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HEADLINES
Monday, July 23, 2007

Crackdown targets tractor-trailers
Updated: 07/18/2007 03:57 PM
By: Jennifer Moxley

CHARLOTTE -- The state highway patrol kicked off a 48-hour enforcement campaign Wednesday morning targeting commercial motor vehicles on Mecklenburg County highways.

Troopers began pulling tractor-trailers over on Interstate 77 at 6 a.m. to fully inspect the trucks and drivers. Some dangers they discovered included one truck with two tires blown out and another carrying metal that had one of its latches unhooked.

Clyde Gaskey has been driving for 30 years. Troopers flagged his truck because his brakes weren't working. He says extra restrictions on commercial vehicles are important.



Troopers began pulling trucks over to the rest stop on Interstate 77 at 6 a.m. Wednesday.

"You know you've got a whole lot more responsibility with one of these than you do with an automobile, so yeah the restrictions do need to be a little tougher than it does with an automobile," Gaskey said.

The state highway patrol uses a van with infrared camera to find trucks without working brakes. If the tires glow, that means the brakes work.

Eleven people died in Mecklenburg County last year from commercial truck-related incidents, and troopers hope Operation Road Watch will cut that number down.

"Mecklenburg County and the surrounding area is a major trucking hub, so there's a lot of truck traffic in this area and subsequently a lot of motor vehicle collisions," said Col. Fletcher Clay.

Last year, state troopers conducted more than 60,000 motor carrier enforcement inspections and investigated more than 107,000 crashes.

Troopers say it's not only the trucks that can be dangerous. They are also checking the drives to make sure they are not driving under the influence and that they're getting enough sleep.

WATCH THE VIDEO

Operation Road Watch
News 14 Carolina's Jennifer Moxley has more on the campaign troopers hope will make local highways safer.

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