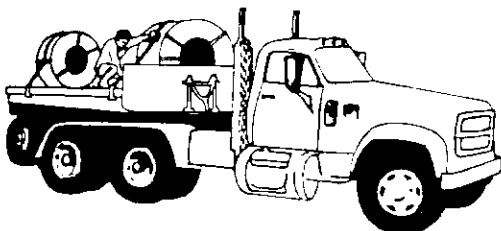


# On Guard



U.S. Department of Transportation

## STEEL AND ALUMINUM COIL LOAD SECUREMENT!



On August 5, 1991, two aluminum coils fell off a U.S.-based carrier's trailer near Gananoque, Ontario, killing four members of a family in a passenger car, all U.S. residents. One of the deceased had just returned from service in Operation Desert Storm.

On October 5, 1992, several 7,000-pound steel coils fell off a carrier's trailer on I-190 near Buffalo, New York, striking several cars and killing four occupants.

On May 18, 1993, a 20-ton coil of steel fell off a carrier's trailer on I-290 near Buffalo, injuring the driver. Luckily, no one was killed and the injuries were minor.

Between those dates, several other incidents of lesser severity occurred in Western New York in which steel or aluminum coils fell off vehicles. In all instances, improper load securement was a factor.

To determine the extent of the load securement problem, the New York Department of Transportation implemented a commercial vehicle roadside inspection policy in February 1993 in the Western New York area, devoting 1 day each week to load securement. Approximately 50 percent of the vehicles checked were placed out of service for load securement problems.

Investigation of the past incidents and the recent inspections in New York indicate that load securement is a major problem and that it is not limited to New York-based carriers. The problem appears to be of national and international scope.

The FHWA is advising motor carriers to pay particular attention to their load securement policies and practices. Specific attention should be paid to the number of tie-down assemblies, the condition and strength of the tie-downs and anchors, and any blocking or bracing that may be necessary. Webbing, chains, cables, and tie-down anchors must be inspected for wear and damage, and the blocking and bracing must be inspected for adequacy before any load is transported.

Sections 393.100 through 393.106 of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations specify the load securement requirements applicable to interstate carriers, and the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA)/FHWA "out-of-service" criteria identify defects which will cause a carrier to be placed out of service. Carriers should acquaint themselves with both.

The CVSA has also developed "Cargo Securement Tie-Down Guidelines" and other related training materials.