

8 EASY TO AVOID LTL SHIPPING MISTAKES



Sometimes the smallest mistakes can cause the biggest problems. When it comes to shipping products that are classified as less-than-truckload, or LTL (meaning less than 20,000 pounds but usually more than 4,000), knowing what NOT to do is just as important as knowing what to do.

1

NOT PALLETIZING YOUR GOODS. Most carriers will not even consider picking up your shipment if it is not palletized. Pallets are readily available in either 48 or 40 inches (standard) but do come in all sizes. A pallet's primary function is to keep your product/s from shifting and rolling around in transit, which can cause substantial damage. Always palletize your freight.

2

NOT USING PROPER PACKAGING. In addition to arranging your product on pallets, you need to make sure it is packaged properly with sufficient padding or cushioning for fragile items, securely taped boxes, and shrink-wrapped to keep it all together and attached to the pallet.

3

NOT PROVIDING ACCURATE INFORMATION ON THE (BOL) BILL OF LADING, such as contents of the shipment, delivery time, pickup and delivery addresses, contact names and phone number, billing information, and other required specifications. Poor communication can delay shipments and create additional fees for returned or mis-delivered shipments.

MIS-REPRESENTING YOUR FREIGHT TO SAVE MONEY.

Fibbing about the freight class (the lower the classification number, the cheaper the cost) or weight of your shipment is always a BAD idea. You run the risk of having to reclassify and reweigh your shipment. This often winds up costing you more because of inspection and reclassification fees.

4

ASSUMING THAT A DELIVERY DATE IS A GUARANTEED DATE. Most carriers and 3PLs offer “guaranteed” delivery, but this is an optional, extra charge added fee. Delivery dates are not guarantees. You have to remember the LTL shipments are usually a consolidation of several customer’s freight, so anywhere along the delivery route, there can be delays.



6

NOT USING A 3PL OR PROFESSIONAL TO ASSIST WITH YOUR LTL SHIPMENT. Using a 3PL to help arrange your dry LTL shipment is preferable whenever possible. 3PLs have the negotiated buying power that comes from working with large pools of dedicated, reliable LTL carriers. Also, they have invested in the technology to be able to track and trace your shipment every step of the way. 3PLs handle all the back-end paperwork, including all billing and any claims, should they occur. They are on your side, and will fight for you as your advocate!

7

NOT SHOPPING AROUND TO GET THE BEST PRICING. Some 3PLs, like Choptank, have the technology to get multiple quotes at once from a selection of carriers, all in one place. This lets you be in the driver’s seat to choose the best price, for the transit time required, for your shipment.



8

NOT PROPERLY INSURING YOUR FREIGHT. Don’t assume that your freight is covered by insurance or that you just don’t need it. There is a multitude of factors that could damage your shipment, such as weather, theft, or a distracted driver causing an accident. How much would it cost to replace your entire shipment? Always ask about insurance, and if you are shipping a fairly high-value cargo, make sure you ask if additional insurance is available.

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