



S&W READY MIX CONCRETE COMPANY	JUNE
DRIVER SAFETY SERIES – MONTHLY TRAINING	
VEHICLE BACKING SAFETY	

According to the National Safety Council, one out of four vehicle accidents can be blamed on poor backing techniques. Backing accidents cause 500 deaths and 15,000 injuries per year. The use of safe vehicle backing tips by employers and employees can help prevent accidents while on the job. In 2009, over half of the preventable vehicle accidents at S&W were due to improper backing techniques.

Here are some things to look for:

- **Get to know a vehicle's blind spots.** In a medium-sized truck, blind spots can extend up to 16 feet in front and 160 feet behind a vehicle. Drivers need to remember that mirrors can never give the whole picture while backing.
- **Think in advance.** Drivers should not put themselves into unnecessary backing situations.
- **Park defensively.** Drivers must choose easy-exit parking spaces that don't crowd neighboring vehicles and park their vehicle in the center of the parking space.
- **When parking in an alley.** If an alley doesn't permit driving all the way through or room to turn around, a driver should back into it (if local ordinances permit) so that when leaving the vehicle can pull forward into the street.
- **Do a walk-around.** Walking around a vehicle gives a driver firsthand view of the backing area and any limitations. They can check for children, soft or muddy areas, potholes, tire hazards, and other dangers.
- **Know the clearances.** When performing a walk-around, drivers can check for obstructions, low-hanging trees and wires, and any other potential clearance-related problems.
- **Every backing situation is new and different.** Sometimes a driver visits the same location several times a day and should be watchful each visit for changes and any new obstacles.
- **Use a spotter.** A driver should use another person to help them when backing. The driver and spotter should use hand signals instead of verbal ones and make sure they understand each other's signals. Don't have the spotter walking backwards while giving instructions.