By law, a commercial motor vehicle or trailer must be inspected daily before it is driven (O.Reg. 199/07, s.6). This daily pre-trip inspection must include things such as load security and mechanical fitness of the vehicle. A schedule of every system and component that must be inspected can be found in the Commercial Motor Vehicle Inspections regulation (199/07).

Other measures that have been introduced to prevent wheel-offs are:
• An absolute liability law for wheel separations
• Specialized training for technicians who work with wheel installations
• More on-road inspections by specially trained police and enforcement officers
• Fines for wheel separations ranging from $2,000 to $50,000.

What you can do
Wheels come off for a number of reasons such as axle problems, hub separations, and fastening failures. When a wheel separation occurs, the inspection and maintenance procedures should be reviewed in detail to find the root cause of the problem.

Even if there is a near miss, such as when a mechanical problem causes a wheel to almost come off, the cause should be investigated. Finding out if there is a weakness in the maintenance and safety review process can prevent future wheel separations.

As best practice, conduct regular risk assessments and inspections to discover what the hazards are, what is being done to reduce the hazard, what the consequences might be if it happens, and what could have been done differently to prevent it from happening.
A wheel coming off a vehicle can be disastrous for the operator or for anyone nearby. A set of dual wheels with a brake drum can weigh more than 300 kg (660 lb). That weight, combined with the speed at which the wheels may be travelling, can cause severe damage to other vehicles and objects, as well as serious or fatal injuries to people in other vehicles.

A preventive maintenance plan can prevent that type of equipment failure before it happens. It will also increase productivity, limit downtime, extend the life of vehicles and equipment, and protect the safety of workers. Visit ihsa.ca/magazine to download the article “The power of preventive maintenance” in Volume 14, Issue 1, of IHSA.ca Magazine. It contains a checklist that you can use to set up a preventive maintenance plan for your company.

What’s being done
This topic is an important one in the transportation industry. In recent months, several of Ontario’s Fleet Safety Councils have invited speakers to their meetings to discuss the topic. At this year’s Fleet Safety Education Conference on September 30, Sgt. Scott Parker of the Ontario Provincial Police, Highway Safety Division, and Dave McDonald of Dave McDonald Bridgestone Commercial Solutions, will be discussing this issue.

The session will provide valuable insight into wheel-off incidents, common myths about wheel installation, and the root causes of wheel-offs. It will review the causes of past wheel-off situations, the preventive measures that can be taken, and technical information about the best maintenance practices.

To learn more about this presentation and the conference, visit fleetsafetycouncil.com

How IHSA can help
IHSA has several products that can help companies with commercial vehicles fulfill the legal requirements for daily pre-trip inspections. They include a Pre-Trip Inspection for Truck Sticker (S106), Did You Circle Your Vehicle Sticker (S029), and a Vehicle Inspection Report form (RF028). Visit ihsa.ca/Products to order these products.