SAFETY BULLETIN #9

September 18, 2025

Hauling Limits and Capabilities

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- ★ Knowing the hauling limits and capabilities of company trucks, trailers, and equipment are essential.
- ★ Exceeding a vehicle's Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) creates significant safety risks, including reduced braking ability and steering control, and increases the likelihood of a crash.
- ★ Other problems could include tire blowouts and suspension failure.
- ★ Having an overloaded truck or trailer can result in legal fines, voiding the manufacturer's warranty, and increased liability in case of an accident.

What are GVWR and GCWR?

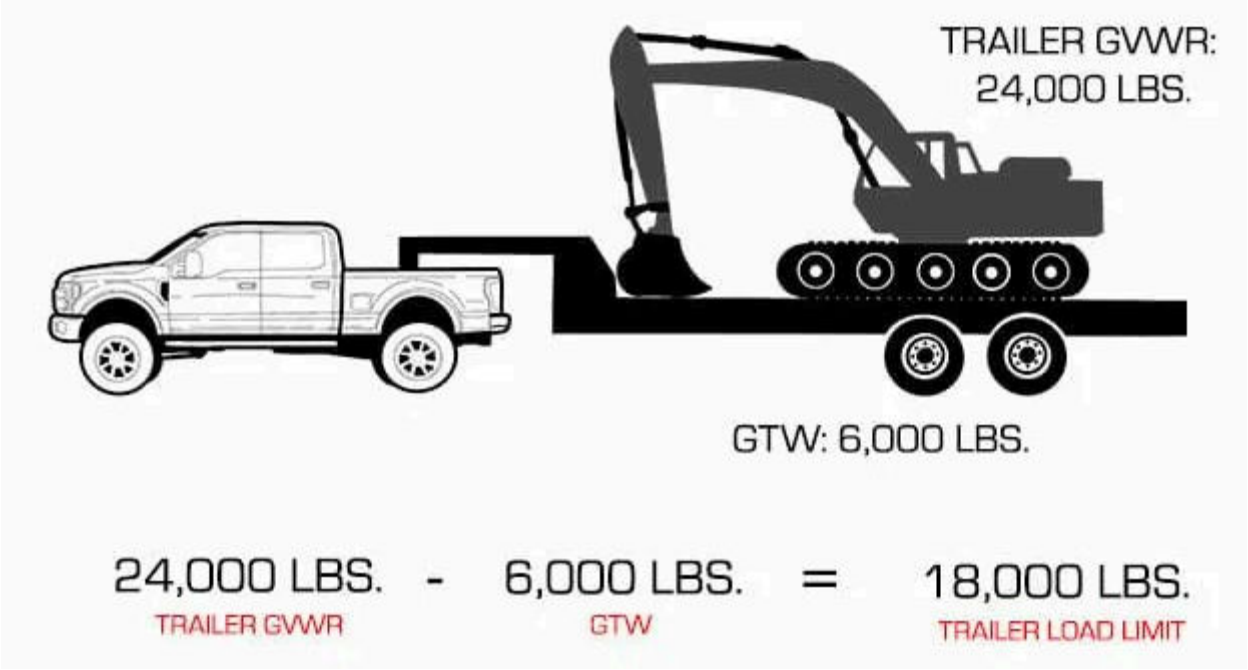
- ★ GVWR = Gross Vehicle Weight Rating
  - The GVWR refers to the total weight of the truck, including its cargo, fuel, passengers, etc.
  - The number is specified by the manufacturer and typically is found on the driver's side doorjam
  - The GVW is not a limit or specification - it is the actual weight
- ★ GCWR = Gross **Combined** Weight Rating
  - The GCWR refers to the maximum allowable weight of a towing vehicle **AND** its attached trailer, including all cargo and passengers.
  - This number can be found in the truck's owner's manual
  - If the truck and trailer combination exceeds 26,001 lbs, a CDL is required
- ★ CDL = Commercial Driver's License. Requirements are:
  - if you operate a single vehicle with a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) of 26,001 pounds or more, or
  - a combination of vehicles with a Gross Combination Weight Rating (GCWR) of 26,001 pounds or more, and the towed unit has a GVWR of over 10,000 pounds.

EXAMPLE: Calculating GVWR and GCWR for an F350 Super Duty:

1.) GCWR = 31,500 lbs (found in truck's owners manual)
2.) Unladen Weight/Curb weight = 8,000 lbs empty (found on truck's vehicle registration in glovebox)
3.) Truck Towing capacity = (31,500 - 8,000) = 23,500 lbs.
4.) Trailer Weight = 5,000 lbs
5.) Loaded Trailer Weight = (5000 plus the weight of your mini-ex (10,500 lbs) = 15,500 lbs.

6.) Compare the towing capacity remaining (23,500 lbs) against the loaded trailer weight (15,500 lbs). This means the truck has capacity to safely tow the loaded trailer. Plus there is ample capacity for passengers and other cargo.

7.) ***Important note: Even if the truck has excess towing capacity, you are always limited to the trailer's load limit. See below:***



Other Discussion Points:

- ★ What is the GVWR (Gross Vehicle Weight Rating) of a Steep Creek truck onsite?
- ★ What is the GCWR (Gross **Combined** Weight Rating) of the same Steep Creek truck?
- ★ What is the available towing capacity for this truck?
- ★ Using a trailer and a piece of machinery onsite, is the truck capable of towing that load safely?