

Part 397 Driving Rules, Cheat Sheet

Companion to HazMat Driver Training (Add-On 2, Highway Mode)

49 CFR Part 397, Transportation of Hazardous Materials; Driving and Parking Rules

Why this card exists. Part 397 covers the driving rules that apply on top of FMCSRs for every hazmat trip. If you learned the old §397.17 tire-inspection rule (the 100-mile-or-two-hour rule), this card shows you the CURRENT rule. Re-read it whenever you renew your hazmat training.

Driving and stopping

\$	Rule	Key points
§397.5	Attendance &*** surveillance**	Placarded vehicles must be attended at all times. 'Attended' = driver is on the vehicle, awake, not in the sleeper berth, within 100 ft and with unobstructed view. Class 1 (Division 1.1, 1.2, 1.3) has a stricter rule: must be attended on a public road, or parked in a safe-haven, or in an isolated area meeting §397.7(a) distances.
§397.7	Parking	Class 1 explosives: no parking on or within 5 ft of traveled portion of public street; no parking within 300 ft of buildings, bridges, tunnels, dwellings or places of assembly except for short stops for traffic, equipment, or operating purposes. All other placarded vehicles: similar but less restrictive, see the full section. NRHM under §397.67 routing rules adds further restrictions.
§397.13	Smoking	No smoking or open flame within 25 feet of a motor vehicle which contains Class 1 (explosives), Class 5

§	Rule	Key points
		(oxidizers), or flammable cargo (Class 2.1, Class 3 with FP ≤ 100°F, Class 4). No smoking while fueling. Includes e-cigarettes and any open-flame source.

Operations

§	Rule	Key points
§397.11	Fires	Hazmat-carrying vehicle must not be operated near an open fire UNLESS the driver has taken precautions to be reasonably certain no fire hazard exists. Driver may not park within 300 ft of an open fire.
§397.15	Fueling	Engine must be off. Person fueling must be in control of the fueling process and at the point where the fuel-tank intake meets the fuel hose. Never leave the nozzle unattended. No smoking, no open flame, no electrical work.
§397.17	Tire inspection (CURRENT RULE)	Drivers of vehicles transporting hazardous materials must examine each tire on the vehicle at the beginning of each trip and EACH TIME the vehicle is parked. If a tire is found to be flat, leaking, or overheated, the driver must repair or replace it at the nearest safe location. ⚠️ NOTE: The old '100-mile-or-2-hour' rule is OBSOLETE. The current rule is what's printed here.
§397.19	Explosives instructions	When transporting Division 1.1, 1.2, or 1.3 explosives, the driver must carry: (a) a

\$	Rule	Key points
		written list of state and local routes the load is restricted to; (b) a written copy of the rules in §177.835(c), (j) covering driving and parking; (c) written instructions on what to do in case of an accident or delay. Driver must read and sign these documents.

Routing

\$	Rule	Key points
§397.67	NRHM routing	Non-Radioactive Hazardous Material routing, preferred and prohibited routes for placarded loads. Drivers must operate on the route that minimizes the risk of harm to people and property, typically Interstate highways and bypasses around populated areas. State and local governments may designate or restrict specific routes; consult FMCSA's NHMR registry.
§397.101	HRCQ routing	Highway Route-Controlled Quantity (HRCQ) of Class 7 radioactives. Must operate on Interstate System except for designated alternative routes. FMCSA Safety Permit required under §385.403. State notifications and approved routing applies.
§385.403	FMCSA Safety Permit	Required for carriers transporting: a Division 1.1, 1.2, or 1.3 explosive in commerce; a HRCQ of Class 7 radioactive; methane (UN1971/UN1972/UN3138) liquefied refrigerated; PIH

§	Rule	Key points
		materials in bulk. Driver must carry a copy of the permit.

What this card does NOT replace

- The full text of Part 397 in the eCFR
- Your shipping papers and the §172.604 24-hour emergency contact
- The 2024 Emergency Response Guidebook (carry it in the cab)
- State-specific routing, parking, or operating overlays, verify with the state's NHMR registry entry
- Your company's standard operating procedures, which may be stricter than Part 397

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