



safety. workforce. business success. leadership.

**MTA 2026 SAFETY CONFERENCE &  
2025 Driver of the Year Banquet**  
*Safer Roads Ahead*  
**Tuesday, January 27, 2025**  
**Vadnais Heights Commons, Vadnais Heights, MN**

**PROGRAM AND SCHEDULE:**

- 7:30 - 8:30 a.m.      **Check-In Opens**  
Attendee Hot Breakfast Served  
Networking / Visit Sponsor Tables
- 8:30 – 8:40 a.m.      **Welcome – John Hausladen, Minnesota Trucking Association**  
Emcee – Karsen Ulwelling, Valley Transportation Service, Committee Chair
- 8:40 – 9:30 a.m.      **OPENING KEYNOTE**  
**The Power of Prevention: How Safety Wins Drive Long-Term Success**  
Lisa Gonnerman, VP Safety and Compliance (US), SFI International  
As safety professionals, we know real success isn't measured by a single audit or scorecard, it's built mile by mile. In this session, you'll hear practical insights on celebrating meaningful safety wins, turning challenges into opportunities, and how to lead in a way that creates a ripple effect across your operation. Most importantly, you'll walk away with proven strategies to engage your teams, strengthen accountability, and build a culture where safety isn't just a priority, it's how business gets done.
- 9:30 – 9:45 a.m.      **BREAK:** Networking / Visit Sponsor Tables
- 9:45 – 10:15 a.m.      **SESSION 2**  
**Minnesota's Big Four: What Enforcement is Seeing on Our Roads**  
Captain Robert Zak, MN State Patrol  
Get the latest commercial enforcement update from Captain Robert Zak of Minnesota State Patrol Commercial Enforcement Division. Captain Zak will share the Big Four factors most often contributing to crashes involving commercial trucks in Minnesota. Also, hear what enforcement officers are seeing during roadside inspections, an update on impairment testing, and how these trends impact carriers across the state.
- 10:15 – 10:55 a.m.      **SESSION 3**  
**Pow! You've Been Served (with a subpoena)**  
Michael C. Glover, Partner, DeWitt LLP

**MINNESOTA TRUCKING ASSOCIATION**

6160 Summit Dr. N #330, Brooklyn Center, MN 55430  
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This session will focus on best practices to avoid, prepare for and respond to a deposition or document demand subpoena. As part of the litigation process, a subpoena is time sensitive business and blowing through a “real” deadline can be costly in time and money. However, if you act quickly you are not without rights to make the process less expensive, less urgent, less disruptive and, maybe, go away altogether. There are strategies and court rules in your favor to limit the frequently “over the top” demands from the party issuing the subpoena and avoid having your employees appear for a potentially more troublesome in person deposition. This short open-format session will answer your questions and will reduce your uncertainty about a lawsuit of which you want no part.

10:55 – 11:20 a.m.

**BREAK:** Networking / Visit Sponsor Tables

11:20 – 11:35 a.m.

**FMCSA Update**

Matt Marrin, FMCSA Field Administrator, Midwest Region

Hear the latest updates on topics such as non-domiciled CDLs, ELDT training providers, Drug & Alcohol Clearinghouse, and more.

11:35 – 11:45 a.m.

**Critical Safety Conversation Introduction**

Topic Review and Attendees Move to Topic Tables

Conversation Topics (Pick 4 Topics):

1. Handling DataQs, CAB Reports & FMCSA Crash Reviews
2. Insurance Renewal Preparation
3. Evaluating Your Shippers
4. Onboarding & Post Hire Training
5. Navigating English Proficiency Requirements
6. FMCSA Audits
7. Maintenance Triangle: Drivers, Shop, Ops
8. Injury Prevention
9. ELD / HOS Constraints / Personal Conveyance
10. Choosing the right safety equipment vendor that fits your needs and vision
11. Commercial Enforcement
12. FMCSA

11:45 – 12:15 p.m.

**Critical Safety Conversations Round 1 & 2**

Two 15-minute sessions

Roundtable discussions focused on best practices

Each table has a safety director facilitator and a NEXTLEADER recorder/reporter

12:15 – 1:00 p.m.

**Lunch Buffet**

Networking/ Visit Sponsor Tables

1:00 – 1:30 p.m.	<b>Critical Safety Conversations Round 3 &amp; 4</b> Two 15-minute sessions Roundtable discussions focused on best practices Each table has a safety director facilitator and a NEXTLEADER recorder/reporter
1:30 – 1:45 p.m.	<b>Critical Safety Conversations – Reporting Back on Best Practices</b> NEXTLEADERS serve as Reporters Each NEXTLEADER will share one best practice to bring back to your team.
1:45 – 2:00 p.m.	<b>BREAK:</b> Networking / Visit Sponsor Tables
2:00 – 2:50 p.m.	<b>CLOSING SESSION</b> <b>Safety Truths That Matter: What the Data Really Tells Us (and What We Can't Control)</b> Dan Murray, Senior Vice President, American Transportation Research Institute In today's high-stakes safety environment, separating signal from noise is critical. This session goes beyond theory to unpack <b>practical, real-world safety research</b> that directly impacts your fleet operations, risk profile, and hiring decisions. You'll walk away with insights you can act on — and awareness of the trends you can't ignore, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Identifying top-performing drivers</b> before they hit the road — what actually predicts safety?</li> <li>○ <b>Driver history deep dive:</b> What background truly matters, and what's just noise?</li> <li>○ <b>Navigating liability landmines</b> — why traditional negligence models may no longer protect you.</li> <li>○ A rapid-fire overview of <b>emerging threats and costs</b>, from cargo theft to insurance spikes to shifting driver demographics.</li> </ul>
2:50 p.m.	Wrap-Up Adjourn

### 2025 Driver of the Year Banquet Schedule (Separate Ticket)

4:00 p.m.	Check-in Opens
4:30 p.m.	Driver of the Month Drivers and Guest arrive for Rehearsal
5:00 p.m.	Reception with Cash Bar
6:00 p.m.	Dinner and Program

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8:00 p.m.

Driver of the Year Winner Announcement

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