Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, DOT  

§ 393.42 Brakes required on all wheels.  

(a) Every commercial motor vehicle shall be equipped with brakes acting on all wheels.  

(b) Exception. (1) Trucks or truck tractors having three or more axles and manufactured before July 25, 1980, are not required to have brakes on the front wheels. However, these vehicles must meet the requirements of §393.52.  

(2) Motor vehicles being towed in a driveaway-towaway operation are not required to have operative brakes provided the combination of vehicles meets the requirements of §393.52. This exception is not applicable to:  

(i) Any motor vehicle towed by means of a tow-bar when another motor vehicle is full-mounted on the towed vehicle; and  

(ii) Any combination of motor vehicles utilizing three or more saddle-mounts.  

(3) Any semitrailer or pole trailer (laden or unladen) with a gross weight of 1,361 kg (3,000 pounds) or less which is subject to this part is not required to be equipped with brakes if the axle weight of the towed vehicle does not exceed 40 percent of the sum of the axle weights of the towing vehicle.  

(4) Any full trailer or four-wheel pole trailer (laden or unladen) with a gross weight of 1,361 kg (3,000 pounds) or less which is subject to this part is not required to be equipped with brakes if the sum of the axle weights of the towed vehicle does not exceed 40 percent of the sum of the axle weights of the towing vehicle.  

(5) Brakes are not required on the steering axle of a three-axle dolly which is steered by a co-driver.  

(6) Loaded housemoving dollies, specialized trailers and dollies used to transport industrial furnaces, reactors, and similar motor vehicles are not required to be equipped with brakes, provided the speed at which the combination of vehicles will be operated does not exceed 32 km/hour (20 mph) and brakes on the combination of vehicles
§ 393.43 Breakaway and emergency braking.

(a) Towing vehicle protection system. Every motor vehicle, if used to tow a trailer equipped with brakes, shall be equipped with a means for providing that in the case of a breakaway of the trailer, the service brakes on the towing vehicle will be capable of stopping the towing vehicle. For air braked towing units, the tractor protection valve or similar device shall operate automatically when the air pressure on the towing vehicle is between 138 kPa and 310 kPa (20 psi and 45 psi).

(b) Emergency brake requirements, air brakes. Every truck or truck tractor equipped with air brakes, when used for towing other vehicles equipped with air brakes, shall be equipped with two...