that each system is great individually, but better together."

Pay Attention to Tire Inflation

CVSA's annual International Roadcheck tire inspections emphasize the importance of maintaining proper tire pressure: Industry research shows about 90% of tire failures can be attributed to underinflation, and nearly half of all emergency service road calls are tire-related.

"Driving on underinflated tires generates higher internal running temperatures, and that will lead to tire blowouts," said Jon Intagliata, Bendix product group director, Trailer Controls. "What's more, underinflation also puts unnecessary stress, wear, and tear on the tires. This excess wear and tear has been documented and it can shorten the life of the tires: The American Trucking Associations' Technology & Maintenance Council estimates that 20% underinflation can shorten tire life by 30%."

You can help reduce this risk by using a system such as the SmarTire® Tire Pressure Monitoring System by Bendix CVS (TPMS) – or the SmarTire® Trailer-Link™ TPMS by Bendix CVS. The system provides real-time pressure alerts to the driver, thereby helping to alleviate the problem of underinflated tires.

Bendix SmarTire systems use a wheel-mounted sensor that continuously monitors temperature and pressure, triggering tire alerts that compensate for changing operating conditions. The alerts can also point to other potential wheel-end issues that lead to high tire temperatures, such as a dragging brake.

As with friction, tires and tire performance also can impact the performance of advanced safety components and technologies, including RSD-compliant brakes, air disc brakes, full stability, and advanced driver assistance systems such as Bendix® Wingman® Fusion™.

The Training Advantage

Keeping vehicles on the road and operating safely also depends on both drivers and technicians staying informed on regulations and remaining knowledgeable about ever-advancing commercial vehicle safety components and technologies. Fortunately, fleets have a variety of options from Bendix when it comes to equipping technicians with the most current and in-depth training and information.

Bendix's robust and comprehensive distance-learning resources can help to keep North America's fleets and truck drivers operating safely. The Bendix On-Line Brake School (www.brake-school.com) offers more than 90 free courses, including a curriculum covering the full spectrum of braking and active vehicle safety product topics, developed by the team at Bendix. This online resource currently counts more than 110,000 registered users.

Additional online training resources from Bendix include the company's popular "Truck Talk with Bendix" podcast, available via Google Play, Apple Podcasts®, and Stitcher. It can also be accessed via Bendix's Knowledge Dock® (knowledge-dock.com), which hosts continuously updated videos, white papers, and blog posts addressing maintenance and other critical topics for the commercial vehicle. In addition, the site maintains the company's venerable and trusted "Tech Tips" series archive.

Also part of Bendix's complement of training resources is its team of field-tested sales and service professionals, along with its veteran field technical support team and the Bendix Tech Team at 1-800-AIR-BRAKE – an expert technical support group providing service advice, brake system troubleshooting, and product training.

Bendix's in-person, hands-on training efforts have also earned praise and recognition over many years. These include the long-running Bendix® Brake Training School, conducted at locations across the United States; on-site maintenance demonstrations and detailed system explorations; as well as on-site technician training covering troubleshooting and system maintenance. Many of these events, which were postponed in 2020 due to the pandemic, are set to resume in June.

"Maintaining commercial vehicles and keeping drivers and technicians up-to-date is a year-round job, but the International Roadcheck event helps by reinforcing the importance of getting prepared by way of proper maintenance," Andersky said. "As always, Bendix is here to help and support the industry with maintenance know-how, reminders, and resources. It's another way we're working to help keep our roadways safe."

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About Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC

Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems, a member of Knorr-Bremse, develops and supplies leading-edge active safety technologies, energy management solutions, and air brake charging and control systems and components under the Bendix® brand name for medium- and heavy-duty trucks, tractors, trailers, buses, and other commercial vehicles throughout North America. An industry pioneer, employing more than 4,100 people, Bendix – and its wholly owned subsidiary, R.H. Sheppard Co., Inc. – is driven to deliver the best solutions for improved vehicle safety, performance, and overall operating cost. Contact us at 1-800-AIR-BRAKE (1-800-247-2725) or visit bendix.com. Stay connected and informed through Bendix expert podcasts, blog posts, videos, and other resources at knowledge-dock.com. Follow Bendix on Twitter at twitter.com/Bendix_CVS. Log on and learn from the Bendix experts at brake-school.com. And to learn more about career opportunities at Bendix, visit bendix.com/careers.

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