

Truck Parking Shortage

The shortage of truck parking capacity is one of the biggest issues truckers face today. In August 2015, the U.S. Department of Transportation published a report titled *Jason’s Law Truck Parking Survey Results and Comparative Analysis*.¹ The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), who conducted the study, concluded most states experience issues with truck parking shortages and that these shortages “are a national safety concern.”

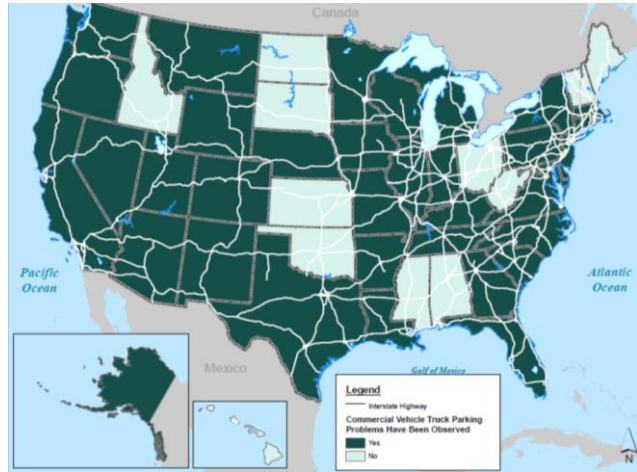
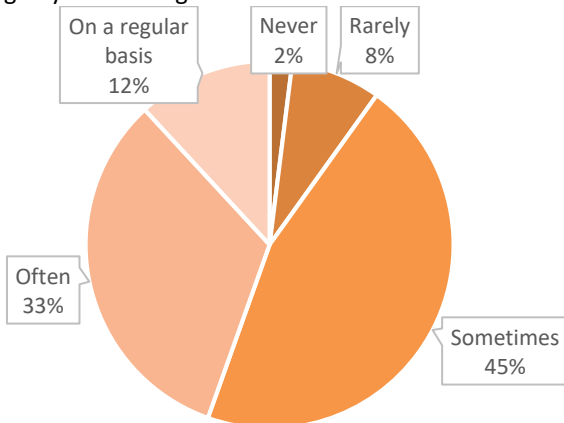


Figure 1: States Reporting Truck Parking Problems

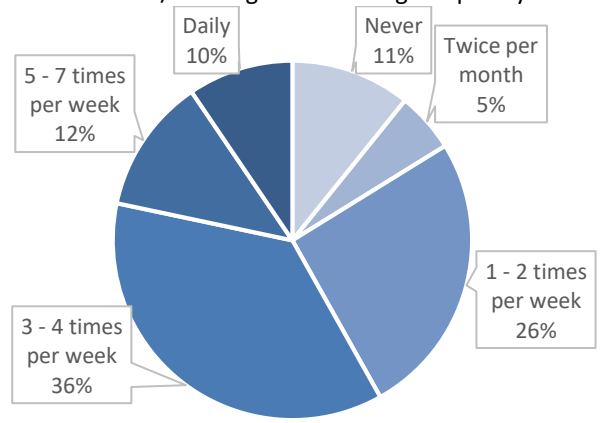
Of the 8,000 truck drivers that FHWA surveyed, over 75 percent stated they regularly have trouble finding parking at night. The FHWA ultimately resolved that there are two negative consequences as a direct result of an inadequate supply of truck parking spaces. First, tired truck drivers may continue to drive because they have difficulty finding a place to park for rest. Second, truck drivers may choose to park at unsafe locations, such as on the shoulder of the road, exit ramps, or vacant lots, if they are unable to locate official, available parking.²

Numerous public, private, academic, non-profit studies have found the demand for truck parking spaces is underserved by the supply, there is a widespread shortage of truck parking facilities and in certain areas, the shortage was severe, and that a lack of parking availability impacts safety.

Driving Beyond Feeling Safe and Alert due to a Lack of Parking³



Unauthorized/Undesignated Parking Frequency⁴



¹ https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/freight/infrastructure/truck_parking/jasons_law/truckparkingsurvey/index.htm

² Ibid, pg. 1-2

³ 2010 OOIDA Parking Survey

⁴ *Managing Critical Truck Parking Case Study - Real World Insights from Truck Parking Diaries*, ATRI (Dec 2016)

Congress enacted Jason's Law as Section 1401 of The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) in October 1, 2012. Congress named the Law in honor of Jason Rivenburg who was fatally shot and robbed for \$7 while parking at an abandoned gas station about 12 miles from his destination because the receiver had turned him away for arriving early for his delivery.

The goal of the legislation was to develop solutions that would increase parking capacity and thus improve highway and driver safety. Instead, however, various federal and state agencies have primarily focused on research, surveys, and grants for truck parking information management systems (TPIMS) rather than increasing actual capacity. FHWA must implement recommendations from the National Coalition on Truck Parking, of which OOIDA was an active participant and partner. Some of the proposed solutions were:

- Use public land within highway rights-of-way to develop additional truck parking capacity. Options include the use of carpool lots during overnight hours, truck chain-up areas during summer months, and ports of entry and weigh stations as temporary parking areas.
- Integrate shippers/receivers into the conversation to address truck parking needs at industrial sites.
- Provide a dedicated funding source for capital and maintenance funds for public rest areas and truck parking facilities on the national highway network. Options for potential new funding sources include dedicating a portion of an existing tax or fee such as Federal non-fuel-based taxes (Truck Tire Tax, Truck & Trailer Sales Taxes, Heavy Vehicle Use Tax) deposited in the Highway Trust Fund.
- Conduct research to identify best practices used by DOTs and other public agencies to generate revenue for maintenance/operations of rest areas, including sponsorships and the use of outside groups to provide funding and/or maintenance services similar to an "Adopt A Highway" model.
- Encourage States and MPOs to address truck parking and similar issues in State and regional freight plans.

The scarcity of truck parking remains an overlooked and inadequately supported highway safety issue. The need to increase true investment in truck parking is long overdue and must be a priority for FHWA, its DOT partner agencies, as well as federal, state, and local lawmakers. Results, rather than research, must be the goal.

While speaking at an OOIDA Town Hall event in 2019, OOIDA members Lee and Gary Zirbel said the current parking situation is untenable and unsafe for truck drivers and motorists. "There's people being killed, vehicles being damaged, tickets being written. We pay permits and taxes and everything else. Where are our rights?"

OOIDA

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