



## Winter Trailer Lighting

Per DOT regulations, all lighting on a vehicle must be in working order. Working lights are important all year round, but during the winter season in areas where visibility may be impaired due to weather conditions such as snow and rain, it is even more important that lights are visible and functioning properly.



While proper maintenance of the electrical system is an essential part of keeping the lights operational, there are some simple steps that can be taken to keep trailer lighting in working order this winter.

### Installation/Replacement/Maintenance

**Positioning Lamps in the Correct Direction** – The bulbs or LEDs within a lamp are positioned in a particular direction, and/or use reflective surfaces within the design of the lamp, to emit light in a specified direction in relation to its function. When a lamp is positioned incorrectly, it is not performing its job properly, offering poor or inadequate lighting. In most situations, proper positioning of a lamp can be determined if text on the lens is right-side up. It's also important to note that there are those lamps that can be mounted in any direction and perform their job function properly.

**Torquing Mounting Hardware To Proper Specifications** – Too much stress placed on the polycarbonate material of a lamp, over time, can lead to cracks in the lens. Mounting hardware should be torqued to no more than the manufacturer's specifications, and mounting holes should be

periodically checked for damage.

**Avoiding Harsh Chemical Contact with Lenses** – Harsh chemicals that come into contact with the lenses on a lamp can weaken the integrity of the lenses over time, leading to damage. Avoid using harsh chemicals when washing a trailer since it's inevitable that the exterior lighting will most likely come into contact with the cleansing solution.

### On the Road

**Clean Lamp Surfaces from Weather and Road Debris** – Perhaps the simplest suggestion to keep lights visible is to remove debris or snow from the lenses with a rag or soft bristle brush to allow for proper lighting.

**Parking in Padded Docks with Lamps Off** – Heat is created from the light, reflecting off the padding and back onto the lamps, which can cause lenses to melt and even shorten the life of the light bulb or LED. Turning off the trailer lamps when parked in a dock with a padded frame will help avoid this.

**Shock and Vibration From Multiple Sources** – Road vibration is a known culprit for premature lighting failure as some bulbs/filaments may break or become disconnected. However, damage from shock or vibration can also occur during loading and unloading (including containers onto trailer chassis) when backing in too hard to a loading dock or brunt force contact with stationary objects. So it's always good to check the exterior lighting after aggressive/heavy loading and unloading, or after a hard jolt with a loading dock.

## TIPS

- Exterior trailer lamps should be mounted and positioned correctly for proper functionality and visibility.
- Periodically removing debris from the lights is one of the simplest steps to keep lights visible during the winter.
- Check for lighting failure from shock and vibration that can come from multiple sources other than just the road, such as the process of loading and unloading.

Have technical questions? Get the latest tips from a skilled Phillips engineer!  
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