

WSDOT Truck Parking Survey

SUMMARY

WHY WSDOT IS EXAMINING TRUCK PARKING

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) keeps people, businesses and the economy moving by operating and improving the state's transportation systems. WSDOT recognizes trucks and drivers play an essential role in the safe and efficient delivery of goods, which supports the competitiveness of businesses in Washington. Truck parking is critical for industry; insufficient truck parking can have negative impacts on communities, economies, the environment and road safety.

In recent years, a growing lack of truck parking capacity has become a national concern. The passage of Jason's Law in 2012 required a federal survey of truck parking challenges and needs. The 2015 study addressed both public and private parking facilities along the National Highway System and inspired many states to assess their own truck parking needs and concerns.

Due to this national concern, and the potential repercussions of insufficient truck parking, WSDOT is conducting a truck parking study. In April 2016, WSDOT surveyed truck drivers and other stakeholders about truck parking attitudes and concerns in the state. This document summarizes the survey results, which will inform the overall study. Complete survey results are available at wsdot.wa.gov/freight/truckparking.



Survey Highlights

- The survey received 1,118 responses, 84 percent from truck drivers.
- Drivers prefer private truck stops for short-term and overnight breaks.
- A majority of drivers take 30 minutes or more to locate parking.
- For 59 percent of drivers, overnight safety is a frequent concern.
- Over half of drivers frequently or regularly drive fatigued due to inadequate parking.
- The most difficult corridors to find parking are I-5, I-405, and I-90.

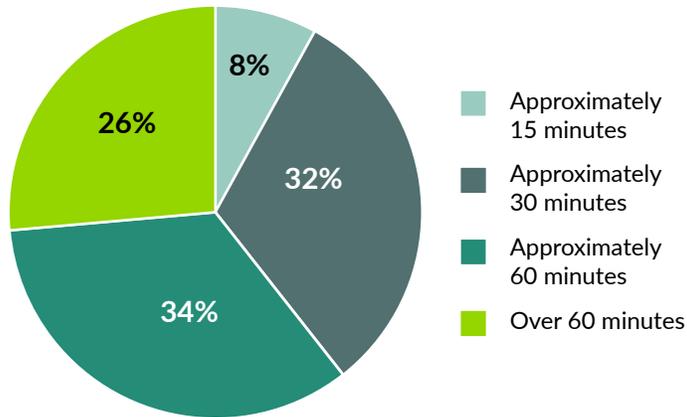
Interstate highway routes have the greatest truck parking shortage

Survey respondents identified the Interstate 5, Interstate 405 and Interstate 90 corridors as having the greatest shortage of safe and legal overnight parking. Parking shortages on Interstate 82 and State Route 167 also were mentioned. Respondents predominantly identified the Seattle-Tacoma region as not having adequate truck parking. One driver noted he or she had "refused...loads going into Seattle metro because of the lack of parking."

Short term and overnight parking is difficult to find

Many other state surveys found it can take truck drivers upwards of 30 minutes to find a place to park, and Washington is no exception. For short-term parking, 37 percent of drivers take approximately 30 minutes to find

Time spent looking for overnight parking



parking; 36 percent take over 30 minutes. Overnight parking is even more challenging. Nearly two-thirds of drivers require an hour or more to find overnight parking. Time of day also is a critical factor. Drivers said the later it gets, the longer it takes to find safe and legal parking at rest areas and truck stops.

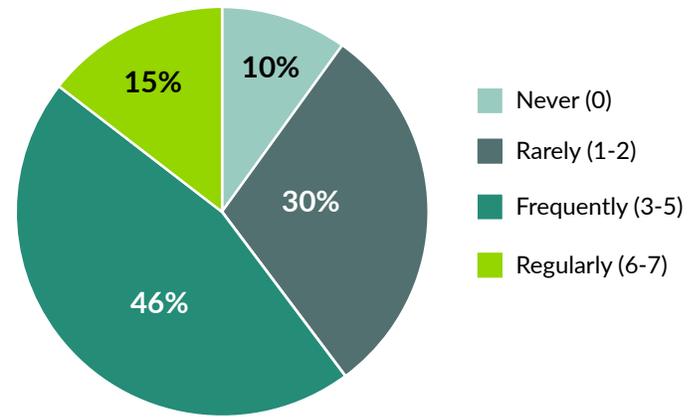
“After 4 pm finding a spot [to park] becomes very difficult and you can spend well over 60 minutes find[ing] safe, secure parking.”

- Independent owner/operator

Overnight parking shortages increase safety and legal risks

Over half of respondents (59 percent) said overnight parking safety is a regular concern. Some drivers stressed that “every night is a safety concern,” especially in the Seattle-Tacoma region. In addition to personal security concerns, 46 percent of drivers also reported

Days per week parking shortage leads to fatigued driving



they have frequently driven while fatigued as a result of limited parking for both short breaks and overnight. Similarly, 46 percent of truck drivers said inadequate truck parking means they frequently have difficulty complying with federal maximum hours of service limitations, implemented to protect both drivers and other motorists.

Majority do not support trucking fees

Most respondents (over 58 percent) were unwilling to pay an additional annual fee for dedicated parking, saying truckers already pay enough in taxes and registration fees. As one driver put it, “truck[s] should not have to pay for parking. We pay road taxes, fuel taxes, license taxes, registration, and fines for violation.” The 42% of respondents amenable to a parking fee preferred a pay-by-spot process rather than an annual fee. They also stressed that fee revenue should be used for truck parking facility improvements.

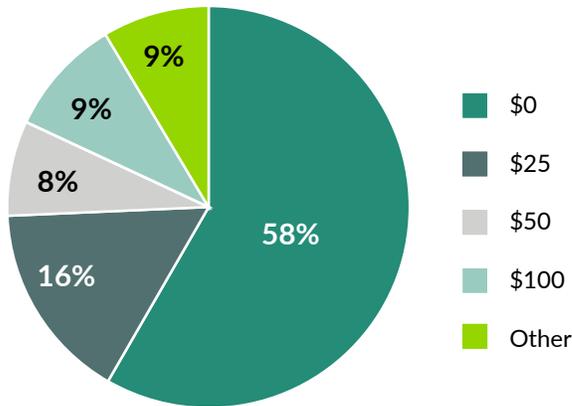
Private truck stops preferred

Drivers reported using private truck stops the most for both short-term and overnight parking, likely due to amenities such as food, showers and laundry. Public rest areas and highway on/off ramps are also frequently used. However, drivers’ preferred parking options are not always available.

Ranked Short-Term Parking Preferences vs. Use

Parking Type	Preference	Actual Usage
Private truck stop	1	1
Public rest area	2	2
Abandoned lot	3	5
Weigh station	4	8
Roadside	5	7
Shipper/receiver location	6	4
Highway on-ramp/off-ramp	7	3
Temporary parking lot (e.g. WalMart, casino)	8	6

Preferred dollar amount for annual truck parking fee



For short-term parking, weigh stations are ranked fourth in terms of driver preferences, yet last in terms of actual usage. Likewise, highway on/off ramps are commonly used by drivers, but they're one of the least popular parking options. These discrepancies suggest there is insufficient parking capacity at drivers' preferred locations.

When drivers must park overnight, shipper/receiver locations are the third most popular parking option; for actual use, respondents ranked shipper/receiver locations seventh out of eight. While drivers frequently use highway on/off-ramps for overnight parking, they are the least popular option and are likely often used only because other options aren't available for mandatory rest periods. As was the case with short-term parking, these differences between use and preference could indicate drivers are unable to find parking at preferred locations.

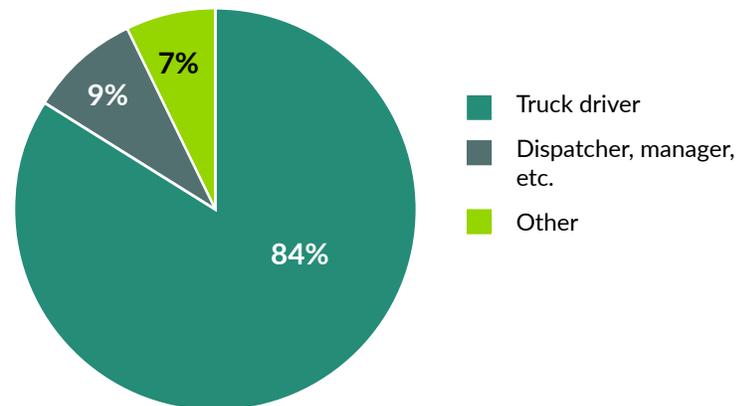
“Many shippers and receivers have ample room on site but we aren't allowed to park there to complete our required break.”

- Over-the-road driver

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Breakdown of survey respondents



The majority (75 percent) of respondents said company owners do not provide overnight parking for drivers. Drivers are frequently required to find their own parking. Similarly, over 67 percent of receiving locations, where drivers deliver their goods, do not offer overnight parking.

Most responses were from regional truck drivers

The majority of respondents (84 percent) were truck drivers. In terms of company type, 36 percent of respondents identified as independent owner-operators, 29 percent as a private company fleet, 24 percent as for-hire, and 7 percent as a long-term lease, with the remaining 4 percent selecting "other." The majority of respondents (58 percent) drive regional tractor-trailers. The second most selected truck option, "other," was primarily composed of over-the-road and long-haul trucks.

Similarities to national survey results

The results of WSDOT's survey echo national findings. As part of



Jason's Law, the Federal Highway Administration assessed supply and demand of truck parking facilities in 2015. In the FHWA survey, 75 percent of drivers reported they regularly (one day or more per week) had problems finding a safe place to rest. The WSDOT survey results revealed similarities, including respondents reporting that preferred parking locations reach capacity in the afternoon and early evening, leading truck drivers to park in less favorable locations. According to the national survey, Washington is ranked 44th out of 50 states in

terms of the number of truck parking spaces per 100,000 daily truck vehicle miles traveled. Washington ranks 42nd in terms of the ratio of public to private truck parking spaces. This shows there are significantly more private truck parking spaces than public rest area spaces in the state and that most other states have higher ratios of public truck parking.

2016 Truck Parking Survey approach

WSDOT's survey was developed to better understand truck parking issues in Washington, using the FHWA and other recent state surveys to develop questions. The FHWA, Washington Trucking Association partners and other trucking industry participants reviewed the survey prior to distribution.

WSDOT sent the survey link via the state's [Freight Alert](#) subscription email system. It was also sent via email to the trucking associations in nine western states and British Columbia and the national associations for independent truck drivers and truck stop owners. Truck drivers, company owners and other employees familiar with parking issues in the state were encouraged to participate.

MORE INFORMATION

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