

Safety in Reverse

Currently, backing up is our highest-risk maneuver when it comes to Motor Vehicle Incidents (MVI). This year CEDA has already matched the total MVIs in the previous year. Of those, 52% of 2026 MVIs occurred in reverse, compared with 35% in 2025. This data is a clear signal that our standard backing safeguards are breaking down. Because human error is a reality of daily operations, we cannot rely on perfect driver alertness alone to keep people safe. In our industry, the margin for error is incredibly thin, and a minor blind-spot oversight can quickly become a life-altering tragedy.

There are several factors that contribute to MVI's that occur when we are backing up; backing up unnecessarily, blind spots, inadequate communication with spotters, distractions while driving/spotting, infrequent practice, lack of spotters where required, and lack of hazard recognition and mitigation.

We need to work together to strengthen our shared defenses, focusing on smarter vehicle positioning and reliable spotting, to ensure our frontline safeguards are strong enough to protect everyone on site.



Use the First Move Forward Self Checklist from CEDA's *Transportation Safety Policy* to help determine if backing up is required:

First Move Forward Self Check Questions	Response
1. Is a "pull through" approach available?	Yes > Pull through the parking stall safely No > Proceed to step 2
2. Is a guide available to assist while backing into a parking stall?	Yes > Follow Workers' Guide to Hand Signals for Directing Vehicles No > Proceed to step 3
3. Can I reverse the vehicle safely in the current conditions?	Yes > Proceed to safely park No > Do not back up and find an alternate place to park

Pedestrian Safety

Working near or interacting with vehicles/equipment puts workers at a high risk of being struck. Drivers/Operators must maintain situational awareness at all times and must stop immediately under any of the following conditions:

- The signaler/guide is no longer fully visible.
- Visual contact with other workers/pedestrians is lost.
- An emergency stop signal is received from anyone in the area.

As pedestrians, we also have a responsibility to:

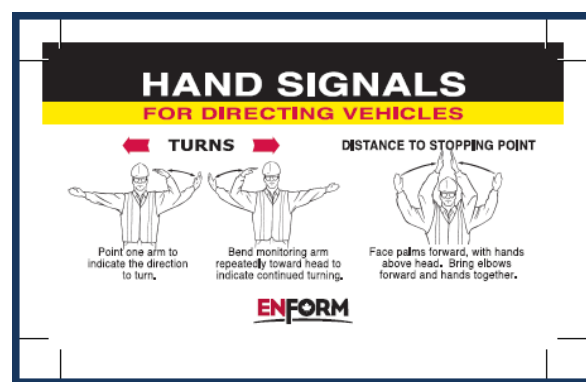
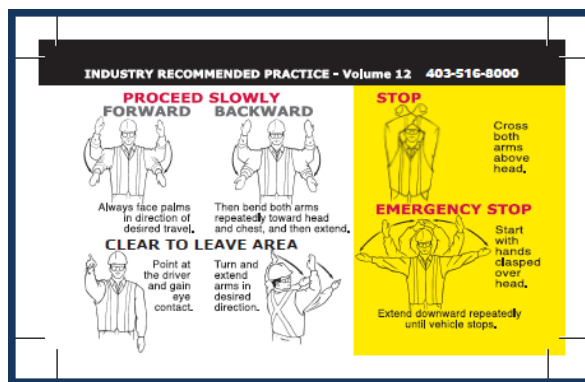
- Remember that large vehicles/equipment have significant blind spots.
- Remain clear of the vehicle/equipment unless acting as a signaler/guide.
- Make eye contact with the driver/operator to ensure he or she is aware of your presence.
- Never cross or step behind vehicles/ equipment when it is backing up or when backup signals are on.



Safety in Reverse

CEDA has the following controls to assist operators/drivers in reducing the number of MVI's that occur while backing up:

1. CEDA's Driver's Orientation covers *Energy Safety Canada's Workers Guide to Hand Signals for Directing Vehicles*.
2. A *Hand Signals for Directing Vehicles Skill Assessment* is required for all Drivers/Operators and Signalers/Guides. The skill assessment covers the following criteria in detail: Hand Signals, Pre-Planning, Signaler/Guide Responsibilities, Driver/ Operator Responsibilities, and Backing Up with No Guide Available
3. The Frontline Leaders' responsible for CEDA's *Short Service Employee (SSE) Program* verify all Short Service Employees have been orientated and instructed as required on items listed above.
4. Wallet cards, as seen below, are issued to all new hires and available as required through CEDA's warehouses.
5. Since 2021, CEDA has started purchasing heavy units (dry vacuum and tank trucks) with back up cameras.



Corrective Action

- Have all Driver/Operators and Signalers/Guides completed the required training and a *Hand Signals for Directing Vehicles Skill Assessment*?
- Do you intervene and correct employees that **are not** utilizing *Energy Safety Canada's, Workers Guide to Hand Signals for Directing Vehicles*?
- Do you provide positive feedback to employees that **are** utilizing *Energy Safety Canada's, Workers Guide to Hand Signals for Directing Vehicles*?
- For certain tasks, the areas we are required to back into **are challenging**. Whenever possible, do we park in a manner that avoids backing up? Do we work with our clients to plan work in a manner that avoids backing up?

For further information refer to:

[CEDA's Transportation Safety Policy](#)

[Hand Signals for Directing Vehicles Skill Assessment](#)

[Energy Safety Canada's Worker's Guide to Hand Signals for Directing Vehicles.](#)