



Truck Accidents in Utah

THE COMPLETE GUIDE

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Truck Accident Guide

Commercial trucks pose a serious threat to other motorists because of their large size, weight, and the materials they transport. Despite this already inherent danger, many trucking companies push drivers beyond their natural limits in an attempt to provide fast deliveries to keep up with the modern-day demands of businesses. These pressures have led to a lack of qualified drivers, drivers who work well beyond their capabilities, overloaded vehicles, speeding, and a disregard for the safety of others. When confronted with these factors and injured in a truck accident, you deserve to be compensated for the full extent of your losses.

The truck accident lawyers at Swenson & Shelley have prepared this truck accident guide to explain truck accidents, your legal rights, and the avenues you may be able to take to hold negligent parties responsible. We also provide a free consultation to truck accident victims so we can explain your legal rights and options during a confidential review of your case.



Truck Accidents in Utah

Here are a few statistics to put the problem of truck crashes in perspective:

The [U.S. Department of Transportation](#) reports that 4,965 people were killed in crashes involving large trucks in one recent year. 71% of the people killed in those accidents were occupants of vehicles other than the truck. Another 13% were pedestrians or cyclists.

85% of all truck accidents happen on weekdays. 61% of fatal truck accidents occur on weekdays. The months of June through October have more truck accidents than other months of the year.

3% of tested truck drivers involved in fatal crashes had blood alcohol concentrations (BAC) of 0.08% or higher.

While large trucks comprise only 4% of all registered vehicles in the United States, they are involved in 10% of fatal crashes.

These staggering statistics are particularly dangerous for Utah drivers because the [Utah Department of Public Safety](#) reports that nearly 25% of all vehicles on our state roads are large trucks. Top causes of crashes in Utah include:



Speeding



Impaired driving



Drowsy driving



Lane swerving



Distracted driving



Failing to yield



5 Most Essential Ways Our Truck Accident Lawyers Can Help

Some people wonder whether they really need to hire a truck accident lawyer or whether they can negotiate their own claim. Keep in mind the truck driver may be represented by insurance companies and lawyers who will aggressively protect their interests. The legal team at Swenson & Shelley PLLC can help you level the playing field by:

Conducting a Thorough Investigation into the Accident

Our team can conduct an in-depth investigation into all aspects of the crash to determine how it happened and who is responsible for it. Valuable evidence may quickly be lost or destroyed without the prompt intervention of a lawyer who can preserve evidence. We can also work with investigators to obtain and assemble evidence to establish all aspects of your claim.

Our investigation may involve:



Carefully reviewing all accident reports



Taking pictures and videos of the accident scene



Interviewing witnesses



Consulting with expert witnesses, such as accident reconstruction experts or engineers who can help explain how the crash occurred



Connecting the Cause of the Accident and Who Is to Blame

Truck accidents can be much more complicated than other types of motor vehicle accidents because several different parties may be to blame for the accident. A skilled lawyer can connect the cause of the accident with who is to blame.

Some common causes of truck accidents and the parties who may be responsible for them include:



Drowsy driving: Truck drivers, trucking companies that encourage or require drivers to violate hours of service rules



Drunk driving: Truck drivers, employers who negligently retain drivers with known drinking or drug problems



Mechanical issues: Truck drivers who fail to complete pre-trip inspections, truck owners who lease their vehicles to others, mechanics who do not properly maintain the fleet, truck or part manufacturers if the problematic part is defective



Inexperience: Truck drivers, employers who hire unqualified drivers or fail to provide sufficient training



Cargo shifts during transport: Cargo loading companies that fail to properly secure cargo, truck drivers who fail to inspect the load after driving a certain number of miles or hours, as required by federal law



Driver error: Truck drivers, trucking companies who negligently hire inexperienced drivers or those with bad driving records

Gathering Essential Evidence to Prove Your Claim

A skilled lawyer understands the power of strong evidence. We will work diligently to obtain evidence, such as:



Photographs or Videos

- The entire accident scene
- Relevant traffic signs
- All vehicles involved in the crash
- Detailed images of property damage
- Skid marks, tire treads, and other road debris following the wreck
- Damage to objects
- All of your injuries

In addition to still photos, we may be able to obtain videos from traffic cameras, surveillance cameras, or dash cams.



Driver Qualification Files

The Driver Qualification File can be a vital piece of evidence to help illuminate factors contributing to the accident. Federal regulations require trucking companies to maintain the following documents in this file:

- The driver's application
- Valid driver's license
- Background check reports
- Original motor vehicle record
- Medical examiner's certification
- Annual reviews
- Employment history
- Training certificates
- Personnel records
- Hours of service records
- Results from alcohol and drug screenings
- Truck maintenance records





Documents and Other Evidence

Other documents and evidence we may subpoena or use other formal discovery methods to obtain may include:

- Electronic data recorder information
- Logbooks
- Bills of lading
- Truck maintenance logs
- Cargo loading documents
- Delivery documents
- Weight tickets
- Cell phone records
- Medical records
- Company manuals



Handling Communications on Your Behalf

It's not uncommon for insurance companies to contact accident victims shortly after a crash and insist they need a recorded statement. Don't fall for this old tactic. Instead, refer them to your truck accident lawyer. Your lawyer can handle all case-related communications on your behalf so you can focus on your recovery.



Negotiating for Maximum Compensation

At Swenson & Shelley, we are experienced negotiators. We can examine your situation and accurately estimate the compensation you will need to pay for your future care and estimate any permanent reduction in your earning capacity.

Free Consultation 27/7

☎ (435) 265-4523



When the Worst Has Happened, We Fight for What's Best for You

Utah Laws Regarding Trucking Accidents

In response to high incident rates of accidents and other safety concerns, a multitude of regulations exist to govern the trucking industry. Swenson & Shelley truck accident lawyers are familiar with federal and state regulations that may impact truck accident claims, such as:

- Hours of service rules that prohibit truckers from driving beyond a certain number of hours, depending on whether they are transporting property or passengers
- Maintenance regulations that govern how commercial trucks are to be regularly maintained and inspected to prevent accidents caused by mechanical failures
- Cargo securing rules that state when and which type of tie downs must be used to properly secure cargo
- Health requirements that drivers pass a physical and be medically cleared before operating a commercial motor vehicle
- Alcohol screening requirements before hiring truck drivers, testing them after wrecks, and random testing protocols
- Prohibitions against passing vehicles in the left-most lane when the gross vehicle weight exceeds 18,000 pounds or has a trailer

Your Guide: What to Do After a Truck Accident

If you are involved in an truck accident involving a commercial truck, here's what you should do:

- Call 911 to report the accident.
- Seek prompt medical care.
- Ask for the driver's information, including their employer's name and the name of the truck owner, if different.
- Take pictures of the accident scene.
- Ask witnesses for their contact information.

And, of course, **reach out to an experienced truck accident lawyer** as soon as possible. An experienced personal injury lawyer can help ensure you receive proper medical care, handle all claims related to your case, manage correspondence with insurance companies, and negotiate for fair compensation on your behalf.



Contact Swenson & Shelley for Help with Your Claim



The truck accident lawyers at Swenson & Shelley hope that you never have to use this guide. But, if you do, know that you do not have to go through the difficult process of handling a truck accident claim alone. Our team is standing by, ready to help. We can handle all aspects of your claim so you can focus on your recovery. Call us today to take advantage of a free, no-obligation consultation.

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