

Acquiring Liability Coverage for My Chuck Wagon Team And, Why I No Longer Cater, But Have Become a Personal Chef

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I AM NOT AN INSURANCE AGENT NOR AN ATTORNEY. THIS IS NOT INSURANCE, OR LEGAL, OR ANY OTHER TYPE OF ADVICE. THIS IS SIMPLY SOME OF THE METHODS THAT I HAVE USED TO BE ABLE TO OBTAIN LIABILITY INSURANCE AND HAVE THE ABILITY TO COOK FOR SOME PRIVATE EVENTS.

With more chuck wagon events requiring Liability Coverage from the participating Chuck Wagon Teams, finding economical coverage is somewhat challenging. Some events are requiring one-million-dollar liability coverage from each participating team. When I carried coverage as a “caterer” my annual premium was \$950.00, just for liability for transport of the wagon and for liability for cooking. That premium knocked me out of going to some events due to the economy of paying \$950.00 then traveling 300 miles one way and staying there for two or three days.

I have worked with my Independent Insurance Agent to bring my cost down and increase my coverage. I have purchased a \$1,000,000.00 Umbrella Liability Insurance policy that covers not only chuck wagon events but covers my household family for any and all legal events. It was not without additional cost but for the additional coverage the cost is much more reasonable; and, some of my non-IRA retirement funds are better protected.

To get the Umbrella coverage I was required to get a more expensive Auto Liability Policy, the following table shows the approximate annual cost increase for my number of vehicles and driving record. I must admit that prior to reviewing my coverages with an independent agent that I was under insured.

Auto Liability Coverage Tiers

Tier		Personal Injury			Approximate Incremental Increase / Year
		/Person	/Accident	Property	
1	Texas Minimum	\$30,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$25,000.00	
2	My Former Coverage	\$50,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$100.00
3	Recommended	\$100,000.00	\$300,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$100.00
4	Required for my Umbrella	\$250,000.00	\$500,000.00	\$200,000.00	\$100.00

So, I am paying an additional two hundred dollars per year for my auto liability, I should have been in Tier 3 for the past several years, but when I started my relationship with a franchise company agent in 1976, Tier 2 coverage was what was recommended. Year after year, I just kept renewing the same policies for my home and auto. After two franchisee retirements and sell outs, I shopped my coverage and found that an Independent Agent could provide better pricing, with better coverage.

In my case, the annual premium for the one-million-dollar Umbrella coverage is \$120.00. So, for an additional \$200.00 per year, which should have been \$100.00 per year increase in Auto Liability

Premium and the Umbrella Premium of \$120.00, I am paying in actuality only \$220. per year for the one-million-dollar coverage.

In addition to the insurance coverage, I have also learned that no matter what I do, I DO NOT CATER. But you may ask, "How do I make money to pay for my Chuck Wagon Habit?" I still on occasion, cook for profit. But I have changed my name brand to become a Personal Chef, not a caterer. To legally cater, and meet Health Department Regulations, one must have a registered commercial kitchen, inspected by the Health Department at least annually and one must meet much more stringent onsite regulations and be subject to onsite Health Department inspections. A Personal Chef, on the other hand cooks at the pleasure of the hiring party and the liability for the event is on the hiring party. The Health Department Regulations are almost non-existent for a personal party given by someone who may hire a Personal Chef to cook and prepare the food.

To be a Personal Chef, one must cook food supplied by the hiring party (a Personal Chef can, if paid to do so, shop for the foods to be cooked), and serve the food to the hiring party's specifications (the hiring party and the Personal Chef may confer to set the menu, preparation, cooking, and serving methods).

These are a couple of tricks of the trade that I have learned over the years. You may want to check into these two methods and be able to save yourself some money and have more freedom to participate in more events. DO NOT depend on any of my methods of how I do it, but check with your Insurance Agent and with governing bodies to see if these methods may work for you.