

**Subject:** Utility Trailers  
**From:** "CSPO (MTO)" <CSPO@ontario.ca>  
**Date:** Thu, 6 Aug 2009 16:15:05 -0400  
**To:** <dusterrm1@comcast.net>

**Ministry of Transportation**

Carrier Safety and Enforcement Branch

3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, 301 St. Paul Street  
St. Catharines ON L2R 7R4  
Tel.: 416 246-7166  
Fax: 905 704-2530

**Ministère des transports**

Direction de la sécurité des transporteurs et de  
l'application des lois

3<sup>e</sup> étage, 301, rue St. Paul  
St. Catharines ON L2R 7R4  
Tél.: 416 246-7166  
Télééc.: 905 704-2530



Mr. Ron J. Melancon  
8898 Castle Point Drive  
Glen Allen, VA  
23060  
[dusterrm1@comcast.net](mailto:dusterrm1@comcast.net)

Dear Mr. Melancon:

Thank you for your e-mail regarding utility trailers. The Honourable Jim Bradley, Minister of Transportation, has asked me to respond to you on his behalf.

The Province of Ontario is known for having some of the toughest laws regarding commercial motor vehicles and trailers in North America. Although a utility trailer is smaller than a tractor trailer combination, the owners are still obligated to ensure they are operated safely on the highway. We have current legislation and regulations that demand every combination of motor vehicle and trailer including utility trailers in excess of twenty feet have all lighting systems such as; tail, brake and signal lighting devices operating an clearly visible and understandable from a distance of one hundred feet to the front and rear of the vehicle. The tires must be safe and suspension must be sound. There are also rules regarding the structural integrity of the trailer hitch, tow bar, safety chains and the hooks that connect to the towing vehicle. The safety chains must also be installed in such a manner that if the trailer became uncoupled while the vehicle combination is in motion, the tow bar will not drop to the ground. All utility trailers that exceed a gross weight of 1,360 kg must also be affixed with brakes adequate to stop and hold the vehicle.

Further to those requirements, if any part of the load or part of the trailer becomes dislodged and falls to the roadway the driver can be fined to a maximum of \$2000. Also, if the utility trailer is being drawn by a commercial motor vehicle, the fine escalates to \$20,000 or, if the item that becomes detached from the trailer is a wheel, the fine then escalates to \$50,000.

All utility trailers being drawn by a commercial motor vehicle that have a combined gross weight of 10,000 pounds (or approximately 4,545 kg) must pass an annual safety inspection. Evidence of this certification is by affixing a decal provided on the vehicle in a location that is clearly visible.

The owners of trailers that fail a roadside inspection have a choice of repairing it on site followed by a re-inspection by the officer or, the licence plate is removed and shall not be returned until the owner can

provide proof that the trailer has subsequently passed a full inspection.

In response to your query regarding U-Haul trucks and trailers I can advise you that for the past three years Ontario has conducted a special initiative to inspect U-Haul vehicles that are operated on our highways. As of 2008, 5.8% of all U-Haul trucks inspected were removed from the road compared to 22.8% in 2006. We have taken a tough stand on U-Haul vehicles and the company has significantly improved the condition of their vehicles as well as their maintenance practices.

If you require further assistance please contact Enforcement Program Advisor Doug Reece at 905-704-2885.

Thank you for your interest in road safety.

Yours truly,

*Original signed by Dawn Stevely for:*

Peter Hurst  
Director

c: The Honourable Dalton McGuinty, Premier of Ontario