

TRUCK WEST

April 2008 Volume 19, Issue 4

Delivering daily news to Canada's trucking industry at www.trucknews.com

Fuel supply running low in Alberta

Esso stations encountering supply issues

CALGARY, Alta. – Alberta has been hit hard by a fuel shortage at Esso stations, but diesel users are suffering less than gasoline consumers and it appears neighbouring provinces have not yet been impacted.

A random poll of a few B.C. Esso stations from Vancouver to Chilliwack recently indicated that this province isn't suffering from a fuel shortage – yet.

However the city of Calgary has been hit hard, according to one employee who was working at a full-service station.

“Diesel is fine,” says Melissa Johnson, “but super is out, and we can't sell mid-grade. Tonight we should be out of regular.”

The cause of the gasoline and diesel shortage is due to “operating issues” related to Calgary-based Imperial Oil's Strathcona, Alta. refinery, according to company spokesman Gordon Wong, which he noted would affect Western Canada, but in varying degrees.

“There might be a possibility of sporadic outages at retail outlets across the Prairies and possibly B.C.,” says Wong, who indicates that an Esso gas station Web alert

Continued on page 8 ■



Photo by Adam Ledlow

B.C. unveils CARBON TAX

Tax will cost trucking industry tens of millions: BCTA

By Jan Westell

VICTORIA, B.C. – The new B.C. carbon tax is creating a great deal of controversy in this province, especially amongst the trucking industry, which is faced with the greatest cost increase.

Yet, one B.C. trucking company is taking the added cost in stride. The general manager and partner of Coastal Pacific Xpress, considers the new carbon tax to be just another expense.

“This is just business as usual for us,” says Jim Mickey. “We consider the increase (in fuel) a cost of doing business.”

CPX is based in Cloverdale, located just a few kilometres from the Washington border crossing, and is considered to be one of the fastest growing truckload carriers in B.C., with 250 trucks and 700 trailers. While CPX is well established, and adjusts its costs according to provincial, national or

international economic fluctuations, the general manager realizes that smaller operators are unable to manage their business quite so efficiently, since many in the trucking industry deal with fixed-term constrains.

“Those guys pay a price for it,” says Mickey. “We adjust our price monthly, so we pass on any increased cost of business, related to the cost of fuel.”

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Mark Dalton O/O



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The truck of tomorrow?

A comprehensive look at hybrid trucks

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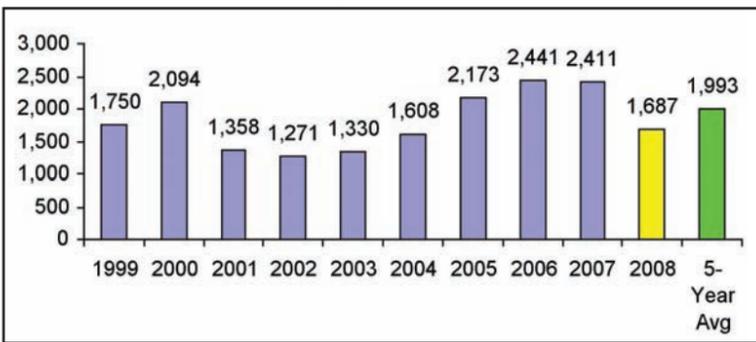
CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

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Monthly Class 8 Sales - Jan 08

OEM	This Month	Last Year
Freightliner	310	613
International	437	537
Kenworth	303	320
Mack	104	191
Peterbilt	219	258
Sterling	127	196
Volvo	128	122
Western Star	59	174
TOTALS	1,687	2411

Historical Comparison - Jan 08 Sales



Motor Vehicle Production to Jan 08

	Total Prodn	For Export
International	4,444	3,729
Paccar	4,659	3,964
Sterling	17,156	14,563
TOTALS	26,259	22,256

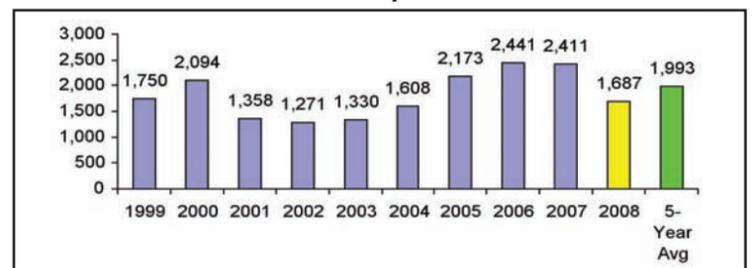
With the days of coping with parts and materials shortages and record demand for new trucks now nothing but a memory, truck manufacturers instead now face the need to continue to bring their operations in line with the reduced sales. But their production strategy must also leave them prepared for the next jump in sales volumes as fleets and owner/operators respond to the next round of engine emissions standards in 2010.

Canadian Class 8 sales started the year off with a whimper, not surprising considering that the pre-buy strategy many fleets used to avoid purchasing trucks with 2007 engines remains in play. Serious doubts about the economy on both sides of the border are creating excess capacity as well. This year marked the first time January's sales totals came in below 2,000 units since 2005.

Class 8 Sales YTD (Jan 08) by Province and OEM

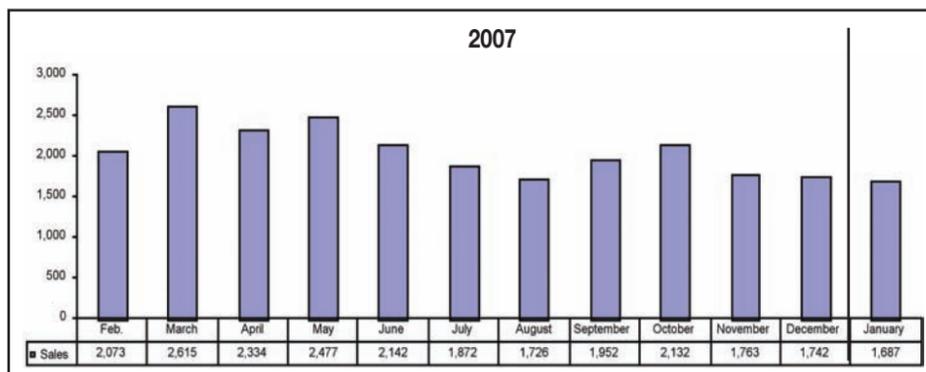
OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	38	66	15	28	112	33	16	2	0	0	310
International	20	79	14	16	184	91	17	6	0	10	437
Kenworth	39	122	15	18	58	50	0	1	0	0	303
Mack	9	8	10	14	36	23	2	2	0	0	104
Peterbilt	20	49	24	23	43	22	37	1	0	0	219
Sterling	11	15	7	5	66	22	0	1	0	0	127
Volvo	2	15	3	13	62	19	5	8	0	1	128
Western Star	19	22	1	1	7	4	3	2	0	0	59
TOTALS	168	376	89	118	668	264	80	23	0	11	1,687

Historical Comparison - YTD



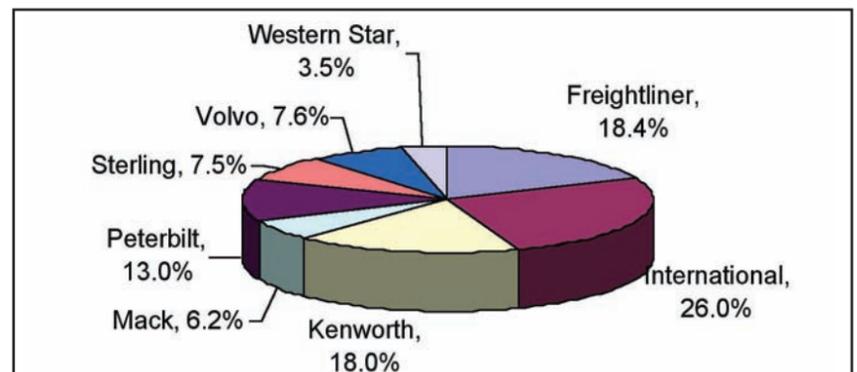
In 2006, a record 39,131 Class 8 trucks were sold in the Canadian market. In 2007, sales dropped considerably down to 25,239 units as about a third of fleets, according to our research, employed a pre-buy strategy to get around the 2007 emissions standards. The impact of that strategy is likely to continue to affect sales for the first half of 2008, perhaps longer if projections for the North American economy don't improve.

12 - Month Sales Trends



Monthly total sales never climbed above the 3,000 mark last year, after doing so seven times in the previous record-setting year. It's highly unlikely to see such strong monthly figures this year either. The 1,687 Class 8 trucks sold in January are about 300 units below the five-year year-to-date average and make for the worst month of the past 12-month period.

Market Share Class 8 YTD



Last year International wrestled the market share lead from perennial front runner Freightliner and International has jumped out of the starting blocks with a strong lead in January, capturing more than a quarter of sales. Whereas Freightliner's share of sales has remained roughly where it ended up at the end of last year, hard-charging Kenworth started off 2008 with a play for second place.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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Is B.C.'s carbon tax just a thinly-veiled fuel tax?

While environmental groups laud B.C. for becoming the first North American jurisdiction to announce a full-fledged "carbon" tax, the trucking industry must feel like it will be shouldering an unfair share of the burden. If approved by the legislature, diesel prices will rise by 2.2 cents/litre by this summer and 8.27 cents/litre by 2012.

We all know how difficult it is for trucking companies to pass on the increased cost of fuel at the best of times. Now they must try to do so while competing companies from other jurisdictions can avoid filling up in B.C. altogether and pay substantially less for fuel. This will put B.C.-based carriers at a competitive disadvantage, especially against fleets from Alberta that are spared not only the "carbon" tax that B.C. carriers face, but also provincial sales tax.

The province is promising the new tax will be "revenue-neutral," with funds re-invested into individuals and businesses that reduce their reliance on fossil fuels. It's being touted as a carrot-and-stick approach, but who can blame the trucking industry for wondering "Where's our carrot?"

After all, there's no recognition of the fact the trucking industry today is already operating remarkably clean equipment. The EPA07 engines are nearly smog-free. By 2010 they will be even cleaner. The trucking industry was "going green" even before the province of B.C. began debating the merits of a carbon tax.

The province's carbon tax falls short of a cap-and-trade system, which would allow companies that reduce their emissions to then sell carbon credits to other companies

Editorial Comment

James Menzies



that cannot reduce their pollution to agreed-upon levels. While the trucking industry has generally opposed a cap-and-trade system, at least it would provide the proverbial carrot for fleets that are able to demonstrate a marked reduction in fuel consumption. Most of the best-run truck fleets are doing this already. If a fleet operating only the latest environmentally-friendly equipment could turn around and sell credits to, let's say, an oil and gas producer, it may actually benefit our industry.

There was mention in the province's news release of funding biodiesel production facilities. One may speculate that fleets that adopt the use of biodiesel may be rewarded under the program. But the potential flaws of adopting alternative fuels have been well-documented.

Biodiesel remains a viable option for fleets that are comfortable with its performance and benefits – but should the industry have alternative fuels

forced down its throat? Particularly when there are some fairly sensible arguments out there that downplay their environmental benefits?

There's also mention in the release of a \$2,000 credit towards the purchase of fuel-efficient vehicles. No word on whether trucks will qualify, but they certainly should. Hopefully this program is broad enough to include incentives toward the purchase of latest generation trucks and engines – even hybrids.

Otherwise, it looks like the trucking industry will shell out tens of millions in additional taxes without receiving a fair return. And if that's the case, let's just call a spade a spade and a fuel tax a fuel tax. □

– James Menzies can be reached by phone at (416) 510-6896 or by e-mail at jmenzies@trucknews.com.



Welcome to the new reality

B.C.'s carbon tax should serve as further warning to truckers across Canada, and in fact across North America, of things to come. Carbon taxes are certain to become a reality across the continent, as they already have in Quebec, as governments are forced to deal with global warming.

And while I don't disagree with many of the BCTA's concerns about the new tax, or the comments of our executive editor James Menzies included above, I think the transportation industry would be better served figuring out how to deal with this new reality than fighting against it.

The issue is beyond the point of debate simply because years of government and, to be fair, industry negligence, have left no room for maneuvering.

Between 1998 and 2007 Canadian greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions have been climbing relentlessly. They far exceeded the targets set for 2000 and 2005 and we are on track to be about 30% above the Kyoto target for 2010. And we can't ignore transportation's contribution to GHG emissions, and trucking's in particular.

Yes, Canadian cities and resources are so geographically dispersed and we are so dependent on trade that we demand a great

Viewpoint

Lou Smyrlis
 Editorial Director



deal from transportation, trucking in particular.

Our transportation system has more kilometres of roads per person than almost any other nation. And yes, the trucking industry has made significant gains in cleaning up the pollution coming from diesel engines, with significant cuts to carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxide and volatile organic compounds emissions. In 2007 it took 60 trucks running the new diesel engines to equal the amount of soot emissions spewed by just one truck sold in 1988. That's truly an achievement to be proud of; unfortunately it does not address emissions of carbon dioxide, which are the main contributors to global warming.

Transportation activities generate more than one quarter of Canada's greenhouse gas emissions and they accounted for 28% of the growth in those emissions from 1990 to 2004. In fact, the transportation sector is the fastest-growing source of greenhouse gas

emissions. GHG emissions from transportation are expected to exceed 1990 levels by 32% in 2010 and 53% by 2020, if current trends continue.

From 1990 to 2003, the amount of freight carried by all modes combined increased 27%. If we look at trucking on its own, the amount of freight carried by for-hire carriers from 1990 to 2003 was up 75%. Just-in-time delivery of freight was a real boon for shippers – between 1992 and 2005 manufacturers were able to reduce inventories as a share of shipments by 15%. But to do so required a lot more frequent deliveries, mostly by truck. There are now 80,000 more medium- and heavy-duty trucks on our roads than there were in 1990.

Given these numbers, how can any government forced to address global warming ignore the transportation industry?

The bottom line is we've come to rely an awful lot on transportation, trucking in particular.

The very success of our transportation system is what's leading to its greatest challenge: its sizeable greenhouse gas emissions. In my next column we'll look at how trucking can survive in a carbon-constrained future economy. □

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Diesel prices in B.C. set to increase 8.28 cents/litre

■ Continued from page 1

While the CPX general manager is philosophical about the increased cost created by B.C.'s new carbon tax, he is likewise skeptical about the environmental benefits of the promoted "revenue-neutral" purpose of the tax, which offers individual and corporate tax relief to some industries, but has not been shown to offer substantial environmental benefits, in Mickey's opinion.

"I personally find it a bit of a stretch, that this is having a positive effect on environmental issues," he says. "It won't be environmentally efficient at all. If society wants to improve the environment by collecting money, they should spend it on improving the environment. It strikes me as just moving money from one pocket to another."

Staffing is already one of the greatest challenges faced by the trucking industry, but the operations manager for Berry & Smith Trucking in Delta, is concerned that this problem could become even greater with a new carbon tax, on top of an existing fuel tax. As a result, Tim McGee believes that drivers who suffer from monthly payments for their rigs, of approximately \$2,000, and fuel expenses that range between \$500 and \$3,000, depending on how far



PAIN AT THE PUMP: Truckers in B.C. will pay significantly more for fuel than their brethren in other parts of the country. *Photo by Adam Ledlow*

they travel, may seek a higher fuel subsidy from their fleet managers.

"It causes them to look elsewhere, even outside the industry," says Tim McGee. "It's a vicious circle."

Competition of another nature is a concern for a smaller Prince George trucking operation. Brett Gunderson is competing with Alberta trucking companies, which don't have to contend with either a provincial sales tax or the new B.C. carbon tax on fuel, unless

forced to fill-up on the return trip.

"It's put us at a real disadvantage," says Gunderson, who travels between Alberta and B.C., and estimates that he burns between 14,000 to 16,000 litres of fuel a month, delivering propane, mainly in the north, where the terrain is anything but flat – another drain on fuel. Even with a monthly price adjustment, Gunderson is always up against steep competition, mainly from the other side of the provincial line.

"It's pretty tough," he says, adding that he fears the new carbon tax may impede provincial investment, which would consequently hinder Gunderson's business.

A Vancouver sustainability organization has been working with the trucking industry, promoting various cost-effective technologies to reduce fuel use and emissions. As a result, Green Fleets B.C., a program of the Fraser Basin Council, has become intimate with the complexities of the freight hauling business, including the financial constraints of a new fuel tax.

"Certainly, there is a concern for smaller operations," says Jim Vanderwal, who has a particular issue with fleets that are restricted to fixed rates, such as those working in the economically volatile forestry industry. "That puts them in a difficult position," he adds.

While sympathetic to the challenges faced by the trucking industry, Vanderwal believes the industry needs more capital investment for new fuel saving technologies, and "to be supported in these efforts."

Barring that plan, Vanderwal can only encourage the trucking industry to take advantage of some of the low-cost measures that can save fuel costs, such as limiting speeds to 105 km/h, training drivers and reducing idling times.

The B.C. Trucking Association (BCTA) estimates the new carbon tax will be an onerous cost to the trucking industry, totaling \$1,000 per long-haul truck this year, about \$3,000 in 2009 and \$6,000 in 2012. The total cost to the industry

will be in the tens of millions of dollars this year, potentially rising to hundreds of millions over the next five years, according to the president of the BCTA, Paul Landry.

"Carbon taxes may have a role to play in encouraging the reduction of greenhouse gases in some sectors and amongst consumers, but the trucking industry has no choice but to rely on diesel fuel to keep the economy moving," he says.

Landry emphasizes that not only does the trucking industry rely on diesel fuel, the province also relies on the trucking industry for the transportation of food, merchandise, parts and equipment each day.

"When you consider it, trucking is the lifeblood of B.C. Without trucking, the economy and our way of life would literally stop."

Adding a carbon tax to diesel fuel won't do much to change the industry's behaviour, he adds, but it will certainly raise the cost of transportation, a cost that will be passed on to the consumer, as the general manager for CPX asserts – but not in all cases.

"Our members have clearly told us that a tax like this won't be easy to pass on," says the BCTA president. "Some of them are bound by contracts. Other trucking companies are price takers because some of the industries we serve, such as forestry, are under extreme pressure."

B.C.'s carbon tax will be far from neutral for the trucking industry adds Landry, which he says is plagued by slim operating margins. The carbon tax may also impede B.C.'s competitiveness, as Gunderson predicts, considering that diesel fuel taxes in B.C. will now be up to three times higher than in Alberta and almost twice as much as most other provinces, a gap predicted to increase according to the BCTA.

While the BCTA is not opposed to the provincial government investing in environmental programs, he says more could have been done to reduce the trucking industry's carbon footprint.

One other issue the BCTA is mystified about: Landry can't understand why the carbon tax on vehicles using gasoline is 2.4 cents per litre, which the BCTA believes causes greater congestion and pollution, while the tax on diesel fuel is 2.76 cents/litre, which will rise to 4.14 cents in 2009, and escalating as high as 8.28 cents by 2012.

"It's ironic that people who don't have a choice in using the road, (such as) the trucking industry, end up having to pay more per litre in carbon tax, than those who have other options," Landry points out.

The B.C. Ministry of Finance has faced a great deal of media criticism since the carbon tax was announced in February, not only from the trucking industry. Finance Minister Carol Taylor has heard a litany of complaints, but

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she says there is one important feature about the 2008 budget that has been overlooked – especially from truck drivers who have grilled the minister when she appeared on various Vancouver radio talk shows, after the 2008 budget was announced.

“I find it interesting, that they didn’t realize the tax cuts,” says Taylor. “As soon as we talk about that, the whole tone changes.”

With the tax cuts, the finance minister rationalizes the “revenue-neutral” designation given to the carbon tax, which is expected to earn approximately \$1.8 million over three years.

“None of the money is staying in government,” she adds. “It is all going to individuals or corporations, with tax cuts.”

Taylor heralds the environmental initiatives included in this year’s budget that relate to the trucking industry and port activities. That initiative includes \$30 million to implement emission-reducing practices for short-haul commercial trucks serving B.C. ports, and to fund port “electrification” which allows ships to turn off their engines while in port. An additional \$3 million will fund the “green lights transportation program,” which will utilize new technologies to assess commercial vehicles for compliance with trucking regulations while in transit, and potentially reduce the frequency of stoppages and idling.

That same funding will also provide plug-in electrical infrastructure at key B.C. truck stops, which is intended to reduce idling times. In addition, Taylor says the provincial budget offers a PST exemption for certain fuel-saving devices that offer increased aerodynamics for a commercial tractor-trailer unit, such as tractor-trailer gap faring devices, tractor roof farings, trailer side skirts, and aerodynamic bumpers and tail skirts.

Yet, despite the provincial government’s enthusiasm for the carbon tax, individual and corporate tax breaks, and the accompanying environmental initiatives, the opposition has a different take on this year’s budget. The B.C. NDP finance critic says he has heard from people who live in the outer regions of the province, who don’t have the same choices for transportation, or the financial wherewithal to change their lifestyle.

“They don’t like it,” says Bruce Ralston, who like the CPX general manager, questions the environmental incentive of the carbon tax. In particular Ralston can’t understand why large industrial polluters like the oil and gas industry, are getting tax relief at this time, considering that the 2008 budget is being promoted as a climate change plan, which he disagrees with.

“This new carbon tax is not a climate change plan,” says Ralston. “The tax will hit consumers and average families the hardest, as large industrial polluters get a pass and a handout. That’s unfair and even the government admits it will accomplish little in the way of reducing actual emissions.” □

Guest column: Carbon tax leaves few choices for trucking

By Paul R. Landry

LANGLEY, B.C. – Sifting through B.C.’s 2008-09 budget reveals that the trucking industry isn’t getting much for the carbon tax that we’re going to be paying. By 2012, the carbon tax on diesel fuel will be 8.2 cents per litre or at least \$270 million per year.

That’s on top of the up to 25 cents per litre that is already being collected by the province. This will make diesel tax in B.C. three times more expensive than Alberta and twice as high as any other province.

Yes, some of that will be returned in the form of reductions in other tax rates – personal, corporate and small business. And, there will be a sales tax exemption for one category of fuel-efficiency enhancing device. But the trucking industry will still be a big

net tax payer in this “revenue-neutral” endeavour.

The trucking industry doesn’t need a tax to know that it should be fuel-efficient.

Common and business sense told us that a long time ago, particularly since fuel is our second highest expense after labour.

For most trucking companies, that means 15 to 30% of operating costs.

For individuals who own and operate their own truck, it could be up to 50%.

What the provincial government should have done – and still can do – is to use some of that tax revenue to help the industry to adopt new technologies that will further improve fuel efficiency. Most of those technologies – like anti-idling devices and low rolling-resistance tires – are add-

ons or options.

Similarly, we need to invest in more expensive smog-free trucks. The trucking industry – made up of thousands of one- and two-truck operators – needs that tax money back to help buy this equipment.

The most perplexing thing about the carbon tax on diesel is that it’s 15% higher than the tax on gasoline.

Does it make sense to tax trucking more than other road users who often have other transportation choices like carpooling or transit?

The irony is that overtaxing our industry will make it that much more difficult for us go “green.” □

– Paul Landry is president and CEO of the B.C. Trucking Association.



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* Warranty does not cover neglect or abuse. See your Hino dealer for complete warranty program details. Hino Motors Canada Ltd., a Toyota group company.



Strathcona refinery the source of shortage

won't be available from Imperial Oil, because the sporadic nature of the shortage, and re-supply, would offer an unreliable information outlet.

"Our expectation is that the majority (of fuel outages) will be sporadic and of a short nature," he added.

Imperial Oil predicted that metropolitan fuel stations in a centre like Calgary, may offer a less reliable fuel source, than an isolated station in B.C. where there are few options, and possibly no other fuel source for 100 km.

"The goal is to try and keep the stations up and running and customers supplied as quickly as possible," he says.

The company is considering all options in trying to secure additional supplies of fuel, including possibly purchasing from other refiners or importing, according to Wong.

"Imperial's top priority is to minimize the inconvenience to our customers as much as possible and to restore the company's Strathcona refinery to normal operations as quickly as possible."

Imperial Oil told the *Globe and Mail* that operating issues are technical and linked to a fuel-processing unit, causing the facility to run at a reduced rate.

The units that were impacted have been idled for assessment and repair.



SHORT SUPPLY: Esso stations in Western Canada experienced a fuel shortage, but as of press time the company said outages should be "sporadic and of a short nature."

The shortages are expected to continue for at least the next few weeks, and alternative supplies are being investigated.

Meanwhile, other fuel retailers in Western Canada have stepped up efforts to keep their markets supplied after Imperial Oil's recent announcement, according to the *Canadian Press*.

Parkland Income Fund with its chain of Western Canada filling stations has been helping out. Parkland runs service stations under various brands, and buys its gasoline from Imperial, Shell and Petro-Canada refineries. Petro-Canada's refinery has also been able to keep its chain of service stations well supplied. □

Alberta installs warning systems for over-height loads

EDMONTON, Alta. – Alberta highways are no strangers to super-sized loads, and the province is taking steps to ensure drivers hauling these loads do not take out overpasses in the process.

The Department of Infrastructure and Transportation has installed advance clearance warning signs and high load warning systems at a number of locations in the province.

The signs are designed to provide truckers with advanced notice when their load is not going pass under the overpass. Over-height loads are directed to take exit ramps to avoid structures that are too low to pass under.

The province is monitoring the effectiveness of the systems and is in talks with the Alberta trucking industry about the number and severity of over-height collisions. The department is hoping to gain feedback from drivers and carriers.

For more information or to provide feedback, contact David Robinson, bridge technologist with Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation at david.robinson@gov.ab.ca. □

New inspection station opened in Saskatchewan

YORKTON, Sask. – The province of Saskatchewan opened a new commercial vehicle inspection station here recently. Highways and Infrastructure Minister, Wayne Elhard, cut the ribbon at the new weigh scale and claimed the area is becoming a business hub.

"We want to ensure the current economic momentum continues both here in Yorkton and the province as a whole. One of the best ways to do that is to improve and maintain transportation infrastructure so critical for economic development," said Elhard.

The new inspection station was built at a cost of \$556,000 and replaces a facility that was built in the 1950s. The station will allow for the weighing and inspection of more than 11,000 trucks per year.

"Our Transport Compliance officers help prevent accidents and protect our roads by ensuring commercial vehicles move safely across Saskatchewan," Elhard said. "This new facility will go a long way to making sure our employees have the right tools to carry out their enforcement activities."

The inspection station has been raised to allow officers to speak with drivers at eye level. It's expected about 60 trucks will pass through the scale each shift. □

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RENEWABLE FUELS

Renewable diesel surviving winter weather

By Jan Westell

EDMONTON, Alta. – The results of Canada’s largest cold-weather, on-road demonstration of renewable diesel, just a few months into a 10-month test, are looking positive, especially in light of Alberta’s recent cold snap, organizers say.

“So far. So good,” says Adam Gagnon, the program manager of transportation and energy efficiency at Climate Change Central (C3), an Alberta environmental organization that is heading up a test that has utilized 60 large commercial vehicles of various sizes, that fill-up exclusively at three main test sites in Alberta: Calgary, Edmonton and Lloydminster.

Since renewable fuels are relative newcomers to the commercial vehicle industry, there has been some skepticism, and a range of questions related to using an unorthodox fuel. But the biggest question was: “Does it work?” as well as, “Does it work in the Canadian winter?” according to Gagnon.

Initial apprehensions from commercial vehicle operators may have come about after Minnesota pushed a government mandate in 2006, to promote biodiesel, with negative technical results. These glitches have since been corrected says the C3 transportation and energy efficiency expert.

“The industry learned a lot, but some fears persisted. Now, we are using fuels with known quality, proper blending techniques, treating with kerosene to meet CGSB standards, and monitoring the whole supply chain as well as the vehicles’ operation on the road,” he says.

The demonstration included an initial lab testing phase, and is now going beyond the laboratory to put renewable diesel through typical on-road use by trucking companies. The demonstration will provide hands-on cold weather experience for fuel blenders, distributors, long-haul trucking fleets and drivers.

The renewable diesel demonstration came about after the federal government announced in 2006, a goal to implement a renewable fuels standard, which will require 2% renewable content in the Canadian diesel supply by 2012. This new environmental standard is dependent upon the successful demonstration of renewable diesel use under a range of Canadian weather conditions. The weather has been especially harsh in Alberta this winter, with temperatures as low as -40 C, but not to the detriment of the bio-fuel performance.

“There have been no reports of difficulty whatsoever, despite the fact that it has been so cold,” says Gagnon, who adds that the commercial vehicle operators have experienced nothing unusual related to engine performance. “As expected, there was nothing amiss with power, torque or emissions.”

The Canadian and Alberta governments are investing \$2.6 million into this project. Shell Canada is the demonstration’s ultra low-sulfur diesel supplier, and the renewable diesel blender and distributor. Additional sponsors and supporters include: the Canola Council of



GIVING IT A TRY: Rosenau is one company that’s helping out by fueling a portion of its fleet with renewable diesel.

Canada, Canadian Petroleum Products Institute, Canadian Renewable Fuels Association, Canadian Bioenergy, Neste Oil and

Milligan Biotech.

Transportation trial participants include: Rosenau Transport, HiWay 9 Express, First Bus Canada, and

Gibson Energy. Road testing began in late 2007 and will continue until October. The companies have a choice of three Shell cardlock centres to choose from in Calgary, Edmonton and Lloydminster. Vehicle operators fill up as they would any diesel fuel.

“In that sense, it has been business as usual when they fill up at the cardlock,” says Gagnon. “We are not asking them to do anything (different).”

While the test was primarily about fuel performance during winter months, Gagnon notes that demonstration cardlock sites were also unaffected by the recent Alberta cold snap, but that wasn’t the case at four other regular diesel cardlock venues at Edmonton and Red Deer.

“All their pumps were frozen solid,” he said. □

@ARTICLECATEGORY:847;

Notice to Truckers – 2008 Spring Load Restrictions

Under the *Highway Traffic Act*, the province enforces reduced load restrictions on trucks to protect Ontario’s highways during spring thaw, when road damage is most likely to occur.

REDUCED LOAD LIMITS PERIOD SCHEDULE 1 HIGHWAYS

Pursuant to the *Highway Traffic Act*, the ministry will impose reduced load limits for those designated parts of the King’s Highways listed in Schedule 1, when appropriate, between March 1, 2008 to April 30, 2008.

SCHEDULE 2 HIGHWAYS

Pursuant to the *Highway Traffic Act*, the ministry will impose reduced load limits for those designated parts of the King’s Highways listed in Schedule 2, when appropriate, between March 1, 2008 to May 31, 2008.

SCHEDULE 3 HIGHWAYS/ROADS

Pursuant to the *Highway Traffic Act*, the ministry will impose reduced load limits for those designated parts of the King’s Highways/Roads listed in Schedule 3, when appropriate, between March 1, 2008 to June 30, 2008.

NOTE: Reduced load limits will be in effect where and when signs are posted depending on road and weather conditions.

SCHEDULE 1 - MARCH 1ST TO APRIL 30TH, 2008

THERE ARE NO HIGHWAYS IN THIS SCHEDULE HAVING A REDUCED LOAD PERIOD.

SCHEDULE 2 - MARCH 1ST TO MAY 31ST, 2008

WHEN SIGNS ARE POSTED, THE FOLLOWING HIGHWAYS WILL HAVE A REDUCED LOAD LIMIT FOR THEIR ENTIRE LENGTH:

510	522	524	525	528	528A	529	529A	538	539A	540A	542A	553	554	558	559	560A	563	564	567	569	570	571	572	573	574	577	579	580
582	585	586	587	591	592	593	595	597	602	603	605	607	607A	609	611	613	615	617	619	621	624	630	636	639	641	645	647	650
651	652	665	667	668	670	671	672	673	801	802	804	805	810	811	7036	7037	7041	7042	7044	7047	7048	7057	7059	7069	7072D	7102	7104	

7110D 7125 7140 7182 Nungesser Rd.

WHEN SIGNS ARE POSTED, THE FOLLOWING HIGHWAYS WILL HAVE A REDUCED LOAD LIMIT FOR THESE LISTED LOCATIONS:

HWY.#	LOCATION	HWY.#	LOCATION
129	16.2 km north of Jct. Hwy. 554 to 48 km south of the south Jct. of Hwy. 101	583S	Town limits, 4.1 km south of Hwy. 11 to its end
516	30.2 km north of Jct. 642 north to Hwy. 599	588	1.6 km south of Hwy. 11/17, west to end of Hwy. 588
518	Hwy. 400/69 east to west limits of Sprucedale, and east of Kearney to the Twp. of Perry/ Town of Kearney boundary	589	9.6 km north of Jct. Hwy. 591, north to end of Hwy. 599
520	Hwy. 124, north to the Hamlet of Ardbeg	594	Hwy. 502, west to Hwy. 17
523	Jct. Hwy. 60 at Madawaska south to Hasting/Nipissing County boundary	596	1 km north of Hwy. 17A, north to its end
527	98 km north of Hwy. 11/17 north to end of Hwy. 527	599	62 km north of Hwy. 17, northeasterly to end of Hwy. 599
532	6.4 km north of Jct. Hwy. 556 to end of Hwy. 532	600	0.5 km, north of Hwy. 11, to Jct. of Hwy. 71
533	Hwy. 656, northwest to Hwy. 63	601	1.6 km north of Hwy. 17 (west leg) to 5 km north of Hwy. 17 (east leg) (Dryden Airport)
534	Jct. Hwy. 524 northerly to the Restoule Provincial Park	608	1 km west of Hwy. 61 west to Hwy. 595
535	1.6 km north of Hwy. 17 north to end	612	Muskoka/Parry Sound District boundary, north to Hwy. 69
539	0.5 km north of Warren, north of Jct. Hwy. 64	625	0.5 km south of Jct. Hwy. 11, south to end of Hwy. 625
540	Hwy. 540B (west entrance), west to Meldrum Bay	632	Muskoka/Parry Sound District boundary, north to Hwy. 141 at Rosseau
542	Hwy. 6, west to Jct. of Hwy. 540 and 540B	634	Cloutier Road at 3.4 km north of Hwy. 11 to its end
546	0.6 km north of Jct. Hwy. 17 north to end of Hwy. 546	638	2.5 km north of east Jct. Hwy. 17 north to 1.3 km east of west Jct. Hwy. 17
548	Maple St. (Hilton Beach) south to southwest limits of Richard’s Landing	642	Jct. 516 easterly to Jct. 599
551	West Jct. of Hwy. 542 south to Providence Bay	643	700 m west of Hwy. 584 to end of Hwy. 643
556	Hwy. 532 to Hwy. 129	657	0.8 km east of Hwy. 105 easterly to its end
557	2.7 km north of Jct. Hwy. 17 (Jct. of Granary Lake Rd.) north to end of Hwy. 557	7045	Havilland Shores Drive, west side Hwy. 17, 0.3 km from Hwy. 17 west 1.3 km
566	2 km west of the Montreal River at Matachewan to its end	7045	Havilland Shores Drive, east side Hwy. 17, from Hwy. 17 east 0.6 km
575	Hwy. 17 to 1 km south of Jct. Hwy. 64	7045	Macintyre Road, from Hwy. 17 north 1.5 km to Jct. of Trout Lake Road
581	Jct. 7181 north for 6 km to Remi Lake Provincial Park	7082	Jct. of Hwy. 17 to the Regional Municipality of Walden limits (4.6 km)
583N	Town limits, 3.6 km north of Hwy. 11 to its end		Lac La Croix Rd. (Flanders Rd. South)
			45 km south of Hwy. 11 to its end

SCHEDULE 3 - MARCH 1ST TO JUNE 30TH, 2008

WHEN SIGNS ARE POSTED, THE HIGHWAYS/ROADS WITHIN THE FOLLOWING TERRITORIES WILL HAVE A REDUCED LOAD LIMIT:

NORTH BAY AREA	COCHRANE AREA	KENORA AREA	PELLATT 2
Ballantyne & Laurier	Onaping Falls	Aubrey East	Pickereel Lake
Bidwell Lake	Red Deer Village	Bears Passage	Pratt
Eldee	Robinson	Big Stone Bay	Red Pine Ridge
Ellsmere	Rock Lake	Blindfold Lake	Reeditt
Laurier	Trout Lake N.	Britton	Reef Point
Lount	Walbridge S.	Vankoughnet & Aweres	Rowell
Marten Lake	Whiskey Lake	Vixen Lake	Rugby
Memesagamesing	Willisville	Wabos	Rush Bay-
Mills & Hardy	HUNTSVILLE AREA	Wharnclyffe	Woodchuck Bay
Patterson	None at this time.	THUNDER BAY AREA	Sherwood Lake
Phelps	NEW LISKEARD AREA	Armstrong	Southshore
Pringle	Anima Nipissing	Dawson Rd. - Goldie	Southwatten
Tilden Lake	Bayly Marter	Devon	Southworth
Thorne	Beauchamp	Firehill	Spohn
Wilson & McConkey	Bourkes	Forbes	Spruce Lake Road
White Pine	Bryce	Fowler	Storm Bay
Wyse & Poitras	Cane	Gorham	Sutherland
Yellowstone	Cairo & Alma Twp.	Hardwick	Tannis Lake
	Crystal Lake	Hicks Lake	(Gundy Lake)
	Eby	Inwood	Van Horne
	Foleyet	Jacques	Wabigoon Redvers West
	Gogama	Lybster	Wabigoon South East
	Henwood	Laclu	Wainwright
	Horwood	Manitou Rapids FN	War Eagle
	Ingram	McCallum Point	West Longbow Lake
	Lebel (Harvey) Kirkland	McConnell Lake	Zealand No. 1
	Lebel (King) Kirkland	McIntosh	Zealand No. 3
	Lorraine Twp.	McKenzie Portage	
	Marquis	Melgund	
	Marter	Minaki	
	Mattagami Twp.	Mine Centre	
	Ossian	Miscampbell	
	Otto	Mutrie	
	Pacaud & Catharine	Nanicost Centre	
	Robillard	Nelles	
	Sheraton	Nickel Lake Shores	
		Pearson Landing	



Let me recall...

How to manage truck recalls while minimizing downtime

By Eric Berard

MONTREAL, Que. – To err is human, nobody will deny that. And the heavy-duty truck manufacturing business is no exception. After some research, I found out that every single heavy-duty truck manufacturer active on the North American market has issued at least one recall for their products over the last 12 months.

Of course, the defects that were found were of different levels of significance and, luckily enough, as far as we know, no serious injuries resulted from them.

The idea here is not to throw the stone at any truck maker, but to better understand how a recall campaign is organized and how fleet managers and owner/operators should be dealing with it to protect their assets and the safety of their drivers, as well as other motorists. After all, a truck manufacturer issuing a recall notice can be seen as continuous after-sale quality control.

Before going into the field to ask fleet managers how they manage recalls, we went to the truck makers themselves. Volvo Trucks North America and Daimler Trucks North America were kind enough to share some valuable advice.

We first asked what is the proportion of recalls that are initiated by customers that discover a problem themselves, as compared to those initiated by the manufacturer. Tim LaFon, manager of regulatory affairs for Volvo Trucks North America and Mack Trucks says: "A very high percentage of problems are discovered by the vehicle manufacturer, who regularly monitors

warranty claims, customer complaints, and field reports for potential safety defects. Dealers are also a source of information."

At Daimler Trucks, Timothy Blubaugh, director of government and technical affairs, agrees, estimating that "About 80% of Daimler Trucks North America recalls originate internally, while 20% are discovered by customers."

This is quite re-assuring, but still, what should this average 20% of trucking professionals do when they suspect a potentially widespread defect?

According to Daimler's Blubaugh, they should contact the manufacturer through the field sales personnel or their local dealer. The specialist from Volvo and Mack agrees, adding: "Most manufacturers have call support centers that are open 24 hours per day, seven days per week that assist the owners with problems."

But once a recall determination is made, how do the "mechanics" of it work?

According to LaFon: "The vehicle manufacturer is required to report the safety defect first to the government (i.e. NHTSA and Transport Canada). The report contains a description of the defect and potential consequence, the class of vehicles affected (make, model, model year, and number of potentially affected vehicles), the repair, and the date that the owners will be notified of the defect. Within a few days after receiving the report, the government makes this information available to the public through their Web sites."



SAFETY FIRST: MacKinnon's Richard Sharpe said he would ground the fleet immediately in the event of a major recall. The company operates 270 power units, including this International.

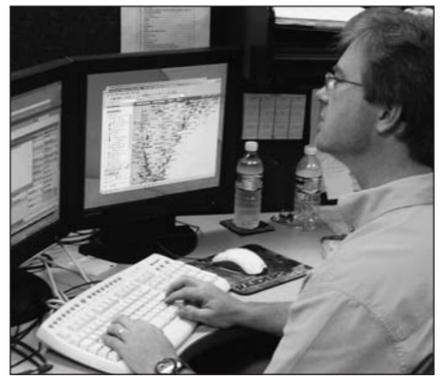
Truck West had the opportunity to verify that and we were pleasantly surprised to see how user-friendly Transport Canada's Web site is. To verify if one of your trucks has been recalled, try this: www.tc.gc.ca/roadsafety/Recalls/recintro_e.htm.

Information technologies are also of great help when it comes to managing recalls. They allow the truck manufacturers to communicate quickly with their dealers and replacement parts providers.

Better yet, if you bought a used truck and the original owner didn't bother to inform you of the recall notice he received, the dealer's computer can "recognize" the truck when it comes into the shop for regular maintenance, identify the recall work that needs to be done and inform the maintenance personnel to do it, free of charge. Warranty databases are also used to track the new owner of a truck.

Ignoring a recall is never a good idea. Of course, taking one or more of your trucks off the road means they are not generating revenue. But safety is at stake and, besides, the manufacturer could revoke the warranty based on consequential damages associated with ignoring a recall.

Above all, planning the event-



THERE TO HELP: Most manufacturers have a 24-hour call centre such as this one, operated by Volvo.

ality of a recall is the key to success. Of course, "A larger fleet can be a direct warranty customer and perform those repairs in their own shops at their convenience," says Blubaugh, adding that if that's not the case, "they can have repairs performed at multiple locations since every DTNA dealer is authorized to address a recall."

Volvo-Mack's LaFon adds "Good communication and planning between the fleet owner and company representative (the fleet service manager or district service manager) is paramount. Recall repairs and repair times vary widely based on the circumstances; therefore, it is important to share information and plan accordingly."

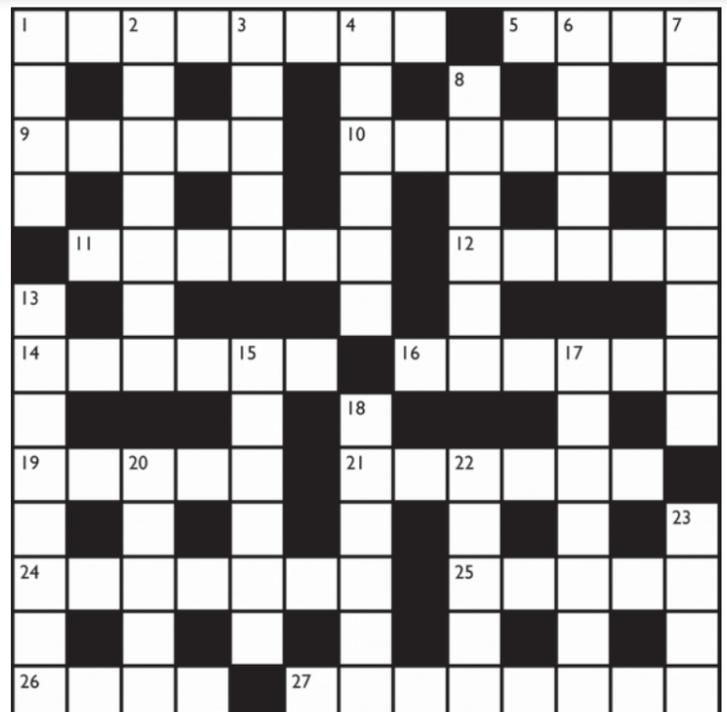
THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across

1. Warehouse workhorse
5. '60s "Put a tiger in your tank" company
9. Went horizontal
10. Goods beyond those on shipping documents
11. Item provoking truckmaker's recall notice
12. Add some coolant or oil (3,2)
14. '99-'06 Mack model
16. Given name, "Smokey and the Bandit" trucker Snow
19. Truck-assembly-line worker, perhaps
21. Shiny finish on 24-Across item
24. Cab-top warning device (3,4)
25. Tire type
26. It's in LTL
27. Canada's official "National Summer Sport"

Down

1. Safety valve in truck's electrical system
2. Conveyances for frozen fries
3. Truck-stop diesel-pump unit of measure
4. Truck-based Rose Bowl Parade vehicles
6. The _____, Montreal's moniker
7. Structure spanning Hwy. 401
8. A Ryder rig
13. Engine rebuild, in other words
15. Non-standard item on new-truck invoice
17. Bite-sized donut shop delicacies
18. European heavy-truck maker
20. Farmers' tractor garages
22. Smokey's favourite gun
23. Slangy name for a certain big rig



Answers on page 35

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Real life experience

Jean-Claude Menard is the fleet manager of Transport J.E. Fortin, a fleet of 85 tractors and 140 trailers, located in St-Bernard-de-Lacolle, Que., merely inches away from the US border. The power units are about 65% Freightliner, the rest being International, Volvo and Kenworth trucks. Fleet harmonization is often said to be an advantage but what happens if a recall is issued? Isn't the fleet more vulnerable since there are many trucks of the same brand?

"Not really," says Menard, adding, "When a recall notice is issued, it's very rare that it affects a large number of our trucks. Usually it's only a particular series. And since we buy only about half a dozen new trucks per year, it has never been an issue here. But it might be for much larger fleets that buys a huge number of trucks at a time."

He also agrees that the quality of the relationship with the manufacturer's representatives is crucial. Menard says that he obtains great service from his local Freightliner dealer.

"If I ever am in a recall situation, I call them to make sure that they have the replacement part and the technician to perform the job and I take an appointment between two trips of the driver to whom the truck is assigned to (to make sure not to cut into his miles) and the dealer comes to take the truck with a jockey and returns it when the work has been performed. The only expense, which is minimal, is the fuel consumed to go to and from the dealership."

If facing a situation where the recall repair is urgent and the truck is away on the US East Coast, J.E. Fortin's dispatchers will get in touch with the driver and, using a dealership's directory, tell him which dealer is the closest to his location and ask that he has the problem taken care of without any delay.

Based in Guelph, Ont., Richard Sharpe is vice-president of fleet services at MacKinnon Transport, a fleet made up of 270 power units and 502 trailers of various configurations.

Right from the start, Sharpe declares: "In the past decade, I've been exposed to remarkably few recall events. I believe manufacturers are, at least in my experience, doing an excellent job of engineering and field trials."

He agrees with Menard that fleet harmonization remains a good strategy.

"A recall in a 2005 model, for example, is a standard installation process in a 2006. So, spreading equipment replacement/acquisition over a replacement cycle helps minimize the number of units affected."

Should a serious safety recall affect his fleet, Sharpe wouldn't hesitate for a second: "I would ground that fleet until the necessary upgrades were made. If the recall could disable the equipment, and risk customer service failure, I'd impose on operations to remove as many pieces as viable, and still support operational needs. In both of

'When you get the recall notice, before showing up at the shop or the dealership, make sure that they have the replacement part.'

Norita Taylor, OOIDA

the above cases, rental units are an option, and may even be available, at discount, from a dealer. On a cosmetic or convenience recall, whenever possible, I would schedule repairs at the next service interval."

And even though MacKinnon is quite a large fleet, Sharpe still feels dealers are most precious allies.

"There is absolutely no question in my mind that a good fleet/dealer relationship is essential for handling a recall in the

best possible manner. The dealer having an understanding of your fleet requirements, lane demographics, maintenance schedules and operational needs substantially eases the pain of the recall. We make it a priority to maintain open and direct communication with our dealers. This pays dividends, not only under recall scenarios, but also in the day-to-day operation of your fleet. Dealers that know their fleets, in my opinion, are the best resources for

overcoming a recall event."

Owner/operators

Norita Taylor is a spokesperson for the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA), an organization that groups 160,000 owner/operators from Canada and the US. She says that proper planning of a recall is even more important for an independent driver, since he has (most of the times) only one truck to rely on. Taylor gives owner/operators this advice: "When you get the recall notice, before showing up at the shop or the dealership, make sure that they have the replacement part and that a qualified technician is available to make the repair."

She also recommends keeping all receipts for expenses incurred because of the recall (meals, lodging, etc.), as there might be taxes deductible. □

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Date _____

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1) How many vehicles are based at or controlled from this location? Please indicate quantities by type:

— No. of Straight Trucks _____ No. of Trailers _____
 — No. of Truck-Tractors _____ No. of Buses _____
 — No. of Off-Road Vehicles _____

2) Does this location operate, control or administer one or more vehicles in any of the following Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) categories? Please check YES or NO:

14,969 kg. & over (33,001 lbs. & over)... YES NO
 11,794-14,968 kg. (26,001-33,000 lbs.)... YES NO
 8,846-11,793 kg. (19,501-26,000 lbs.)... YES NO
 4,536-8,845 kg. (10,000-19,500 lbs.)... YES NO
 Under 4,536 kg. (10,000 lbs.)... YES NO

3) This location operates, controls or administers:

Diesel powered vehicles... YES NO
 Refrigerated vehicles... YES NO
 Pickups or Utility Vans... YES NO
 Propane powered vehicles... YES NO

4) Do you operate maintenance facilities at this location? YES NO
 IF YES, do you employ mechanics? YES NO

5) Indicate your PRIMARY type of business by checking ONLY ONE of the following:

a) For Hire/Contract Trucking (hauling for others)
 b) Lease/Rental
 c) Food Production / Distribution / Beverages
 d) Farming
 e) Government (Fed., Prov., Local)
 f) Public Utility (electric, gas, telephone)
 g) Construction / Mining / Sand & Gravel
 h) Petroleum / Dry Bulk / Chemicals / Tank
 i) Manufacturing / Processing
 j) Retail
 jii) Wholesale
 k) Logging / Lumber
 l) Bus Transportation
 m) Other (Please specify) _____

6) Are you involved in the purchase of equipment or replacement parts? YES NO

7) Are you responsible either directly or indirectly for equipment maintenance? YES NO

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TODAY!

Off the beaten path

B.C. moves to address logging road safety following several accidents

By Jan Westell

PRINCE GEORGE, B.C. – A few decades ago, B.C. logging roads were designed for one main use: hauling logs. The public was warned to stay off, at least during regular log hauling activity, or face the consequences – which could be an unfortunate collision with a logging truck.

That's exactly what happened to one B.C. logging truck driver. Joseph Leroux was killed two years ago, when the 52-year-old was forced off a narrow forest service road (about 190 km north of Prince George, near Mackenzie), after another truck unexpectedly met him at a corner. Leroux's truck subsequently caught a snow bank and then descended into a small ravine.

The inquest into his death revealed that there were two potentially conflicting licensed users on the logging road at the time of the accident. There was also uncoordinated and inefficient radio protocol, by two different trucking crews on a service road that complied with minimal safety standards.

Leroux is just one of 16 forest industry drivers who have died on logging roads in the past three years. In 2005, 11 logging truck drivers died on the job, which accounted for 26% of the total fatalities in the forest sector that year. In 2007, there were fewer truck driver fatalities, but the deaths on logging roads accounted for 42%, or five of the 12 total forest sector fatalities that year. It is a complex safety issue that has come to the attention of the office of the B.C. Forest Safety Council's (BCFSC) ombudsman, which recently issued a report with his recommendations.

"It is important to note that these deaths that occurred are not necessarily logging truck drivers," says BCFSC ombudsman Roger Harris, who dismissed the term "logging road" in favour of "resource road," in the report. "In fact, in 2007, only one fatality was a logging truck driver. The other four individuals who died were driving pick-ups, which is why safety on our resource road network cannot be focused only on large industrial traffic."

B.C. has approximately 400,000 km of resource roads, and Harris observes that the wide network of gravel roads are now used by a variety of users, including the oil and gas sector, the agriculture industry, lighter commercial business, tourism, and First Nations people who access remote communities.

But despite the increased usage by a variety of industry and private individuals, the Ministry of Forests and Range continues to be the sole agency responsible for this extensive off-road network, a situation the ombudsman believes

is ineffective and unsafe.

"While the use of logging roads has changed over the last decade, the regulatory conditions that are in place have not," he says in the report. "The users of resource roads have changed, but the ministry charged with responsibility for the system, and the method of funding construction, maintenance, compliance and enforcement, has not."

Harris recommends the province establish a new public highway designation for resource roads that serve as the primary or secondary access roads for communities.

The new designation would have clearly defined standards for construction, maintenance, enforcement and be funded and maintained similarly to the public highway system.

One of Harris' key recommendations is the creation of road safety management groups (RSMGs) or bodies of stakeholders that would be responsible for managing a specific resource road network.

These groups would include representation from various stakeholders, and jointly make decisions and implement actions concerning road safety issues, design, construction, maintenance, safe driving practice, signage, driver education and allocation of resources.

Harris also recommends designating certain resource roads as public highways, to deal directly with driving conditions.

In that regard, the report refers to a well-used resource road that leads to the tiny community of



SAFETY URGED: A growing number of road users are driving on resource roads, posing increased dangers to log haulers.

Bamfield on southern Vancouver Island, once a remote telegraph station that also served loggers and fisherman.

Now the area is an international ecotourism magnet, due to its location as a gateway to the scenic Broken Islands archipelago.

The ombudsman's recommendation to address overused roadways, such as this, has been hailed for its adherence to improved safety standards.

"We need proper funding from other agencies who use those roads."

Rick Publicover, CILA

"I applaud the recommendation calling for public highway designations for certain roads, as it deals directly with safe driving conditions," says Stepan Ochman, regional director of electoral A (Bamfield) of the Alberni Clayoquot regional district.

"Forest companies have maintained the Bamfield Road to industrial standards for decades, but in recent years, these standards have deteriorated to the point that the road is unsafe, not only for forestry workers, but all users."

A third key recommendation made by Harris, is that truck drivers be certified and this certification should extend to people who drive light vehicles, such as pick-

up trucks, ATVs and four-wheel drive vehicles.

Many of the ombudsman's recommendations were approved by the Truck Loggers Association, which is particularly concerned about the onerous cost of building and maintaining logging roads, which continues to be the responsibility of the B.C. forest industry, which is made up of mainly independent operators.

"I think for us, the most important factor is the acknowledgement that forest resources are paying for the cost of these roads, and there are many, many (other) road users," says the executive director of the TLA, David Lewis, who considers that other sectors that use the resource roads, should participate with the funding.

"It's a significant burden," adds Lewis, who emphasizes the present economic challenges that face the forest industry.

The TLA executive director was also impressed that the ombudsman addressed truck loggers "cycle time," or turnaround time related to the contracted hourly rate for hauling logs, a process that may become hampered by unpredictable road or weather conditions, a costly situation that can cause drivers to eschew safer driving habits. "That's a huge problem," he adds.

The Central Interior Logging Association agreed with Lewis on this same point, especially when another industry utilizes the resource roads that have already been funded by the forest industry, like mining or recreation, when maintenance is required.

"We need proper funding from other agencies who use those roads," says the executive director of CILA, Rick Publicover, who praised other aspects of the report, including the coordinated road safety management proposal. The BCFSC office of the forest safety ombudsman was established in 2006 to enhance safety in the B.C. forest sector by becoming a safe, confidential and persuasive agent for raising and reviewing safety concerns throughout the sector, and facilitating impartial and timely resolution of safety issues.

The forestry safety ombudsman is appointed and funded by the forest industry through the B.C. Forest Safety Council. □

Forest Council offers safety course for O/Os

PRINCE GEORGE, B.C. – The B.C. Forest Safety Council is offering a series of Individual Owner/Operator (IOO) SAFETY courses for independent owner/operators.

The courses are aimed at all forestry workers, but two training sessions scheduled for April are designed exclusively for truckers.

"The IOO SAFETY course is designed to help individual owner/operators develop a safety system that works for them and their needs," the B.C. Forest Safety Council explains on its Web site: www.bcfestsafe.org. "Using an industry-approved and Council-supplied SAFETY Log, these individuals have a process to organize and track all their safety activities whether they are working on their own or on the work site of another prime contractor."

Topics covered during the course include: Creating a forest safety culture; rolls and responsibilities of the independent owner/operator; and the SAFETY Log as a self-audit. The SAFETY Log includes an emergency response plan, safe work procedures, basic safety record-keeping, safety meetings and communications, and audit submission guidelines.

All course participants receive a SAFETY Log following registration. To see where the course is being offered, visit the Council's Web site.

It is a part day course, usually running during the morning. The two trucker-specific courses are slated for Apr. 14 in Prince George and Apr. 26 in Williams Lake. □

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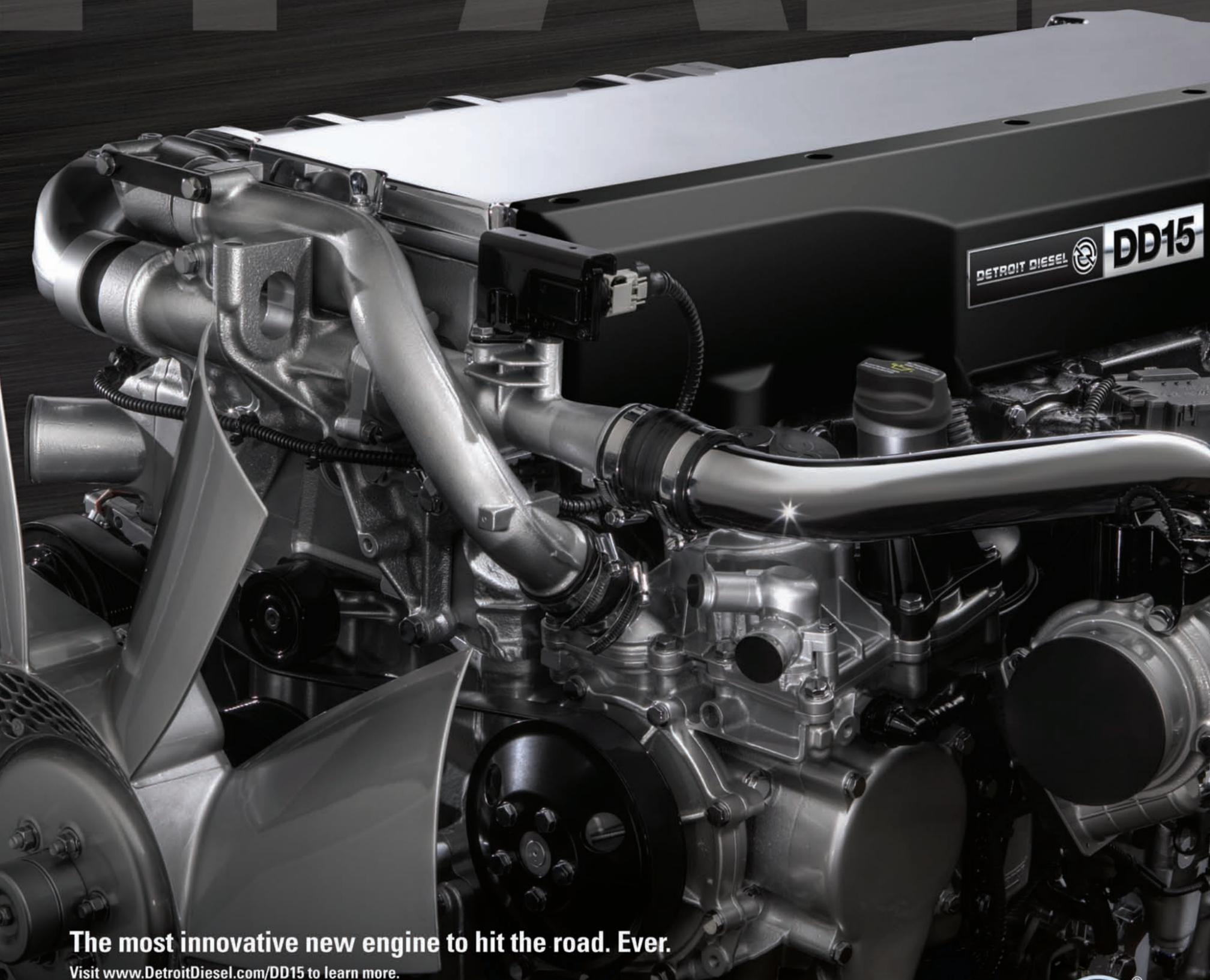


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The three best places to look for tax savings

So you've spent the last month ripping your house apart and running your hands under the bunk mattress for any shred of paper that might justify a tax deduction. Or maybe you're diligent about keeping receipts and feel pretty good about your filing system.

Either way, you're interested in lowering your tax obligation, and that's good. Taxes are too high in this country to not seek out ways to reduce the burden. Whether you're incorporated or a sole proprietor, here are my three favourite places to look for tax savings:

At the point of sale

You need a new pen to fill out your logbook, so you buy one at the truck stop for a dollar. You stuff the receipt in your pocket. At least, that's what you remember.

Throwing away that receipt is like throwing away hard earned money.

Without a receipt, the GST/HST is no longer refundable to you – there's five to 13 cents right there. Without a receipt, you can't claim the pen as a business expense against your gross income.

If you earn between \$35,000 and \$70,000 a year, you're paying approximately 35% to 40% income tax.

Because you're not able to deduct the dollar for the pen, you'll have to pay the resulting income tax of 35 to 40 cents tax. So that cheap pen actually cost you \$1.40 to \$1.53. Whether you're a sole proprietor or incorporated, the result is the same.

In the cab

So think about it. How many times have you pulled cash out of your pocket and not kept the receipt? How many times have you bought personal and business items together and the receipt is in your personal records and not your business books? How many times have you used your personal credit card because your business card wasn't handy and not charged your company back appropriately?

Talk to your accountant about how to organize receipts where you do most of your day-to-day business: in the cab.

We give our clients accordion-style file folders marked with categories like meals and showers, fuel, etc.

Four times a year, they put the whole folder – receipts inside – into a big envelope and courier it to us (we pay the freight). This system helps them keep receipts organized in the cab, makes it easier for us to prepare their returns (most file quarterly), and allows us to focus on each quarter of the business year and not just the year-end.

On the tax return

Every time an expense item is

Tax Talk

Scott Taylor



missed or an entire expense type or category is not taken, the cost to you is much more than the original cost.

For example, Canada Revenue Agency has again changed the write-off rate on computer equipment. If you bought a computer after March 18, 2007, the computer belongs in Class 45 and has a 55% CCA rate. That's a change from the 45% rate established in March 2004; prior to that, they were 30%.

Have you been doing it right all along?

Another expense that's often handled incorrectly is your health coverage.

A CRA auditor I met recently was going to disallow this claim for one of our clients.

Previously, you were to include your health benefit premiums directly on your tax return as a medical expense. Now you can expense this cost directly on your business income statement.

This translates into quite a bit of tax savings. The medical expense deduction is reduced by 3% of your net income.

This carve-out greatly reduces the deduction and often, unfortunately, prevents any sort of claim. Now you get to expense 100% of the cost, you get to save tax every year on this deduction.

Be careful though, with everything on your tax return, there are a few rules and guidelines to follow.

Your benefit premium likely includes life and disability insurance. If so, the amounts included in your monthly payment for these should be backed out.

Additionally there are rules capping the amount of the expense you can write-off for yourself, your spouse, and children. Unless you're an incorporated owner/operator, for whom the deduction limits don't apply.

It's hard to keep up with these changes yourself.

It may cost a little more money, but an experienced accountant can comb through the tax codes to help ensure that all possible deductions are taken advantage of can easily have a direct pay back to you.

That way you can focus on collecting and organizing those receipts. □

– Scott Taylor is vice-president of TFS Group, a Waterloo, Ont., company that provides accounting, fuel tax reporting, and other business services for truck fleets and owner/operators. For information, visit www.tfsgroup.com or call 800-461-5970.

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*Compared to a Detroit Diesel Series 60 EPA 2007 engine with comparable engine ratings and load weights. **Effectiveness of turbo compound is based on load on the engine. The turbo compound returns horsepower back to the engine's flywheel.



Keeping up with the paper chase during driver hiring

Any carrier can tell you about the reams of paper that are collected during the hiring process.

It can take days to assemble the job application, abstract and other documents that will determine if a driver is qualified to sit behind the wheel of one of your trucks. Then all these details need to be cross-checked and confirmed.

It can seem like a chore.

But this process is more than a paper shuffle to please an auditor. It provides the information that you need to select a safe and qualified driver, and that will contribute to your fleet's bottom line.

Indeed, the information that you collect through this process can help to weed out "high-risk" drivers – the one-third of today's driving pool that is at a higher risk

Ask the Experts

Evelyn Cartmill



of becoming involved in crashes – if you know where to look.

Just as important, the related documents can help to identify the candidates that match your fleet's vision of a qualified driver, and guide training efforts to enhance the skills of your employees in the years to come.

It all begins with the information collected on the job application.

This important document should outline the driver's employment history, the kinds of

equipment that he has operated, and facts about previous violations and crashes.

But keep in mind that the missing details are just as important as the information found on the forms.

Look for gaps

For example, a driver may leave a convenient gap in his employment history as a way of avoiding the story about how and why he was fired.

Any of the collected information should be compared to your fleet's clearly defined selection criteria – a written outline of the minimum level of experience and the driving record that is required to safely perform a job.

While we would all like drivers to have clean abstracts, some

thought has to be given to the criteria surrounding the number and kinds of violations that can be addressed through future training. Most important, an assessment of a driver's attitudes about these issues will offer an indication of this candidate's ability to be part of your future fleet.

A related script of well-defined interview questions will help to assess this outlook toward safety and customer service, as well as the way he might contribute to your team's efforts.

Then it's a matter of confirming all of the information that the driver has provided, and the abstract attached to the application form can be a good place to start. More than one carrier has been surprised to discover that a job candidate failed to mention the details about a crash that involved another fleet.

Check references

Reference checks provide another vital tool when confirming the information.

For example, cross-border fleets are legally required to obtain references from all of the employers that the driver has had in the last three years.

In the event that there is a discrepancy, the driver can be re-interviewed to clear up any potential misunderstandings.

While the regulatory requirement can be met by faxing reference requests to previous employers, it is important to remember that telephone conversations will ultimately provide the most effective approach when obtaining the details that are required to make a hiring decision.

Privacy legislation does not prohibit reference checks for employment purposes as long as you have the driver's signed consent.

Other documents contained within a driver's qualification file can support your hiring decision. While the certification of violations and hours-of-service declaration must be completed and verified, you also need to include the results from a practical test of the driver's skills, using the equipment that will be operated during the course of his duties.

The latter step will present a safe driver with another opportunity to demonstrate his ability to complete a vehicle inspection, secure a load and showcase defensive driving abilities.

In the end, these important steps will identify the safe drivers who are a perfect fit for your fleet and will contribute to all of its related goals. □

– Evelyn Cartmill is STS senior advisor, CHRP, CRM. Send your questions, feedback and comments about this column to letstalk@markel.ca. Markel is the country's largest trucking insurer providing more than 50 years of continuous service to the transportation industry.



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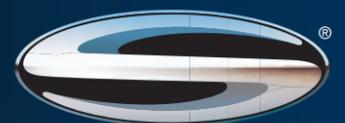


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Keeping a lid on it

New tarping systems help improve road safety while making a driver's job easier

By Jan Westell

VANCOUVER, B.C. – When a boulder toppled off a dump truck in urban Vancouver, B.C., and then smashed through the window of the car following behind, it was considered a freak accident.

That was about seven years ago, when the victim had been out for a Saturday afternoon drive cruising along Southwest Marine Drive, one of Vancouver's most picturesque and affluent neighbourhoods.

After being struck on the head with the rock, Ingrid Pipke's car hit a power pole and then collided with another vehicle, (according to an on-

line record of the event, supplied by CanWest news service). The 48-year old woman later died from her injuries after being taken to hospital.

The tragedy caught the attention of many critics of unruly commercial vehicle operators, especially those who inadequately secured unsafe loads. However, a communications representative for the B.C. Ministry of Transportation says that all loads must be secure, even before the 2001 accident.

"The regulations have always been, that no loads can be insecure," says Tamara Little. "For a load of gravel, for example, if the load has

the potential to blow out, it must be tarped. If the rocks are loaded such that they can fall off, then the vehicle was improperly loaded and didn't meet regulations."

Following the accident, Vancouver police hired a forensic geologist to track down the origins of the two-kilogram boulder, and potentially, the driver responsible for the unsafe load. While investigators may have located the construction site, the driver's identity was undetermined.

However, since that tragedy, regulations have been enforced on a greater basis, and tarps on B.C. dump trucks are now a common site.

In Ontario, the regulations for securing truck loads are stringent, intended to not only prevent tragedies like the one in B.C., but also to prevent vehicle damage, such as window chipping and other mishaps, that can be caused from loose material like gravel. As a result, tarps are required for more and more types of

loads, according to the owner of Trison Tarps of Brantford, Ont., including sod, scrap metal, or anything on a flatdeck, or dump trailer; even with smaller truck loads.

"More people are required to tarp their loads, than ever before," says Paul Vandenberg who adds that heavier materials, like brick, require greater reinforcement with not only tarps but heavy-duty strapping for safety and security purposes, to comply with stiff transportation regulations.

"The transportation industry is probably the heaviest regulated industry in North America, partly due to the reason that everything you use, comes by truck," adds Vandenberg. "It's huge."

The tarp manufacturing business is becoming more complex. Automated tarp systems have been developed, which allow drivers to cover their freight without the laborious task of climbing on top, pulling on tarps, and tying down straps.

"They can tarp the load, without getting on top of the trailer," says Vandenberg, who adds that, in most cases, many of the tarping systems can be accessed, adjusted, and fastened, from the cab.

"We are not just manufacturing tarps," he adds. "We are getting into electric arms and motors for grain hauling trailers and dump haulers."

It's not a regulation, but a time-saving and safety issue that is attracting customers to Verduyn Tarps of Hamilton, which recently opened a second outlet in Detroit, Mich. The company's best-selling product is a sliding tarp system, which owner Lloyd Verduyn says is popular on both sides of the border.

"The average trucker is aging, and the Eagle Slider Tarp System is allowing them to stay in the business longer, since they no longer have to use old heavy ground tarps," he explains.

Verduyn considers that exemplary service is also attracting customers on both sides of the border, although he continues to adapt to service challenges with his newer US shop, which has its own idiosyncratic requirements.

"It's totally different," says Verduyn of the US trucking industry, where he says owner/operators like to make a personal statement about their rigs, that is not related to security, with typically more lights, more chrome and even exclusive tarp straps.

"We just have to adjust," says Verduyn, who takes the cross-border service adjustment, in stride. "We go with the flow," he adds.

Tarps used by the trucking industry are exposed to the vagaries of extreme weather, which means most of the durable covers are likely to need repair – eventually. Cambridge Canvas Centre provides custom fabricating tarpaulin products to the transportation, industrial, recreational and sign supply sectors, but like Trison and Verduyn Tarps, a prominent part of the business, is an efficient repair centre.

The Cambridge, Ont. repair centre has been specifically designed for the trucking industry, with four large drive-through bays that can contain tractor and trailer hook-ups. □

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07 Engine Report

Today's emission-friendly engines have shed some of their early problems

ORLANDO, Fla. – The push for cleaner truck exhaust came at an obvious cost. FedEx Freight paid an average of \$4,000 extra for post-2002 engines that reduced NOx with technology such as Exhaust Gas Recirculation (EGR) systems. Maintenance needs also increased, and fuel economy plunged as much as 16%.

But things have improved. The maintenance costs – while still higher than those that were faced before 2002 – are not as frightening as they once were. The exhaust-cleaning components have been refined. Some of the sacrificed fuel economy has even been regained, and drivers love the improved acceleration that comes with the equipment.

The fine-tuning of the engines' Electronic Control Modules ultimately delivered fuel economy that was within 3% of the numbers seen prior to the equipment



Technical Correspondent

John G. Smith

changes mandated by the US Environmental Protection Agency, says Dan Umphress, managing director of maintenance solutions at FedEx. The 2007 engine designs with Diesel Particulate Filters have performed just as well.

"Electronic groups of the manufacturers are very busy," he told a crowd of maintenance managers at recent Technology and Maintenance Council meetings. "We were most glad that it wasn't worse."

Some fleets still have a role to play if they want to recover that lost fuel economy. Umphress, for



UNKNOWN: The impact of using CI-4 Plus oils on DPF cleaning intervals remains a mystery, but many fleets are taking their chances with the tried and true lube rather than switching to CJ-4.

example, says maintenance managers need to keep a close eye on fuel maps.

Most FedEx tractors are 4x2 day cabs that typically pull a pair of pup trailers for an overall Gross Vehicle Weight of 66,000 lb.

The problem is that the default programming on a new engine tends to be set up for a truckload tandem configuration that has a Gross Vehicle Weight of 80,000 lb.

"You can get optimum efficiency by working with an engine supplier and matching fuel maps to your duty cycle," Umphress says. "If there's anything outside the box, you will need to work closely with suppliers."

The good news is that some of North America's largest fleets are reporting better working relationships with those who supply the engines in the first place.

"Recalls were handled very swiftly," says Tom Newby of the Old Dominion Freight Lines, noting how one supplier to his 5,000-tractor fleet has assigned a single point of contact for warranty claims. "It's one of the best things that happened during these times ... We started to

get the personalized communication back."

Granted, the fleets and manufacturers also had a lot to talk about.

When the first post-2002 engines were introduced, FedEx was plagued by troublesome turbos, EGR valves, coolers, sensors and hose clamps.

Schneider actually thinks the gross maintenance costs for its 2004 engines will be 62.8% higher than the cost of maintaining equipment that was purchased before the rules were in place.

But again, the equipment has improved. When tracking the maintenance on engines built since 2005, Schneider's Steve Duly has found that gross maintenance costs are 18.2% higher than those linked to pre-EGR engines.

Schneider's issues involving EGR valves, bellows pipes, and intake throttle valves have largely been addressed.

That experience has carried over into the 2007 engines that are equipped with new Diesel Particulate Filters.

"The base engine itself, independent of the aftertreatment, is per-

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forming quite well,” Duly says, adding that exhaust systems are more durable.

There are still some issues, however. The larger cooling system required a change to fan mounts and engine mounts, and there is a different turbo and coalescing filter to consider. The fleet has also needed to address challenges around the cooling of the transmissions, and larger alternators have been required.

Ultimately, the host of additional equipment has added to overall weights as well. The post-2007 Schneider trucks are 350 pounds heavier than their predecessors, and Old Dominion needed to update gear ratios and reposition the fifth wheels to compensate for the extra mass that it faced.

Challenges with the Diesel Particulate Filters haven't been limited to the extra weight, either.

“We have a good, safe regeneration cycle now,” Duly says, “but it is definitely not optimized for fuel economy.”

If there is one common complaint, it seems to involve the fact that drivers need to control the regeneration cycle more often than expected.

“We thought the manual switch would sit there any never be touched,” Umphress says. That hope ended in the first few days. “We ended up with more driver training and coaching than we thought we would.”

The switches themselves have caused another challenge, Umphress says, referring to one model of truck that includes a toggle switch to bypass the regeneration cycle. The problem, he says, is that there is nothing to remind drivers that it has to be flicked back into place. “A better solution would be some sort of momentary switch.”

Similar challenges have been experienced at Schneider, where engines ultimately de-powered because drivers ignored the related warning light. The answer has come in form of cab decals explaining what the lights mean.

It all adds up. Every Schneider driver now needs an hour of extra training, while lead mechanics receive up to 40 hours of related training.

General mechanics need an extra five hours of study time, while maintenance call centre associates need another two hours to focus on questions specific to the emission systems.

New engines, old oils

Despite all the changes, these fleets admit that one thing has stayed the same – their oils.

There may have been a massive effort to introduce Ultra Low-Sulfur Diesel (ULSD) fuel and a new CJ-4 oil to protect the Diesel Particulate Filters, but these maintenance teams have opted to stick with the previous generation of oils. Schneider has even maintained its current drain intervals of 7,000 miles per quart (a little under 12,000 km per litre) with the help of a regular oil analysis.

Granted, the decision presents a few unknowns. None of the fleets have accumulated the mileage needed to test the impact on Diesel

‘Our drivers noticed a considerable acceleration improvement.’

Dan Umphress, FedEx

Particulate Filters, which could be fouled by the higher ash levels in a CI-4 fluid.

Schneider's largest pool of 2007 engines comes in the form of 48 Freightliner C120s equipped with Detroit Diesel Series 60 engines, but they have only accumulated an average of 260,000 km each.

The fleet doesn't expect the filters to require servicing until they're on the road for at least 480,000 km.

The only change expected in the short term could come in the form of a custom-blended oil that will offer some of CJ-4's properties, but at a lower price.

Says Newby of the Old Dominion fleet: “We're going to

ride it out and see.”

Then there is the question of when the Diesel Particulate Filters will require their first cleaning, and who will do the work. For its part, FedEx plans to clean its own equipment in-house. Each fleet is still considering its strategy.

In the meantime, drivers are enjoying the ride.

“Our drivers noticed a considerable acceleration improvement,” Umphress says of the trucks purchased since 2002. “They call them hot rods.”

Of course, the fleet also opted to move up from the 11-litre displacements that it had bought before 2002, largely because buyers

thought the extra airflow might be helpful.

“New technology has made that ideal obsolete,” he admits, “but once you go up in engine size, it's a one-way ptrip.”

Looking specifically at the 2007 engines, Newby agrees that the torque curves are unchanged. The hot rods remain.

The biggest unknown may involve how much future buyers will like the trucks. FedEx, for example, has yet to re-sell any of the trucks that it bought with post-2002 engines. Newby has a mere 200 of the 15-litre EGR designs that have crossed the million-mile threshold.

Duly admits that Schneider couldn't recover all of the additional costs when it sold some of its used equipment. “But we also did not receive a penalty,” he says.

That's another piece of good news. □

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Understanding, and controlling driver turnover costs

By Jan Westell

LANGLEY, B.C. – A shortage of drivers is an ongoing problem for the trucking industry, and expected to get worse over the next five years. However, the high turnover rate related to this unique industry is also a challenge, but not so easily understood. That was a topic of discussion that intrigued many of the 22 participants who were taking part in a seminar about human resources essentials, designed specifically for the trucking industry, at the B.C. Trucking Association recently.

The facilitator of the seminar encouraged the participants, who all hailed from the trucking industry as employers or administrators, to measure their turnover rates in financial terms. It's a cost of doing business that may other-

wise be underestimated.

"The cost of turnover is hidden," said HR specialist Alison Cunningham. "We don't even know what's bleeding out."

One way to avoid high turnover rates is to consider an effective recruitment program, for greater success with human resource challenges.

The positive outcome would be hiring a competent driver who not only had the right technical skills, but also "fit" with the culture of the company, and stuck with the job for an acceptable period of time.

"You do this by hiring better quality drivers in the first place and you make sure you have a retention program, so that they stay longer," said Cunningham.

Attracting qualified candidates

will save not only time, but also money, by minimizing ongoing recruiting requirements, and potential turnover.

A larger number of qualified candidates will allow a greater range of selection – and the ability to hire the best people for the company. Further, the HR specialist suggested that employers consider building a "pipeline of applicants" that have been pre-screened for basic requirements. This continuous recruiting model should also provide high quality drivers, when the need demands.

Through the preliminary application process, Cunningham warned about identifying "red flags," such as incomplete references, driving infractions, employment gaps, lack of experience, etc.



CHOICES: Treat potential hires with respect from the start and remember they do have other options, experts said at the CTHRC/BCTA seminar.

As for the actual interview, Cunningham emphasizes that it should be done in person, face-to-face.

"I'm not a proponent of hiring a driver over the phone, in 15 minutes. I want the person to come in for the interview."

The HR specialist recommended tracking potential applicants for future positions and keeping a written file of this information for future reference, which could be done by using a simple spreadsheet application.

Even before the interview starts, the applicant should be treated with respect and greeted with warmth, when they arrive for the interview. Otherwise these potential candidates may seek employment elsewhere, considering the competitive marketplace that now exists for qualified truck drivers.

"At the end of the day, the driver has the choice where they want to go," says Cunningham, who warned against the potential for inappropriate and indifferent treatment during the initial application process.

"We wouldn't treat customers that way. Why should we treat drivers that way?"

In response to the facilitator's main points, the participants that attended the Langley seminar talked about their own successful strategies for retaining drivers. One participant had a problem with negative interaction between a dispatcher and company drivers.

The employer decided to send the dispatcher on a 14-hour trip to Whistler, with another truck driver, which apparently offered a good example of the daily grind faced by B.C. truck drivers. Another participant had a neophyte driver who was having difficulty shifting, a skill he eventually learned from a more seasoned driver, with great success.

"He's now one of our best drivers," said the employer.

Each participant in the HR seminar received a guidebook to augment the seminar. The guide has been designed to be easy to use, with three module topics: recruitment, retention, and understanding turnover. For more information about future seminars, visit the CTHRC Web site at www.cthrc.com, or call 613-244-4800. □

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First hour of driving most dangerous: FMCSA

By Jan Westell

WASHINGTON, D.C. – In a study to determine the safety of driving a truck over a period of one to 11 hours, it was revealed that the first hour is the most dangerous – by far.

The higher crash percentage in the first hour of driving is a major finding that is relevant to an assessment of the existing federal Hours-Of-Service (HOS) regulations, which has been examining the 11-hour driving period for truck safety. The study was in response to public criticism over the safety aspect of a regulatory increase of driving from 10 to 11 hours, since the regulations changed in 2005.

“This had been a contention with some, that allowing drivers to drive an extra hour would significantly increase crashes, but that contention was not supported in our study,” says Richard Hanowski, the director of the Centre for Truck and Bus Safety at Virginia Tech Transportation Institute, who headed up a research project funded by the US Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA).

The findings of this research project were discussed over a recent online forum, or “Webinar,” with the intention of promoting the findings, and to encourage safety at the wheel, especially within that first hour of driving, according to the chief of the FMCSA research division.

“This was really one of the main purposes of this Webinar: to get the message out to safety managers that the first hour of driving can be the most dangerous and that safety managers need to convey to their drivers, the importance of taking measures, (and) to be fully awake prior to starting their drive,” says Martin Walker, who also offers this advice to truck drivers: “Don’t roll out of the sleeper berth and start driving: Have breakfast. Exercise. Shower. Do something to be fully alert before you start driving in the morning.”

In analyzing the high incidence of first-hour crashes the researchers considered circadian lows versus circadian highs (a 24-hour cycle in the physiological process), but found nothing significant in that analysis.

The study also considered traffic density, with no definite conclusion as to why the first hour of the driver’s work day was the most accident-prone – at 14.7%, with a leveling out and much fewer incidents throughout the day.

“There is a spike in the first hour, and everything else is about the same,” says Hanowski, who offered no rationale, but could only presume that the problem with the first hour of driving might be related to sleep inertia, including the “take-off” and “landing” function of driving.

These are all hypothetical reasons that could be considered by fleet managers, according to the transportation expert, who doubted that any federal regulations would be considered.

“The first hour spike was an interesting finding, but I don’t believe there is anything that FMCSA can do about that, in terms of regulations anyway,” he says. “In my opin-

ion, addressing that would fall with the fleet safety managers, and the drivers, of course.”

Hanowski recommends that fleet managers alert drivers about the importance of being cautious, observant, and practicing defensive driving.

While the research director has his own hypothetical rationale for the spike in crashes, he says the reality is probably quite different from one fleet to another.

“I suspect that much of it might be attributed to the more complex driving environment that many of our study drivers came across in the early stages of their drive: intersections, merging, and most importantly, interacting with other vehicles,” he says, while offering further hypothetical reasoning.

“I think that this might carry over

to other hours as well, given these same conditions. That is: it may not be the hour so much as the complex driving environment and heavy traffic that may occur early in their drive. So, the take-away would be that drivers need to practice safe, defensive driving at all times, but especially when they are in complex, high demand situations.”

The research project also considered the increase in off-duty time from eight to 10 hours, an HoS revision implemented in 2003, which allowed drivers to get more sleep: approximately one hour more than under the former HoS regulations.

It is a revision that has the researchers wondering about a correlation with high first-hour crash incidents.

“An important question associated with this change was: does the ad-

ditional one hour of allowable driving time, increase crash risk?” asks Hanowski.

The data for this research project was collected with the participation of three trucking companies.

The test trucking companies operated during normal, revenue-producing runs, with 103 drivers driving an average of 46 trucks for about 13 weeks.

The trucks were fitted with a variety of data acquisition systems, including “drowsy driver warning systems,” and four video cameras that were placed in optimal locations on the trucks.

Over 100 data measures on driving performance were collected, which was considered a considerable achievement, according to Hanowski.

“As far as I know, this is the most complete on-road study ever conducted.” □

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Setting the stage

Ontario, Quebec ponder speed limiter enforcement

By Carroll McCormick

MONTREAL, Que. – For those trying to keep track of the twists and turns in the road leading to speed limiter laws in Quebec and Ontario, here is the latest: Quebec now has a speed limiter law, but has not yet implemented it and professes not to know when it will.

Ontario is busy drafting its own law, it may have it ready to adopt by spring and it wants to implement it by this fall or sooner.

To recap the story, last November Quebec became the first province to introduce speed limiter legislation, in Bill 42. On Dec. 19 the National Assembly voted B-42 into law.

However, the law set no implementation date for section 66, which mandates activating speed limiters at 105 km/h; i.e., Quebec has a law but has not yet turned it on.

The word from Transports Quebec, as of Feb. 29, is that it is conducting studies of “105” – the hip new shorthand for this issue.

It desires and is discussing harmonizing the implementation of 105 with the rest of Canada and even North America.

When 105 will be implemented, and how it will be enforced are, at least for public ears, unknown.

Harmonization talks between Ontario and Quebec are taking place at the “staff level,” according to Chris Brant, manager of the carrier safety policy office, with the Ontario Ministry of Transport.

“We are working with Quebec and Transport Canada as well, should any other jurisdiction be interested. We want our legisla-

tion to dovetail across the Ontario-Quebec border,” he says. However, he adds, “We are not going to wait forever.”

According to Brant, Ontario’s MTO is satisfied that the 105 concept is safe and sound enough to impose on trucks and that its strategies for implementation, education and enforcement are already partially fleshed out.

First, with or without harmonization with other provinces or states, once Ontario implements its own 105 law, every truck built in 1995 or later and with a gross vehicle weight of 11,793.4 kilograms (26,000 lbs) or more

that operates in or through the province will have to have its speed limiter set to 105 km/h.

No matter where a truck comes from, says

Brant, “They need to be ready to comply.”

That said, the law will not require trucks without speed limiters to be retrofitted with them. But Brant also notes, “You can’t hide, modify, defeat or deactivate (your truck’s speed limiter). That would be considered an offence.”

There will be an education period of six to 12 months after 105 is implemented, during which truck owners who have not set their speed limiters will not be prosecuted, at least the first time they are stopped.

The strategy to spread the word about 105 will be broad and could include roadside inspections, pre-announced blitzes, inspections at weigh stations, information booths at trade shows/conferences and sign campaigns.

What carriers should not count

‘We are not going to wait forever.’

Chris Brant, MTO



COMING SOON?: Trucks from all parts of North America will be expected to comply with Ontario’s speed limiter rules, when enacted.

on are letters in their mailboxes alerting them to the new law.

“We will ask officers (around the province) to put together speed limiter plans with the resources each (area) has available,” says Brant.

“We’ll see how the level of ignorance is in the first three to six months. The education period is just that. We would be lawfully allowed to (ticket) but we don’t plan to initiate prosecution for non-compliance. The intention is to reach drivers and let them know that there is a new law on, and you have X time to become compliant.”

Ontario is also well along in testing the equipment its enforcement officers will need to test trucks for compliance. The idea is to jack into a truck’s Electronic Control Module (ECM), download speed limiter data in a read-only format and determine whether the speed limit has been set to 105.

The MTO has already purchased and beta-tested some off-the-shelf technology for interrogating ECMs, and is looking at other equipment that might be suitable for purchase and possible modification to meet its needs.

The gear needs to be ruggedized, portable, have readouts that are visible at night, and be capable of printing out data for enforce-

ment purposes.

As well, says Brant, “There is a lot of data we don’t want to see. We are only interested in the speed-related settings. We are looking at how to give our officers the way to see the speed limiter information without inconveniencing drivers.”

It is difficult to imagine that Transports Quebec, its latest claims notwithstanding, does not already have some well thought out implementation and education plans in place and that the carrier enforcement branch of the Societe de l’assurance automobile du Quebec would not yet have any enforcement equipment to play with.

According to Quebec Trucking Association president Marc Cadieux, Quebec wants to get as many provinces on board as possible, although he says Prince Edward Island is not going to buy into 105.

He does say, not surprisingly, that a soft enforcement period in Quebec has been discussed.

If Ontario does become the first jurisdiction in North America to implement 105 in this “show me yours and I’ll show you mine” story, its “all must comply” law, will surely mean that resistance to 105 is futile and other jurisdictions will quickly follow suit. □

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Star trek: Test driving Western Star's 4900 FA

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. – My first time behind the wheel of a Western Star and I'm given a decked out 2008 model. For so many years as a company driver, the only time I'd get close to a Western Star was when one passed me on the road.

But it would be easy to get attached to this driver-friendly, 13-speed Eaton Fuller matched with the big Detroit Diesel engine (14-litre with 470-515 horses).

I cut my teeth on Ford Louisvilles and they always seemed to be mated with Motown power. Something about the variable turbo on the Detroit 60 engine lets you bang through the low gears without any lag, and play the transmission like a virtuoso accordion player. And there's that deep responsive tremolo as you top out in high range – like opening the throttle on a powerful motorcycle.

Western Stars can also be fitted with Cat or Mercedes engines, but this Detroit is all I need for checking out the gentle hills of the Niagara Escarpment along with Harper Ontario Truck Centre's district sales manager Brian Howe.

My ride is a 4900 FA (set-forward axle) with a walk-in 82-inch Stratosphere sleeper that's stand-up enabled from nose to bunk. From the outside it displays the classic Star lines: the belt buckle radiator and bowed-out sleeper cab; plenty of blinding chrome and stainless steel fixtures.

"A lot of Western Star owners want their equipment to look sharp," says Howe. "Lots of lights, lots of chrome and lots of options."

Indeed, I can see why owner/ops and specialty fleets love these trucks. Driver comfort is a big feature. Truckers spend a good portion of their lives inside the cab of a truck – and even big men and women would feel at home in a Western Star. Yes, those are real wooden cabinets in the bunk. When was the last time you saw real wood used in truck fittings?

The Western Star is 100% truck, nothing pretentious about it, no gimmicks. Canadian truck drivers have always had a close relationship with Western Star and remain loyal customers of the brand. The trucks were hand-built in Kelowna, B.C. up until 2002 when production was shifted to Portland, Oregon, where they're still constructed with the same hands-on assembly procedures. Fourteen units per day roll out of the Daimler-owned West Coast plant, most of them headed for anxiously-waiting owner/operators or specialty haulers.

Western Star's ruggedness and durability is legendary, and its attractiveness to vocational applications is easily explained. For a young country with extremes in geography and climate, the Western Star is well-suited to resource-based industries like mining, logging and construction. Twin steering axles are available in 4900-series trucks and in the heavy-duty 6900s.

On-road Editor

Harry Rudolfs



But this 4900 is all highway. My ride is just a bobtail jaunt, but it's enough to attest to the Star's fine ride and driveability. Equipped with Freightliner/Hendrickson's AirLiner suspension all around, even the front axle, the unit glides like a limousine. Still, I have the urge to hook up to a gravel trailer or a set of B-trains loaded to the hilt with lumber or coiled steel. This Western Star screams: "Work me!"

"This is not an entry level truck," says Howe, who explains most Western Star buyers come to purchase the equipment after they've been in the business for a few years. "They've built up some equity and want to step up to something better."

The traditional design of the Star with its large radiator makes it a perfect candidate for 2007 EPA engines with plenty of cooling potential to accommodate the demands of the DPF. The regeneration process is entirely automatic during highway use. "Most likely the driver won't even notice it's happening," says Howe.

A dash-mounted switch allows the operator to initiate or disable the soot-burning function depending on the circumstances or location. P&D work may require manual periodic regeneration, i.e., after a long day in the city.

My test unit rolled on 3.73 rear ends and the big Detroit put out 1,650 ft.-lb. of torque at 1,200 RPM. No speed limiter on this horse, she kept creeping up to a buck and change on the 410 highway with nary a vibration. Quiet ride, too, sitting on Meritor axles (12,000 front, 40,000-lb rears).

According to Howe, automatic transmissions are not that common on Western Stars, but several options are available, including a full Allison automatic, or the Eaton Fuller AutoShift and UltraShift models.

"By far the 18-speed is the most popular on a lot of our trucks, not just for heavier highway operations but for other high horsepower applications," he says. Alternate engine options available include the Caterpillar C-13 and C-15 models, and the Mercedes MBE 4000 that puts out 450 hp.

But when you've got it right, it's not necessary to change much. And with the exception of the 2007 EPA engines, the 4900 is basically the same as last year's truck. It's still got the same rugged 5/16" frame (125,000 psi) with tubular steel cross members.

What is impressive is the care that the manufacturer takes in routing the air and electric lines through the chassis. They're bundled and set off from the frame by brackets. And electrical cords have a part number etched on

the wire or cable every 18 inches for easy identification and replacement.

The partial wrap-around console is fitted with well-lit rocker switches and needle gauges – labeled with words instead of weird diagrams. In fact, there's nothing digital or electronic on the dash except the fuel-consumption indicator.

The steering wheel itself is classically-styled of a standard diameter with leather sleeves, unencumbered by push button controls or extraneous padding.

The inside trim was a muted gray "Mesa, diamond-tufted vinyl with buttons," that's also available in maroon, blue and tan. Even the metallic trim around the instruments can be had in three styles: black, chrome or gold

Western Star prides itself on its sleepers which have a flat floor and lots of head room. I liked the dinette seating package which gives it a home office/lounge/kitchen feel. And I really liked the rear window option that would be a great help when blind-siding trailers.

Owners, especially, prefer the 4900 LowMax low profile models, a custom look that says: "this is my truck and I ride my way."

And I found out it's a myth to assume company drivers don't drive Western Stars. As a reward for 10 years service with



O/O FOR A DAY: On-road editor Harry Rudolfs enjoys his ride in this Western Star 4900 FA.

Woodcock Brothers Transport of Sebringville, Ont., owner Brad Woodcock buys his company drivers their own Western Star 4900 EX LowMax tractors, fully loaded and spec'd to owner/operator standards.

"When you walk out of a coffee shop you can be proud of it. And the drivers respect that," says Woodcock.

Dave Ritchie, owner of L. Ritchie Cartage in Scarborough, Ont. operates a fleet of 38 Western Stars. "They're a little bit more money, but I still think you get the best value for your dollar," he says. "They enhance the image of our fleet and help in driver retention." □

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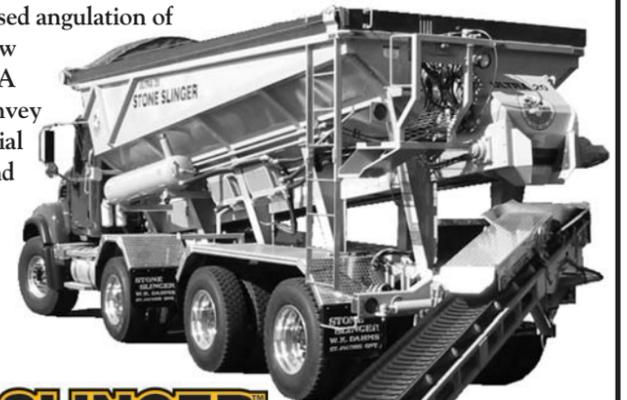
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By James Menzies
ATLANTA, Ga. – Since 2002, fuel has crept up from 9% of a fleet's cost of operating a long-haul truck to a staggering 35%. It has reached the point where fleet managers get giddy over an opportunity to improve fuel mileage by as little as 1%.

But what if there was a way to improve fuel economy by 30% or more in stop-and-go applications or 8% over-the-road, all the while reducing idling and extending brake and engine life? Early users of hybrid trucks say it is possible.

Hybrid-electric drive trucks have been trickling into the marketplace, and are now providing real-world results that have many fleet managers taking notice.

With real-world testing substantiating claims of major fuel mileage improvements, two-fold extensions in brake life and significant idle-time reductions – it looks like hybrids are here to stay.

Double digit fuel economy improvements, extended brake life and the elimination of idling. Three solid reasons why hybrid trucks are:

Here to stay

By now, all the OEMs have at least experimented with hybrid-drive vehicles, and most now have hybrid models in full production. The truck makers have favoured the Eaton hybrid system, which uses regenerative braking to harness kinetic energy produced during braking and then stores it in a battery pack. That energy is then used to help pro-

pel the vehicle via an electric motor which works on its own at low speeds and in conjunction with a traditional diesel engine at higher RPMs. It's a parallel hybrid system, meaning a driver can continue to operate the vehicle via the diesel engine alone should the hybrid system become disabled.

With hundreds of hybrid trucks

now in service across North America, the reviews are trickling in: and they're overwhelmingly positive.

Bill VanAmburg, senior vice-president, WestStart-CALSTART, administrator of the Hybrid Truck Users Forum (HTUF), has been overseeing the use of hybrid work trucks over the past six years. The agency's goal was to "speed the development and introduction" of hybrids, with its sights ultimately set on reducing the industry's use of petroleum by 20% by 2020.

Under the HTUF program, 24 hybrid-electric trucks have been put on the road over 18 months. So far, 14 of those vehicles are delivering fuel economy improvements of 54% or more.

"The more work-site time, the better the miles per gallon," explained VanAmburg, noting the best results were achieved with trucks that run auxiliary equipment such as man-lifts off the electric motor. Perhaps more impressive than the fuel savings, however, was the fact the HTUF trucks have averaged just one mechanical issue per truck every two years.

OEMs have been field-testing hybrid trucks as well, and they are telling similar success stories. At the National Truck Equipment Association's Work Truck Show, officials from International, Freightliner and Kenworth all touted fuel economy improvements of 30-40%. But there are other advantages as well. In stop-and-go applications, where the greatest fuel economy improvements are achieved, some fleets have doubled, or even tripled, their brake life. This is because as part of the regenerative braking process, the electric motor acts almost like an engine brake, slowing the vehicle down when the driver lets off the throttle.

Jeff Mudgett, senior technical engineer with Eaton Corp., says FedEx is running 24,000 to 28,000 miles between brake jobs on its hybrid delivery trucks – that's double the life of the brakes on its traditional-drive vehicles.

The most impressive results have occurred with vehicles that combine stop-and-go driving with the need for an electronic power take-off (ePTO), such as utility trucks. A traditional-drive truck must idle to power devices such as a man-lift or boom.

The ePTO, however, shuts down the truck's engine and powers the device almost soundlessly via the electric motor and batteries. When the batteries are nearly depleted, the truck automatically starts up to recharge the battery pack. This generally takes about four minutes.

Once they've been recharged, the diesel engine again shuts down and allows the electric motor and batteries to do the work.

Utility fleets have reported idle-time reductions of up to 87% at job-sites, according to David Bryant, Freightliner's vocational sales manager, hybrids. Not all applications are suited for hybrid-electric vehicles, however. For instance, an ePTO will not be of much use if the auxiliary device continuously draws more than 15 horsepower, admitted Bryant. And aerial devices taller than 50 feet may also draw too much

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power to achieve a significant fuel savings. The key is to talk to your dealer to determine whether your application lends itself to the use of hybrid trucks.

Components and packaging

One of the biggest challenges facing OEMs has been simply finding a home for all the additional components that hybrids require. Hybrid systems include several sizeable parts, including: a Power Electronics Carrier (PEC) which houses the lithium-ion batteries and related electronics; a hybrid drive unit which includes the electric motor, automatic transmission, clutch and other components; a motor inverter/controller; and a liquid cooling system, to name a few.

There are other optional devices that may be required for certain applications, such as an auxiliary power generator (APG) and electronic-PTO. The PEC poses the biggest challenge. It houses two high-voltage lithium-ion batteries, harnessing 340 volts of electricity.

Collectively, the hybrid components weigh about 400 lbs, and they take up a lot of space. Fortunately, the electric motor provides 60 hp and 200 ft.-lb. of torque, so operators can spec' a smaller diesel engine, recovering much of the 400 lbs that's added by the hybrid system, said Bryant.

Freightliner, for instance, recommends the Cummins ISB, which offers a 490-lb weight savings over its heftier cousin, the ISC.

One of the pleasures of observing the emergence of hybrid systems has been watching the OEMs find clever ways of packaging the extra components while trying to maintain a tidy back-of-cab (BoC) for equipment upfitters.

For its part, Freightliner shortened the fuel tanks on its M2e so the hybrid cooling system could fit neatly behind the tank. With the increase in fuel mileage offered by hybrids, Bryant said most operators won't be impacted by the 16% reduction in fuel capacity – the truck can still be operated just as long between fill-ups.

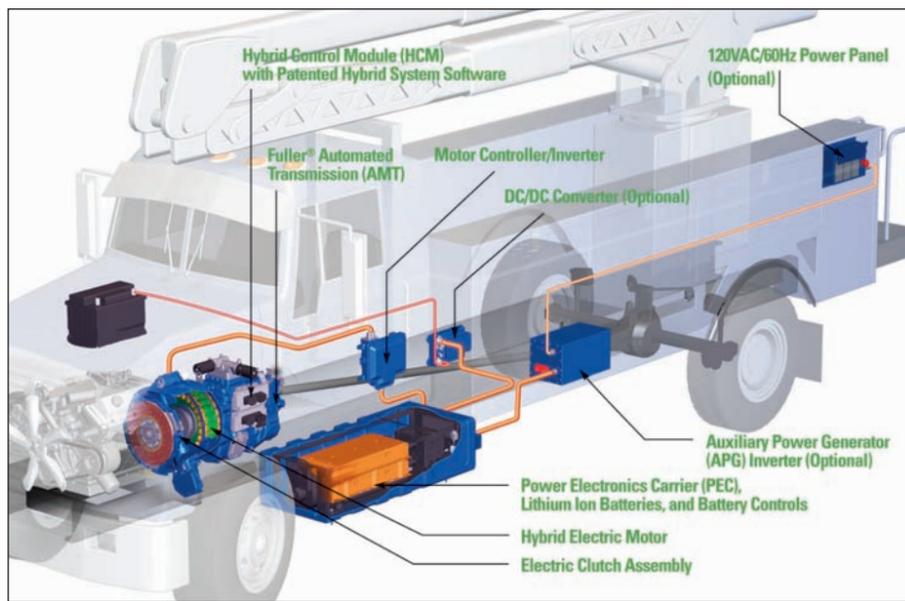
The company maintains a clear back-of-cab thanks to its step-mounted diesel particulate filter and muffler with vertical tailpipe. Well almost...the company has placed the motor inverter/controller on the back of the cab, which extends the BoC by four inches, but provides easy access for service.

On Freightliner's new M2e hybrid beverage truck, the bulky PEC was mounted inside the body along the ceiling where it doesn't impede payload. Bryant said the PEC can be mounted up to nine feet away from the other hybrid components, without suffering a decrease in voltage.

Mounting the PEC inside the body isn't yet an option on refrigerated boxes, Freightliner officials told *Truck West*, and it may interfere with loading if it's mounted on the ceiling of certain types of bodies.

Peterbilt has taken a different approach. The truck maker placed most of the hybrid components in the 12-volt battery box behind the cab steps, and mounted the PEC on the frame rail for an equally tidy approach.

"We found the body-builders



HOW IT WORKS: The system generates electricity during braking and stores it in the PEC. That energy is then used by the electric motor to help power the vehicle, on its own at start-up and along with the diesel engine at higher speeds.

wanted everything consolidated in the battery box," explained Chris Wehrwein, senior design engineer

with Peterbilt. The components can be mounted in various locations, depending on the need of the operator.

The PEC comes with a nine-foot leash, which offers some flexibility.

Greg Loew, market manager, hybrid vehicles with Altec Industries, a manufacturer of aerial devices, said upfitting equipment to hybrids has not been without its challenges. First, the company had to ensure there were no operational differences for utility workers.

"It's critical the operator doesn't notice a lot of difference," said Loew. "There needs to be a smooth transition from one to another. We needed to add new things so when a guy grabs the pistol grip he's been grabbing for the last 20 years, it functions exactly the same way."

Installing equipment onto a hybrid chassis took some getting used to, and Loew said the company had to dedicate a special bay for upfitting equipment onto hybrids – trying to do it on the assembly line was causing too many slow-downs.

Continued on page 28 ■

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HYBRIDS

Corporate mandates driving hybrid purchases

■ Continued from page 27

Another challenge has been educating customers that not all applications are suited to hybrid trucks.

Digger derricks, for instance, use so much battery power that Loew said "batteries are going to last 30 seconds to a minute, and you're not going to get the engine-off time that you need."

Cost

With fuel savings often exceeding 50% and idle-time reductions of 80% in some applications, one may wonder what's holding the industry back from the more widespread adoption of hybrid vehicles?

That can be summed up in one word: Cost. OEMs offering hybrid vehicles were surprisingly candid about the price, when asked recently at the Work Truck Show in Atlanta. Eaton's hybrid system adds between

"Cost is not a show stopper, they're still ordering our trucks,"

— Judy McTigue, Kenworth Truck Company

US\$40,000-\$45,000 to the price of a chassis. If you require ePTO capabilities, you can tack on another \$15,000.

"Cost is not a show stopper, they're still ordering our trucks," said Judy McTigue, medium-duty marketing manager, Kenworth Truck Company.

"We're all fighting the same battle," admitted Freightliner's Bryant, when asked about the cost. "Right now, it's a bugger."

In the US, it's a little easier to swallow a \$60,000 up-charge, thanks

to government incentives. Up to \$12,000 in federal tax incentives are available for Class 7 hybrid purchases, and that can be topped off with state or local funding in at least nine states. Some US carriers have been able to cover the entire cost premium through government incentives, enabling them to enjoy an immediate payback.

Here in Canada, no such government grants or tax breaks currently exist specifically for hybrid commercial vehicles. Peterbilt's Wehrwein said even without government help,

a payback can be achieved in the right application. Utilities for instance, which benefit not only from improved fuel mileage and brake wear, but also from an 80% idle-time reduction while operating their truck-mounted boom, are perfect candidates for hybrids. Peterbilt projects a return-on-investment within three years in utility applications – not bad, considering the typical life-cycle of a utility truck is five to seven years. But customers are demanding even faster paybacks, according to Kenworth's McTigue.

"Customers want a two to three year return on investment," she said.

Then there are those companies that are motivated not by cost reductions, but by corporate-driven environmental values.

That's the case with most early adopters of hybrid trucks, said Dan Kratz, truck operations manager for GE Capital Solutions. He said he fields calls every day from companies looking to 'green' their fleet operations as part of a corporate objective.

"The main push is corporate mandates," he said. "That's the major portion of what we're doing. As far as the tax implications, they love it, but the real driver is the corporate mandate."

Once a fleet has come to terms with the increased purchase price, there are other maintenance costs to consider as well.

The PEC contains a filter which must be changed twice a year. The filter costs about \$15, said Josh Lepage, sales manager, product integration with International Truck and Engine. But beyond that, there's not a lot to worry about. Synthetic transmission oil can last up to 500,000 miles and the batteries are designed to last six to eight years, depending on duty-cycle and weather.

But those lithium-ion batteries will lose power gradually, and when they do give up the ghost entirely, they cost about US\$5,000 to replace.

Lepage said OEMs are looking at exchange programs as well as re-manufacturing options for batteries. Batteries remain the weak link in the hybrid chain; they are expensive, heavy and offer a finite power supply.

Kratz pointed out fleets also have other concerns preventing them from leaping onto the hybrid bandwagon.

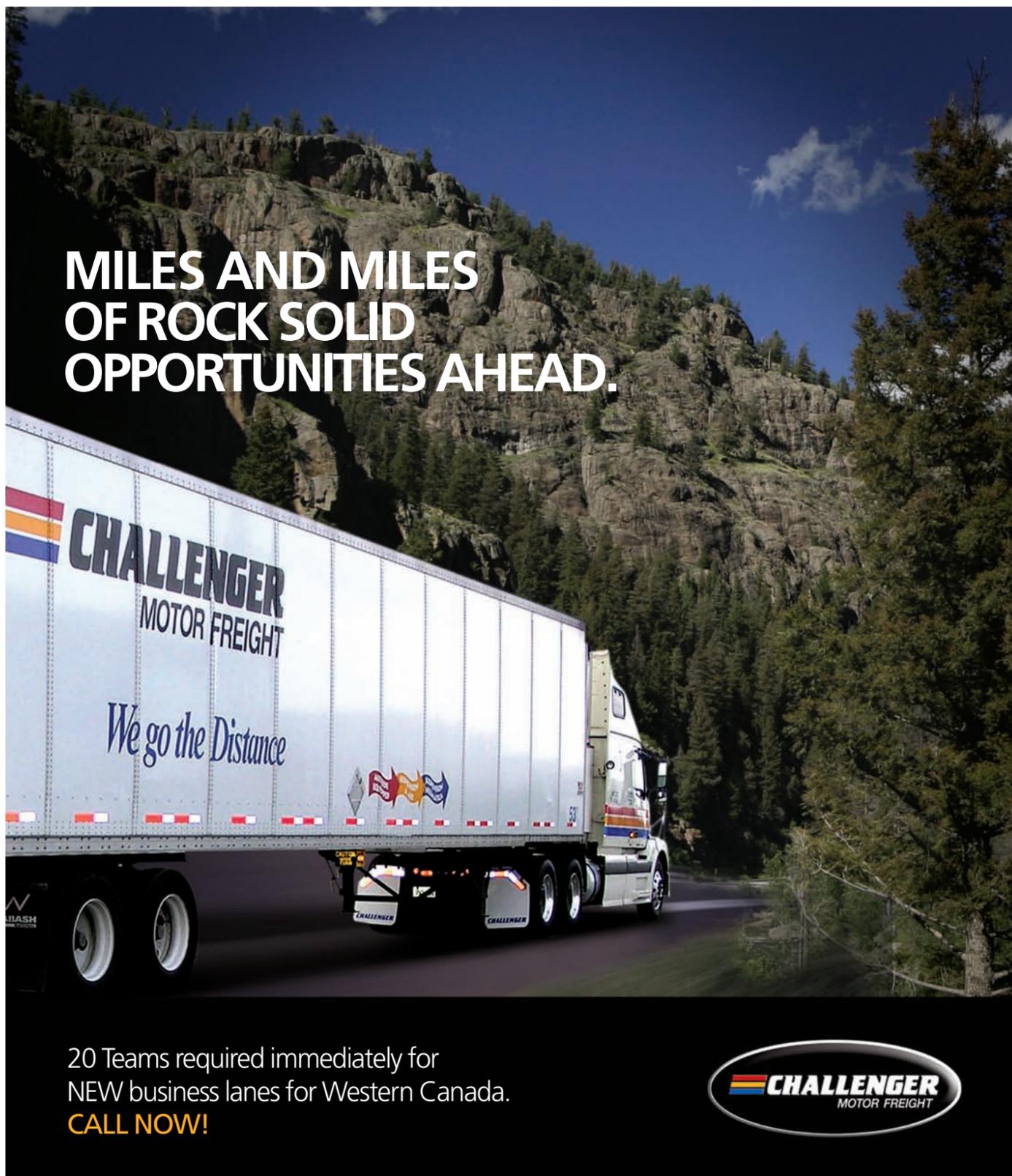
Parts and labour availability, for instance, could be an issue.

"Are dealers going to stock parts? For some of the units there may be a reluctance to," Kratz suggested. He also pointed out many dealers remain uneducated about how to sell and service hybrid vehicles. And then there's the question of resale value.

"Is there a demand for used hybrid trucks? We don't know, they haven't been in the market long enough," Kratz said. He pointed out stripping a chassis of its costly hybrid components before resale is not ideal.

On the road

I had the opportunity recently to test drive several medium-duty hybrid trucks on Atlanta's city streets. They included: a Freightliner M2e beverage truck; an International 4300 utility truck; and a Peterbilt 335 utility



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truck. All were Class 7 vehicles and each featured Eaton's hybrid-electric system.

Hybrid-electric drive trucks certainly provide a unique driving experience. Although engineers urged me to drive each of the vehicles "just like any other truck," the driving experience was vastly different. Not better or worse – just different.

Central to the Eaton hybrid system is its proprietary AutoShift transmission, which takes shifting out of the equation. I simply released the air brakes, pushed the 'D' button for drive and was ready to roll. The AutoShift routinely starts out in second gear, but you can override this if need be by switching the transmission to manual mode and selecting first gear. I never found this to be necessary.

When I first let off the brake, the vehicle crept forward, powered solely by the electric motor, which emitted a soft whine.

The diesel engine remained at idle as I exited the garage. The beauty of the electric motor is that it offers full torque immediately upon depressing the throttle. Think of it as a light switch, when you ask for power, you receive it instantly.

International's Lepage said a hybrid truck can reach 60 mph nine seconds faster than a traditional-drive vehicle. I wasn't going to be hitting 60 mph on the short test route in downtown Atlanta, but I don't have any reason to doubt him.

"You get that 60 hp (provided by the electric motor) immediately when touching the gas," Lepage reasoned. Indeed, the electric motor was very responsive. This is a characteristic of hybrids which is undoubtedly welcomed by drivers who make frequent stops and starts, which most hybrid operators are likely to do.

As my speed crept up to 12 mph, the diesel engine was still at idle. But once I crossed a threshold (at about 600 RPM), the diesel engine roared to life, spooled up to match the speed of the electric motor and then the two worked in unison to power the vehicle. At that point it drove like any other medium-duty truck, until I let off the throttle, that is.

When I let off the gas, the electric motor immediately began bringing the vehicle to a halt. You can't coast along like you would in a traditional-drive vehicle.

It's almost like someone threw a sail out behind the truck. This takes some getting used to, but it lends credence to the claim that brake life can be extended dramatically compared to traditional-drive trucks.

I let the electric motor slow me down entirely when approaching stop signs and red lights – the only time I stepped on the brake pedal was to come to a complete stop and maintain my position.

As the motor slows the truck down, it harnesses power which is transferred to the batteries housed in the PEC. That power is then used to help launch the vehicle the next time the throttle is applied, saving fuel in the process, as well as wear and tear on the diesel engine.

Another impressive feature of the Eaton system is its "hill hold" capability. I stopped the vehicle on a steep incline and found that the truck did not try to roll back like you'd expect it to. No fancy foot-



IDEAL FOR UTILITIES: Utility applications are well-suited for hybrids, because the electric motor can be used to power the truck-mounted man-lift. Pictured is an International DuraStar hybrid.

work is required when you want to continue on your way.

The M2e beverage truck that I drove had already accumulated 50,000 miles, yet the inside of the smokestack was a real testament to cleanliness of the vehicle. The inside of the stainless steel stack still gleamed – maybe it's time we reconsider the term "smoke" stack.

Unlike the Freightliner, both the International and Peterbilt utility trucks featured an ePTO and auxiliary power generator (APG). The ePTO is used to power equipment such as a man-lift while the APG provides AC power for other devices. (If the hybrid system is too quiet for your liking, you can plug a stereo in there).

Both the ePTO and APG can be activated by pressing a button on the shifter inside the cab. Eaton engineers allowed me to play with the ePTO to demonstrate how quiet it is. The outriggers and lift could be operated by the electric motor alone, which made for nearly soundless operation.

I'm told this is appreciated by work crews, who can now communicate with each other in a normal tone of voice rather than via walkie-talkie.

Depending on how much strain you put on the batteries, the electric motor could power truck-mounted equipment for minutes or hours. Typically, after about 30 minutes of use, the truck's engine restarts and juices up the batteries.

Of the trucks I drove, only the Pete 335 had a dash display to show exactly how the hybrid system was working. The truck I drove had a rudimentary screen, but Wehrwein said production models will come with full-colour screens and snazzier graphics.

The display featured power graphs that indicated the amount of energy being driven into the batteries as well as the remaining battery power. They also displayed throttle pressure and fuel efficiency, providing the driver with real-time advice on how to maximize fuel mileage.

What's next?

As medium-duty hybrids continue their trickle into the marketplace, truck makers have already fixed their sights on bigger things – such as Class 8 hybrids.

McTigue said Kenworth has already started producing heavy-duty hybrids based on the T660 platform. While heavy-duty trucks typically don't undergo rigorous start/stop applications, there are still fuel savings to be had, she insisted.

In fact, McTigue said Kenworth's heavy-duty hybrid will deliver 10-15% fuel savings in line-haul applications. Meanwhile, the trucks can provide a reduction in idle-time and eliminate the need for an auxiliary power unit (APU) to provide heating, cooling and hotel load power.

Just five minutes of engine idling is required to charge the hybrid system's batteries, meaning Class 8 tractors can comply with strict anti-idling rules in places such as California.

Class 8 hybrid systems are comprised of the same basic components as the medium-duty vehicles, McTigue explained. Peterbilt has designed a heavy-duty hybrid based on its Model 386, which has been undergoing real-world testing with Wal-Mart.

The truck was expected to deliver fuel savings of 5-7% as well as a 90% reduction in idle-time when the truck is parked.

Meanwhile, Volvo Group has developed its own hybrid system for Volvo and Mack Class 8 trucks, as part of a partnership with the US Air Force.

The proprietary system utilizes an electric turbo-compound to gener-

ate electricity which can be used to power devices such as pumps, fans, air compressors and even power steering and air conditioning, explained Anthony Greszler, vice-president, advanced engineering with Volvo Powertrain North America. This takes strain off the diesel engine, saving fuel in the process. It also eliminates the need for an APU and can reduce idling almost entirely, even while stuck in stop-and-go traffic, Greszler added.

Volvo officials claim their heavy-duty hybrid system will achieve fuel savings of 5-8% in long-haul applications.

Another development that could be on the horizon is the more widespread use of hydraulic hybrids.

The systems offer the same benefits of hybrid-electric trucks while doing away with the burdensome batteries, instead generating power hydraulically.

"Hybrid hydraulics are moving forward," said WestStart-CALSTART's VanAmburg. "In the heavy segment, with heavy stop-and-go, hydraulic hybrids are going to be very competitive."

For now, however, it's hybrid-electric vehicles that are receiving most of the attention, with the expectation that higher volume orders will help drive down production costs and by extension, purchase price.

"We need production numbers in the thousands," said VanAmburg. "A self-sufficient marketplace is the goal, but we're not yet at the tipping point."

That tipping point may be near, however. Just last month, Eaton announced that Coca-Cola had placed an order for 120 hybrid beverage trucks – the single biggest order of hybrid systems in Eaton's history.

A few more orders like that, and economies of scale will help eliminate the cost factor entirely. Steve Guillaume, general manager, medium truck group with International, predicted the cost of hybrid systems will decrease 50% by 2010.

If his prediction rings true, the value proposition driving hybrid truck sales will become much stronger, with or without government incentives. □

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Eaton receives largest ever order of hybrid systems

ATLANTA, Ga. – Eaton Corp. received its largest single order of hybrid electric drivetrains in late February.

Coca-Cola will be purchasing 120 new hybrid drive trucks in 2008, adding to its current fleet of 20 hybrid delivery vehicles.

Eaton officials announced the deal at the Work Truck Show. The sale represents the largest ever North American commercial order of Eaton's hybrid systems.

Coca-Cola tested and evaluated its current fleet of 20 hybrid delivery trucks, and found they reduced emissions by 32% and fuel consumption by up to 37%.

They've also enjoyed lower maintenance costs, Eaton officials announced.

"We have been working with Coca-Cola Enterprises since 2003 to assess our systems," said Dimitri Kazarinoff, general manager for emerging technologies at Eaton's Truck Group. "Coca-Cola is demonstrating its commitment to reducing pollution and greenhouse gases, and Eaton is pleased to be a part of this effort. We are looking forward to working with them to deploy the systems into their transportation network."

Dave Leasure, corporate director of fleet procurement for Coca-Cola Enterprises, added, "In addition to the environmentally-friendly advantages that hybrid vehicles deliver, we are also happy to report that



COOL ORDER: Coca-Cola has placed an order for 120 hybrid beverage trucks such as this one.

driver acceptance has been highly favourable, especially in high start-and-stop applications. The hybrid drive units have been performing very well in communicating with the electronic engines, always giving us the necessary torque and horsepower when it is needed."

Currently, hybrid delivery trucks come at a premium of about \$40,000 per vehicle. However, Kazarinoff said large orders like the one placed by Coca-Cola will help drive down production costs.

"We're now moving to a scale where we can move these hundreds of units to thousands of units and tens of thousands of units," he said during a press conference.

Eaton expects to sell 1,500 to 2,000 hybrid systems this year, according to Kazarinoff.

It is believed the Coca-Cola order consists entirely of straight trucks which will be deployed throughout the US. □

Michelin wins truck writers' tech award

ORLANDO, Fla. – Michelin's Durable Technologies is this year's recipient of the Truck Writers of North America's (TWNA's) Technical Achievement Award. The company was acknowledged during the Technology and Maintenance Council (TMC) meetings in Orlando. Doug Jones, Michelin's customer engineering support manager was on-hand to accept the award, which recognizes a product or service that exhibits technical innovation, has a wide applicability to the trucking industry, offers significant benefits to users and is widely available. Complete vehicles are not eligible, but individual components and systems are.

This year's selection committee consisted of: Paul Abelson (*Road King & Land Line*); Tom Berg (*Heavy-Duty Trucking*); Eric Berard (*Berard Communications*); John Baxter (*Randall-Reilly Publishing*), Tom Gelinis (*Fleet Equipment*); and James Menzies (*Truck News and Truck West*).

Michelin's Durable Technologies made its debut on the company's XDA5 drive tire with a tread design that is molded in three dimensions. As the tire wears, the tread reveals new grooves and tread blocks, giving the tire a second life, self-regenerating to improve wet, worn traction. The self regenerating tread can extend tread life by as much as 30%.

According to selection committee chairman Berard, "Michelin's innovation couldn't have come at a better time. Tires have always been a major maintenance expense for fleets as well as owner/operators. So, while providing tires that can last longer without jeopardizing safety at a moment where oil prices are at a never seen high, Michelin durable technology helps save the environment as well as save money to the trucking industry. There is no doubt in my mind that the Technical Achievement Award Committee members have made the best choice again this year."

More than a dozen products were nominated for this year's award. Finalists included: the Andersen Eco-Flap; ArvinMeritor's PinLoc System; EHS Industries' Galvanized Trailer; Michelin's Durable Technologies; Ruehl's Sturdy Steps; and Traction Technologies' Cinch. □

Volvo, Mack to waive parts shipping charges

GREENSBORO, N.C. – Volvo Trucks North America and Mack Trucks are launching a new program that will eliminate freight charges for most emergency replacement parts, the companies have announced. The program will be launched in Canada at the end of March. If a part is not available at a local Volvo or Mack dealership, but is available within the companies

parts distribution centers, the part will be shipped overnight to the dealer at no cost to the customer.

Parts can also be ordered after hours and received the next day or ordered on Saturdays for Monday delivery, the companies announced. Oversized parts weighing more than 150 lbs are shipped via LTL carrier, again with no freight charges to the customer. □

Canadian dealers named North America's best for Kenworth, Pete

REGINA, Sask. – A Saskatchewan Kenworth dealership has been recognized as an international leader in sales, service and operation, by its US corporate headquarters.

Custom Truck Sales of Regina was named 2007 Kenworth Dealer of the Year, an award that recognizes outstanding dealerships in both the US and Canada.

The president of the Regina-based dealership credits strong customer service, and a quality product, for this corporate tribute made recently in San Diego.

"This recognition is a great testament to the hard work of our dedicated employees, who provide a high level of service to our customers on a daily basis," says Brent Leach.

The Dealer of the Year award is based on overall performance, quota attainment, dealer performance, parts sales and service, and operation and facility evaluations. However, there were a few attributes that stood out to earn this recent award for the Regina dealership, such as superior sales and "excellent" customer support, according to Kenworth general manager and PACCAR vice-president, Bob Christensen.

"Custom Truck Sales management and employees have a tremendous passion and dedication for being the world's best and are truly deserving of the 2007



DEALER OF THE YEAR: From left are Gary Moore, Kenworth assistant general manager for marketing and sales; Ken Leach, Custom Truck Sales; Bob Christensen, Kenworth general manager; and Brent Leach, Custom Truck Sales.

Kenworth Dealer of the Year award."

The dealership was chosen from among six other "gold" dealerships for 2007, including: Edmonton Kenworth, Inland Kenworth – US (which includes dealerships in California, Arizona and New Mexico), Kenworth of South Texas (San Antonio, Texas), Kenworth Sales Company of Salt Lake City, Utah, and MHC Kenworth of Oklahoma.

Custom Truck Sales has been a Kenworth dealer since 1965 and operates dealerships in Regina, Saskatoon, and Estevan, Sask., as

well as Winnipeg, Man.

The dealer isn't new to the Kenworth awards podium, and has won Kenworth "silver" awards in 2003, 2005 and 2006.

Meanwhile, Stahl Peterbilt, with dealerships in Edmonton, Grande Prairie and Fort McMurray, Alta. has been named the company's Dealer of the Year.

The Edmonton location, owned by Ed, Paige and Eddy Stahl, took top honours.

The Edmonton dealership was relocated to its current home in 2005. It features a 75,000 sq.-ft. building which includes an indoor

truck display large enough for two trucks as well as 2,220 sq.-ft. of parts display and 25 service bays.

"Stahl Peterbilt of Edmonton is a shining example of Best-in-Class customer service," said Bill Jackson, Peterbilt general manager and PACCAR vice-president. "Stahl Peterbilt markets the full-range of Peterbilt and PACCAR products, services and technologies for both heavy- and medium-duty Peterbilt trucks which leads them to annual growth in truck sales and profitability."

Ed Stahl, president of Stahl Peterbilt, said "We strive to provide 'world-class' customer service and support for our valued customers. It is a pleasure to sell the Peterbilt truck since it is recognized as the industry leader for reliability, workmanship, and technical innovation."

Stahl Peterbilt has always been among the top Peterbilt dealerships.

During its five years as a Pete dealer, the company has won four platinum awards and two best-in-class awards from the company.

It was also named Medium-Duty Dealer of the Year in 2004. Peterbilt Pacific out of Surrey, B.C. was also recognized by the company.

The dealership, owned by Don and Terry Pasiuk, was recognized with a Best-in-Class Dealer Award. □

NEW PRODUCTS

Heated trailer roofs coming to Canada?

UK company says it has solution to snow and ice accumulation

By James Menzies
TORONTO, Ont. – This winter, *Truck News* received reports the O.P.P. were targeting truckers who had snow and ice built up on their trailer tops. It poses quite the quandary for drivers and fleets.

Climbing atop a trailer to remove snow and ice is a workplace hazard, and strongly discouraged by workers' compensation agencies in Canada. But on the other hand, police are inclined to ticket a driver for failing to remove the wintry debris.

What's a driver to do?

There appears to be a potential solution out there, and it comes from the United Kingdom of all places. William Tudor, president of Erythros Technologies International contacted *Truck West* after reading a blog entry on trucknews.com about trailer-top snow and ice accumulation.

His company has developed a roof-top system that prevents

snow and ice from collecting in the first place. It consists of a series of panels (10 would be required for a 53-ft. van trailer) which capture solar energy and store it in small, watch-sized lithium batteries. When the temperature drops below 35 F (2 C), the system turns on and warms the panels to 45-50 F (7-10 C) to prevent snow and ice from accumulating. When the temperature is above 2 C, the system hibernates.

It works on untethered trailers as well as those that are attached to power units, Tudor told *Truck West* in a recent interview from the U.K.

"You don't have to worry about turning it on," explained Tudor, who learned all about the dangers of snow and ice accumulation while working as a truck driver in the US. "These trailers sit in the yard and it's not sticking, so they're ready to go which is a major plus for drivers and trucking

companies. They don't have to worry about trailer turnaround and drivers getting citations."

The company has been in talks with Liberty Linehaul to begin testing the system here in Canada next winter. Currently, the largest obstacles to bringing the system to market are the manufacturing cost and life-expectancy, Tudor admits. The company is aiming to design a system that will last more than 10 years and it is seeking suppliers that can help drive down the manufacturing cost.

By the time the system is rolled out, Tudor said it should cost no more than \$300 per trailer.

"I understand that yes, it is expensive, but there is no real cheap way to resolve the problem," Tudor said. "It will pay for itself in insurance claims alone in five to six years. We're trying really hard to bring the price down as much as possible."

The company has already initi-

ated discussions with Transport Canada and also plans to appeal to insurance companies to provide incentives for fleets that adopt the technology.

The entire system weighs about 78 lbs – significantly less than a rooftop full of snow and ice. When the sun isn't out, the heating coils are powered by the batteries which last for up to 24 hours before needing to be recharged by the solar panels. Tudor said the batteries are designed specifically to perform in extremely cold weather.

"I know it gets bloody cold in Canada," Tudor explained. "We searched around and found a Norwegian company that supplies these batteries, which were designed for use in the Arctic Circle."

Erythros is in the final stages of its research and development phase. Next up is real-world testing which is set to commence next fall in Canada. For more information or to volunteer as a test fleet, call William Tudor at (0 11 44) 7717 516 422 or e-mail will_tudor@erythrostechnologies.com. □

@ARTICLECATEGORY:844;



Shaw Tracking has introduced **LSD (Legal Subdivision) Mapping**, which is tailored specifically for the oilfield industry. The new mapping feature is designed for the OmniVision Mobile Computing platform. LSD Mapping provides locations of oil rigs based on LSD coordinates, the company says. Dispatchers can use the program to locate lost drivers and help direct them to specific oil rigs. New oil rigs are posted regularly and the LSD map refreshes every two minutes to provide real-time truck information. For more information, visit www.shawtracking.com.



SkyBitz and StarTrak Systems have teamed to introduce a **new refrigeration monitoring and control system for reefers**. SkyBitz Reefer Control allows fleet managers to monitor, manage and control all their reefers from their personal computer, the companies announced. The SkyBitz GLS 210 Mobile Terminal has been linked to StarTrak's ReeferTrak module to provide reefer location and performance information. Fleet managers can access in real-time, information such: operating state; temperature; alarms; battery condition; and fuel level. They can also control temperatures, clear alarms, etc. For more information, visit www.skybitz.com.

Thermo King has introduced three new **remote status light displays** for reefer-equipped trailers. The displays are designed to make it easier for

drivers to check status, temperature and fuel levels by simply glancing in the rearview mirror. Three configurations are available for the new displays: Status; Status/Fuel Level; and Status/Fuel Level/Temperature. Thermo King says the new displays will help drivers avoid out-of-fuel shutdowns. Each display uses high-visibility LED lights and boasts an auto-dimming feature for night-time driving. The displays are compatible with all Thermo King SB trailer units with SR-2 controllers. The lights are available now through Thermo King dealers.



Safety Link has introduced a new Acorn Design **lug nut cover**, which the company says will prevent wheel separations and look good in the process. The lug nut cover is now available with a chrome finish, the company says. The Acorn Design lug nut cover encases the entire lug nut, protecting the lug nut and the studs from road sludge, which can cause corrosion. For more information, visit www.safetylinkinternational.com.



Carlisle Motion Control Industries is taking its transit **brake lining** to the vocational truck market, targeting applications such as refuse; concrete; logging; sand and gravel; and beverage distribution. The WT56 friction material offers the stopping

power needed in vocational applications and also provides quiet stopping for noise-sensitive operation, the company claims. It is specially designed to handle the high heat generated by heavy loads in stop-and-go environments, according to Carlisle. For more details, visit www.carlisleemotion.com.



Virtual Dispatch has launched its **Excelerate Live Web-based dispatch system** for fleets. Excelerate Live is ACE- and EDI-ready, the company says. All that is needed to operate the system is your standard Internet Explorer Web browser. Users can create orders online, produce invoices and proof of delivery documents and track orders through the program. Virtual Dispatch officials say a company can be up and running on the system in under an hour. The cost is \$50/month and more information is available at www.virtualdispatch.com.



Air-Weigh has introduced a new **in-cab electronic scale** dubbed LoadMaxx. The new scale packages existing hardware and software technology in a new ComLink hardware device. The scale features a J1939/CAN bus interface allowing instantaneous dash displays of vehicle weight, which can also be transmitted to a fleet's headquarters. Two alarm outputs are available to notify a driver when an axle group weight or GVW exceeds limits. The new scale also features an inclinometer

option which compensates for uneven pressure on a vehicle's suspension which can occur when parked on an incline. For more information, visit www.air-weigh-scales.com or call 888-459-3444.

A new **"intelligent" dipstick** that uses sensor technology to determine when motor oil needs to be replaced is being introduced to the trucking industry. The IntelliStick monitors oil condition by measuring the additive conditions and oxidation/acid build-up in the oil, while also scanning for water, coolant and fuel intrusions, the company says. A PDA can be used to read the test results. The company says the IntelliStick reduces unnecessary oil changes and eliminates the cost of oil analysis. For info, visit www.intellistick.com.

Universal Boot has introduced a new **lightweight conical kingpin lock**. The lock can be installed with no key or tool, the company said, and it is easily removed thanks to its push-lock design. The company says its newest kingpin lock provides higher security than other locks in its price range. It's available for \$239. For details, visit www.universalboot.com.



Peterson Manufacturing has introduced a white **LED work light**, comprised of 10 super high-output white diodes, designed to provide even lighting for work areas. The M907 is four inches in diameter and is an ideal replacement for PAR 36-type lights, the company says. The work light is vibration-resistant and hardened for durability and boasts 100,000-hour diode life as well as a low amp draw. For more information, visit www.petersonmfg.com. □

NEW PRODUCTS

International's newest star shines bright

LoneStar turns heads at Chicago Auto Show



HEAD-TURNER: The LoneStar's distinctive new look is bound to turn a lot of heads on the highway.

By James Menzies

CHICAGO, Ill. – It's not every day a truck is highlighted on the front page of a major daily newspaper – unless it has been involved in an accident, that is. But International's new LoneStar was the hit of the Chicago Auto Show, its bold new look creating a buzz that transcended the trucking industry.

The truck captured the imaginations of visitors from outside the trucking industry and arguably garnered more media attention than any other vehicle at the auto show, appearing on the front page of the *Chicago Tribune* as well as in consumer magazines such as *Popular Mechanics*.

"This truck is unlike anything on the road today," Daniel Ustian, president and CEO of Navistar, announced at the show.

When the LoneStar takes to the highway in earnest (by the time you read this, some customers will have received their first test vehicles) it will no doubt turn a lot of heads. The LoneStar has a retro look that is a throwback to International's C- and D-series trucks from the 1930s and 40s. That's not a coincidence, according to Dave Allendorph, chief designer, Navistar Truck Group.

"The initial question was, 'What would it look like if we designed a modern vehicle with our heritage imbedded in there?'" he recently told *Truck West*. "We looked at our entire historic product line to see what was there and we ended up being really enamored with the C- and D-series...and we ended up starting to borrow from them."

Retro design

The most grabbing similarity is the sloped, v-shaped rad, which gives the truck a bold, sleek appearance. As International designers began mimicking the front-end design of its retro vehicles, the company noticed aerodynamics were an unintended benefit of the classic design.

"I think it was just the design of the time – nobody really thought



RETRO: International returned to its roots with the LoneStar, borrowing some design characteristics from classics such as the DMAXX (left).

about aerodynamics," Allendorph said of International's early vehicles. "But it turned out to be very correct. As we applied those shapes and forms to the LoneStar and tested it, we had a great looking truck for sure, but it also ended up having very high performance from an aerodynamic standpoint."

When engineers set out to design the LoneStar, they aimed to appeal to those owner/operators who prefer classic-style trucks. However, given today's fuel prices and thin profit margins, the company also realized it had to offer aerodynamic improvements over your traditional long-hood, flat-nose conventional truck design.

"Our benchmark (for fuel economy) was actually the aerodynamic industry, not the classic," said Mark Wohlford, LoneStar program manager, International Truck Development and Technology Center. "Our best tractor two years ago was the 9400; that was our benchmark and what we went after and we are equal to many of the aerodynamic tractors out on the road."

Wohlford said testing indicates the LoneStar is 5-15% more aerodynamic than other classic models, which translates to a fuel economy improvement of up to 7.5%. He said only International's own ProStar and perhaps the Freightliner

Cascadia can boast better aerodynamics. Because of the LoneStar's impressive fuel economy, International expects its newest flagship to have some fleet appeal, even though it's undeniably an owner/operator truck.

"When we looked at classic truck buyers in the past, 63% of trucks that are sold in the classic market are sold to fleets," pointed out Wohlford. "We see this as a driver retention reward truck for fleets and there's also a high interest from owner/operators."

Customizable

The LoneStar will undoubtedly appeal to owner/operators interested in customization. International eyed Harley Davidson as a benchmark for developing a fully-customizable vehicle. And like Harley Davidson, International has provided owners with a wide variety of customizable add-on parts they can purchase to truly make the truck their own. This feature will no doubt be appreciated by owner/ops who love chrome, but lack the time or skill to perform the customizations themselves.

"An integral part of the whole LoneStar philosophy was to make it distinctive and unique and not just a cool truck today, but to let it grow, evolve and become more and more personalized all the time," Allendorph told *Truck West*.



LUXURY LIVING: The interior has the feel of an upscale downtown condo.

A peak inside

Obviously, the exterior of the LoneStar commands the most attention. But the interior is equally distinctive. It features the look and creature comforts of an upscale condominium, rather than your traditional sleeper cab. Wohlford said the company aimed to create a "psychological break between work space and living space."

Designers surveyed hundreds of truck drivers and found, not surprisingly, that many did not like eating on their bed. So instead of simply slapping a bed in the sleeper, the company engineered a comfortable living area for drivers featuring everything from hardwood floors (an option) and a stylish, curved sofa.

"When they're ready to go to bed, that back wall folds down and it has a full 42-inch bunk behind it," explained Wohlford. Other highlights include airline-style overhead storage bins and an integrated workspace with laptop plug-ins.

No prototype required

In what is a real testament to today's computer simulation capabilities, International managed to skip the prototype stage of development altogether. The LoneStar was extensively tested through computer imaging and clay modeling, which negated the need to develop costly prototypes, the company said.

"That ended up saving about 12 months for us in the product development process," Wohlford said.

Only a few "engineering mules" were created to test the truck in the real world, but Wohlford said this was done simply to validate the company's existing expectations. That design-to-production approach shouldn't concern customers, the company insisted.

"We didn't cheat anything," Wohlford said. "The quality expectations on this vehicle are higher than on any other vehicle."

Availability

The LoneStar will be available to order in April. Production will begin in August at International's Chatham, Ont. assembly plant with deliveries set to commence in the fall. Initially, the LoneStar can be spec'd with Cat and Cummins power.

When a 15-litre version of International's own MaxxForce engine becomes available (likely not until 2010), it will also be an option. □

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Canucks clean up in Caribbean

PARADISE ISLAND, Bahamas – Both Canadian carriers and drivers have been awarded with top industry honours and a little slice of paradise at the Truckload Carriers Association's (TCA) annual convention. The convention was held at The Atlantis Resort in the Bahamas.

A fine Ladd

Doug Ladds, a company driver with Guelph, Ont.-based MacKinnon Transport, has been named the grand prize winner in the 2007 Company Equipment Driver of the Year Contest.

The contest honours the top company drivers based on their safety records, unblemished work histories, and community and industry involvement.

Ladds has been a truck driver for 24 years, working for MacKinnon Transport since 1994. During his career, he has logged more than 3.6 million accident-free truckload kilometres.

A member of his company's driver-trainer team for 14 years, Ladds is now the head driver trainer.

He has attained certification as a Certified Professional Driver and is a member of the executive board for the MacKinnon Transport Drivers Association. Ladds is also the first driver to attain the president level of MacKinnon's Road Masters Program, an initiative designed to recognize both a driver's safety-first attitude and his general knowledge of the trucking industry.

Ladds is currently serving a two-year term on the Ontario Trucking Association's Road Knight Team, a select group of ten truck drivers who speak to the media, students, civic groups, driving schools and other interested parties about the trucking industry, safety and sharing the road with trucks.

In 2001, Ladds received TCA's Highway Angel Award for assisting three young motorists trapped in a burning vehicle.

As the Grand Prize winner, Ladds received the following prizes: a

Cummins engine-powered Dodge Ram pick-up truck; an all-expense paid trip for two to the Grand Ole Opry; roundtrip airfare for two to anywhere in the continental US; a GPS navigation system; \$10,000 in cash; \$5,750 in truck stop gift cards; and a \$500 truck parts gift certificate

Bison best of the biggest

Well-decorated Canadian carrier, Bison Transport of Winnipeg, Man., also came away a winner at the TCA event. Bison was named the grand prize winner of the highly coveted National Fleet Safety Award in the category of truckload companies with a total annual mileage of more than 25 million miles.

TCA presented the award to Rob Penner, vice-president, operations, at the Annual Banquet March 3.

Bison Transport was selected from among nine division winners in the National Fleet Safety Division Awards announced in January.

The company strives to meet stringent standards in its overall safety programs, on and off the highway, and was judged to be the best in its commitment to improving safety on the highways. This year marks the third consecutive year that Bison Transport has won TCA's Grand Prize National Safety Award for its mileage category.

Smaller fleets also awarded

Though Bison was crowned the grand prize winner in the fleet safety competition, three other Canadian carriers placed in either first or second place in their division. MacKinnon Transport topped the 25 to 49.99 million miles, with Erb International of New Hamburg, Ont. placing a close second.

In the 50 to 99.99 million miles category Robert Transport of Rougemont, Que. bested Carter Express of Anderson, Ind. and Koch Companies of Minneapolis, Minn. to claim top spot.

The judging process began with the determination of the top companies in each of six mileage divisions.



CANADIAN CONTINGENT: From left to right, winners Wendell Erb (Erb Transport), Rob Penner (Bison Transport) and Evan MacKinnon (MacKinnon Transport) proudly display their awards from the Truckload Carriers Association.

The division winners were selected based on accident frequency only. The top three winners in each division were then able to compete for the two grand prizes.

The grand prize winning companies were judged on their overall safety programs, both on- and off-highway. During the judging, some of the factors considered included safety program organization, employee driver/independent contractor selection procedures, training, supervision, accident investigation, inspection and maintenance of equipment, and outside activities including general highway safety.

Mackinnon's Haight honoured

During the TCA event, yet another Canadian received top honours, as MacKinnon Transport's executive director Ray Haight was presented with the 10th annual Lee J. Crittenden Memorial Award.

The award, presented annually by Professional Truck Driver Institute (PTDI) is given to the person who has done the most to advance the ideals and goals of the PTDI, of which Lee Crittenden was a staunch supporter until his death in April 1998. Haight, who is the outgoing chairman of PTDI, was elected in December 2002. Shortly after, he became the organization's full-time chairman and leader.

He was instrumental in changing PTDI's board of directors to a fully functioning group that took an active role in moving PTDI forward.

With a strong belief in PTDI's voluntary standards in the US and Canada, Haight has given countless presentations demonstrating the importance of training standards and the certification of courses that meet those standards. He has spoken to industry leaders and the press about the need for standards and quality, not just in training, but also in professionalism within the transportation industry.

Haight has also been tremendously active in promoting the image of the driver and in the retention of drivers, having established an envious retention rate with MacKinnon in the process. Another of his high profile achievements was the establishment of the apprenticeship program in Ontario that could potentially turn into a pilot program for the entire trucking industry.

Although his responsibilities with PTDI will be winding down, Haight is now embarking on a new endeavour, having just been elected for a one-year term as chairman of TCA. During his year as TCA chairman, Haight plans to increase TCA's presence in the educational arena. □

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MISSING



Sigourney Teresa Chisholm
5284-P

D.O.B.: September 20, 1991

When last seen:

Height: 2 feet 2 inches **Hair Colour:** Brown

Weight: 22 lbs. **Eye Colour:** Brown

Nickname: Sigi

Missing Since: May 17, 1993 **From:** Toronto, Ontario



WANTED ON A CANADA WIDE WARRANT FOR ABDUCTION:

Name: Patricia Joan O'Byrne **Eyes:** Green

Hair: Dyed Red **Height:** 6'1"

Characteristics: Faint scar on upper lip, wears glasses or contact lenses **Weight:** 210 lbs

Anyone with information please contact:

All Calls Confidential - No Name Required

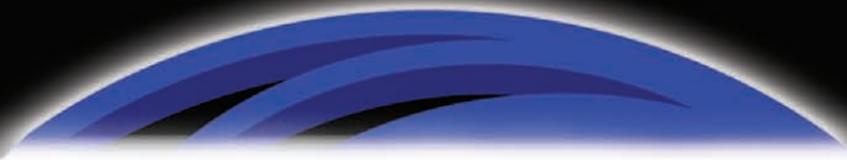
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A NEW LOOK: UPS Canada is adding 139 propane-powered delivery trucks to its fleet, bringing its total worldwide green fleet to 1,629 vehicles.

UPS Canada goes from brown to green with propane trucks

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. – UPS Canada will be rolling out 139 additional cleaner-burning, propane delivery trucks. The majority of these vehicles will be deployed in Quebec, Ontario and Alberta and the rest distributed between British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

The propane vehicles are joining roughly 600 propane trucks already operating in Canada.

The addition of these vehicles means more than one-third of UPS Canada's 2,000 package delivery vehicles will run on low-carbon fuel.

"UPS Canada has been a leader in deploying alternative fuel vehicles since 1985," said UPS Canada vice-president of automotive, Steve Clark. "This deployment demonstrates UPS's continued commitment to running our business in a responsible manner."

The 139 new propane trucks are expected to reduce UPS's carbon dioxide emissions by a total of 254 metric tonnes per year, the equivalent weight of 80 UPS trucks.

This would be a 35% improvement compared to conventional gas engines. Additionally, particulate matter emitted from vehicles will be virtually eliminated, the company said.

In the 1980s, the propane trucks currently in UPS Canada's fleet were converted from gasoline and diesel to run on alternative fuels.

The new trucks are now originally manufactured for alternative fuel use. The UPS propane vehicles will run on liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) provided at eight on-site fuelling stations at UPS facilities in Canada.

LPG is derived from petroleum during oil or natural gas processing and is cleaner-burning than regular gasoline.

The newly-added propane-powered vehicles feature the latest technology in clean-burning propane engines. Propane vehicles emit about one-third fewer reactive organic gases than gasoline-fuelled vehicles.

Nitrogen oxide and carbon monoxide emissions are 20% and 60% less, respectively, than conventional vehicles.

UPS's global alternative-fuel fleet now stands at 1,629 vehicles – the largest such private fleet in the transportation industry – and includes compressed natural gas, liquefied natural gas, propane and electric and hybrid-electric vehicles. UPS is also working with the US Environmental Protection Agency on a hydraulic hybrid delivery vehicle.

UPS began deploying alternative fuel vehicles in the 1930s with a fleet of electric trucks that operated in New York City. Since 2000 alone, the company's "green fleet" has travelled 202 million kilometres. □

Truck fleets among best managed firms

TORONTO, Ont. – Transportation companies continue to dominate the annual list of Canada's 50 Best Managed Companies award. New among transportation companies on the list of the top 50 Best Managed Winners list for 2007 were Cummins Western Canada and TransX.

In addition to the top 50, Platinum Club status is given in recognition of those companies who have sustained a "standard of excellence and leadership in all areas of their business practices," and have qualified in the award program for at least six consecutive years.

In total, 52 companies throughout Canada have been awarded Platinum Club membership in 2006 (up from 44 in 2006). Platinum Club Members in the transportation sector include: Bison Transport, Challenger Motor Freight, Consolidated Fastfrate, Fountain Tire, Kriska Holdings, MSM Transportation, QuikX Transportation, Wheels Group, and Yanke Group of Companies.

In addition to the 52 Platinum Club members, 84 Canadian companies requalified in 2007 for the Best Managed designation by successfully meeting stringent operational and financial review requirements. Requalified members from the transportation industry

for 2007 include: Armour Transportation Systems, Day & Ross, H & R Transport, MacKinnon Transport, M-O Freightworks, and Tandet Management.

Organizers said the winners of this year's competition enjoyed the highest profit and revenues since the program's inception, boasting combined sales of \$8.5 billion and average sales growth of 31%.

"This year's winners leveraged their entrepreneurial passion to drive their revenue, profits and value in the face of triple-digit oil prices, a strong Canadian dollar, and mixed economic signals south of the border," commented John Hughes, Deloitte partner and national leader of the Best Managed program.

"The 2007 Best Managed companies have clearly proven their stability in a changing economy," said Calvin A. Younger, senior vice-president, CIBC Commercial Banking, a national sponsor of the program. "They think beyond their own walls and have achieved outstanding results. We are thrilled with their achievements this year."

The Platinum Club and 50 Best Managed Companies awards are sponsored by Deloitte, CIBC Commercial Banking, Queen's School of Business, and the *National Post*. □

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Mark Dalton Survival of the FICTIONAL



PART 3

By Edo van Belkom

The story so far...

Mark has been eating all-day breakfasts at greasy spoons for months and when he finishes breakfast, his pants don't fit him any more. He pokes a hole in his belt to solve the problem, but when he heads back to Mother Load, he sees someone going through the cab. He runs toward his truck to try and catch the guy, but he's gassed after 100 feet and the thief gets away.

Mark is feeling fat and out of shape. He calls up Bud and asks Bud how much he weighs. Bud had been a star athlete in high school but since becoming a truck driver had put 290 pounds on his 5'10" frame. Bud warns Mark that the same thing can easily happen to him. Mark decides to do something about it and goes for a walk after he's parked the truck for the night.

The next morning before heading east out of Calgary, Mark stopped in at one of his usual truck stops for breakfast. He sat in his usual seat, picked up a morning paper like he usually did, and waited for Patty, his usual waitress, to come and take his order.

"Mark Dalton: Owner/Operator," she said as she approached the table with a pot of coffee in her hand. She went to pour Mark a cup, but he put his hand out to stop her.

"Hey, watch it," she said. "You'll burn your hand pulling stunts like that."

"No coffee for me today," he said.

"Okay, I'll be back with the tea."

"No, that's not it. What do you have instead of coffee and tea?"

"We've got decaf."

"That's a coffee too," Mark pointed out.

"Right. Well, there's juice... orange and apple." Patty scratched her head. "And I suppose I could pour you a glass of milk."

"Milk, excellent."

Patty stared at Mark with a confused look on her face. Then she pulled the pen out of her pocket and made a note of the milk. "Besides the milk, you want the usual?"

"No," he said. "I want something different today."

"We've got chicken sausages, if you like. And Freddy's made waffles before, but you've got to ask him real nice or he doesn't even hear you."

Mark shook his head. "No, I don't want sausages or waffles at all. By different, I mean completely different."

"How different?"

"Like fruit for one."

Patty's nose suddenly scrunched up on her face like somebody just

farted. "Fruit?"

Mark nodded.

"I think we've got some fruit cocktail in a can."

It wasn't fresh fruit, thought Mark, but it was a start. "And how about some yogurt?"

"Yogurt?" She said the word like it was from another language.

"Yes, yogurt."

She turned to face the kitchen. "Hey Freddy, we got any yogurt back there?"

"Plenty," Freddy shouted back. "I ordered some a few weeks ago and nobody eats it."

"Mark here wants some."

Freddy stepped out from behind the grill to have a look at Mark. "Is he sick?"

Patty shrugged.

"I just felt like having some."

Patty scribbled a few more words on her pad and said, "I'll see what else we got that's...different."

"Thanks," Mark said. "I'd appreciate that."

About 10 minutes later Patty returned with a breakfast that consisted of a bowl of oatmeal, some fruit cocktail, a serving of yogurt and two slices of toast. "Sorry about the bread," she said as she slid the plate onto the table in front of Mark, "but it's whole wheat...and Freddy says that it's supposed to be better for you than white bread. Is that right?"

Mark nodded. "I think so."

"Well," said Patty. "Enjoy."

"I will, thanks."

Mark looked at the spread in front of him and wondered if he'd been wise to change his eating habits so drastically - and all at once. He liked breakfast sausages and bacon because, well...they tasted so good.

However, Mark knew they were tasty because of all the fat they contained. He didn't know all that much about fatty foods, but he did know that they made you feel lethargic and drowsy after you ate them and those weren't good things for someone to be while behind the wheel of a semi-truck. The only thing worse for you was alcohol, and no-one needed to explain the dangers of that to a professional driver like Mark.

Of course, he could drink a gallon of coffee to keep him alert, but that only helped in the short-term. Sooner or later the caffeine would wear off and you'd be struggling to stay awake. If you had to drive any distances - and Mark was hoping to get

deep into Saskatchewan by nightfall - it was better to have some juice. After all, when people tried to set records for hours without sleep the doctors always recommended juice to them instead of coffee and that was a good enough endorsement for him.

When Mark was done eating, his stomach felt full but somehow lighter than when he ate a meal of bacon, eggs, pancakes and coffee.

"You want anything else?" Patty asked him as she cleared the plates off the table. "A donut, maybe. Or an apple fritter."

Mark thought about the offer and felt a slight pang in his stomach. He loved apple fritters, especially the big bulbous ones that looked like giant mutant potatoes. Those things were like meals in themselves and there were many late night hauls that had been fuelled by apple fritters and large double-doubles.

"I, uh..." Mark could feel the weakness come over him as he considered giving in to temptation. After all, he'd had a healthy breakfast and he'd earned a little indulgence - one fritter wasn't going to kill him.

Just then the door to the diner opened and a driver stepped in who was every bit as big as Bud. Big hands, broad shoulders, big boots, and one of the largest waists that could be crammed between a seat and a steering wheel. Mark looked at the man, nodded and said "Hi" and knew he was looking at himself 20 years down the road.

Sure, one fritter might not kill him, but maybe the hundreds, or even thousands he would eat over the next 20 years would do him in one donut at a time.

"No thanks," he told Patty. "But I'll take an apple if you have one."

After a few days on his new diet Mark started feeling better, about himself and behind the wheel. He



didn't get tired as easily, and he slept a lot better at night.

Another bonus he hadn't anticipated but was glad to have all the same was... regularity. Eating fruits and whole wheat bread, and cutting out fried foods and anything that came out of a bag with an expiry date in the next decade had made Mark's bowel movements arrive like clockwork.

These days, Mark ate breakfast, visited the restroom and was good for hours. It sounded strange, but fewer bathroom breaks gave him more time on the road and that meant a better bottom line.

Finally, at the end of each working day, Mark had enough energy left over to read a book, see a movie, or go for a run. At first, it had been little more than a couple of laps around Mother Load, but after a few days he'd broken away from his rig and ventured out around the truck stop parking lot. After that, he felt strong enough to venture onto the side of the highway and run a few miles.

It all felt good and he knew that over the long-term, he would feel better, live longer, and quite possibly become a better driver, because of it.

And if he became a better driver, it meant he'd also be a better person. All that from a change of diet and a bit of exercise. Who could have known?

- Mark Dalton returns next month in the conclusion of Survival of the Fittest.

The continuing adventures of *Mark Dalton: Owner/Operator*
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Feds should help pay for hybrids

Hybrids are getting a lot of press these days. And so they should. With fuel savings of 30-50% a year in medium-duty applications, the trucking community is taking notice. Investing in one of these beauties is not only good for the bottom line (over time) but it's good for the corporate image as well. Everyone knows that this planet is in real trouble (although some still have their heads in the sand) and this technology will help make a significant contribution in reducing the trucking industry's footprint.

No doubt, there's a premium to be paid – they do demand top dollar. You'll see upwards of an additional forty grand tacked onto one of these vehicles (ouch!) but fear not, as with any new technology that has required so much time in research and development, the prices will eventually come down (one only has to remember the original cost of the hand-held calculator. They were a fortune back in the day).

Unfortunately, our government in its infinite wisdom has decided not to pass on any incentives to help take the sting out of the investment. Someone needs to wake up Mr. Harper's P.R. Department to the fact that south of the border, the US government incentives cover up to 80% of the additional cost. Maybe Mr. Bush has been staying up late at night watching Mr. Gore's video. Whatever, they got it right.

Publisher's Comment

Rob Wilkins



Not surprisingly, the Harper government couldn't get the fuel-efficient car incentive program to run smoothly – in fact, they screwed that up royally. Flaherty announced the rebate before all the details were ironed out. The program was to start in March, 2007. In September they still hadn't issued one cheque. Most of these rebates were under \$2,000. Can you imagine what would happen if the government sat on hundreds (thousands) of \$40,000 rebate cheques? It wouldn't be pretty.

At the end of this year, the car incentive program – as inefficient as the process is – will be cancelled. Funny thing, a "green levy" on gas-guzzling cars was introduced in the same 2007 budget that was meant to offset the cost of the rebate program. Although the car incentive program is being cancelled, that green levy tax will remain in place. I can't help but think our government is sending us mixed signals. They say one thing, yet far too often their actions demonstrate another. □

– Rob Wilkins is the publisher of Truck West and he can be reached at 416-510-5123.



Coping with trailer snow and ice build-up

Dear Editor:

The police are now targeting trucks with a build up of snow or ice on their roofs. We have all witnessed this while travelling the highways and I must admit it is a problem. But the approach is a little misguided to expect a driver to remove snow and ice from a 13.6-ft. van. I don't know if any of these officers have been on the roof of a van trailer in the winter but it is comparable to an ice rink! Recently I was at a New Brunswick scale and when a van came in with snow on the roof, the scale operator simply directed the driver to pull over to a catwalk that was the same height as the van. He removed the snow safely and was on his way. All scales in N.B. have these catwalks – a proactive solution to a problem. Why can't we all be proactive and provide this much needed service instead of just writing insecure load tickets? □

James Alderton
Via e-mail



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Owner Operator? Manufacturer: _____ Year/Model: _____ Engine Type/Size: _____
Do you own a Trailer? Yes No If yes, which type: _____
Preferred driving region: Canada U.S.A. Both

Preferred Trailer Type: (Check all that apply)
 Flatbeds Heavy Hauling/Specialized Moving Vans
 Tankers Straight Trucks Super B Reefers
 Vans Other _____

Trailer Type Experience: (Check all that apply)
 Flatbeds Heavy Hauling/Specialized Moving Vans
 Tankers Straight Trucks Super B Reefers
 Vans Other _____

Current Drivers License:
Do you have a Commercial License? Yes No
License Number: _____ Expiry Date: _____ Province/State Issued: _____ License Type: _____
Has your license ever been suspended? Yes No
Number of accidents in last 3 years: _____ Personally responsible for: _____ Not personally responsible for: _____

Total Truck Driving Experience: _____/yrs
Last Employer: _____
Name: _____ Company City: _____ Province/State: _____
Phone #: _____ Start/End Date: _____
Job Description: _____ Reason for leaving: _____
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BOWMANVILLE, Ont. – In Joanne Ritchie’s monthly column in the January issue of *Truck West*, the executive director of the Owner-Operators’ Business Association of Canada touched on the marked lack of rest stop parking for truckers in Canada. She claimed that miles of wilderness with no facilities, no food and not even a paved shoulder is not only frustrating for drivers, but dangerous.

While the addition of new rest stops is still up in air, the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure Ontario have teamed up to remodel and improve the province’s existing rest stops. The remodelling initiative will eventually shut down all 23 of the 400-series service centres, and hopefully, at least from a truck driver’s perspective, relegate each of the sites’ deficiencies. But will they meet the standards of your average trucker? *Truck West* stopped by the Fifth Wheel Truck



Truck Stop Question

Adam Ledlow
Assistant Editor

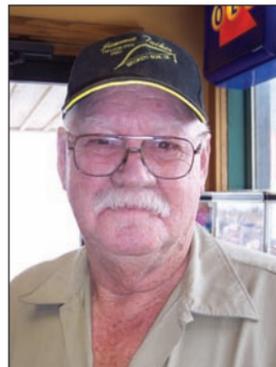
How would you redesign Canada’s rest stops?

Stop in Bowmanville, Ont. to see how drivers would improve Canada’s rest stops if they were in charge of the blueprints.

Glen Dale, a driver with Jimmy Tucker Trucking out of Broken Bow, Okla., says that lack of truck parking is the number one problem at rest stops in both Canada and the US.

The driver of 28 years says that while most truck stops have adequate parking, rest areas often come up short.

He notes that in the US there are



Glen Dale

some rest stops with enough parking for 100 trucks and more sites like that would help the situation.



Henry Bueckert

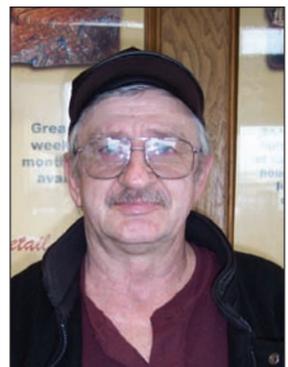
Henry Bueckert, a driver with Landstar out of Jacksonville, Fla., agrees with Dale and says more parking for trucks would be at the top of his wish list. Aside from that, Bueckert says that food choices at rest stop restaurants are few and far between, even though he admits they’re starting to get a little bit healthier.

“As a truck driver you can’t put the truck anywhere else (beside truck and rest stops) otherwise I would probably go to different restaurants.”

Bueckert also says that it would be beneficial if Wi-Fi Internet access was more widely available across the province’s rest stops.

Marvin Kelly, a driver with XTL Transport in Toronto, Ont., again cites parking as the number one issue for Ontario’s rest stops.

He says 25-50 spots just isn’t enough will all the traffic out there and numbers will need to climb closer to 100 for these new and improved service centres to be a hit with drivers. Having vending machines for coffee and snacks, as well as adequate restrooms also rank highly on Kelly’s list.



Bill Meehan

Bill Meehan, an owner/operator with 38 years experience, says Canada is way behind its US counterparts when it comes to rest stops. He told *Truck West* that in states like Ohio and New Jersey, shower facilities, driver rooms, driver facilities and parking have all been vastly improved upon. Some stops have parking lots so big that they offer a shuttle from the furthest points, he said.

“If they’re going to shut us down for 12 hours, 15 hours we need parking,” Meehan says. “You go across Canada and our highway systems for trucks are not quite the best and our rest areas are garbage. They’re antiquated back to the 1950s.”

That said, Meehan notes that Ontario and Quebec are the only provinces that have pull-over service areas, while provinces like New Brunswick and Nova Scotia are sorely lacking. “It’s not just an Ontario thing, it’s a Canadian thing and they need to make it a Canadian thing.” □

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