



Engine Brakes: Stay safe and help us reduce noise!

Nobody likes the sound of engine brakes. Please help us reduce noise in our neighbourhood by using your engine brakes only when necessary. Proper engine brake use keeps you safe and improves the image of your industry.

Remember, your engine brakes are designed to assist the service brakes in controlling the speed of a loaded tractor-trailer as it descends a steep grade. When used improperly, engine brakes can contribute to a loss-of-control crash.

When you apply the engine brake without the aid of service brakes, braking occurs only at the tractor's drive wheels. When this happens, the momentum generated by the trailer can cause you to jackknife.

Here are some reminders for proper engine brake use:

Actively manage the use of your engine brake. Only turn the engine brake on when you need it and as conditions allow.

Do not use the engine brake on icy roads. Using the engine brake in slippery or icy conditions can cause drive wheel lock-up and a potential loss of control, especially in older tractors with limited electronic engine controls.

Limit the use of the engine brake on high power to dry roads and steep grades. If the roads are slippery or if the truck is hauling a light load, use the engine brake on reduced power settings, and monitor it closely.

Adhere to the manufacturer's instructions for use. All engine brake manufacturers provide guidelines for use with the vehicle operator's manual. Be sure to follow their specific instructions.

Some engine manufacturers now offer quieter models, but it's ultimately up to the driver to monitor engine brake use to avoid both unnecessary noise and accidents.

Please use your engine brakes sensibly and responsibly. Thank you!

Adapted from "Ask the Expert: Are Your Drivers in the Know About Engine Brakes?" Markel Information Solutions, February 2007. www.markel.ca

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