



Benefits of Electronic Logging Devices

December 19, 2017

The [Electronic Logging Device \(ELD\) rule](#) was published on December 15, 2015 and became effective on December 18, 2017. The goal of the mandate is to improve safety and efficiency by requiring motor carriers and drivers who must keep records of duty service to use an ELD or automatic on-board recording device. The ELD is installed onto the truck engine and records data such as driver's driving time, miles driven, and how long the engine has been running. There are significant costs involved to implement these devices, but the benefits are also noteworthy.

Improved safety. Fatigued drivers are dangerous. Studies have shown that sleep deprivation impairs judgement and delays response time. This increases the chances of an accident resulting in fatalities and large claims. ELDs log the amount of time that a driver has been driving to verify that they comply with the hours of service rule and get enough rest to operate the vehicle with maximum alertness. Some ELDs even have notifications to warn drivers when they are approaching their hours of service limits. Well rested drivers make a safer environment for everyone on the road.

Less paperwork. Drivers are hired to drive but regulations require that they keep track of their hours on logs. It takes much administrative work to document logbooks, maintain files, and transmit them to the necessary parties. ELDs automatically record this information so that drivers can focus on driving. Furthermore, since data is transmitted electronically, there is less data entry errors and back office work. This should reduce clerical expenses.

Better insights. Trucks and routes generate a lot of data. ELDs can supply information such as fuel consumption, time on the road, and dwell time. With this data, carriers can make informed decisions to manage their processes and operations more efficiently. For example, if carriers discover that drivers are often delayed because they are waiting to load or unload, they can discuss the issue with shippers to quicken this process.

Greater transparency. ELDs record the vehicle data, stores it, and is available when needed. This makes it easier to comply with hours of service guidelines and to share the data with safety officials. Additionally, ELDs make it difficult to falsify records. Entries can be edited by drivers and authorized staff, but all edits require an annotation explaining the change and the driver needs to confirm the edit.

As of December 18, 2017, inspectors began enforcing this mandate and non-compliant drivers may be fined. After April 1, 2018, drivers operating without an ELD may be put out of service. The ELD mandate impacts the entire trucking industry and will take time and effort to adapt. To stay compliant and learn more, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration has posted an [FAQ](#) on their website to help the public understand the parameters around ELDs and this mandate.

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