



O'Hare Towing Service Relies on Kenworth Trucks To Respond to Roadside Emergencies

Kenworth T800 Features Prominently in Reality Show on Towing Company

DOWNERS GROVE, Ill. – When an overturned truck and trailer hauling 10,000 pounds of plate glass must be moved or when a 60,000-pound trailer must be lifted off its tractor to free the trapped driver, whom do you call?



For many motorists, truck operators and emergency responders, O'Hare Towing Service's distinctive green and white tow vehicles are a welcome sight when they need heavy equipment or loads moved.

"People rely on us when things go wrong out on the road, and sometimes lives are on the line, so it's critical that we can do it quickly, safely and efficiently," said O'Hare Towing Service owner Bill Gratianna. "For the heaviest and most complicated moves, our Kenworth trucks offer us the reliability and the equipment and specifications we need in order to do what we do best. And I depend on the expertise of people at MHC Kenworth-Chattanooga and the engineers at Kenworth to help me choose the right tow truck specifications."

If Bill, his brother, Joey, and his wife, Marci Gratianna, and the rest of the people at O'Hare Towing seem familiar, you may recognize them from "Wrecked – Life in the Crash Lane", the hit reality television show about the towing world. The show airs on SPEED, the U.S. cable network for many of the top motor sports series in the world. The second season of "Wrecked" debuted in May and continues through the summer.



"Wrecked" features the Gratianna family and the employees of O'Hare Towing Service who operate in the Chicago metropolitan area. Most of their business comes from responding to calls from motorists, particularly truck operators, who need roadside assistance due to equipment problems, weather-related issues, and accidents within a 75-mile radius of Chicago. The company also sends out flatbed car haulers and tow trucks to haul cars, stranded buses, trailers, trucks and other heavy equipment across the Midwest or across the country.

To accomplish that work, O'Hare runs a mixed fleet of medium duty flatbed haulers and heavy duty tow trucks painted the company's signature colors of green and white with bold yellow lettering. The company operates 10 medium duty and heavy duty Kenworth trucks, which includes five Kenworth T800s. A sixth T800, equipped with a 35-ton Vulcan V70 stationary towing body, recently joined the fleet. The company will also add a new Class 6 Kenworth T270 in the near future. O'Hare operates Kenworth trucks for their durability and reliability in getting tough tow jobs done successfully.

Bill said Kenworth's trucks have been an integral part of the success of his family's business. Jack Gratianna, Bill's father, first opened the business as O'Hare Truck Service in 1963, the year Bill was born.

"My father's first brand new tow truck was a 1975 Kenworth W900, equipped with a Holmes 750 tow bed," he said. "I remember that truck well — going with him on tows as a young kid and riding in the bunk. In fact, I think it was one of the first trucks our business bought that came with a sleeper bunk."

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Bill said the flagship of O'Hare's truck fleet is a Kenworth T800, equipped with a 575 hp engine, 18-speed manual transmission, a third pusher axle, and a 60-ton Century Rotator. It's driven by Joey Gratianna, Bill's younger brother, who affectionately refers to the truck as his "Mistress." The 28-year-old driver also serves as manager of the company's two diesel truck shops.

"There's a whole bunch of things we love about our Kenworth trucks," said Bill. "Since the mirrors are mounted on the truck's cowl and not the door, we don't get a lot of vibration moving them out of place. The easy-to-read instrument panel offers us bright, well-positioned gauges that we can read quickly. The quietness of the cab also makes for a better work environment. My business is pretty rough-and-tumble and black-and-blue, so anything that can make us more comfortable will also make us more productive and help us stay alert."

While Kenworth trucks have a special place in the hearts of Bill and his brother, Joey, Bill said it's the after-the-sale support he receives from Kenworth's network of dealers that convinces him Kenworth is the right choice.

"I buy my Kenworth trucks from MHC Kenworth-Chattanooga so that I can have the tow bodies and rotators installed at the Miller Industries assembly plant in Chattanooga," Bill said. "But I still get great parts and service support from CIT-Kenworth here in Chicago and when I'm 500 miles from home and I need service on my Kenworth truck, I still get treated by other Kenworth dealers as though I bought the truck from them."

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. 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.



Why Bill Gratianna Participates in Wrecked

Bill Gratianna, who serves on a board of directors for the International Towing and Recovery Hall of Fame and Museum (www.internationaltowingmuseum.org) in Chattanooga, Tenn., first learned about the reality-based show from a fellow board member. A Knoxville, Tenn.-based production company called North/South Productions was looking for a towing company to feature in a reality-based show. Bill, at the urging of his wife, Marci, contacted the company and agreed to send in a video of his company's operation shot by one of his teen-age daughters.

The company liked the video and sent out a camera crew, who shot a pilot for the show. The company then approached several networks including SPEED, which agreed to pick up 19 episodes. The first season's episodes aired last year. The second season began in May. The show's website is www.speedtv.com/programs/wrecked.

"I don't really consider myself to be a tough guy, not like those guys on those other reality-based shows, "Ice Road Truckers," and "The Ax Men," Bill said. "But I decided to get involved in this project for two reasons: it would help out our company and give my drivers the recognition they deserve.

"But perhaps more importantly, it would raise awareness among the motoring public and law enforcement officers about the dangerous work tow truck drivers do," he added. "About 40 to 50 of our brothers are killed out there on the road every year while responding to accidents. I want people to realize how important it is for them to slow down or give tow truck drivers a wide berth when they see them out on the side of the road."