

TECHNICAL BULLETIN



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REFERENCE: 5/8" Dolly Safety Chain Wear Limit

BACKGROUND:

49 CFR Sec. 393.70 Coupling devices and towing methods, except for driveaway-towaway operations states:

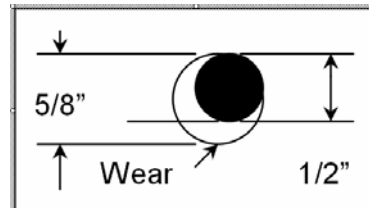
(4)(d)(3) The safety device, and the means of attaching it to the vehicles, must have an ultimate strength of not less than the gross weight of the vehicle or vehicles being towed.

In the case of single axle triples operation, the maximum Towed Vehicle Weight (TVW) of a converter dolly would be 80,000 lbs. which represents the lead dolly (four single axles @ 20,000 lbs. each).

The Silver Eagle standard for safety chains is a pair of 1/2" Grade 70 link chains. Testing has confirmed ultimate strength to be in excess of 80,000 lbs. for the pair. A pair of 5/8" Grade 70 chains have ultimate strength in excess of 110,000 lbs. Therefore, the specification of 5/8" chain has a substantial safety margin.

Recommended Practice

Safety Chains which measure 1/2" or less should be replaced. As the diagram on the right shows, a 5/8" chain worn down to 1/2" has a sectional area greater than an unworn 1/2" diameter chain, which leaves a margin of safety.



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