***Question 4:*** Upon termination of direct assistance to a regional or local emergency relief effort, as specified in § 390.23(a), may utility company line crews return directly to the motor carrier’s terminal or the driver’s normal work reporting location without complying with Parts 390-399?

*Guidance:* Yes. However, drivers of utility service vehicles are exempt from Federal and State hours-of-service regulations, see 49 CFR 395.1(n). Because the returning vehicles are transporting only crew members, tools, equipment, or materials not used in the emergency relief effort, they are considered to be “return(ing) empty” for purposes of § 390.23(b).