

THE GREEN LIGHT

The official newsletter of ATA Comp Fund

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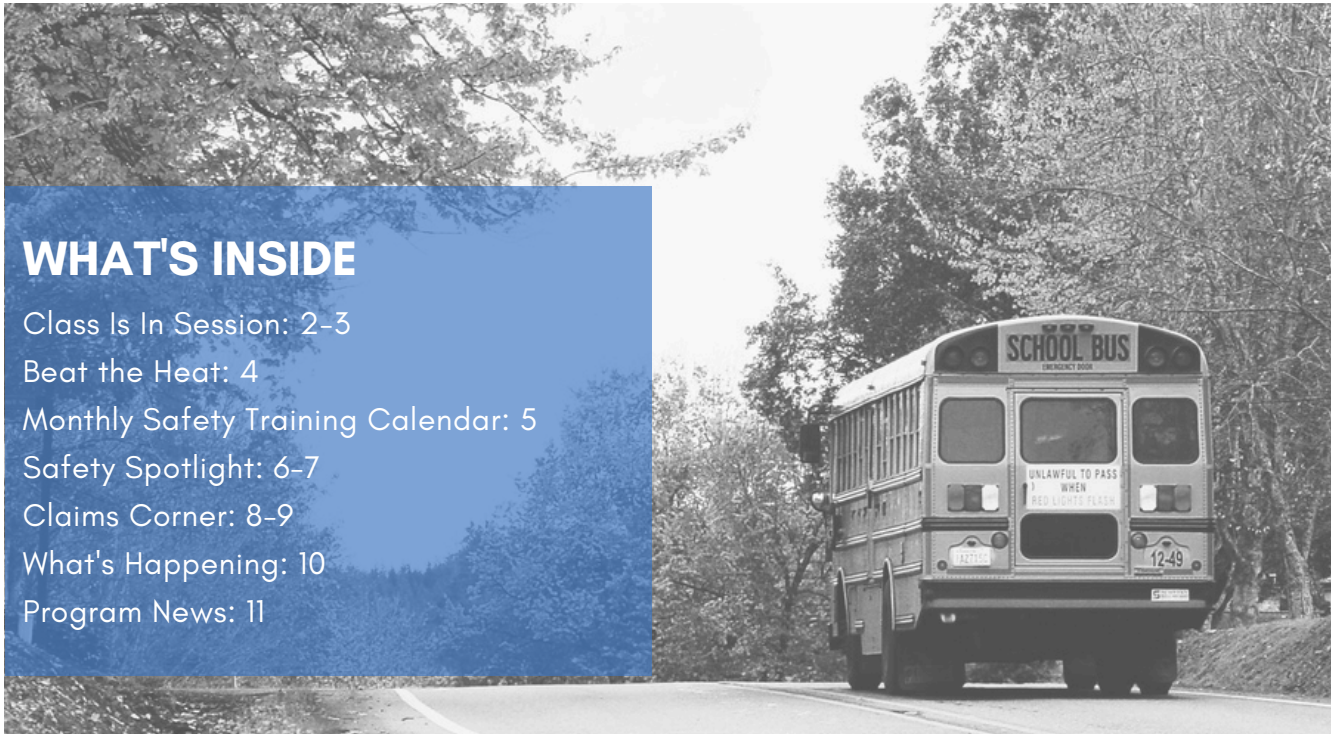
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BACK TO SCHOOL: EYES UP, SPEED DOWN

Schools across the region reopen in mid-August, and that changes everything on the road. More buses, more young pedestrians, more teen drivers, and more congestion in the zones your drivers pass through every day. Let's walk through the data, the risks, and the practical steps your drivers (and employees) can take to stay ahead of it. Because protecting the families in those school zones is part of protecting you at every turn.



CLASS IS IN SESSION: SHARING THE ROAD WHEN SCHOOL IS BACK

Abby Greer August 5, 2026

Alabama schools reopen in mid-August. That means more traffic, more pedestrians, and more young drivers on routes your fleet runs every day. Here is how to prepare your team.

Students across the state are getting ready to go back-to-school, and that adds more hazards to Alabama's roadways. Parent drop-off lines back up at intersections. And a new wave of 16- and 17-year-old drivers get behind the wheel for the first time. For professional drivers, back-to-school season is not just a traffic annoyance. It is a predictable, preventable risk window. The data tells the story.

MORE TEEN DRIVERS MEANS MORE RISK.

Teen drivers have crash rates nearly four times those of drivers 20 and older, per mile driven, according to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. The first three months after licensure are the most dangerous. Speeding is a factor in just over a quarter of teen fatal crashes. Single-vehicle crashes, where a young driver loses control without another vehicle involved, account for 43 percent of teen crashes. More than one in four fatal crashes involving teen drivers happens between 3 and 7 p.m., the after-school window when your drivers are still on the road.



SCHOOL BUS STOP-ARM VIOLATIONS ARE STILL A NATIONAL PROBLEM.

The 2025 NASDPTS (National School Bus Illegal Passing Survey) recorded an estimated 39.3 million illegal passes of stopped school buses nationwide, down 13 percent from the prior year but still roughly 0.7 violations per bus driver per day. It is illegal in all 50 states to pass a school bus with its stop arm extended and red lights flashing. A professional driver who does it risks a ticket, a license hit, and a preventable crash.

SCHOOL ZONES ARE HIGH-RISK.

Children do not always cross at crosswalks. They dart between cars. They walk with their heads down looking at phones. A distracted child plus a 80,000-pound truck is not a fair fight, and the law will not side with the truck.

CLASS IS IN SESSION: SHARING THE ROAD WHEN SCHOOL IS BACK

CONTINUED

WHAT DRIVERS SHOULD DO

- **Slow down in school zones.** Obey posted limits. If the beacons are flashing, the reduced limit is in effect. Speed fines double or triple in school zones in most states.
- **Increase following distance around buses.** Give yourself time to stop when the yellow lights start flashing. Never pass a stopped bus with its red lights on and stop arm out, from either direction.
- **Expect the 3 p.m. rush.** Dismissal is the highest-risk hour for school-age pedestrian fatalities. Plan routes to avoid school zones during pick-up and drop-off windows when possible.
- **Eliminate distractions.** No phone, no eating, no adjusting the radio in a school zone. Children are unpredictable. A second of inattention is the difference between a close call and a fatal crash.
- **Watch for bikes and pedestrians in residential areas.** Kids on bikes often turn without signaling. They come from driveways and from behind parked cars. Check mirrors constantly.

WHAT COMPANIES CAN DO

- **Route planning.** Review dispatch schedules and delivery windows against school start and dismissal times. A 15-minute adjustment can keep your trucks out of the busiest school zone congestion.
- **Driver training.** Add a back-to-school safety module to your next pre-trip meeting or toolbox talk. Walk through school zone laws, stop-arm requirements, and the 3 to 7 p.m. teen driver risk window.
- **Document it.** Underwriters and claims adjusters look for documented safety training. A back-to-school briefing on the record is another piece of evidence that your operation takes safety seriously.

Back-to-school is a seasonal risk, but it is a manageable one. Plan around it, train your drivers for it, and make it part of your safety culture. The families in those school zones are the communities your member companies serve. Protecting them is part of protecting you at every turn.



[Click here to discover our Risk Management team's Resources.](#)

BEAT THE HEAT: SUMMER ISN'T OVER YET

Abby Greer August 5, 2026

Heat-related illness is one of the most underestimated risks in transportation. Here are some tips for keeping your drivers, mechanics, and other workers safe through the hottest weeks of the year.

August in Alabama is not the time to ease up on heat safety. It is the time to double down since we all know the heat extends well into the autumn season. Heat exhaustion and heat stroke can happen fast, and the people most at risk are often experienced hands who push through the warning signs because they have "done it before." The good news is that heat-related illness is almost entirely preventable. A few practical habits make the difference.

- **Know the symptoms.** Watch for weakness, dizziness, sometimes nausea. A pale or flushed appearance. Sweating with moist and clammy skin. A high body temperature with a strong, rapid pulse. Chills. Confusion. Any of these signs mean it is time to stop, cool down, and get help if symptoms do not improve quickly.
- **Know the causes.** Not drinking enough water is the leading culprit. But sweating, illness, caffeine and alcohol, and certain medications all raise risk. Remind drivers and dock workers that energy drinks and coffee are not substitutes for water.
- **Work smart.** Do not rush. Take breaks in the shade. Schedule heavy, physical jobs like loading, tarping, and chaining for the coolest part of the day. Keep cool water within reach and drink it steadily, not just when thirsty.
- **Be prepared.** Pack a simple kit before the shift: drinking water, sports drinks, a wide-brimmed hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, light snacks, and an extra shirt. Avoid heavy meals before working in the heat. Wear light-colored, cool clothing.
- **Watch the regulatory landscape.** OSHA's proposed federal heat injury and illness prevention standard remains in rulemaking, with an initial trigger at an 80°F heat index and a high-heat trigger at 90°F. The OSHA National Emphasis Program on heat hazards ran through April 8, 2026, and the agency is actively inspecting outdoor and indoor heat exposures under its General Duty Clause. Seven states already enforce their own workplace heat standards. Proactive heat planning is no longer optional for multi-state operations.



Beat the Heat
<https://bit.ly/4ye6MGH>

Safety is not a seasonal slogan. It is a daily practice that protects your people and your profitability. Build heat planning into your pre-trip routine, train your supervisors, and make water and shade as standard as fuel and tires.

[Click here to view our mid-summer Beat the Heat video and quiz!](#)



NEED SAFETY TRAINING IDEAS?

Abby Greer August 5, 2026

Coming up with fresh, new content for monthly safety trainings can be tough. Our Risk Managers have provided an easy tool that can assist in safety training for our members... and helps to alleviate some of the stress that comes with scheduling these very important meetings. The **MONTHLY SAFETY TRAINING CALENDAR** provides topics for each month and includes a one-page handout and relevant videos from our archives.

SEPTEMBER

National Truck **Driver Appreciation** Week runs September 13th - September 19th, but we're showing love all month!



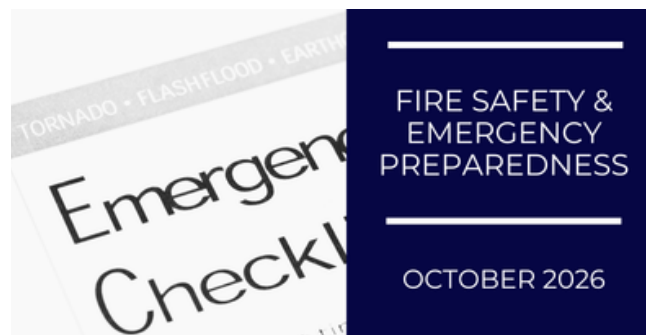
NOVEMBER

With winter months approaching, brush up on **Winter Weather Travel Safety** to stay safe on the roads.



OCTOBER

Be ready for the unexpected. **Fire Safety & Emergency Preparedness** helps your company know what to do if an emergency does happen.



DECEMBER

Nearly **80%** of injuries occur when the truck isn't moving. Situational awareness is key to prevent preventable injuries.



This resource is available exclusively to members of the ATA Comp Fund program and is also available in our [Online Portal](#) under the Resources tab. Contact your Risk Manager today to learn more about how you can incorporate this useful tool in your safety trainings!

SAFETY SPOTLIGHT

Abby Greer August 4, 2026

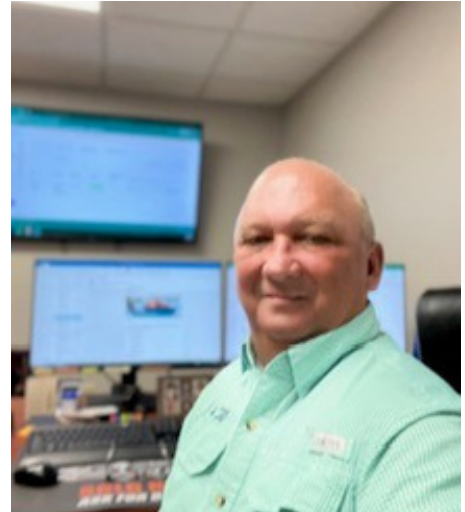
The "Safety Spotlight" feature of The Green Light shines the spotlight on safety professionals to gain insight into their background, and their thoughts and ideas on safety in our industry.

Meet Tracey Truelove, General Manager/Safety Manager for C&W Global in Winter Garden, Florida. Tracey started his career loading/unloading packages at UPS on the midnight shift. He worked his way into operations, and later, safety for Central Florida...

How did you get started in Safety?

I would have to say safety is basically built into every job that is performed and mine started back in 1983 when I got a job at UPS loading/unloading packages here in Orlando on the midnight shift. After 2 years I worked my way into a supervisory role and was constantly training employees on how to safely

perform their jobs. After 8 years in operations, I was offered a new role as an internal customer service rep dealing with package handling, open packages, and damaged packages (especially ones that were marked hazardous material) and was instrumental in implementing a disposal program for these packages. I became the HazMat guru for our district, and from there I was pulled into our district safety department in 1994, and that was when my formal safety career began. I had to learn all aspects of safety to include safety training, forming safety committees and finding ways to make safety a priority throughout our district. Within a couple of years, I was the Central Florida District Safety Manager.



What do you view as the main duties of a Safety Director?

The main duties of a safety director are to get ALL employees to follow safety methods, use PPE and other tools appropriately, and to make safety a priority in everything they do. I would always run into the misconception that safety methods are tedious and take more time to use. The challenge was to get employees to make safety a habit!

Why is safety important to you? How do you (or would you) improve your company's safety culture?

Safety is important because you want everyone to come to work safely and go home each day injury and accident free, if not for themselves, for whomever it is that is important to them. I am a strong believer that how you treat employees shapes their attitude. If they know you care and you have their best interest at heart, they will typically follow you and want to do a great job (what's important to you, is what's important to them - so send the right message).

SAFETY SPOTLIGHT

CONTINUED

What has been the most challenging task in your career as a Safety Manager?

As a Safety Manager you are always being the salesperson that is selling your employees on the rewards of being safe. In many cases, the toughest ones to sell are your immediate management people you have assigned under you. Getting them to understand that safety will supersede operations is sometimes tough because they think that's what drives their paycheck. That's why Safety Indices must be built into all reviews and evaluations, and people must be held accountable for being safe.

How do you promote your company safety culture? How do you get employees to "buy in" or get involved?

The best way to create a safety culture is to be a sincere leader with your people and show them that you care. That right there will get most people to buy in. Some you have to prod a little bit more and show that your willing to let them go if they can't work safe. Accountability is the basic fundamental for any safety program. Show them you care enough to make them be safe.

What advice do you wish you had received early in your safety career? What advice would you give someone who is starting out in their safety role?

I would say the best advice I could have learned a little bit earlier in my career and what I would say to someone starting out is: You can pretty much expect what you inspect! The key to driving a great safety program is being out with your people and watching what they do as much as you can. When you see something wrong, you need to say something. Nothing will ever change if you don't say something. Interacting with people is where you get that buy-in and people want to not just work safe, but even work safe for you!

What would be your safety quote or message?

I would have to quote one of the key phrases from the Smith System of Defensive Driving: *Be Prepared, Expect the Unexpected*. Mishaps, injuries and accidents typically occur when you least expect or let your guard down. You have to be thinking at all times and make sure you are doing it the safe way!

Of the ATA Comp Fund/AIR recommendations, which policy or procedure has been most effective for your company and why?

I would say my favorite program has been the Re-employability or Sheakley programs to where we get the injured employee back into performing some type of work within there limitations. We have had much success getting the injured employee back to work in a more timely fashion by utilizing this program.

CLAIMS CORNER - ASK THE CLAIMS TEAM

Abby Greer, Suzy Baker & David Balades July 29, 2026

In this feature, we highlight some of our most Frequently Asked Questions regarding the claim process. These are answered by none other than ATA Comp Fund Director of Claims, Suzy Baker (with some help from her Claims, Risk Management, and Underwriting friends)! If you have any questions, please submit them via email [HERE](#).

NURSE CASE MANAGER FAQ

Managing medical treatment after a work-related injury can be complex, especially when an injured worker has multiple injuries, coexisting medical conditions, or other factors that may complicate recovery. A nurse case manager helps simplify that process by coordinating care, improving communication, and supporting a safe recovery. Here are answers to some of the questions we hear most often.

What does a Nurse Case Manager do?

A nurse case manager is a registered nurse who serves as a central point of communication between the injured worker, the treating physician, the employer, and the claims team. They can be used to coordinate medical care, monitor recovery progress, and help ensure treatment stays on track. Their goal is to help the injured employee receive the right care at the right time so they can recover safely and return to work as soon as medically appropriate.



When does a Nurse Case Manager get involved?

That depends on the facts of the claim. Not every claim requires the aid of a Nurse Case Manager, so it's important that the claims team evaluate the need early and often. A Claims Specialist may consider assigning a Nurse Case Manager for tasks such as reducing delays in treatment, scheduling medical appointments quickly, and establishing a clear recovery plan. Prompt coordination helps keep the claim moving efficiently while supporting the employee throughout the recovery process.

CLAIMS CORNER - ASK THE CLAIMS TEAM

CONTINUED

Will the Nurse Case Manager attend my employee's medical appointments?

Sometimes. Field nurse case managers may attend appointments in person, while telephonic nurse case managers provide support remotely. In either role, they communicate with the treating physician, monitor medical progress, clarify treatment recommendations, and identify potential issues before they become barriers to recovery.

How does a Nurse Case Manager benefit my business?

Effective medical coordination helps employees recover more efficiently, which can lead to faster return-to-work timelines, lower claim costs, and fewer lost-time days. Nurse case managers also work with employers to identify light-duty or modified-duty opportunities whenever appropriate, helping injured employees remain engaged while they recover.

Is the Nurse Case Manager on my side?

Yes. A nurse case manager's role is to support the recovery process for the injured worker while facilitating communication among everyone involved in the claim. When employees receive timely, appropriate care and employers stay informed throughout the process, everyone benefits through improved outcomes, smoother claims, and a safer return to work.



Have questions about whether or not a Nurse Case Manager can be beneficial to one of your claims? Contact our Claim Management team to learn more!

WHAT'S HAPPENING



CVSA BRAKE SAFETY WEEK

The Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) runs a week of focused brake inspections across the country. This year, August 23-29, inspectors will be checking brake systems, hoses, linings, and ABS compliance. Brake violations are consistently among the top out-of-service conditions. Use the weeks ahead to audit your fleet's brake maintenance records and get your trucks ready. A clean inspection is a claims prevention win.

NATIONAL TRUCK DRIVER APPRECIATION WEEK

The annual celebration of America's 3.6 million professional truck drivers, American Trucking Associations' National Truck Driver Appreciation Week, will be held September 13-19. This is the week to recognize the men and women who keep your freight moving and your business running. Plan a driver appreciation gesture at your operation. A thank-you lunch, a handwritten note, or a fuel card bonus goes further than you think. Your drivers are your first line of defense on safety.



ALABAMA TRUCKING ASSOCIATION GOLF CLASSIC

The Alabama Trucking team is ready for its largest fundraising event of the year! Join the team Tuesday, October 6th at the Robert Trent Jones - Capitol Hill in Prattville, Alabama, for their Annual Golf Classic, benefitting the TRUK PAC. Festivities kick off Monday, October 5th with a celebration reception. Register your team today!

PROGRAM NEWS

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

The ATA Comp Fund program is proud to welcome the following new members:

- **RJH & Sons Trucking Inc** *Hamilton, Alabama*
- **Shockhoe Express** *Highlands Ranch, Colorado*

The ATA Comp Fund, along with the Alliance Interstate Risk program, has returned a 10-year average annual historical dividend of 32% to participating companies, with over \$318 million distributed since 1993.

We look forward to continuing our current partnerships in 2027, as well as making new ones. Join us and we will work together to make your company one of the safest and most successful in the industry.

WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE

\$22,337,608

WILL BE DISTRIBUTED WITH 2027 RENEWALS



Our Risk Management team decided to do something different for June's National Technician Appreciation Week (NTAW). The team launched the Technician and Shop Safety Quiz, which celebrated the people who keep our fleets safe and road-ready. We're proud to recognize our gift card winners across both the ATA Comp Fund and Alliance Interstate Risk programs.

Congratulations to every technician who participated, and thanks to the shops and fleets that keep safety at the center of everything. Your commitment to safe practices is what helps our membership operate at the safest, most profitable level in the industry.



A copy of our most recent [Financials](#) can be found on our website.

