

# CROSSROADS

A Publication For And About Valued D&T Team Builders

SEPTEMBER 2006

## 'If you could see what terminally ill children go through'

It is a privilege for most any trucking company to be associated with an independent contractor such as Paul Kruske. Not only for his professional performance but for what he accomplishes away from his job.

As a driver, Paul, who joined D&T Trucking Company in January of this year, has accumulated about three million accident-free miles in his 23 years behind the wheel. This story, however, was inspired by his volunteer work, because he helps make dreams come true for terminally ill children.

Paul is deeply committed to the Make-A Wish Foundation, a non-profit, nationwide organization dedicated to worthwhile causes on behalf of afflicted youngsters. These children have dreams—a trip to Disneyland or Disney World, a Disney cruise, a meeting with a movie star or famous race car driver, a refurbished room, clothes for the child and his/her family.

The cost of accommodating such dreams is generally between \$6,000 and \$10,000 each. Paul, and a group of friends, for 10 years have been holding fundraisers resulting in 17 children in his Nekoosa, Wis. home area being able to realize their dreams. In the past year, he has become a "wish granter"—meaning that he is the person who actually meets the child and family, does the paperwork to establish qualifications, and interacts with the Appleton, Wis., field office of Make-A-Wish.

"I have now been personally able to say three times that 'yes, your wish is granted'," said Kruske. "If people could see what these children are going through," he added, "learn about them, look at their determination, it would be amazing. It would change the way our society is today."

Even before becoming involved with Make-A-Wish, Paul along with one particular friend believed strongly in worthy fundraisers. But interestingly enough there was one year when no benefit event was needed—"no one's house burned down, for example, no one had a member of the family killed by a drunk driver," he said. So, looking for another cause, they traveled to Appleton, and what they found out struck a chord.

"We have friends who have lost children," said Paul. "Both of us knew how wonderful it was to have our children grow up healthy and how terrible it is when a child is terminally ill and the family is not able to do much."

Since beginning with Make-A-Wish, Paul has seen the range of emotional experiences. Some children have survived their diseases, some have not. With some families, he has remained in contact, with others he has not—"it's a personal, a private thing for them." Sometimes Make-A Wish families appear at fundraising activities, which is an intense motivating factor for volunteers and contributors alike.

There are now 10 people in Nekoosa who are helping Kruske make dreams come true. These are volunteers he knows he can count on time after time, year after year. They understand what it takes to get the job done, and they do what they say they will do, Paul says.

"It's a big job, satisfying, gratifying, but also challenging," he said. "You have to have the right people to make it work, people with a lot of compassion, with hearts of gold."

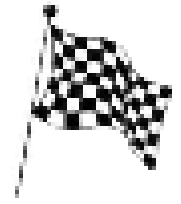
People like Paul Kruske.



*Paul Kruske and his wife, Diana, have a healthy blended family of six children, three grown and three, ages 17, 13 and 12, still at home. And now they have their first grandchild; Paul is holding, Zackaria Edward Smith, Jr., born July 12, then at 7 pounds, 15 ounces and 20 inches long.*

# A Message to D&T Contractors . . .

*Now Is The Time To Start Referring Drivers  
To D&T And Be Entered In The Next*



## SPECIAL REFERRAL PROMOTION



*For a Grand Prize Back By Popular Demand . . .  
A Free Trip For Two To The Famous  
**TALLADEGA (ALABAMA) SUPERSPEEDWAY***

For An Exciting NASCAR Race

*Details to Follow, But Make Referrals Now  
To Be Eligible For The Grand Prize Drawing!*



## Referral update report: bonus dollars add up

A total of \$2,650 was paid out in bonuses in the preceding month to D&T independent contractors who referred drivers to our team. Five contractors received their initial bonus check of \$250 for their referral. They were:

- Paul Kruske, who referred David Baggs to D&T;
- Chuck Noll, for his referral of Dino Tokin;
- James Long, whose referral was Jeff Fielder;
- Greg Grunert, who brought Steve Keuntjes to our company;
- And Ted Ellifson, for referring Jon Fjetstad.

Additionally, referring contractors earn bonuses of one cent per mile, paid in quarterly increments for one year, for each mile that their referral drives for D&T during that period. Reaping benefits in this phase of the referral program were:

- Mariusz Okula—fourth and final quarterly payment for the referral of Tomasz Garbacz.
- Pawel Dzimira—fourth and final check for his referral of Ryszard Jucha.
- Paul Kruske—second quarterly check for referring Greg Grunert.
- Todd Kohnen—second quarterly bonus for his referral of Anthony Hanvold.

It's easy to see how the dollars can mount for independent contractors participating in D&T's referral bonus program, especially since there are drivers out there for whom D&T is just the right company!

## Sorry, Meredith...

Our apologies to Meredith Helm for inadvertently omitting him from the staff listing of those reaching anniversaries of service in August. That month marked the 16th year that Meredith has been with D&T Trucking Company. And by the way, in a story in the Crossroad about Meredith two years ago, he described how he happened to join D&T. He said: "I came here because I was looking for a 'family feeling,' which I wasn't finding in my previous (trucking) job. So I wasn't happy there. But I found what I was looking for with D&T."

## October anniversaries of service with D&T

### CONTRACTORS

- 4 Years – Dean Dobberfuhr
- 3 Years – Jason Carolan  
Joe Lang
- 1 Year – Terrance Johnson  
Calvin Johnson

### STAFF

- 10 Years – Wanda Svenson
- 4 Years – Matt Rozell

# The term is new, but the danger is the same

Road rage by any other name is still. . .road rage. This observation is prompted by a new description from psychiatric and mental health specialists for that wild-eyed, horn-honking, lane-changing, speed-loving "maniac" (or supply your own term) behind the wheel.

Specialists have concluded from a study that this and other irrational behavior and outbursts of extreme temper are caused by a chemical imbalance which they call intermittent explosive disorder (IED). Specifically IED is said to spring from inadequate production of a mood-regulating and behavior-inhibiting brain chemical and can be treated with anti-depressants, including those that target certain receptors in the brain.

Thus road rage incidents are not simply "bad behavior from people who need an attitude adjustment." Instead, there is a "biology and cognitive science to this (problem)," said Dr. Emil Coccaro, Chairman of Psychiatry at the University of Chicago's Medical School.

Information about IED was obtained from a survey of 9,282 United States adults in 2001-2003. The study was paid for by the National Institute of Mental Health in Bethesda, Md., and the results were published in the Archives of General Psychiatry.

From the nationally representative sample, approximately five to seven percent were found to have the disorder. The percentage translates into possibly 16 million Americans, more people than those having better known mental illnesses such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, according to Dr. Coccaro.

Most of those afflicted also had other problems of an emotional, drug or alcohol nature and had been treated for them. But only about 28 percent had ever had something done for their anger outbursts.

When these outbursts occur on the road, they of course are dangerous and create stress for others, including professional truck drivers. And as for whether or not such episodes can be attributed to "intermittent explosive disorder," as one person pointed out:

"I don't care what you call it or how you define it, I just know road rage when I see it."

## A great catch!



*D&T independent contractor Duane Rubner scored his personal muskie best on his annual fishing trip, accompanied by his two brothers and some friends, to Lake of the Woods upwards of northern Minnesota on the Ontario side. After about a 10 to 15-minute struggle, he pulled in this 49 1/2 incher, estimated weight 40 to 44 pounds. He has previously caught three or four muskies in the 48-inch range and one slightly over 49 inches and now the muskie in this photo "is my biggest to date," Duane reported. But the "to date" suggests that he might not be through yet!*

## Some tips for truck drivers on dealing with stress that comes from road rage

- Expect to have to deal with it. You are likely to witness situations at times and, because you drive a large vehicle, you might be more likely to be subjected to road rage from other drivers.
- Remember that your vehicle will undoubtedly be easily recognized and can be a lethal weapon, so don't do something foolish!
- Give the other party a wide berth; avoid confrontation if at all possible.
- Confrontation is rarely worth it, and it can escalate beyond control.
- Take two deep breaths, and count to 10 by thousands (one thousand one, one thousand two, etc.)
- Breathe out all the air in your lungs; when you do that, you cannot be tense at the same time. Then relax.
- Do stretching: Neck, shoulder, back, and face muscles.
- Try self-massage: Temples, jaw, face, shoulders.
- Progressive muscle relaxation (do isometrics, moving against an immovable force).
- Relax by quieting your mind; focus on one thought, allow muscles to relax.
- Listen to the Gettin' in Gear relaxation audio tape.

*Source for all of the above and much more: "Gettin' in Gear—A Wellness, Health and Fitness Program for Commercial Drivers." The program is available through D&T Trucking Company.*

# There was a 'family party' August 21-25 at D&T

The family and team atmosphere was clearly evident during the recently-observed National Truck Driver Appreciation Week at D&T Trucking Company. It was a well-deserved event designed to express publicly "the fine job done by our independent contractors," said Bob Dolle, company owner.

Bob added, however, that D&T has never waited for an "official" week to recognize the importance of its drivers; "our philosophy has always been that they are our business partners," he stated.

The week-long "party" August 21-25 included complimentary breakfast and lunch served every day, door prizes and gift bags for drivers, new trucks on display, plenty of conversation and general all-around good will and fellowship.

It should be emphasized that the event would not have been possible without a total team effort. Pitching in were the "meal staff," headed by Julie Myles (Bob's wife) and including Ann Haglund (Bob's sister), Kay Haglund (no relation to Ann), Diane Curley, Pete Eversoll (Julie's nephew) and Kathy Crystal; the D&T office staff; and the shop technicians, all of whom made the independent contractors feel so welcomed and appreciated.

Thanks also goes to Schroeder Milk for supplying milk, juice and cooler, Pearson Candy for its products and all of the other customers, vendors and friends whose sponsorship contributed to the success of National Truck Driver Appreciation Week.

Their participation showed that trucking and related industries are indeed a family.



Three of the members of the "meal team" (left to right): Ann Haglund, Julie Myles and Kay Haglund.



## What's a party without food!

Eating was good at National Truck Driver Appreciation Week, with 550 plates of food served at breakfast and lunch. For the statistically-minded, here is what was consumed over the five days...

- ... 120 pounds of bacon
- ... 50 pounds of ham
- ... 40 pounds of pork
- ... 90 pounds of hash browns
- ... And as for eggs, there's no statistic. The quantity was so great that we lost count!

## Thank you to these sponsors for participating in a special week

AFP  
Allstate  
Bailey Nurseries  
Bergstrom Jewelers  
Blaine Brothers  
I State Freightliner  
JJ Keller  
Kath  
Kolstad

Land O' Lakes  
Liberty Mutual  
Libra  
Lofthouse Bakery  
Nice Threads  
Now Care  
Pearson Candy  
Perlman Roque  
Rihm Kenworth

River Valley Truck  
Rental & Leasing  
Schroeder Milk  
Schwan's  
Supervalu  
Thermo King  
Volvo  
Xtra Lease

# Some thoughts about the tribute to truck drivers



**Shawn Nelson — Independent Contractor, D&T Trucking Company**

"It's a good idea when a trucking company shows that it appreciates its drivers. I've been with other companies that blow smoke, but D&T really does appreciate the job we do."

**Meredith Helm — Customer Service, D&T Trucking Company**

"Drivers are the linchpin of our industry. It's one thing to sit in an office, but they have to go out and get things done, and it's a tough job. So it's important at D&T to have a Truck Driver Appreciation Week, important for Bobby (Bob Dolle, owner of D&T) to show how much he and all of us appreciate what our drivers do. Our customers think it's great, too, what we do for our drivers."



**John Bracelen — Independent Contractor, D&T Trucking Company**

"We (truck drivers) often don't get the respect we deserve. There are decent people, too, but with other people, when you tell them what you do for a living, they just say 'oh.' For them, one bad driver can ruin the barrel for all of us. But I think the (appreciation) week idea is good, although I wasn't able to get to D&T this year. I was too busy with loads. I work with my dispatcher as a team and I'm doing well."

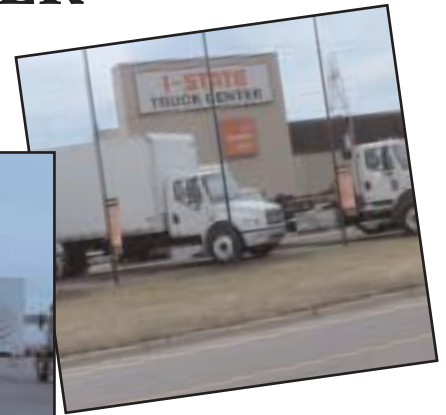
**John Cowan — Director of Distribution, Schroeder Milk Company**

"We have worked closely with D&T over the years and participate every year in their Truck Driver Appreciation Week. I understand their wanting to honor their drivers. The way they do it is kind of neat, and happier drivers are going to benefit us, too. So we support that recognition effort in whatever way we can."

**Dino Tokin — Independent Contractor, D&T Trucking Company**

"I had a great time. It (the tribute from D&T) was a very nice thing to do for drivers. I brought my son (Dennis, 3 1/2 years old) with me and he loved it, being able to climb into the trucks on display. It's nice when stuff like this happens."

## PICTURE REVIEW OF TRUCK DRIVER APPRECIATION WEEK



## On the Lighter Side . . .

### PROBLEM SOLVED

All three churches in this small town found themselves overrun, for whatever reason, by an abundance of squirrels. However, they had differing reactions to the problem.

The first church decided that the creatures had a God-given right to be where they were. Who are we, the elders asked themselves, to interfere? And soon there were more squirrels than ever.

The second, feeling that the squirrels should not be harmed, trapped them in a humane fashion, transported them into the countryside, and released them. Within a week, they were back.

The third church tried another solution. It collected the pesky animals, baptized them and registered them as official members of the congregation. Now the squirrels only appear on Christmas and Easter.

\* \* \*

### PLACING THE FACE

It was Herman's turn to man the information counter at the museum, and his first visitors were a pair of identical twins. Each brother preferred to tour on his own, and Herman politely gave them directions for the exhibits each wanted to see. Before leaving, they agreed to meet back at the counter in an hour.

One of the twins returned a few minutes early. "I think I'll go to the coffee shop," he told Herman. "Will you tell my brother where I am?"

"I'll be happy to," came the pleasant reply. "But just to make sure I'll recognize him, tell me what he looks like."

\* \* \*

### DIFFERENCE OF OPINION

Here's what could be wrong with telling jokes about lawyers. The lawyers often don't think the jokes are funny, and other people might not realize the stories are jokes.

\* \* \*

### NOSING AROUND

A Courier Express driver carried a large package to the front door of a house and rang the bell.

"What is it?" responded the woman on the other side of the door.

Driver: "I have a registered parcel for Mrs. Smith."

Woman: "Is it gift wrapped?"

Driver: "No, it's a carton."

Woman: "Who sent it?"

Driver: "A computer company, ma'am."

Woman: "What's in it?"

Driver: "Ma'am, I really don't know, but I do need a signature to deliver it."

Woman: "I can't sign for it."

Driver: "Why not?"

Woman: "Because I'm not Mrs. Smith. She lives next door."

\* \* \*

### FINAL THOUGHT

Drivers are advised to never allow an excess of temperature to accumulate beneath a circular, snug-fitting clothing component. Or, in plain English: Don't get hot under the collar!

## *Their birthdays are coming up:*

Jeff Bjerke	October 3
Jeff Lucas	October 29
Garry Meyers	October 4
Charles Noll	October 5
Jimi Parranto	October 20
Matt Rozell	October 27
Lloyd Schofield, Jr.	October 3
Donald Warner	October 16

*Happy birthday  
wishes to all!*

## Name-dropping

August was the anniversary month of safe driving achievement for **Tad Strus**—Tad reaching six years of accident-free performance. Congratulations, and keep adding years to your safety record.

\* \* \*

**Frank Collins** and **Andrzej Dajwowski** were the most recent D&T Trucking Company independent contractors to pass roadside inspections with no violations. D&T appreciates your professionalism, and thanks for the positive contribution to our cattier profile.

\* \* \*

**Jon Fjelstad** of Strum, Wis. has joined the independent contractor team. We welcome you, Jon, and look forward to a long-term, mutually rewarding relationship.

## From the 2006 Working Class Pride and Polish calendar

# Equipment (and driver) of the month for October

Approaching the age of 60, Lavern Pflughoeft determined that it was time to establish a new working relationship in his original Minnesota home area. So when older brother Harold, an independent contractor with D&T Trucking Company since 1991, referred Lavern to D&T, there was a meeting of the minds resulting in his joining the contractor team in April, 2004.

D&T welcomed this safety-minded, on-time achieving owner-operator with nearly two million miles of over-the-road experience, much of it out west. Moreover, Lavern brought his equipment philosophy with him; "I take care of my truck," he simply said about the 2002 Peterbilt, the fourth tractor he has owned.

He noted that D&T has the same philosophy, remarking that "I had heard before I got here that the company keeps up its equipment, that trailers go through the shop every time they come in. I like pulling D&T trailers."

Lavern and Carol Pflughoeft now live in Rushford, Minn. They have two married children, a son and a daughter, twins by the way, and four grandchildren.

A man of varied interests, Lavern enjoys hunting occasionally, playing cards, going camping during the summer with the family motor home and building craft items of wood or iron. Up to three or four years ago, he also, with his son, built and a few times even raced stock cars, a more adventurous activity that is now part of the past.



*Lavern Pflughoeft - 2002 Peterbilt*

## Highway to Health

"...As natural as breathing' is the concluding part of many an expression. But for a significant number of people, taking a deep, healthy breath is not as simple as it sounds.

Estimates show that perhaps as many as 20 million Americans suffer from asthma, a chronic inflammatory disease that, to use another expression, can take one's breath away. The person can feel fine and then, suddenly, some environmental trigger sets off wheezing and shortness of breath. The result sometimes is a visit to the medical emergency room or even hospitalization on occasion.

Common triggers can be smoke, especially tobacco smoke; animal dander; mold; dust; chemicals; and strong perfumes. Other potential causes are not as obvious: Changes in humidity; colder temperatures; physical exertion; emotional situations.

Fortunately asthma can be treated—the first step of course being to see your doctor. Once the diagnosis is confirmed, treatment is individualized depending on the severity of the symptoms and the medications to which the person best responds. For long-term care (besides the advice to avoid the triggers if possible), there are anti-inflammatory medications. For an acute attack, short-term methods are used to open the airways by relaxing the muscles that have constricted around them.

Many people who have asthma also have to deal with allergies because of their overly sensitive immune systems. Their bodies react aggressively to many of the same triggers that generate asthma attacks, and there are food allergies as well.

In the fall, ragweed is the leading culprit for hay fever sufferers. Also, molds can be troublesome for a lot of people; rotting wood or decomposing leaves in the yard and gutters provide a prime location for molds to thrive.

Again, however, allergies like asthma can be treated and generally controlled. Diagnosing them is usually relatively easy for the doctor; it simply takes a physical examination and a comprehensive personal and family history followed by a referral if necessary to an allergy specialist for more complete testing. This will consist of skin tests—analysis of reactions to injections of tiny quantities of known allergens (triggers)—or a blood test in some cases.

After identification of the allergy—or allergies—steps can be taken to alleviate the characteristic symptoms of runny nose, sneezing, coughing, scratchy sore throat, itchy eyes. In addition to doing, again, the obvious—avoid the triggers—there are new and improved antihistamines on the market today, and a seasonal option (in autumn, for example) are shots to counteract the body's aggressive reaction to the offending allergen.

Finally—and this might not be of much consolation—if you are an allergy sufferer, you're not alone. An estimated 20 percent of the population is in the same boat. And the likelihood of your being among the many millions dramatically increases if allergies are prevalent in your family, because a genetic tendency exists.

So see your doctor if you have recurring symptoms.

# To serve the public, obligations come with the CDL

It takes a special person to be qualified enough to serve customers and the public as a professional truck driver, And along with such responsibility is the other side of the coin; if violations occur, there can be more severe ramifications for the professional driver than for the general motoring public.

Certain first-time offenses can cause a driver holding a CDL to be disqualified from driving a commercial motor vehicle for a substantial period. This includes violations committed on his or her own time while driving a personal vehicle. The result of disqualification for the professional driver, obviously, is that he/she is out of business.

A driver is disqualified for one year if convicted of one of the following major offenses while driving any type of vehicle:

- Driving under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance
- Refusing to take an alcohol test
- Leaving the scene of an accident
- Using a vehicle to commit a felony

While driving a CMV, the driver is disqualified for one year if convicted of one of these major offenses:

- Having an alcohol concentration of 0.04 or greater
- Driving with a revoked, suspended or canceled CDL
- Driving when disqualified from operating a CMV

- Causing a fatality through the negligent operation of a CMV

Some additional facts to note: If hazardous materials are being hauled, the disqualification period is three years; the disqualification period for a second conviction is life; a driver convicted of using any vehicle to commit a felony involving the manufacturing or dispensing of a controlled substance is automatically disqualified for life.

There also are potential disqualifications, for perhaps 60 or 120 days, for CDL holders convicted over a specific period for any combination of two or more serious traffic violations. These include:

- Excessive speeding
- Reckless driving
- Improper or erratic lane changes
- Following the vehicle ahead too closely
- Violating a state or local motor vehicle traffic control law arising in connection with a fatal accident

None of the aforementioned is pleasant to contemplate. And none of it affects the truly professional truck driver. But it nevertheless is an obligation of the trucking industry to emphasize to all motor carriers and their drivers that safe and legal driving is expected at all times in all vehicles, whether the driver is on the job or on his/her own time.

## Annual 'Trucks & Toys' campaign gets underway

D&T Trucking Company has started accepting contributions for the annual Trucks & Toys campaign sponsored by the Minnesota Trucking Association and implemented with the cooperation of many companies, including ours.

Through this extremely worthwhile project, gifts are collected and distributed for children—ranging from infants and toddlers to pre-teens and teenagers—who otherwise would find the Christmas season much less joyful. Please bring in your presents (unwrapped) or checks or cash with which gifts will be purchased.

The assembled contributions will be consolidated with those gathered at other locations and ultimately given to grateful and deserving families. D&T and our staff and independent contractors traditionally have participated wholeheartedly in Trucks & Toys, demonstrating full understanding of the holiday spirit.



*This collection was from the successful 2005 Trucks & Toys drive.*

## How to sleep well by 'beating the heat'

While the season of excessive heat may be behind us, recommendations from the National Sleep Foundation (NSF) on "how to sleep well even when it's hot" can still be relevant.

"Getting a good night's sleep is important for maintaining energy and focus during the day," said Meir Kryger, M.D., Vice Chair of NSF. "Inadequate sleep can affect personal relationships, overall health, productivity at work or home and the ability to drive safely."

Thus the NSF recommends the following steps to "beat the heat."

- Avoid excessive heat buildup in your body by, among other ways, drinking plenty of water.
- Allow time for the body to cool down after physical activity/exercise before going to bed.
- Take steps to prevent excessive heat buildup in your home.
- Wear light nightwear.
- Take a shower or bath before going to bed; but with regard to this, a cool shower may not help to reduce core body temperature. Sleep experts advise that warm/hot baths completed at least one hour before bedtime have been shown to improve sleep under normal conditions.
- Create lower temperatures in sleeping areas.
- Maintain consistent sleep and wake times.
- Avoid hot and heavy meals, especially near bedtime, and avoid coffee and excessive intake of caffeine, particularly in the afternoon and/or evening.

# Shop Talk

By Mark Wells

## Getting your operation ready for cold weather

Once again, it's time to get your equipment prepared for cold weather operation. The Maintenance Council Recommended Practice #311 provides an overview of vehicle preparation and is the basis of this month's Shop Talk column.

Oddly enough, the RP #311 doesn't address tires but good tires are one of the most critical items related to winter driving. Tread depth for steer tires is required to be no less than 4/32". Drive and trailer tires must have a minimum of 2/32". Most people would agree that going into the winter driving season with minimum tread depth on your tires isn't a very good idea. Make an honest assessment of your tires; if they are questionable, plan to replace them before weather gets bad. Keep in mind that as ambient temperatures continue to drop, tire inflation pressures will drop as well. Check your tire pressures regularly to keep them properly inflated.

### Cooling System:

- Check antifreeze strength for adequate protection to -35° F.
- Pressure test the cooling system at 15-18 psi after opening heater control valves. Leaks will be easier to detect if the pressure test is done while the engine is cold.

- Perform a careful visual inspection of all coolant hoses. Be on the lookout for chaffing, hardness, sponginess and swelling. Tighten loose hose clamps to prevent annoying cold-water leaks.

- Check the block heater condition with an ohmmeter. A 10-15 ohm resistance is typical for a 1000 to 1500 watt heater. Be sure to check the electrical cord and plug too.

### Cab Heat:

- Many tractors have a filter on the heater system air inlet. Make sure it's clean.

- Test the heater fans in the cab and the sleeper berth. With the engine at operating temperature, the air being discharged from the heater should be 110° or higher.

- Check the heater controls for proper function.
- All tractors are required to have operational defrosters.

Keep the junk off your dash so the defrost ducts aren't obstructed.

### Air System:

- Drain air tanks thoroughly.
- Replace air dryer desiccant cartridge annually.
- Check air dryer heater operation. Normally the heating element will draw 4-5 amps when cold.

### Batteries:

- Disconnect batteries and load test each individually. A good 12-volt battery won't drop much below 10 volts during load testing.

- Clean and tighten all battery connections. It's also important to check the starter connections. Protect all connections with anti-corrosion compound. Aerosol products do a good job and they're easier to apply than dielectric grease.

- Check alternator belt condition and tension.
- Alternator output should be 13.2 to 14.2 volts.

### General:

- Check operation of windshield wipers and washers.
- Replace wiper blades.
- Check the exhaust system for leakage. Leaks are usually indicated by soot streaks around connections.
- Make sure all lights and reflectors are in good working order.

Extras: A few items can help get you moving again when cold weather-related problems do arise. None are very expensive or take up much room.

- Last winter quite a few people experienced fuel filter plugging due to abnormally high glycerin content found in some biodiesel fuel. Carrying a couple of extra fuel filters, some fuel to prime them and a good filter wrench is cheap insurance.

- For obvious reasons, carry a good set of jumper cables.
- Have an air system deicer to thaw frozen valves.
- Carry a spare air governor. They always seem to fail when cold weather is at its absolute worst. Rebuilt air governors usually sell for around \$20.

## Did you know that...

...an estimated 1.5 million accidents involving vehicles and deer take place every year in the United States. These accidents kill more than 150 motorists and cause more than \$1.1 million in damage, according to the Council of Insurance Agents and Brokers. Of course the problem is that deer can pop out from seemingly nowhere at any time, leading to the only advice possible: Always be cautious behind the wheel.

The D&T Trucking Company



A publication for and about  
valued D&T Team Builders

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Good stuff.



*No. 3 in a series of 3*

## The art of using communication ‘devices’ effectively

Communicating effectively on the road enhances the prospects of safe travel. This series on “devices” to attract the necessary attention of others and to see and be seen by them started with an article on the proper use of the horn, followed last month by a writeup on headlights and auxiliary lights.

In this concluding article in the series, the subject is the effective use of mirrors to prevent any unfortunate and possibly dangerous surprises. It’s especially important for the driver to check the mirrors before changing speed and/or his/her position in traffic.

A good rule of thumb is to make this check approximately every four seconds and to be particularly aware of potential blind spots beside the tractor’s fuel tank and drive wheels. There is specific value with each of the two types of mirrors—plane and convex—but each also has its drawbacks; the plane mirror by itself allows too large a blind spot, and a convex mirror gives a distorted view.

**Plane mirrors** — A plane mirror provides the best view of the rear of the trailer and the highway behind you. However, it doesn’t give a very wide view and has a blind area along most of the length of the vehicle.

Field of view is best in the left mirror. Images in the side mirrors are similar to those on an automobile. You should be able to easily learn to judge speed and distance of overtaking vehicles. Because of the blind spots, lane changes and other maneuvers are fairly risky, so be certain to use signals and pause a bit before changing directions.

**Convex mirrors** — These mirrors are designed with an outward curvature to provide a wide angle view. They give a broader view than plane mirrors and also eliminate a lot of the blind spot area. In addition, they provide the best close-up view of the side portions of the tractor-trailer combination.

The downside of the convex mirrors, however, is that they show a distorted image. For example, vehicles overtaking you appear smaller and farther away than they actually are. Small, stick-on convex mirrors have the most distortion and also reduce the plane mirror viewing area.

**Combination of mirrors best** — A good combination of mirrors will provide both maximum side and rear vision. However, a combination takes some getting used to for the driver. The overlapping view can be confusing. It will be helpful to have a high quality, properly aligned and adjusted convex mirror so that overlap and distortion are minimized as much as possible.

Be aware that even with a good combination of mirrors, some blind spots will still remain. You should get used to the position and field of view that each of the mirrors provides. Don’t ever move your vehicle without checking to be sure that the mirrors are properly positioned.

Mirrors require care. Keep them clean and tight so they have the maximum effectiveness. If mirrors are not tight, they will vibrate and distort the view of the traffic situation. Adjust them to give yourself the very best view possible.

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TRUCKING COMPANY