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Sally Ellertson
Public Information Officer
141 West Renfro
Burleson, Texas 76028-4261
817-426-9622
F: 817-426-9390
sellertson@burlesontx.com
www.burlesontx.com

The roads are safer today, thanks to a multi-agency Commercial Vehicle Enforcement (CVE) detail Jan. 21 at Burleson's I-35W Commercial Vehicle Inspection area.

Fifty trucks were inspected, 14 federal citations and two state citations were issued, 141 federal warnings and 15 state warnings were handed out, and 14 commercial vehicles – 28 percent of the vehicles - were placed out of service for violations. The focus of the CVE detail is on vehicle weights, motor carrier safety, vehicle registration, transportation of persons, and hazardous materials.

The agencies involved Jan. 21 included the Burleson, Mansfield, Arlington, Grand Prairie, Fort Worth and North Richland Hills police departments; Texas Department of Public Safety; and the Tri-County Auto Theft Task Force (Johnson, Tarrant, and Ellis counties). One of the six agencies hosts a CVE enforcement detail each month.

The detail took place between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. Officers waved commercial vehicles in to the Inspection Area then lined them up for inspections. Once a commercial vehicle enters the inspection area, they are weighed to ensure that they are in compliance with state weight laws. One inspector will walk around the vehicle checking lights, tires, markings, etc., while another inspector crawls under the vehicle and checks the brakes, air hose, etc. Once the inspector is done crawling the vehicle, the initial inspector will take the driver and his vehicle to an area where he can complete his inspection and the paperwork.

Most violations are listed as warnings on the report with the egregious violations being issued a citation. The difference in these warnings is that they can count against the driver or the company, and all violations must be corrected before the next trip. If there are any out of service violations, once the inspection is complete the inspector will escort the driver and truck to a nearby location where they are required to be towed or correct the problem before they can move.

The Burleson Police Department's Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Unit was established in October of 2011 at the direction of the Burleson City Council. The primary function of the unit is to ensure the safety, via education and enforcement, of those who travel the roadways.

Burleson is a member of the Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program. Burleson Traffic Officer Kevin Cordell is a certified CVE officer, which means he is certified via Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration courses on driver inspections, vehicle inspections, Texas Intrastate Law, license and weights, hazardous materials, cargo tank inspections, and other bulk packaging.

Why are commercial vehicle inspections important to residents of Burleson? Interstate 35, also known as the NAFTA corridor, runs from Mexico to Canada. Every truck that uses the NAFTA corridor goes through Burleson.

“Without the training and ability to inspect these vehicles, it is left up to the drivers and companies to voluntarily comply with the regulations established by their own industry,” Burleson Traffic Sgt. B. O’Heren said. “Considering that 14 out of 50 commercial vehicles were placed out of service in this detail alone, I would say that we definitely need to be out there ensuring these vehicles are safe to travel the roads.”