

## LKL Safety Note

### Working safely with Tractors and Trailers on the road

It's a busy time of year both with harvesting and muck spreading and there are more vehicles on the road and use of trailers or trailered equipment.

Below are some general reminders about vehicle, trailer and load safety

More collisions are observed on roads between May and end of September during the months of silage making, hay making, harvesting and muck spreading NFU mutual's advice to farmers includes: -

- Ensure all equipment is road worthy and pay particular care to things like trailers which may not have been used for months.
- Be aware of vulnerable road users or hidden junctions, making contractors aware of these junctions and commonly-used walking, cycling and riding routes.
- Familiarise yourself and your contractors with the speed limits for your vehicles.
- If your agricultural vehicles leave mud in the road, remember to clean it up and put out signage
- When turning, indicate in plenty of time and check more than once for road users on your inside.
- Be respectful to fellow road users, but only allow them to pass when it is safe to pull over.

**It's important to ensure work equipment including; vehicles, trailers and machinery is properly maintained.** The HSE says that legislation requires that every employer has a legal duty to ensure that their work equipment is maintained in an efficient state, and is in good working order and a good state of repair – so its performance doesn't deteriorate and put people at risk



Agricultural trailers are legally required under the 1998 Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations to be in a roadworthy condition, which means they should be well maintained and in good working order, with records of maintenance held by the farmer. But when **Tilly pass** was launched in 2019 out of 1,000 trailers inspected, 84% had a serious brake defect and 58% needed worn wheel bearings replacing. When the trailers were retested in 2020, more than 110 were found to have worn towing eyes and in 2021, this increased to 160.

'Visual checks may pick up a damaged towing eye and handbrake cable - but there are probably hidden defects you can't see' says Jane Gurney – founder of the 'Tilly your Trailer campaign'.

The **Tilly Pass** offers the opportunity for trailers to be maintained to the legal standard. An annual 18-point inspection is carried out on farm by authorised mechanics.

The inspection covers lights, tyres, towing eye, all brakes, hydraulic pipes and connectors, tailgate and the trailer's structure – to check for cracks or holes.

Once a trailer has passed, a Tilly certificate will be fixed to the tailgate, clearly displaying a unique Tilly Pass number. This will be recorded along with the trailer chassis number for a thorough record of maintenance.



HSE staff who attend a number of accidents yearly - say 'Consider also the terrain and load safety - If a load is moving around on a trailer, then it could come off or can effect vehicle handling leading to roll over'

'Load shift can even occur at less than 30 mph and can also be dangerous for staff carrying out unloading - The load has made the journey, but then at the point of unloading, the straps are taken off, the load has become

unstable and it falls out and either hits somebody or they jump out the way trying to avoid it – but proper strapping and risk assessment of work activities will help avoid it'

See also <https://www.nfuonline.com/archive?treeid=7226> the NFU Farm Safety Transport guide



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