

TECHNICAL BULLETIN

STEERTEK AXLE SYSTEM TOWING PROCEDURE

SUBJECT: AIRTEK®/SOFTEK®/COMTEK™

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

ON HIGHWAY AND ON ROADWAY RECOMMENDED TOWING METHODS

Hendrickson recommends that a vehicle equipped with a STEERTEK axle be towed by the following methods (listed in order of preference) for **ON HIGHWAY** or **ON ROADWAY** applications.

1. Wheel lift method, the **IDEAL** towing procedure
2. Towing the vehicle from the rear method
3. Conventional axle fork method
4. Spring eye and hanger lift method (may require the removal of fairings)

Please read, understand and comply with any additional towing instructions and safety precautions that may be provided by the vehicle manufacturer.

Hendrickson will not be responsible for any damage to the axle, suspension or other vehicle components resulting from any towing method or fixture not authorized by Hendrickson.

Please contact Hendrickson Tech Services at 630.910.2800 or send email to: techservices@hendrickson-intl.com with any questions regarding proper towing procedures for vehicles equipped with a STEERTEK axle.

WHEEL LIFT METHOD—IDEAL

This method provides the greatest ease for towing the vehicle. Lifting at the tires helps reduce the risk of possible damage to the axle, suspension, and engine components during towing operations, see Figure 1.

Figure 1 Wheel lift method





TOWING VEHICLE FROM THE REAR METHOD

This method is preferred when the proper equipment is not available to perform the wheel lift method and is necessary for wreckers not equipped with an under lift system.

AXLE FORK LIFT METHOD

This is an alternative method for towing the vehicle, but requires standard 5" forks, (see Figures 2 and 3) and designated lift points inside the axle clamp groups. The following procedure must be used:

- Place a spacer on the boom to provide adequate clearance between the oil pan and the boom if necessary. This will provide sufficient room under the axle to locate forks in the proper position.
- Install the fork in the boom properly.
- Position the tow forks directly under the axle, inside the axle clamp groups as shown in Figure 2.

Figures 2 and 3

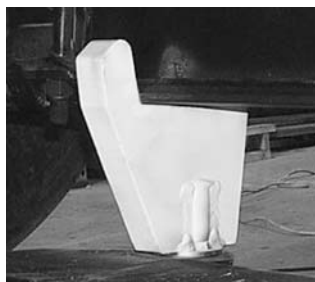
Proper Tow Fork Location on inside clamp group on the STEERTEK Axle



- Prior to lifting the vehicle, ensure that the bottom axle plate is flat in the tow fork to minimize any gap between the bottom axle plate and the tow fork. See Figure 4 and 5. It may be necessary to deflate the air in the steer axle suspension, and/or release the tractor brakes. Deflate the steer axle air springs by disconnecting the height control valve linkage and lowering the height control valve linkage arm. This will exhaust the air pressure in the steer axle air springs.

Figure 4 - Without Gap

Figure 5 - With Gap



NOTE

When lifting a vehicle with an under lift boom, care must be taken not to damage the engine's oil pan. Vehicles equipped with a front fairing may require removal of the front fairing prior to towing to prevent component damage.

- Lift vehicle and secure the vehicle to the boom.
- Install safety straps, it is preferred to use nylon safety straps. Chains have a tendency to bind and may cause damage to the axle.



SPRING EYE AND HANGER LIFT METHOD

This method is permitted for under lift equipped units, caution must be taken as not to damage leaf spring, (see Figure 7 for proper installation). This method is not recommended for the COMTEK mechanical suspension (composite leaf spring s).

- Inspect ends of spring cradles for burrs or sharp edges that could damage spring.
- When securing the vehicle to the boom, it is preferred to use nylon safety straps. Chains have a tendency to bind and may cause damage to the axle.

NOTE

When lifting a vehicle with the under lift boom, (see Figures 6 and 7), care must be taken as not to damage the engine oil pan. It may be necessary to remove the front fairing. If necessary place a block of wood between the top of the boom and the bottom of the axle.

Figure 6

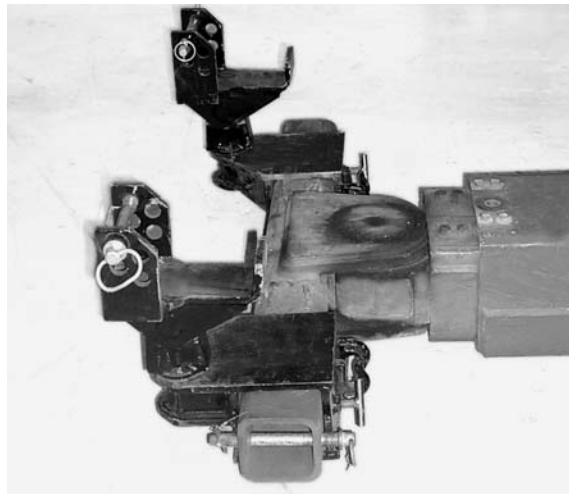


Figure 7





WARNING

OFF ROADWAY TOWING METHOD

WHEN A TRUCK IS DISABLED AND EQUIPPED WITH A STEERTEK AXLE, CARE MUST BE TAKEN TO ENSURE THERE IS NO DAMAGE TO THE SUSPENSION OR AXLE WHEN TOWING THE VEHICLE. THE USE OF A TOW STRAP IS NECESSARY TO TOW A DISABLED TRUCK INTO A REPAIR FACILITY. THE TOW STRAPS SHOULD BE CONNECTED TO THE TOW HOOKS PROVIDED BY THE VEHICLE MANUFACTURER AT THE FRONT OF THE BUMPER. IF THE USE OF TOW HOOKS IS NOT AN OPTION THEN A TOW STRAP MAY BE WRAPPED AROUND THE FRONT AXLE (SEE FIGURE 6) IN A MANNER THAT IS ACCEPTABLE FOR TOWING THE VEHICLE INTO THE SHOP. DO NOT USE A TOW CHAIN AROUND THE FRONT AXLE TO TOW THE VEHICLE, DOING SO WILL DAMAGE THE AXLE AND VOID WARRANTY. SEE FIGURE 7.

THE FOLLOWING METHODS ARE NOT RECOMMENDED FOR ON HIGHWAY OR ON ROADWAY TOWING

Figure 6

**NYLON STRAPS ARE
ACCEPTABLE FOR
OFF ROADWAY TOWING**



Figure 7

**CHAINS ARE NOT
ACCEPTABLE FOR
OFF ROADWAY TOWING**



 **HENDRICKSON**

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