



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

TEL. 349-4300
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9.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

September 28th 1998

To The Honorable, The City Council:

In response to Awaiting Report numbers 8 & 16, regarding four truck incidents and procedures to prevent similar accidents in the future, please be advised of the following:

On April 10th a Sun Co. tanker truck collided with a taxi in Harvard Square on Massachusetts Avenue, spilling roughly two to three gallons of gasoline. While Fire Department officials arriving on the scene found the tanker driver to have acted quickly in containing the spill, in accordance with standard operating guidelines, the Fire Department evacuated nearby residents and Cambridge police responded to control traffic. Sun Co. dispatched two empty trucks to remove the remaining gasoline from the tanker involved in the accident. The truck driver was cited for a marked lane violation, or failure to stay within a lane. Since the streets utilized by the tanker were not posted for truck restrictions, officers on the scene did not solicit destination information.

On June 4th, a C. White & Son tanker operator unwittingly struck a light pole while turning from Brattle Street onto Craigie Street. Police responded to the scene where approximately 10 to 15 gallons of gasoline spilled along one lane, and proceeded to close the area to traffic in accordance with safety regulations. Cleanup of this site, as well as 199 Concord Avenue, where police located the driver, involved a crew from Environmental Products and Service Inc., assisted by the Fire and Police Departments. The driver was cited for failure to stay within a lane and leaving the scene of an accident. Since the streets utilized by the tanker were not posted for truck restrictions, officers on the scene did not solicit destination information.

On July 21st at approximately 10:45AM, a moving truck owned by McDonald Moving and Storage began leaking fuel at the intersection of Garden and Walden Streets. Roughly three gallons of gasoline spilled as a result of an over filled gas tank. The driver controlled the leak and the Fire Department responded to secure the scene. No destination information was solicited.

On July 22nd at approximately 8:30 AM, a Ray Brother's Transportation semi-tanker truck discharged fluorosilicic acid at the corner of JFK and South Street in Harvard Square. Escaping through a loading valve that was both uncapped and defective, the concentrated fluoride substance irritated the eyes of a driver following the vehicle. After police stopped the New Hampshire-bound truck at 1533 Massachusetts Avenue, the Fire Department proceeded to cordon off the area as clean-up crews worked to remove the chemical from the JFK/South Street

intersection, as well as two other locations in Harvard Square. The tanker originated in Allston and proceeded along North Cambridge Street, over the Larz Anderson Bridge, onto JFK Street and finally to 1533 Massachusetts Avenue where it was stopped before reaching its destination of the Jones chemical Depot in St. Merrimack, New Hampshire. State police cited the operator for having an uncapped air line, a defective loading valve and an expired record of duty.

In all four cases, City Police and Fire Departments acted in accordance with standard operating guidelines for accidents of this nature. While the City can not guarantee operator error involving tanker trucks will not occur in the future, we have an extensive operational plan that allows Police, Fire, and other relevant departments to execute a highly coordinated, swift response in the event hazardous spillage does take place. In the interest of public safety, the City will take a conservative and cautious approach to incidences such as these or other accidents involving hazardous material. Safety is our top priority.

Recognizing that hazardous material spillage involving trucks is part of a broader issue surrounding truck traffic in Cambridge, the City has undertaken a number of initiatives to address the community's underlying truck traffic concerns:

Increased Police Enforcement

Increases in Police enforcement efforts has led to an unprecedented number of trucks stopped and ticketed for a variety of infractions and has reduced the number of trucks violating street restrictions. Police have significantly expanded their traffic safety and enforcement activities with the establishment of a truck enforcement unit, acquisition of mobile weigh stations, and in-service training of all officers. This initiative has conveyed a message to the trucking community that Cambridge is a City in which truck restrictions and safety requirements will be strictly enforced, thereby discouraging some drivers from viewing a short cut through Cambridge as a time and cost effective alternative to regional highways.

Selective Street Restrictions

Based on truck volumes, travel patterns, and adjacent residential uses, the City Manager, with the approval of the Massachusetts Highway Department, established partial or full truck restrictions on all Cambridge streets where they were warranted.

Cordon Count

The Department of Traffic and Transportation is conducting an extensive City-wide cordon count. This traffic study is the first to attempt to quantify the number of trucks carrying hazardous materials through Cambridge. The statistical data culled from the cordon count will allow the City to understand current truck traffic patterns and to identify shifts in these patterns over time.

Truck Origins/Destinations Solicitation Policy

At the request of the Council, the City Manager has requested the Police Department to initiate a policy that will attempt to ascertain origins and destinations of trucks routinely stopped for traffic-related violations.

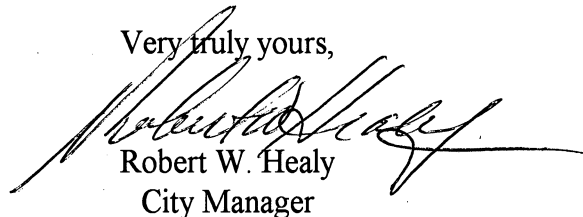
Night Time Truck Ban Council Order

While the interplay between local, state and federal regulation of truck traffic is complex and uncertain, at the request of the Council, the City is taking steps to investigate the potential for a City-wide night time truck ban.

As you are well aware, any efforts to reduce truck traffic in Cambridge are likely to be highly contentious and will present challenging legal issues. While the City continues to work toward mitigating the negative impacts of trucks as well as protect the safety, property, and quality of life of residents, truck transportation is a central feature of commerce in the United States, and a fact of life in an urban environment.

With regard to accidents involving trucks carrying hazardous material, you will be pleased to know that these incidents are indeed rare in Cambridge, and we have no indications that accidents involving tanker trucks are increasing this year. In fact, due to stricter hazardous material storage regulations and the advent of safety enhancing technology, accidents involving dangerous materials are decreasing.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert W. Healy', is written over the typed name and title.

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

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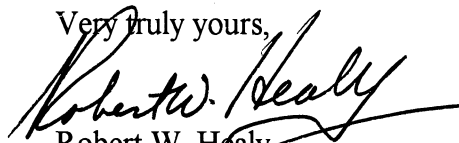
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9.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

September 14th 1998

To The Honorable, The City Council:

In response to Awaiting Report numbers 13 and 21, regarding four truck incidents and procedures to prevent similar accidents in the future, please be advised of the following:

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Consent Agenda #9

5755

Relative to hazardous cargo
truck accidents.

In City Council September 14, 1998

No Action Taken

SEP. 28 1998

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