

NEWSBREAK

April 2024 Publication of the Minnesota Professional Towing Association



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TRAA Leads Congressional Efforts to Oppose FTC Overreach on Towing Fee Regulation



Following a successful Hill Day where TRAA members conducted meetings with over 100 Members of Congress and their staff, TRAA has continued to lead Congressional efforts to oppose FMCSA’s baseless suggestion that the FTC include “predatory towing fees” as part of the rulemaking on Unfair and Deceptive Trade Practices.

During our meetings, TRAA articulated why regulation of the towing industry and/or fees are outside the FTC’s jurisdiction. These reasons included:

- Congress has already delegated regulation of towing practices and pricing – and it is not to the FTC. Under PL 113-159, Congress set all non-consent towing regulation to state and localities, and consensual towing [the vast majority of Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) towing] to the FMCSA.
- The FTC’s junk fee rule is aimed at protecting consumers, not the commercial trucking industry, and the FTC does not have the authority to regulate transportation policy. An FTC rulemaking under 15 U.S.C. § 57 that includes fees for towing, consensual or non-consensual, would subvert the will of Congress, which has already delegated to the states and FMCSA.

Most importantly, TRAA communicated that FMCSA’s suggestion to include all fees upfront is unrealistic given how a tow works. Requiring multiple towing operators to respond to the scene and provide competing quotes goes directly against Quick Clearance by significantly increasing the amount of time and number of responders on-scene.

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**If you would like to make a
contribution to help with the legislative
efforts, please send your donations to:**

**MPTA
2886 Middle Street
Little Canada, MN 55117**



Message From Executive Director, Lance Klatt

Happy Spring everyone,

Been quite an unusual winter in many respects as the towing industry continues finding stability within local and federal regulations, and of course a winter stacked with many obstacles including a lack of inclement weather. As I write this letter to the membership, I really want to communicate to everyone that our industry is challenging enough. The legislature isn't fond of our industry, insurance industry really doesn't like us, in general, the public doesn't like us unless they desperately need us.

I do know, now is the time we need each other. A competitor or not, the towing industry, our members cannot fight amongst themselves. Life is hard enough for all of us! Inside this Newsbreak, an article written by Brian Riker of Tow Industry Week with the headline of "Control your own Destiny". Sounds like the towing industry has some work to do in finding ways for the industry to be more professional. Social media posts via Facebook, Snap-Chat, Instagram, Twitter or even a text, can be harmful not to just an individual but to their business and their employees.

Members and board members including myself as Executive Director control our own destiny. Up to each of us to work together. As Brian says it so "bluntly" "I am saddened that we still have several states without a towing association, or a few where the towing association is simply a committee within the trucking association." I think it's time for our industry to grow up, challenge itself, maybe even delete social media accounts? Will tell you this right now- "If our towing operators everyone in the industry continue down this dreaded path, I for one, am concerned for our industry and the Minnesota Professional Towing Association, Brian Riker someday may be saddened as Minnesota and/or other states may be one of those states without a Towing Association.

Looking forward to working with all of you in strengthening the Industry and Association one towing member at a time! I can control my own destiny, can you?

Thank you for the opportunity to be your Executive Director!

Lance

1- Day Basic Light Duty Hands-On Training Class

Wednesday, May 15, 2024

“DoubleTree by Hilton - 2540 Cleveland Ave N, Roseville, MN 55113

The one day course focuses on the basics of everyday towing with a 1-ton, flatbed, basic hook-ups, use of dollies, and wheel lifts with limited classroom instructed by Ron Feist, Ron Gardas Jr. and the Minnesota Professional Towing Association Board of Directors.

****Registration Forms need to be turned in no later than May 10th****



Send completed form to:

MPTA
2886 Middle Street
Little Canada, MN 55117
Phone: 651-487-2231
Fax: 651-487-2447
nikki@mnssa.com

Hands-On Training

Members:

\$245.00 per student

Non-Members:

\$345.00 per student

- Minimum of 15 participants to hold class
- Cancellation Policy - credit only for future schools

Hotel:

DoubleTree by Hilton
2540 Cleveland Ave N
Roseville, MN 55113
651-636-4567

Wednesday, May 15, 2024 Agenda

7:30am Registration
8:00am to 5:00pm Classroom & Hands-on Training

- Breakfast and lunch will be provided.
- A pair of gloves and work clothes will be needed, expect to get dirty.

****All Participants will receive MPTA Certification Of Attendance****

Registration Form

Business Name _____ Member #: _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Name of Student (s): _____ Total \$ _____

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Grand Total _____

Method of Payment: Visa, Master Card, Discover, Amex Check

Credit Card # _____ CVS Code: _____

Name of Card _____ Exp. Date: _____

Address for Card: _____

(Including City, State & Zip)

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The unintended consequence would be a significant risk to public safety and to the lives of the responders required to stand on the side of the road while quotes are negotiated. Congressional offices were very much in agreement with these points and agreed that direct dialogue between the towing industry and FMCSA is the best approach to addressing the concerns of FMCSA over transparency in towing fees. Accordingly, TRAA has asked Congress to include the below language in the FY25 appropriations bill, which the House and Senate will begin drafting later this month.

The Committee is aware of the Federal Trade Commission's Proposed Rule on Unfair and Deceptive Fees. The Committee is also aware of recent efforts to include certain towing fees for commercial motor vehicles in this rule. Given the lack of evidence obtained by the Agency prior to publishing its draft Rule and the focus of the Rule on the individual consumer rather than commercial consumers, the Committee is concerned that the inclusion of towing fees in the Rule on Unfair and Deceptive Fees would be outside the scope of the Rule as submitted to Congress for review. The Committee instead supports the creation of a Department of Transportation-led task force to address transparency in towing fees as the agency with legislatively mandated authority to address the issue and industry expertise.

In addition, we are actively working with FMCSA on the proposed Tow Services Transparency Task Force and anticipate further updates on this effort in the not-too-distant future.



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Adam Letourneau



TOW INDUSTRY & WEEK

Control Your Own Destiny

By Brian J Riker

Are you sick and tired of things happening to you rather than controlling your own destiny? I know I am! Quit bitching about it and do something. It really is that simple.

I attended the Towing and Recovery Association of America's Hill Day event this past week. The title is really a misnomer because we were in Washington, DC for the better part of last week hosting or attending meetings with legislators and regulators.

We did something and made a difference. What did you do last week?

I am saddened that we still have several states without a towing association, or a few where the towing association is simply a committee within the trucking association. Talk about the fox guarding the hen house.

Really? We have so little self-respect that we can't find the time, or common ground among fellow towers to band together. You do not have to like your competitors, but since we are all in this together, we need to learn to work together as colleagues for the common good of the industry.

Even worse is the infighting from various entities, all claiming to be the true voice of the industry; yet without a coordinated message from all the stakeholders within the towing industry, all we are doing is diluting the work of each of these well-intentioned entities.

A recurring theme I hear often, and witness in the countless towing focused social media pages, is the industry's desire to be accepted as professionals. This is often combined with a strong desire to remain mostly unregulated, as we are now. Both great goals, although impossible to achieve unless we as an industry step up and "police ourselves."

This was the focus of the recent actions by U.S. Secretary of Transportation Buttigieg and Acting Administrator Lawless from FMCSA when they filed comments at the 11th hour related to the Federal Trade Commission's "junk fee" proposed rulemaking. As towers we can't have it both ways; free to run as we desire without any industry oversight.

The only question is who will be our governors - towing industry professionals or some clueless governmental agency? I vote for industry professionals as our leaders.

Working towards that goal, towers from 24 states descended upon Capitol Hill last week to conduct 103 individual meetings with Congressional offices on key committees that govern transportation, infrastructure, and commerce. Speaking as one voice, the voice of the towing industry, these industry leaders brought the personal touch and voice to the message that is presented daily by the team at Tremont Strategies Group, the lobbyist for the TRAA.

Without constituent input these events would not be effective, as lobbying alone does not move mountains. Towing business owners, drivers, grieving parents and even industry suppliers and media working in unison towards common goals was a beautiful sight to witness given how often this industry finds itself fighting itself. In person meetings, letter writing campaigns and attending local events with your legislators is critical to support the lobbying efforts.

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This year the goal was simple: proving we deserve to keep the seat at the table TRAA has earned previously. Yes, TRAA was blindsided, as were all the other industry associations, regarding the junk fee proposal; however as soon as TRAA became aware they were able to arrange a meeting with the US DOT and discuss realistic options for a workable solution related to the potential for abuse for within the industry.

Of course, the world doesn't stop just because a new challenge is presented. The group also worked to spread the message about roadside responder safety, calling for more support of slow down move over and awareness resolutions. Educating the general public about their role in roadway safety remains a top priority of the towing industry and the US DOT.

Additionally, the rapid development and deployment of electric vehicles was discussed, with a welcome reception from both sides of the aisle when the safety and training of responders was discussed. It appears that there may be a consensus towards slowing the pace of adoption of alternate fuels to give the service and support community time to catch up.

Last, but certainly not least, the topic of truck size and weight limits was broached. TRAA has joined with the Coalition Against Bigger Trucks to oppose increasing truck size and weight limits on our nation's highways given the towing industry has difficulty servicing the vehicles already on the highway.

While this may sound counterproductive, given the industry itself is asking for a size and weight exception, in reality we are not asking to increase the size of our tow equipment; instead asking only to be legally allowed to use our equipment as intended to service what is already legally on the roadways today.

Overall, it was a productive event for this industry advocate, one I am proud to have taken part in since its inception and will happily be there next year.

How about you? Strength in numbers. This is your call to action.

Will you do something or just stand there bitching when the world changes around you?

Interesting Facts For April

- ◆ *There are two thoughts on how April got its name, but no one is for sure. The first is that it got its after Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love. The second is that the word April in Latin means "to open" and refers to the flowers and trees opening.*
- ◆ *April is considered the funniest month.*
- ◆ *The first president of the United States, George Washington, was inaugurated on April 30, 1789.*
- ◆ *The phrase "April Showers bring May Flowers" comes from a poem from the 1500s by Thomas Tusser.*
- ◆ *April is the equivalent of October in the Southern Hemisphere.*
- ◆ *The April full moon earns the name April's Full Pink Moon not due to its color but because its named after the pink phlox flowers that bloom in North America's early spring.*
- ◆ *The Titanic, a famous ship, hit an iceberg and sank on April 15, 1912.*

Chattanooga Lookouts reveal alternate identity as 'The Chattanooga Wreckers'



CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. – The Chattanooga Lookouts are proud to announce a new alternate identity for the 2024 season. The new alternate identity was chosen to recognize Chattanooga as the birthplace of the wrecker and to honor the past, present, and future of the towing industry. For six games the team will play as the Chattanooga Wreckers, featuring new on-field jerseys and hats in a dark navy and orange color scheme. The primary mark features a vintage wrecker in orange inspired by the inventor of the tow hitch, Ernest Holmes Sr. The team is partnering with Miller Industries and the International Towing and Recovery Museum to help shine the spotlight on the hard-working men and women who work in the towing and recovery industry.

“Having the opportunity to tell the story of a homegrown industry, an industry that was born and built right here in Chattanooga, is a unique opportunity” said Lookouts Vice President Andrew Zito. “The Lookouts and the towing industry have been a staple of Chattanooga for more than 100 years. We are super excited to bring this identity to life throughout our 2024 season.”

The Chattanooga Wreckers, presented by Miller Industries, will play their first game during the Wreckers Kickoff Extravaganza weekend on Friday, April 26, and Saturday, April 27. The remaining dates include Sunday, June 16, Friday July 12, Saturday, August 3, and Thursday, August 29. Both Friday, April 26 and Saturday, April 27 will feature a Wreckers Car Air Freshener Giveaway for the 1st 1,000 fans. Friday, April 26th's game will be capped off with a spectacular fireworks display. Wreckers' games will also feature special entertainment, promotions and yes, tow trucks.

“The Towing Museum is incredibly proud to be a community partner with the Chattanooga Lookouts,” said Executive Director of the International Towing Museum, Lauren Colón. “With our industry foundations being here in Chattanooga, we look forward to engaging with our community while spotlighting the towing industry and slow down move over law awareness. We would also like to extend a big thank you to Miller Industries for sponsoring this exciting collaboration.”

“Miller Industries is thrilled to partner with the Lookouts,” said Miller Industries Vice President of Marketing Kipp Felice. “With Chattanooga being the birthplace of towing, and home of The World’s Largest Manufacturer of Towing and Recovery Equipment, Miller Industries, we knew we needed to be a part of this and are very proud to be the presenting partner of the Chattanooga Wreckers. We look forward to working alongside the International Towing and Recovery Museum and the Lookouts to highlight and share the history of our industry.”

The full brand kit and on-field hat and jersey were designed by W. Todd Vaught and Daniel Levey of Confluence Design in Atlanta. Wreckers merchandise, including replica jerseys, fashion caps and shirts are now available for purchase online at Lookouts.com or at the Team Store located at AT&T Field, open Monday to Friday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Source: MLB.com

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An Invitation from WTA Chairman, Jamon Ingelse



Dear Towing Industry Colleagues,

On behalf of the Wisconsin Towing Association, it is my pleasure to extend a warm invitation to you and your company to join us at the 2024 Annual Convention. The Convention has a new date - June 21st to 23rd - and it promises to be an exceptional opportunity for towing professionals from across the region to come together, train, share insights, and build invaluable connections.

The Annual Convention is not just a gathering; it's designed to encourage towing professionals with the latest industry trends, best practices, and networking opportunities. The event serves as a platform for forging meaningful connections and cultivating lasting relationships within the towing community. Whether you are a seasoned industry veteran or a newcomer eager to make your mark, I encourage you to take this opportunity to engage with peers, share insights, and explore potential collaborations that will drive our industry forward.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the sponsors, exhibitors, and partners whose generous support has made this convention possible. Their contributions not only enhance the overall experience for attendees, but also underscore their commitment to the advancement of the towing profession.

I encourage towing companies from surrounding states to attend this event and participate in our exhibition to present your equipment, services, and expertise. By joining us, you'll showcase your company's latest equipment, technology, and services to a diverse audience of towing professionals eager to discover innovative solutions to enhance their operations. After all, equipment of all kinds ultimately makes the convention.

For registration and more information, simply click the link below or contact the Wisconsin Towing Association at (608) 827-5783, or e-mail Dan Johnson at djohnson@witruck.org

Thank you for your support of the Wisconsin Towing Association and I do hope you will join us at the 2024 Annual Convention.

Warm regards,

Jamon Ingelse
Board Chairman
Wisconsin Towing Association

Minnesota Professional Towing Association 2024 Scholarship Application

The purpose of this scholarship program is to assist young men and women whom are seeking a higher education in order to develop advanced skills.

Three scholarships of \$500.00 each will be awarded annually to applicants who must be at least a senior in high school and/or 18-25 years of age and is a son, daughter, or member in good standing with the MPTA.

MPTA Scholarship Guidelines

- Applicant must have a 3.0 GPA to qualify.
- Applicant must provide proof of performance with application (official school transcript).
- Applicant must provide proof of enrollment for institute of higher education with application.
- Applicant must provide two letters of recommendation from either a teacher, school advisor, or extra circular advisor (i.e. sports coach, club advisor).
- Applications must be returned to MPTA by **May 20th** of each year.
- Students may apply for scholarship a maximum of three times.
- Applicants do not need to study in the automotive industry.

Selection Process:

- The MPTA Board of Directors will select scholarship winners based on the criteria below from the applications:
 - Accomplishments specified on application (i.e. DECA, FBLA, sports, leadership roles, etc.)
 - Student's goals, both long-term and short-term
 - Student's GPA
 - Student's work ethic (Does the students hold a part-time job as well as attend school?)
- The applications will be reviewed by the Board of Directors at the May Board meeting.
- Scholarship winners will be contacted in late May.
- The Association will give the checks to the students in the spring of each year.

Applications due no later than May 20th

All applications, letters of recommendations, and transcript should be sent to:

Minnesota Professional Towing Association
2886 Middle Street
Little Canada, MN 55117

Phone: 651-487-2231

Fax: 651-487-2447

Application, letters of recommendations, and transcript must be received by **May 20th** for consideration.
(Please print or type – if not enough space is provided please attach a separate sheet)

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone Number (best number to reach you) _____

Name of current school _____

Name of parent or guardian _____

Name of the MPTA member with whom you are associated:

(Applicant must be the son, daughter, or member in good standing of the MPTA)

Business's Name _____

Owner's Name: _____

Name of the institute of higher education that you plan to attend:

Reason for applying (financial need): _____

List extra curricular activities: _____

Please describe any awards, honors, or leadership positions you have held/received:

Future goals (long and short term): _____

Do you currently hold a job outside of school? If so please provide name of employer:

How do you plan to use this scholarship for higher education?

Return complete application to MPTA, 2886 Middle Street, Little Canada, MN 55117
Phone: 651-487-2231 Fax: 651-487-2447

Member Directory

Aitkin	Dennis' Towing 320-684-2825	Crystal	Schmit Towing 763-253-1568	Lakeville	Marek's Towing & Repair 952-469-3182
Alexandria	Dan's Diesel, Inc. 320-995-6108		Twin Cities Transport & Recovery 651-642-1446	Little Falls	Collins Brother Towing Of Little Falls 320-257-5525
Anoka	North Star Towing 763-427-4160	Currie	Radke Wheel Service 507-763-3129	Loretto	Burdas Towing 320-257-5525
Apple Valley	Dick's Valley Service 952-432-2848	Cushing	Always Available Towing & Repair 218-575-3096	Luverne	G&S Auto LLC 507-283-8146
Austin	Otomo's Auto Towing 507-450-0051	Dayton	MN Towing and Repair 612-326-6687	Mankato	Affordable Towing 507-388-8697
Big Lake	Bob's Towing & Recovery 763-262-8697		Twin Cities Transport & Recovery 651-642-1446	Marshall	Pulver Towing 507-828-5720
Blackduck	Bogart's Towing 218-835-4548	Detroit Lakes	DL Towing 218-847-6362	Melrose	Shaggy's Towing 320-256-7855
Blaine	Citywide Service Corp 763-786-9020	Duluth	Dukes Towing 218-722-8885	Minneapolis	Blaine Brothers 763-780-5130
	Frovik's Towing 763-786-9220	Eagan	Mark's Towing 651-454-1533		Bobby & Steve's Auto World South Minneapolis 612-861-6133
	Hooked Up Towing & Recovery 612-913-0702		Magnum Towing 651-423-7201		City of Minneapolis Public Works 612-704-0428
	Twin Cities Transport & Recovery, Inc. 651-642-1446	East Bethel	Schmit Towing 763-253-1568		Miller Towing 612-827-5591
Bloomington	Darrick's Preferred Auto 507-583-9994	Eden Prairie	Matt's Towing 952-949-2900		Silverback Towing & Recovery 763-332-1563
Bloomington	Chief's Towing, Inc. 952-888-2201	Eden Valley	Jack's Towing 320-453-6560	Minnetonka	Kustom Karriers 952-938-4680
Brainerd	Collins Brothers Towing Of St. Cloud, 218-822-5525	Elk River	Bob's Towing of Elk River 763-441-3666	Monticello	Burdas Towing 320-257-5525
Brooklyn Park	Cardinal Towing Service 763-535-1334		Collins Brothers Towing 763-241-9177	Moorhead	Aggressive Towing & Recovery 218-287-2344
	Citywide Service 763-424-4900	Faribault	Glenn's Service LLC 507-334-4202		Ed's Towing Service 218-233-7740
	Feist Towing 763-544-5512	Fergus Falls	Beyer Towing 218-205-6137	Motley	Collins Brothers Towing Of Motley 320-257-5525
Burnsville	Captain Towing 952-856-2901	Forest Lake	Dan's Towing 654-464-5551	Mountain Iron	Iron Range Towing and Automotive 218-780-1726
Cannon Falls	Siewert's Towing 507-263-4791		Twin Cities Transport & Recovery, Inc 651-642-1446	New Brighton	Freeway Towing 651-633-5525
Clearwater	Blaine Brothers 320-558-9966	Fridley	Schmit Towing 763-253-1568		Statewide Towing 651-633-4262
	Collins Brothers Towing & Repair 320-257-5525	Grand Marais	Cook County Towing 218-663-7475	Newport	Absolute Towing & Recovery 651-337-2149
Cloquet	Cars Towing, Inc. 218-879-3133	Grand Meadow	Gregerson Towing & Recovery 507-272-4088	Oakdale	Twin Cities Transport & Recovery, Inc. 651-642-1446
Columbus	Blaine Brothers Truck Aline 763-786-8863	Inver Grove Heights	South East Towing 651-451-9721	Owatonna	Dean's Westside Service 507-455-1950
Coon Rapids	Corky's Towing 612-919-1106	Ironton	AutoSmith Service Group 1-218-545-5715		
	Highway 10 Towing 763-757-6789	Lafayette	Five Star Towing 507-843-2677		
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Member Directory

Paynesville
Collins Brothers Towing & Repair
320-257-5525

Plymouth Frankies Towing Co
763-595-0321

Twin Cities Transport & Recovery
763-544-3202

Red Wing Midway Auto
651-388-8296
Siewerts Garage
651-388-9163

Rochester CSC Towing
507-289-8344
Gregerson Towing & Recovery
507-272-4088
Rochester Towing, LLC
507-288-7317
Pulver Towing
507-282-3851

Rogers Burdas Towing
763-428-9911

Sauk Centre Centre Towing Inc.
320-352-1500

Savage Allen's Service Inc.
952-894-1000
Tyson's Towing & Transport
612-928-3705

Scanlon Blaine Brothers
218-879-6681

Shafer PLC Recovery
651-257-3975

Shakopee Shakopee Towing
952-445-0030

Spring Lake Park Citywide Service
763-432-4550

St. Anthony Twin Cities Transport
& Recovery, Inc.
651-642-1446

St. Cloud Andy's Towing
320-251-5691
Collins Brothers Towing
Of St. Cloud, Inc.
320-257-5525

St. Francis PTL Tire & Auto
763-434-7766

St. Paul Twin Cities Transport &
Recovery, Inc.
651-642-1446
Elite Towing of Minnesota, Inc.
952-808-0808

PLC Recovery
651-247-9783

Stillwater Stillwater Towing
651-439-5744

Strandquist Nordic Towing
1-833-667-3421

Sunburg Dans Diesel Inc
320-264-5852

Virginia Armory Shell Towing & Service
218-741-6050

Waseca Bocks Service Inc.
507-835-5407
Tesch Service Center
507-835-4610

White Bear Lake Twin Cities Transport &
Recovery, Inc.
651-642-1446

Willmar Dans Diesel Inc
320-995-6108
Ed's Service Center & Sales
320-235-5945

Winona Borkowski Towing & Salvage
507-452-9073

Zumbrota Bergs Towing & Repair
507-732-5613

NORTH DAKOTA

Bismarck Berg's 24 Hour Towing
701-663-6491

Grand Forks Nordic Towing
1-833-667-3421

SOUTH DAKOTA

Big Stone The Shop, Inc.
605-862-8215

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218-722-7781

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Banking/Financial

Merchants Bank
Jordan Frederick 507-457-1194

Credit Card Processing

Delta Payments
Kent Flannery 877-718-4490

Fabrication & Manufacturing

B&B Industries
Lance & Layla Burda 763-333-4743

Health Insurance

Health & Life Financial Services
Kevin Urlaub 763-287-0055

Insurance

Insuring Minnesota
Rick McIntosh 952-469-0425
Midwest Insurance Service
John Hall 651-439-5939

Management Consulting

Professional Transport Management
Company
Steve & Sue Schmit 612-366-0525

Uniforms

Cintas Kevin Gaskins 763-391-5266

UPCOMING EVENTS

1-Day Basic Light Duty Training Class

May 15, 2024

7:30 a.m.– Registration
8:00a.m.-5:00p.m.– Classroom &
Hands-On Training

DoubleTree by Hilton
Roseville, MN

****Registration Form on Page 4****



**SLOW DOWN & MOVE OVER
RESPECT TOW TRUCK DRIVERS**

SAVE THE DATE

“The Eve of Destruction”

September 14, 2024

Elko Speedway
26350 France Ave, Elko, MN

****More information to follow****