

Recent Changes to Annual Vehicle Inspection Criteria

Effective December 9, 2021, the annual (periodic) commercial motor vehicle (CMV) inspection standards in Appendix A to Part 396 were amended to include **rear impact guards**. The form used to document an annual inspection must include rear impact guards in the list of items to be inspected (if "rear impact guard" is not pre-printed on the form, it may be written in by hand).

A CMV will fail its annual inspection if any of the following criteria are present.

Trailers built after January 25, 1998

For trailers and semitrailers with a GVWR of 10,001 pounds or more and manufactured on or after January 26, 1998 (except for pole trailers, pulpwood trailers, low chassis vehicles, special purpose vehicles, wheels back vehicles, road construction controlled horizontal discharge trailers; and trailers towed in driveaway-towaway operations):

1. Missing guard.
2. Guard is not securely attached to trailer, including broken or missing fasteners, any welds or parent metal cracked, or other damage that compromises secure attachment of the guard.
3. Guard horizontal member does not extend to within 4 inches of each, or extends beyond either, side extremity of the vehicle.
4. Guard horizontal member is more than 22 inches above the ground.
5. Guard horizontal member is more than 12 inches forward of the rear extremity of the vehicle.
6. Guard horizontal member does not have a cross sectional vertical height of at least 4 inches across its entire width.

All other CMVs (1953 or later)

For all other CMVs manufactured after December 31, 1952 (except truck tractors, pole trailers, pulpwood trailers, road construction controlled horizontal discharge trailers, or vehicles in driveaway-towaway operations) in which the vertical distance between the rear bottom edge of the body (or the chassis assembly if the chassis is the rearmost part of the vehicle) and the ground is greater than 30 inches when the vehicle is empty:

1. Missing guard.
2. Guard is not securely attached to trailer by bolts, welding, or other comparable means.
3. Guard horizontal member is more than 30 inches above the ground.
4. Guard horizontal member does not extend to within 18 inches of each side extremity of the vehicle.
5. Guard horizontal member is more than 24 inches forward of the rear extremity of the vehicle.

For details, refer to 49 CFR §393.5, §393.86, and Appendix A to Part 396.