

Police host 'truck blitz' training course for new officers

One-third of heavy vehicles were taken off the road for failing to meet standards during a commercial vehicle safety inspection.

Halton Regional Police hosted a training course for new commercial motor vehicle officers from April 11-13.

The three-day course led 24 officers, including eight from the Guelph and Hamilton police services, through a curriculum that included cargo securement, hours of service limits, weight and dimension limits in Ontario speed limiting equipment, spill response, Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, hazardous materials and wheel detachment investigations.

The course culminated in an opportunity to conduct commercial motor vehicle enforcement throughout Halton.

Newly-trained officers inspected 48 commercial vehicles on April 13, mainly in Burlington and Oakville. Sixteen were taken out of service, a 33 per cent failure rate.

Officers laid 102 Provincial Offences Act charges.

Halton police Traffic Services Unit Sgt. Ryan Snow said most POA charges involving commercial vehicles have no set fine. They result in a court summons and can, upon conviction, result in thousands of dollars in fines.

During the recent one-day inspection blitz,

one vehicle and its license plate were seized because it had not undergone a mandatory annual safety inspection.

The reasons for vehicle drivers and owners to be ticketed are fairly consistent from one inspection to another, said Snow.

"It's pretty well consistent across the board — unsecured loads, mechanical issues to do with brakes and suspensions, and licensing, people operating on roads without a proper licence.

"We don't have to go searching. You can stop vehicles almost anywhere and anytime and one-third of them will fail and be pulled off the road," noted Snow.

Halton police says drivers and operators of commercial motor vehicles are responsible for ensuring their vehicles, as well as their loads, are inspected and safe before travel.

The service has a Regional Commercial Motor Vehicle Unit that conducts safety inspections several times a year around Halton.

Snow recalled a potentially deadly situation in late March in the Plains Road and QEW area that turned out OK. A large truck lost its rear axle assembly.

"(There was) drive shaft failure at the front end, it contacted the road and the resultant force transmitted back to the rear axle where it

was bolted to the frame — shearing all the connectors.

"The axle came off and struck another vehicle, however there were no injuries," said Snow.

He said that in this case, the truck's operator couldn't have been expected to identify the condition of the drive shaft during a pre-trip inspection.

"While there wasn't any negligence on this occasion, a lot of wheel separations and other equipment failures are due to a lack of maintenance. This is where charges come into play. In a wheel separation, the classic signs include bolt holes in the rim that are elongated and threaded wheel studs where the treading is stripped off."

Snow added that quite often wheel separations go unreported as the driver pulls over, retrieves the separated wheel from the ditch and then leaves the scene.

He said Halton police encourage motorists to call 911 anytime they see a wheel separation or even the aftermath with a wheel and rim laying on the ground or a driver out on foot rolling a detached wheel assembly back to their truck.

"Halton police responds to these instances on a high priority basis in order to investigate, and likely charge the driver and company.

"These instances usually lead to identi-



Halton Police were out in Acton checking commercial vehicles yesterday (Wednesday). This one was 6,500 kg overweight and had five other violations.

Halton Police Photo

fying other safety violations, which provide grounds for further charges and removing the vehicle from the road — thereby protecting the community."

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