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Load Securement Products Are Crucial for the Safe Transit of Intermodal and OTR Loads

The trucking industry is responsible for moving more than 75 percent of the nation's freight, according to the American Trucking Association. That freight is moved by nearly 2 million heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers in the US, according to federal government estimates. However, the current supply chain shortage has some in the government looking at relaxing regulations by reducing the minimum age, which will put even more tractor-trailers on the road at one time. With so much traffic on the roads, proper load securement is essential to prevent serious accidents.

While most shipping is done by truck, intermodal transportation plays an important role in moving freight, and its demand has seen a steady increase that is expected to continue into 2022. Load securement for intermodal freight is equally important as shifting loads can lead to derailments.

Improper Load Securement

If a load isn't secured correctly, it can shift longitudinally (back-to-front) or laterally (side-to-side) within the trailer or container. In a best-case scenario, the load moves or falls, making a mess with possible product damage, but in a worst-case scenario, lives can be lost, either by the driver losing control or the truck overturning/ train derailing or by heavy product falling on the driver or warehouse worker when the trailer or container is opened.

There are several preventable ways that loads can shift during transport. Some of them include:

- Walking - The sideway migration and movement of single units from the center of the trailer or container towards the side walls.
- Leaning – The movement of two or more units out of place and unto the same side, which can cause double-stack trains to sideswipe or trailers to overturn.
- Wrap-around shifting – A longitudinal movement when units behind singles violently shift forward and fall into voids.
- Rear securement insufficiency – a load shifts backward and falls into a void between load and doors.
- Underhang voids – Void created when pallets with underhang are butted against each other.

Products For Load Securement

If you aren't sure what products you need to secure your load safely, we can help. Through an onsite evaluation, which includes assessing the product and how it is loaded, we can look for voids and any possibility for movement. We will recommend transit protection products and supply you with a load plan. Railcar recommendations will always comply with regulations; however, over-the-road regulations are less specific, allowing more options.

Void Fillers

- Bulkhead void fillers – Diamond-Pak® and Match-Book® bulkhead void fillers prevent forward and backward cargo shifting and can be used in combination with airbag void fillers for more effective center fill application. Match-Book® void fillers are foldable, free-standing, corrugated-backed spacers that prevent crosswise load shifting.
- Side-to-side void fillers – Diamond-Corr® and Saddle-Pak® void fillers are void fillers that prevent side-to-side shifting. Diamond-Corr® expand to fill spaces between heavy loads. Saddle-Pak® void fillers are designed for single units to maintain weight distribution. Side to side-void fillers can be manufactured to your specifications.
- Load divider panels/ tier restraints – Designed for single pallet units, these are used to prevent end-to-end toppling.

Dunnage Airbags

- Square airbags – These easy-to-inflate, gusseted airbags are used in voids up to 30 inches. Made from a durable polypropylene material, these airbags can be used in wet or dry conditions. They are AAR-approved level 1.
- Over-the-road airbags – These are cost-effective airbags designed specifically for OTR shipping and manufactured to your specifications.
- AAR Approved Level 1-5 Airbags – With digital inflating technology, these are the fastest inflating airbags. They are engineered for demanding applications and are tested and approved for levels 1 to 5 by the ARR for rail shipments.
- Void filler airbags – These are used to prevent side-to-side movement and are designed to fill large voids up to 36 inches.

Other

- Strapping – Strapping is used for budling, load securement, doorway protection, and more. Poly-woven and composite strapping absorb impacts that would break steel banding.
- Friction and Antiskid Mats – these AAR-approved mats reduce movement and cushion heavy materials. They reduce unloading time by 50 percent.

Let Us Help You Secure Your Load and Save 10%

We have decades of experience and understand intermodal and OTR requirements. We can design a cost-effective transit securement plan for you that will minimize freight damage and prevent load shifting accidents. If you have other questions about transit securement, check out our frequently asked questions.

Qualified companies can receive a free damage prevention analysis to assess your processes and recommend cost-saving options. Plus, we are giving you 10 percent off your first order applied as a rebate to your next order. Contact us to learn more!