

# HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND CSA

If you transport hazardous materials, you know that they require special training, special packaging, and special precautions to minimize the risks. Under the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's CSA enforcement program, failure to comply with the rules for hazmat packaging, marking, and securement carries risks of its own.

## How Is YOUR Hazmat Safety Record?

The following are the most common hazmat-related violations and their severity in the CSA scoring system for the Cargo-Related BASIC.

No.	Description	Severity
1.	Placard damaged, deteriorated, or obscured	5
2.	Package not secure in vehicle	10
3.	Vehicle not placarded as required	5
4.	Shipping paper accessibility	3
5.	No shipping papers	3
6.	Emergency response information missing	3
7.	Emergency response information not available	3
8.	No placards/markings when required	5
9.	No cargo tank test or inspection markings	7
10.	Placard not reading horizontally	5

## Keeping Your Score Low

To keep your score low in the Cargo-Related BASIC, you'll need to strive for clean inspections, secure your load, and follow the Hazardous Materials Regulations at all times.

- **Avoid the "high severity" hazmat violations.** These include improper hazmat securement (10), package integrity violations (8), package testing violations (7), fire hazard violations (6), and marking/placarding violations (5).
- **Secure the load.** Hazmat packages must be secured against shifting or leaking. This is one of the most common violations, and it carries a severity of 10.
- **Is your training up-to-date?** You cannot haul, handle, or otherwise work with hazardous materials if you are not properly qualified, trained, and re-trained. Know which loads you are qualified to haul, and make sure you have the proper (and valid) endorsements and qualifications.
- **Check your placards.** Are they clean, undamaged, and visible? Do they show the proper information?
- **Double-check the shipping papers!** Make sure they contain all required elements.
- **Carry your papers.** Depending on the cargo, you may need any or all of the following: shipping paper, hazardous waste manifest, emergency response information, Certificate of Registration number, and, for explosives, a copy of Part 397, accident/delay instructions, and a route plan.

## Hazmat Under CSA

- Most high-severity violations in this BASIC relate to hazmat securement or packaging, so a low score depends on proper packaging and securement.
- Of the 350 violations in the Cargo-Related BASIC, about 240 of them relate to hazmat, and of those, drivers are held accountable for about 80.
- Violations will affect your scores for 3 years, and your employer's score for 2 years, but their impact decreases with time. Your score is updated every 30 days.
- Clean inspections – with no cargo-related violations – will improve your score.
- Many hazmat violations relate to paperwork. Make sure the hazmat shipping papers are available to authorities in the event of an accident or inspection.



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