

## **Why Rear-End Collisions Involving Trucks Are Often Catastrophic**

### **Trusted Indiana truck accident attorneys fighting for your full compensation**

Many crashes result in relatively minor injuries, and the people involved walk away thinking, “That could have been worse.” But imagine a 40-ton semi-truck hitting your car from behind at highway speed. Suddenly, “worse” doesn’t even begin to cover it.

Rear-end collisions are common, but when a truck is involved, they can become life-altering or even deadly. Understanding why rear-end [truck accidents](#) are so destructive is key if you’ve been injured or are trying to hold the right parties accountable.

### **Why are trucks so much more dangerous in rear-end crashes?**

Large commercial trucks are more dangerous than passenger cars because of size and weight. A fully loaded tractor-trailer can weigh up to 80,000 pounds, while the average passenger car barely tops 4,000.

Even at lower speeds, the difference in mass makes the impact much more severe. When a truck slams into the back of a car, the smaller vehicle absorbs almost all of the force. This leaves vehicle occupants vulnerable to crushing injuries, shattered bones, and internal trauma.

It’s not just the weight, though. Trucks carry cargo that can shift in a crash and amplify the force of impact. A truck’s frame sits higher than most passenger vehicles, which means the bumper and crumple zones of a car often fail to absorb the brunt of the collision. That’s why even a seemingly minor rear-end truck accident can leave a car’s passenger compartment severely compromised.

### **How does stopping distance affect rear-end collisions with trucks?**

Some people may assume a truck can stop as quickly as a car, but that isn’t the case. Trucks have much longer stopping distances, especially when traveling at highway speeds or carrying a full load. Air brakes, which most trucks use, have a natural delay called “brake lag,” which means it takes longer for the brakes to engage fully. On a wet or icy road, a loaded semi might need several football fields to come to a complete stop.

Other factors can also affect stopping distance, including cargo weight, slope, tire condition, and even driver reaction time. If traffic suddenly slows or a vehicle cuts in front of a truck, there’s often nothing the driver can do in time to avoid a rear-end collision. Combine that with fatigue, distractions, or speeding, and the odds of a catastrophic crash rise dramatically.

### **What makes underride accidents so deadly?**

One of the most frightening aspects of rear-end truck collisions is the risk of an underride accident. This happens when a passenger vehicle slides under the back of a trailer. Underride

guards exist, but they aren't always strong enough to prevent a car from going under in a high-speed impact.

Underride crashes demonstrate just how incompatible trucks and cars are on the road. Even small misalignments in height, or the trailer's lack of adequate safety features, can turn a collision that might have been survivable into a life-changing event. Tragically, these truck accidents are often preventable with better truck maintenance, stricter safety regulations, and careful driving.

### **What role do driver and company negligence play in these crashes?**

Human error is often the biggest factor in rear-end truck collisions, even more than physics or vehicle size. Several types of driver mistakes commonly lead to these crashes:

- **Fatigue:** Long hours on the road and tight delivery schedules can push drivers beyond legal limits, slowing reaction times and increasing the likelihood of rear-end collisions.
- **Distracted driving:** Phones, GPS devices, and in-cab technology can divert a driver's attention from the road at critical moments.
- **Speeding:** Traveling too fast for conditions reduces a truck's ability to stop safely, especially given its long stopping distance.
- **Impairment:** Alcohol, prescription medications, or illegal substances can significantly compromise a driver's judgment and reflexes.
- **Poor defensive driving:** Failing to anticipate traffic slowdowns, leaving insufficient following distance, or reacting too late to hazards can turn routine driving into a catastrophic crash.

Trucking companies also play a role in these crashes. Negligent hiring practices, poor training, and failure to enforce safety standards can turn a risky driver into a serious safety risk.

Companies may overlook past crashes, traffic violations, or substance abuse issues to fill routes quickly. When a driver they should never have hired causes a crash, the company may be legally responsible in addition to the driver.

### **What injuries are common in rear-end truck accidents?**

Rear-end collisions with trucks are often catastrophic because of the forces involved. Common injuries include:

- **Traumatic brain injuries:** TBIs are caused by sudden deceleration or the head striking hard surfaces. These injuries can lead to long-term cognitive impairments, memory loss, or difficulty with basic motor functions, and they require extensive rehabilitation and support.

- **Spinal cord injuries:** Spinal cord injuries can result in a loss of sensation or movement in parts of the body. They have an impact on the victim's quality of life and often lead to lifelong care needs.
- **Internal organ damage:** Bruising or rupturing of vital organs can lead to life-threatening internal bleeding or dysfunction. In severe cases, this damage may require emergency surgery and result in long-term health complications or permanent damage to organs such as the heart, lungs, or kidneys.
- **Crush injuries and fractures:** Limbs trapped or bent under extreme force often result in compound fractures or amputations. These injuries may require multiple surgeries and long-term physical therapy, with victims sometimes facing permanent disabilities or the loss of use in the affected limbs.
- **Psychological trauma:** PTSD, anxiety, and depression can follow the crash. Many survivors struggle with flashbacks, sleep disturbances, and an ongoing fear of driving, which can hinder their ability to return to everyday activities and work.

### **Why are rear-end truck accidents legally complicated?**

If you've ever wondered why truck accident cases take longer than standard car accidents, the answer is they're typically more complicated. Multiple parties may be liable, including the driver, trucking company, cargo loaders, or even vehicle manufacturers. Federal trucking regulations, such as FMCSA hours-of-service rules and maintenance standards, add an extra layer of legal nuance.

Insurance companies representing trucking firms are often aggressive in defending claims. They'll use everything from lowball settlement offers to challenging causation or comparative fault to keep your compensation as low as possible, or deny it entirely.

This is why evidence must be preserved to prove fault in these types of cases. Electronic logging devices, black box data, dash cam footage, and trucking company records all help establish fault. Crash reconstruction experts may also be needed to demonstrate how the collision occurred. You need a skilled Indiana truck accident attorney to help you get this evidence and build a strong case for you.

### **What should I do if I'm involved in a rear-end truck accident in Indiana?**

If you're in a rear-end collision with a truck, your actions immediately afterward can impact your claim. First and foremost, seek medical attention, even if you feel fine. Injuries such as concussions or internal bleeding can be delayed, and they can worsen if left untreated. Seeing a doctor helps address these injuries early and establish a connection between the crash and your condition.

Next, call the police and ensure a report is filed. Document the scene by taking photos of all vehicles, the license plate, trailer markings, and any visible injuries. Collect witness contact information. Avoid giving recorded statements to the trucking company's insurance provider until you've consulted a lawyer.

If a loved one was seriously hurt or lost their life, get in contact with a lawyer as soon as possible to pursue a [wrongful death claim](#). The last thing you need is to deal with trucking companies and their insurance providers while you're mourning your loss.

### **Get help after a rear-end truck accident in Indiana**

[Boughter Sinak, LLC](#) has extensive experience handling serious truck accident cases across Indiana, including Fort Wayne, Warsaw, and surrounding communities. Our Indiana truck accident attorneys know how to investigate truck accidents and trucking companies, and stand up to insurance companies to build a strong case on your behalf.

We can handle your claim from start to finish, negotiate with insurance companies or even take your case to court if necessary. Our team fights to recover compensation for medical bills, lost wages, pain and suffering, and long-term care needs. With a free consultation and a contingency fee structure, you pay nothing upfront for our services.

Don't wait while evidence disappears or insurance companies protect their bottom line. [Contact us online](#) or call our Fort Wayne or Warsaw law offices today to schedule your free consultation.