

# safety matters

Oil & Gas  
Toolbox Talks for

From your safety partners at Bankers Insurance, LLC

## Bobtail Operation: Delivering Propane Safely

An estimated 35,000 bobtail trucks hit the road each day to deliver propane to customers across America. There is substantial responsibility that goes along with the transportation of potentially hazardous cargo. To protect yourself and those around you, it is especially important that you practice safe driving techniques while behind the wheel of a bobtail.

### Rollovers

A bobtail is especially subject to rollovers due to the following:

- High center of gravity
- Short wheel base
- Shifting liquid cargo
- Tendency to drive on rough, uneven terrain

However, the design of the vehicle is not solely at fault. Studies have shown that, while the bobtail itself may be prone to tip, operator error is a contributing factor in almost all rollovers.

Safety officials say rollovers occur most often after a bobtail's passenger tires leave the side of a roadway. It is not uncommon for the shoulder to be lower than the pavement, which creates an imbalance. Most drivers instinctively react to this situation by jerking the wheel quickly to the left in an attempt to return all tires to the road. If you overcorrect, the weight shifts too quickly, resulting in a rollover.

To avoid rollovers, take the following

precautions:

- Suppress the instinct to jerk the wheel suddenly
- Reduce your speed considerably
- Then slowly ease your way back onto the roadway

### Inattentive Drivers

Not paying attention to the road can have disastrous results. You may have to react quickly to avoid a sudden change in the environment around you. If you are distracted by something else, you may not have enough time to respond. Any activity that does not allow you to fully focus on the task of driving is prohibited, including the following:

- Talking on the phone and texting (using a hands-free device is permissible in essential or emergency situations).
- Reading a map or reprogramming your GPS—pull over to the side of the road to do so.
- Driving on inadequate rest—your reaction time may slow when you're tired, and you also run the risk of falling asleep.

### Railroads

The idea of getting stuck on a railway crossing can be any driver's worst nightmare. When you add a potentially explosive cargo to the mix, it is easy to see why you must pay extra attention while

**Well trained, attentive drivers are the key to safe bobtail operations. Make sure you know how to avoid potentially hazardous situations.**



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crossing the tracks.

- It is required by law that those transporting propane and other hazardous materials stop at all railroad crossings.
- Make sure you have a clear view of the tracks in both directions.
- If you see a train coming, wait for it to pass. You may not realize how fast the train is moving.
- Never ignore flashing lights or navigate around safety gates at a crossing.
- If your vehicle does become stuck on the tracks, exit the vehicle immediately, and move a safe distance away.