Importance of Sway Control

Assuming hitch weight of a poorly balanced trailer is raised to at least 12 percent (but not more than the rating of the hitch) by redistribution of supplies or equipment, use of an effective sway control is another important element in the towing stability formula. Two types of sway controls that are available, the friction-type controls from Reese and Eaz-Lift, and the Reese Duo Cam. Both types are effective, but the Reese Duo Cam depends on adequate hitch weight for its effectiveness. Thus, it is most suitable to trailers with high hitch weights.

A sway control should be utilized, no matter how good trailer stability appears to be. The sway control dampens or slows the pivoting motion of the trailer coupler on the ball, and is very valuable during emergency maneuvers to prevent driver steering overreaction, not to mention its role in helping the tow vehicle and trailer feel like they are in concert with each other.

To properly adjust a friction-bar sway control for maximum effectiveness, tighten the control until you notice that the tow vehicle doesn't quite straighten out after completing a sharp turn at slow speeds. Loosen the control slightly, so the vehicle will track straight after the turn. If your sway control cannot be tightened enough to cause the tow vehicle to "dog-track" after a slow-speed turn, the unit probably needs service (cleaning, light sanding of friction surfaces). If that still does not created the desired effect, add a second sway-control unit on the opposite side.