



Kenworth T660s Pay Fuel Economy Dividends for Flatbed Hauler Central Oregon Truck Company

PRINEVILLE, Ore. – On a sunny spring day, it's hard to beat the drive and scenery on I-97 through Bend, Ore. To the right is majestic Mt. Bachelor, and a few miles north, Three Sisters mountain range. It's all within sight of Prineville, Ore.-based Central Oregon Truck Company (COTC), whose fleet of 162 power units, mostly Kenworths, traverse the interstate on a daily basis.



Central Oregon Truck Company, a flatbed hauler, handles loads through 48 states and Canada. To stay competitive, COTC concentrates on low operating costs, vehicle weight and driver comfort. "And our recent orders of Kenworth T660s with 62-inch AeroCab® FlatTop sleepers are helping out tremendously in meeting all of those goals," said Phil Taylor, COTC vice president of fleet operations.

"When fuel spiked close to \$5 last year, we had to make a concerted effort to improve our fuel economy," said Taylor. "It led us to the transitioning of our fleet to the Kenworth T660 and it's been paying us dividends. The T660s are beating other aerodynamic brands we have tested – with the same drivetrain and horsepower, spec'd identically – by three-tenths of a mile per gallon. That's huge to us." Translated, that's a potential gain of more than \$300,000 in fuel savings over the course of a year for COTC.



"Our best driver is getting 7.0 mpg and that's tremendous when you factor in a flatbed configuration," said Taylor. "Flatbed loads can be very irregular, creating turbulence and increased wind resistance resulting in severe fuel mileage penalties."

Taylor said he keeps close tabs on vehicle performance and governs the engines to 62 mph. Idle time is down to 22 percent thanks to diesel-fired heaters for winter use. In summer months, the company's CARB-compliant Cummins engines are used for idling only when ambient temperatures are over 85 degrees.



Phil Taylor, vice president of fleet operations for Central Oregon Truck Company, stands next to one of the company's fuel-efficient Kenworth T660s.

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He also encourages his drivers to take steps to maximize fuel economy performance. “The gap between the tractor and flatbed plays a part in aerodynamics and drag,” said Taylor. “So we work with our drivers to make sure the gap is at the optimum point. And we make sure air pressure is checked on a regular basis – a 10 psi drop means a 1 percent loss in fuel efficiency.”

With a gross vehicle weight of less than 17,000 pounds, COTC Kenworth T660s generally haul flatbed loads weighing around 48,000 pounds. “We haul a lot of lumber products, steel, and heavy equipment,” said Taylor. “Anything that can be put on a flatbed, we’ll move. While the majority is transported to the 11 western states, it’s not uncommon for us to haul cross-country.”

Since the company began transitioning to the Kenworth T660, purchased through Papé Kenworth in Portland, driver feedback has been excellent, according to Taylor. “The T660s are very comfortable rigs to drive and that has special meaning since the owners of this company were all former drivers themselves. They know how critical it is to operate high-image and productive trucks that make drivers feel proud to drive for our company. These Kenworths do that and more.”

And, when it’s time for trade in, Taylor said Kenworth’s reputation gives him an added advantage. “We normally trade at 550,000 miles and we’ve found that Kenworth trucks provide higher resale value and better marketability than other brands. That’s important in a down economy.”

Kenworth Truck Company is the manufacturer of The World’s Best® heavy and medium duty trucks. Kenworth is an industry leader in providing fuel-saving technology solutions that help increase fuel efficiency and reduce emissions. The company’s dedication to the green fleet includes aerodynamic trucks, medium duty diesel-electric hybrids, liquefied natural gas trucks, and the Kenworth Clean Power® no-idle system. This year, Kenworth became the first truck manufacturer to receive the Environmental Protection Agency’s Clean Air Excellence award in recognition of its environmentally friendly products. In addition, Kenworth is the recipient of the 2008 J.D. Power and Associates awards for Highest in Customer Satisfaction for Over the Road and Vocational Segment Class 8 trucks. Kenworth’s Internet home page is at www.kenworth.com. Kenworth. A PACCAR Company.