

TOWING & RECOVERY FOOTNOTES

Inside
OSHA
Pg 17

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When Less is **MORE**

Light-duty tow trucks are the real industry workhorses

By Allan T. Duffin

What's the deal with light duty? It's sometimes considered a poor cousin to medium- and heavy-duty towing operations. More complex jobs get more attention and require bringing out the big guns to recover trucks, tractor-trailers, buses, and other large vehicles. Bringing in the heavy-duty equipment can have certain advantages for the tower, said David Lambert, president of the North American Towing Academy in Alt-amonte Springs, FL. "Less wear and tear on the equipment, less rigging, and the billing may benefit both the operator and his company."

But, said Lambert, not everyone agrees with this assessment, which is why *Footnotes* is revisiting light-duty towing, a subject originally covered on these pages four years ago. "The abilities of light and medium-duty equipment may surprise some towers," he explained. "A tower who understands the capabilities and limitations of his equipment can perform miracles with light- and medium-duty trucks."

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Justin Rose & John Berghager, I-70 Towing & Recovery

Overlooked/Undervalued

Why is light-duty towing and recovery often overlooked? "It's human nature," said Al Gregg, owner of Dakota Towing Service, based in Brookings, S.D. "It's like watching a young boy go down the street to deliver the newspaper or watching a silver-backed gorilla do the same task. The gorilla will get more attention, even though there are more paperboys around."

"The same is true in our industry," continued Gregg: "The heavies are more exciting. There is an adrenaline rush each time you fire up to go on a heavy recovery, and it seems to become almost a spectator sport when you're out there doing your job. But if you're performing a light-duty recovery on the same stretch of highway, traffic flies by not caring if you're there or not — and we do wish they'd care enough to slow down and move over."

Recent years have brought new developments to the light-duty arena. Two years ago the Roanoke, VA., municipal government tackled a local issue involving light-duty towing. Residents complained about the city's system for police-requested towing services because rates varied depending on which towing companies arrived on the scene.

The result: different vehicles involved in the same accident were sometimes charged different rates. In the fall of 2006, the Roanoke city government reworked the system,

dividing contracts into "light duty" and "medium/heavy duty" categories.

"Light-duty tows are the towing of passenger cars, minivans, and most SUVs," read the city's request for proposals. "Medium/heavy-duty tows involve the towing of delivery trucks, tractor-trailers, and other heavy-duty vehicles." The city planned to create pricing controls over light-duty tows but decided to leave medium- and heavy-duty tows to the market since "it is more difficult to create a fair pricing system for medium/heavy-duty tows."

The result? "An award was made to several towing companies for light and heavy duty," said Sharon Gentry, the purchasing manager for the city. "Two separate contracts were awarded depending on equipment. They are called on to do work on a rotating basis. The system is working very well; the tow company owners were very responsive."

In Texas, Charles Rash, owner of FastTow Wrecker Service in Houston, said this year marks the first time that police and private-property towers — usually doing light-duty work — must be trained and certified according to state regulations. "That's about 50,000 trucks and drivers," he adds, "includ-

ing transport trucks." In Harris County, which includes the city of Houston, Rash notes there are four million vehicle registrations. "That adds up to a lot of possible tows." As an example, he said, the city of Houston racks up over 160,000 non-consent tows annually.

Light vs. Heavy Duty

So, at the most basic level, what are the real differences between David and Goliath — light- and heavy-duty towing, respectively? Rash draws the distinction this way: "Light duty is about customer service; heavy duty is more about the big toys."

Al Gregg noted another basic difference: light-duty towing and recovery is usually done by tow trucks that are heavier than the disabled vehicle being recovered. For heavy duty it's usually the opposite. "There your casualty is usually heavier than the tow truck," he said, "oftentimes requiring two tow trucks to perform the recovery."



Dakota Service light-duty wrecker in action

In addition, said Gregg, most light-duty recoveries are accomplished on unibody cars. "If you hook low and to the high corner on the front end of the vehicle," he explained, "once you have tension on your wire rope, the chances of the vehicle tipping over are very slim." On the other hand, recovering a tractor-trailer combination requires that the tow operator have complete control over the equipment and cargo being recovered.

See WHEN LESS IS MORE, page 4

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BRAINSTORMIN
WITH STORMIN NORMAN

**Run When
You Hear...**

*“I’m from the gov’mint and
I’m here ta help ya”*

By Stormin Norman Horton

For anyone who pulled a Rip Van Winkle and woke up in 2008 (especially if you walked into any Wal-Mart in the country and saw the TV monitors hung everywhere throughout the store, and cameras inside and outside the store), you would be correct to assume that times now are more like that of Orwell’s Big Brother than the days of “Leave It To Beaver” and “Father Knows Best.”

No, it’s not “Father Knows Best” anymore, it’s the gov’mnt knows best. If you don’t think so, consider that the saying “I’m from the government and I’m here to help you” always strikes a chord. Why? Because people realize we are beginning to delegate our safety, well-being, success, and protection from life’s risks to Big Brother.

Since 9/11 and the hastily enacted Patriot Act, we have given up more of our traditional liberties to the government. When you stop and think, you may recognize the many things that are being done now in the guise of keeping us safe.

Who’s Listening?

Of course, throughout our history we’ve had all kinds of crackpots and terrorists and other types who have meant to do us harm. But never in our history have we been so willing to trade our personal liberties for security. If you think we haven’t lost some of our freedoms, then consider what has happened just in my own community. It should be enough to make you rethink the issue.

There’s a kid that I half raised with

one of our sons. He went to work for a government agency where his sole job was to read people’s emails and listen in on phone conversations to spy on the American public. Hmmm. Hello, Big Brother.

Even politicians are getting caught because of the Patriot Act – or at least caught “in the act” as was the governor of New York, a former attorney general who turned out to be a firm believer in “Do as I say but not as I do.”

And it’s happening right here in Dothan, Alabama, where people have been charged with making terrorist threats when their biggest crime was getting hit with a stupid stick and losing their temper.

On the national scene, you know we now have to practically get undressed for inspection before we fly because of a very few people who tried to do crazy things. So, yes, we have traded some personal liberty to gain a sense of safety.

Chasing Our Tail

What I maintain, however, is that if terrorists want to do something, the chances are good they won’t repeat attacks in the same way. They’ll come up with something new and different while we continue to chase our tail, gradually removing the personal liberties we have enjoyed for so many years as Americans.

I suspect what the real terrorists want is for us to become the same type of closed, dictatorial society they live in. They may be laughing in their goat’s milk now as they see themselves able to take on a whole free society and

begin to change it into one that is more closed and regulated.

Wait a minute, what was that you said? – something about terrorism in Dothan, Alabama? Dothan is a small city with around 60,000 people; Ozark, where our business is located, has only about 16,000. So what could possibly happen here that has to do with terrorist activities?

Well, not long ago some people lost their heads. One was a lady whose child was disciplined in a local public school. She got angry, picked up the phone, and told off the principal. And guess what? She got cuffed and stuffed for “making terrorist threats” because she threatened the principal.

Have you ever seen a momma when somebody got between her and her kid? Ooooh, Nellie! But a terrorist? I think not.

It Ain’t Bingo

We knew a guy who worked a counter for years selling car parts. He got into a tiff with his old lady. As you know, there’s a fine line between love and hate, so when things start going south in a marriage a guy may find himself doing things he shouldn’t be doing and saying things he shouldn’t be saying to his wife or his ex.

Most people would never carry this kind of thing any farther than saying he got angry and was talking trash. But this poor guy was arrested for making terrorist threats because he said some things he shouldn’t have.

A few years ago, it would have been called a domestic dispute and maybe a restraining order would be issued or he would be arrested if it was called for. Well, this guy was charged as a terrorist, but he’s no more a terrorist than his wife is – he’s just a good old boy who ran off at the mouth.

He’s never been to a terrorist camp and wouldn’t know C4 from A3 unless it was in a bingo game. But overzealous law enforcement and the Patriot Act have turned citizens with some personal issues into being charged with terrorist activity.

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WHEN LESS IS MORE

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"The main difference that we notice in light-duty towing is that in the last five to 10 years, the cars have become more delicate to handle," said Jason Strickland, owner of Strickland Towing in Haven, Kansas. "There are fewer places to attach chains and straps for recovery, aluminum a-arms, and flimsy rear axles. The lack of a true frame makes a correct hook-up a major safety issue." Operators must be careful when hooking up and ensure they examine all possible rub points for chains and straps, he said.

Strickland also notes that the last several years have seen a proliferation of cars with pop-out tabs in bumper covers for fixed loops. He's also seen many screw-in eyelets on automobiles like the BMW, Volkswagen, and Mini Cooper models. "Educating operators about the proper places to attach chains and straps has become a priority," he said.

At I-70 Towing and Recovery in Columbia, MO., drivers use flatbeds and wheel-lift trucks for light-duty rescues. According to Jennifer Furlong, dispatcher/secretary for the company, "We use dollies on recovery vehicles that have total suspension damage in the front and back, so that all four wheels are off the ground."

standard equipment — dollies, winches, booms, chains, and snatch blocks — Furlong noted that "winch cables are smaller and more apt to break, so being aware of your stationary obstacles in order to work around them so you will not break equipment and still maintain safety is crucial."

"You can't buy experience but you can train for the future," said Rash. He notes that at every recovery scene,

Light-Duty Recovery: A Conversation

Jason Strickland is the owner of Strickland Towing in Haven, KS, which has offered light-, medium- and heavy-duty towing services since 1998. Strickland Towing primarily uses rollbacks for towing rather than sling or wheel-lift wreckers.

"Most of our light-duty rollover recoveries are performed with rollbacks. First, at any accident scene we perform a safety and site assessment, looking for factors such as lane blockage, fuel spills, battery location/condition, if vehicle is in or out of gear, ignition turned off, and any physical obstructions that will make the recovery more difficult.

"If the vehicle is on its top, we attach chains around the frame (avoiding, wires, lines, etc.). If the frame is not exposed, we hook to the reinforced frame slots using a bridle. We slowly and cautiously winch the vehicle back onto the side that has already been damaged first. Once the vehicle is resting on its side, we gently pull the vehicle back onto its wheels and prepare it for tow.

"If the vehicle is on its side parallel to the highway and facing away from our recovery unit, many times we use the reverse roll method. We attach a strap to the frame down low on the side facing away from our unit. If necessary, we dig a tunnel between the ground and the side of the vehicle resting on the ground and run the strap through it back to our winch line. As we winch the strap to the unit, the vehicle then rolls back onto its wheels.

"In some instances with the above-mentioned scenario, we have had the luck to have a sturdy tree in the area and used the tree as a dead man to perform a rollover. This method is performed by running the cable from our unit to a snatch block chained around the tree, and then attaching the cable to the vehicles. This isn't a common occurrence, but once in a while luck is on our side.

"If steering components are damaged or missing, we use an eight-foot-long oak 4x4 as a skate to center the car on the deck. We also use floor jacks, snatch blocks, and other cribbage to maneuver the cars on the decks. In most cases, we do not use a rollover stick, but sometimes they are a necessity."



Century light duty

More Interest

In the training arena, Lambert notes that over the last several years there has been greater interest in light-duty training. As an example, he points to the Professional Wrecker Operators of Florida, Inc., headquartered in Orlando, which sponsored nine light-duty training classes last year, compared with two for heavy-duty operators.

"Never ask a trainer if any type of training can be overemphasized," chuckled Lambert. Despite about 95 percent of all towing and recovery being light-duty operations, he said that the current emphasis on Traffic Incident Management means that heavy-duty operators get the lime-light. "Law enforcement expects a trained operator to arrive on the scene of a major incident," said Lambert. On the other hand, he added, it's important to remember that most incidents that close an interstate involve light cars and trucks rather than 18-wheelers.

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Everyone Benefits

all of the major players often have extensive training: the fire department, police, EMTs, EMS, and even the media. Tow truck operators should be just as prepared. "Sometimes a tow truck driver pulls up in a \$50,000-plus truck and the only training he has is how to drive and maybe make out his ticket," said Rash. "If you are lucky he won't kill or injure someone during the recovery or wind up on the Wall of the Fallen."

Training is critical when an accident shuts down a major highway, said Lambert. "When there are hundreds of cars and trucks backing up on the interstate, burning gas, polluting the environment, and the level of road rage is rising, side streets are getting crowded. Goods and services, packages and letters, and people are delayed," he said. "Because of the financial and environmental impact, it's important that all the operators be trained, not just heavy-duty ones."

Valuable Assets

What about cross-training between light and heavy-duty operators? Learning all types of towing operations is beneficial to both the tower and the company for which he or she works, said Gregg. "As a small operator, I try to have all of my employees familiar with both because usually a heavy recovery or major accident will require that most of my staff will be going out," he explained. "A cross-trained employee is a more valuable asset. At the same time, he is

more marketable if opportunity presents itself. If I were an employee I would want to cross-train, just to

broaden my possibility of working for a larger variety of employers."

For tow truck operators to be more effective, Lambert urged heavy-duty operators to build a solid foundation in light-duty recovery. "A good light-duty recovery program will include the basics, like equipment ratings, stabilizing the truck, effects of snatch blocks, and calculating resistance," he explained. "Once you understand the basics, it's easier to move on to heavy."

According to Lambert, approaching the training in this manner helps bridge the gap between light and heavy

towing techniques. "We start learning in elementary school and then progressing to high school," he explained. "This is similar." As for medium- vs. heavy-duty towing, he said that there is little difference between the two arenas.

Overall, said Rash, who drove a truck for 25 years, training is the

most important aspect of running a towing operation. If the worst happens, lawsuits can be costly, so be prepared, he said. "When you are defending a lawsuit over your liability limits and go to court, you'd better have that driver's training certificate with you."

"Advanced equipment and a lot of excellent trainers have really advanced our industry," notes Gregg. "You don't want to spend the rest of your life thinking 'What if?' or 'Why didn't I?'," said Rash. "Get involved in training."



Rollback Sidewinder's skid steer off-road vehicle

Old hands and rookies can all benefit from light-duty training. At Avilla Motor Works, Inc., in Avilla, Indiana, owner Jeff Watson rang up an expert when he set up his new towing service two years ago. "Since we are newbies in towing," he said, "we sought out Wes Wilburn to help with our training needs — and we have a lot!"

Watson has been in the repair business for 11 years and runs a six-bay shop. He's starting slowly with his new towing division and currently operates two trucks. One is a 2004 International Harvester 4300 rollback, while the other is a 1998 IH 4700 with a Chevron LMD 512 bed. The rollback features wireless remote-controlled winches manufactured by the British firm Lodar Wireless Solutions.

Watson's rollback truck is also equipped with a directional recovery unit supplied by American Enterprises in Oregon, Ohio. "The advantage to our unit is that you can pull 180 degrees, right to left, all the way around the back," said Dave Jaeger, who owns the company. "All of the other units available are side-pullers." Jaeger notes that while other units include 100 feet of cable, the American Enterprises product has a 160-foot cable with a wireless remote control.

Gregg makes a quick list of his light-duty equipment: self-loading

See WHEN LESS IS MORE, page 8



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BRAINSTORMIN

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Better Stay Cool

So what in the world does that have to do with wrecker people?

Most of you have a good relationship with law enforcement. You're on rotation, you work wrecks, and you have them run DMV requests if your state requires them. You may think of these guys as your "friends."

That is a false sense of security. They are the law first and we are wrecker people second. That puts us in the category of second-class professionals, and often we are also second-class as people because of the way we act.

I have seen and heard of many towers who've lost their heads and their cool with law enforcement about, for example, a competitor who jumped their calls. They have done everything from poking holes in radiators to getting into fist fights to screaming and cussing and more, activities that are as bad or worse than what these two local people were arrested for and charged with making terrorist threats.

I'm here to warn you that when it comes down to thinking of yourself as a "friend" or "acquaintance" of law enforcement people, you could wind up on the losing end. It's more important than ever to watch your mouth.

Be a professional and act in a professional manner no matter what. Do not resort to any type of violence, foul language, threats, or anything else that can land you in jail - or worse, for making terrorist threats.

Not Your Pals

In case anyone has forgotten, even before 911 there was the RICOH Act. We're talking federal racketeering here. Laws enacted to nail the mob were used on a tower in Florida who did not properly dispose of vehicles. Was it on purpose? Was it an accident? Were employees not doing paperwork right? I don't know, don't even have a clue, but the gentleman's house, property, trucks, etc. were all seized under the RICOH act. Guilty until proven innocent.

So, if the example of what I have experienced in Dothan is any guide, you'll see how much more serious it can be these days if you put yourself in the position of getting arrested for anything. Also, it is important not to do anything to cast a bad light on the fragile industry professionalism that people like TRAA's Harriet Cooley are working so hard to promote.

Let's work together, let's promote professionalism, and when something does go wrong, please don't resort to threats or worse. And warn your people about this. If you or they have problems with law enforcement or other government people, don't fly off the handle.

And document, document, document, because, believe me, the government is documenting too. And listening and watching.

The views expressed in this column each month are the opinion of the author alone and do not necessarily represent the editorial position of this publication.

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- Cyndi Kight

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When Less Is More

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wheel lifts, Go-Jacks, self-loading dollies, skates, and arrow sticks, to name a few. "Advanced equipment and a lot of excellent trainers have really advanced our industry," he said.

According to Mark Sawyers, the president of Recovery Solutions, which he recently bought from Dave Craze, who is staying on in a consulting capacity. "Without a doubt, the most important development is the self-loading wheel lift invented by Dave Craze and Calvin Russ through their company Dynamic Manufacturing." The self-loading wheel lift made all types of light-duty tows safer, said Sawyers, including repossessions, private property and public safety tows.

Added Sawyers, "I'm biased, of course, but I bought the self-loading wheel lift from Recovery Solutions for years, long before I bought the company."

"The amount of time it takes to get a car loaded with a self-loader changed light duty towing for the better," said Sawyers. "It became a much safer industry." "Crazy Dave" Craze later formed Recovery Solutions in Chesapeake, VA, to manufacture his invention and additional products based on his design. Recovery Solutions offers four series of wheel lifts and a large selection of parts and accessories as well.

Evolving Technology

In 2002, towing veteran Carnell Duvall, owner of Duvall Wrecker Service in Quinton, Okla., patented his Rollback Sidewinder. Rollback Sidewinder. A vehicle-positioning system, the Rollback Sidewinder arranges wrecked vehicles on the shoulder in exact loading position without crossing the centerline. "The machine is wireless remote-controlled and can be operated up to 200 feet away, which is a big safety plus," said Duvall. "The highway patrol always appreciates you working wrecks without crossing the center line."

Duvall also introduced the Off-Road Recovery Skid Steer Device.

The device mounts on skid steer loaders by quick attach and is used when four-wheel-drive wreckers cannot get to the scene because of surface road conditions caused by rain, snow or ice. "The skid steer device has tool boxes for chains, a stabilizing system, and a choice of three winches — 9,000, 12,000 or 15,000 pounds — equipped with 100 feet of cable," explains Duvall.

Even as more such new, high-tech products come to market, some traditional tools of the trade have been retired to the boneyard. The wheel lift, for example, replaced the sling as the gear of choice for towing vehicles. "The sling has become a secondary device as opposed to the primary device for light-duty towing," said Sawyers.

"The cars have become more delicate to handle"

"There are still some sling trucks out there, but the wheel lift — self-loading or conventional — really dominates the light-duty part of the industry now."

Strickland's shop takes a different approach: "We've mostly eliminated our conventional sling-type and wheel-lift wreckers and replaced them with carriers," he said. "If a damaged vehicle needs a tow from a recovery scene, it is very possible that hook-up with a wheel lift may not be possible and further damage may result from a sling hook-up. This makes the rollback the tool of choice for us."

Over at Dakota Towing, Al Gregg fondly recalls using pan dollies during recovery operations. Once a standard tool for light-duty towing, Gregg's pan dollies are no longer in active use, "although," he said, "I still have a set in the shed."

Bob's Garage & Towing, Inc. in

Covering All The Bases

Many towing companies nationwide have the tools to cover a variety of recovery challenges, often a diverse mix of light-, medium, and heavy-duty equipment. Some typical examples:

Al Gregg, owner of **Dakota Towing Service**, based in Brookings, S.D., owns light to heavy-duty gear towing equipment. Gregg prefers good used equipment and likes 5,000- or 6,000-pound lifts with "chassis to match," he said.

He has particular praise for Zip's Truck Equipment as a service-oriented distributor. "There are a lot of great manufacturers of towing equipment to choose from," he said. "I personally like to buy from those companies, like Zip's and Miller Industries, that give back to our industry. I think most of the major equipment manufacturers and distributors do just that, and each tower in a given area will support those distributors close to them."

Gregg said that towers in his area are very fortunate to have Zip's, Twin City Wrecker, Roy's Auto, Williams Wrecker, and North Central Truck & Trailer — all with "sales representatives who really care about us and the equipment they sell us," he said.

Over at **FastTow Wrecker Service** in Houston, Texas, owner Charles Rash runs the company founded by his father in the 1930s. Said Rash: "My father bought a used Army truck, built a homemade rig, and went to work towing in Houston. The towing rate was \$7.50 per tow and 50 cents a day for storage." Today, nearly 75 years later, Charles Rash's three sons



The Greggs have a mix of light/medium and heavy duty gear

operate the company across three locations. Rash operates 30 light-duty trucks, including 26 Vulcan 804s and four Jerr-Dan rollbacks.

At **Bob's Garage & Towing, Inc.**, in Painesville, Ohio, the father-and-son team of Jay and Jared Fox oversee four full-time and four part-time drivers, plus three mechanics in the garage. The company was established in 1965 by Robert Fox as a light-duty operation with two wreckers and a two-bay auto repair shop. By the mid-1970s Fox had expanded the business to three trucks: two wreckers and a flatbed. After Jay purchased the company he updated the equipment with wheel-lift wreckers and, in early 2003, added heavy-duty towing and recovery to the menu.

Today the company runs 10 recovery vehicles that feature Century, Jerr-Dan, Vulcan, and Champion equipment. "We have light, medium, and heavy-duty wreckers," said Jared Fox. "We also have flatbeds along with a skid steer loader, an incident response trailer, and trailer dollies for towing damaged trailers."



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Painesville, Ohio recently transitioned its light and medium-duty truck fleet to newer models. "We have used Vulcan wheel-lift wreckers since the late 1980s when they were first introduced on the market," said Jared Fox. Bob's original light and medium-duty fleet included a 1997 International 4700 with Chevron 19-foot flatbed, a 1999 International 4700 with Vulcan 894 wheel lift system, a 2000 Ford F450 with a Vulcan 881 wheel lift, and a 2001 International 4700 with a Chevron 21-foot flatbed.

Bob's recently updated its fleet, purchasing a 2007 Ford F550 with a Jerr-Dan HPL-3500 single-line wrecker, a 2006 Ford F650 with a Vulcan 894 twin-line wrecker, and a 2006 Ford F650 with a Chevron 21-foot flatbed Series 14. Also in the fleet are a 2000 Chevrolet 3500 with a Vulcan 807R autogrip with extendable boom and single line, and a 2001 Chevrolet 3500 with a 19-foot Champion flatbed.

When Bob's Garage & Towing expanded into the heavy-duty towing and recovery arena, a completely refurbished, low-mileage 1996 Chevy Kodiak with a Century 4024 wrecker was the first addition. Next, in January 2004, they added a 1997 Freightliner FLD120 with an Aatac Titan 50 wrecker. The Freightliner was replaced in May 2007 by a 2004 Peterbilt 378 with a Century 9055 wrecker which is also equipped with dual SP850 side-pullers. To keep its lineup fresh, the company is planning to add a new wrecker, a flatbed and a road tractor in the near future.

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Moving Forward

Knowledge is crucial, said Charles Rash, who urges towers to participate in their national, state, and local towing associations. "If you are not involved," he said, "then you're just on the sidelines watching, and you are going backwards in your business."

Rash said that his family business has been involved in local politics since the company launched in the 1930s, and have been involved in lawmaking as well. "For 75 years our family has put in our two cents' worth, for and against towing regulations," he explains. "Texas politics are tough, but I've found that the returns have been immeasurable." In fact, he said, "I've found that people who don't like their regulations didn't get involved in the writing of them."

Rash urges tow company owners to focus on the important things. "I can't understand an owner who spends thousands of dollars on a fancy paint job and then sits in a meeting and cries about the cost of training and association dues," he laments. "Maybe they need to cut the rig off their truck and sell watermelons on the side of the road instead."

In a business where light-duty towing is getting more attention, the prepared tower stands to benefit the most.

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RECOVERY NOTES

One Rollover, Two Recoveries

How light-duty & heavy-duty would handle it

By Bill Jackson

When I write for *Towing & Recovery Footnotes*, I am aware that I am addressing two very different classes of readers. In Group One are people like me who get most of their action by using some sort of mechanical tow truck, one of the many types of medium hydraulic booms, and maybe even some air cushions. Group Two people arrive on-site with a huge 30-, 40-, or 50-ton hydraulic tow truck, well-equipped with blocks, chains, and shackles.

The scenario: A tanker, loaded with sugar/molasses and weighing 67,000 pounds, has gone off the road. It hit a steep bank and then rolled upwards, breaking hedgerow trees that are now embedded in the tractor cab. The tank is very delicate despite the heavy weight.



What a hugely different challenge a job like this presents to Group One compared to Group Two! I remember this one so well as it seems to illustrate how far we have come in easing our recovery problems, thanks to the clever designers who have brought us sliding rotating booms.

However, there were some issues here that could have easily made the recovery very tricky. When we are so familiar with the sight of a tractor and trailer rolled away from us, it can come as a shock to realize that sometimes what we normally would do at a rollover is not going to work. Let us review the options for our two groups:

For Group Two only. You will obviously park this side, use two or more straps to lift it, extend your boom and it is all done. Wrong!

The tank is too weak to permit the use of even 12-inch-wide straps. You will need some sort of air cushion that will, at the very least, get the tank horizontal and take the weight of the tanker straps.

Better still, after disconnecting the tractor, you could lift only the front end of the tank and bring it to the curb, creating enough space

for it to sit down when you roll it up with a top lift. This way you are avoiding the whole weight of 67,000 pounds on your boom and reducing the lift to about 33,000 pounds on two closely-tied straps that the tanker walls can stand.

For Group One. For those of us relying on a couple of mechanical wreckers, plus some air bags, what a

“Wreckers alone just could not do it”

different story it was (and possibly would be still is in some areas). Upon arrival, the thought was that the job was not too hard, but there were some snags to ponder, such as:

- You can't winch it up as it is over-center.
- You can't winch it up until it is standing over-horizontal
- When you do winch it up, you will be stopped by the tree growing out of the cab.
- If you separate the tractor, how will you swing the front end round to the curb? Your booms don't swing.
- If you drag it, the tank will burst.

There are not too many jobs where you have to say that cushions are really essential, but this was one of them. Wreckers alone just could not do it without tremendous rigging and re-rigging.

The best solution was to uncouple the tractor and use cushions to lift it up to a full height of 84 inches (Jumbo slope tops) by using two of them under the rear of the tank only. That stopped the front from sliding.

When it was up to satisfaction, the straps were hooked on and it pivoted to stand up. Note that we were only placing the least possible load on the tank as the cushions have all the weight. We pulled the tractor down to the road by sliding it away from the trees.

Time for the Big Guys in Group Two should be about one hour. For Group Two, allow five hours. See what I mean when I say how lucky you are if you have the big gear? If you don't, do not worry too much. I'll be willing to bet that the charge is the same. ☘

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278319-New 2006 Ford F-650 Jerr-Dan Rustler WSRB Steel 21 x 8 Fixed Rail Smooth Deck, 10,000 lb., Elec. Shift PTO, Winch Ten./Roller Guide, 8000 lb. Ramsey Worm Gear Winch, 3000 lb. Wheel lift w/Stan. L Arms.

281709-2007 Freightliner M2 Jerr-Dan 21' Steel RRSB w/ Aluminum blade rails, 210hp Mercedes, Automatic, Air ride, Air brake, 19.5s



295843-New 2008 Ford F-650 Jerr-Dan 21' Aluminum Removeable Rail, SRS10 Side Recovery System, 8000 lb Worm Gear Winch, 3500 lb. Wheel Lift.

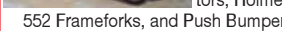
283351-2007 Kenworth T300 Jerr-Dan MDL320/110 Integ. boom



272879, 272882 - 2007 Sterling Acterra, Jerr-Dan HPL60 12 Ton Hydraulic Wrecker, Used at the Iowa Speedway 108" CA, 6K lb. Wheel Lift w/Forks and Scoop L-Arms. Many racetrack extras!



280817-2002 Intern'l 4300 DT466, 6 Sp., 19.5s, Simulators, Holmes



102640 - 2003 Chevy 6500 Century 21' Steel w/Removable Rails, 8000 lb Winch, 3500 lb Wheel Lift, Wheel Simulators, Warning Lights

278867 - 2007 Chevy K3500HD Jerr-Dan HPL-35 808 9 Ton Boom, Ramsey 8000 lb. Single Winch, T37 Pivot Wheel Grids 3500 lb.



283136-1996 Chevy C3500 5.7L, 5 speed, 130,000 miles Century 301



290470-2008 Ford F-550 - Jerr-Dan HPL 60, Alum. Light Pylon, J Chains/Wheel Straps, 12 Ton Boom, Dual 10K lb Winches, Tow Sling, 4K lb. Standard L Arms

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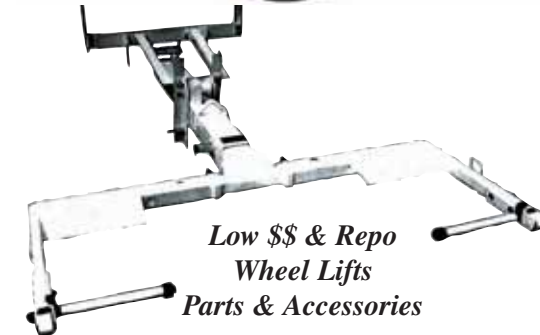


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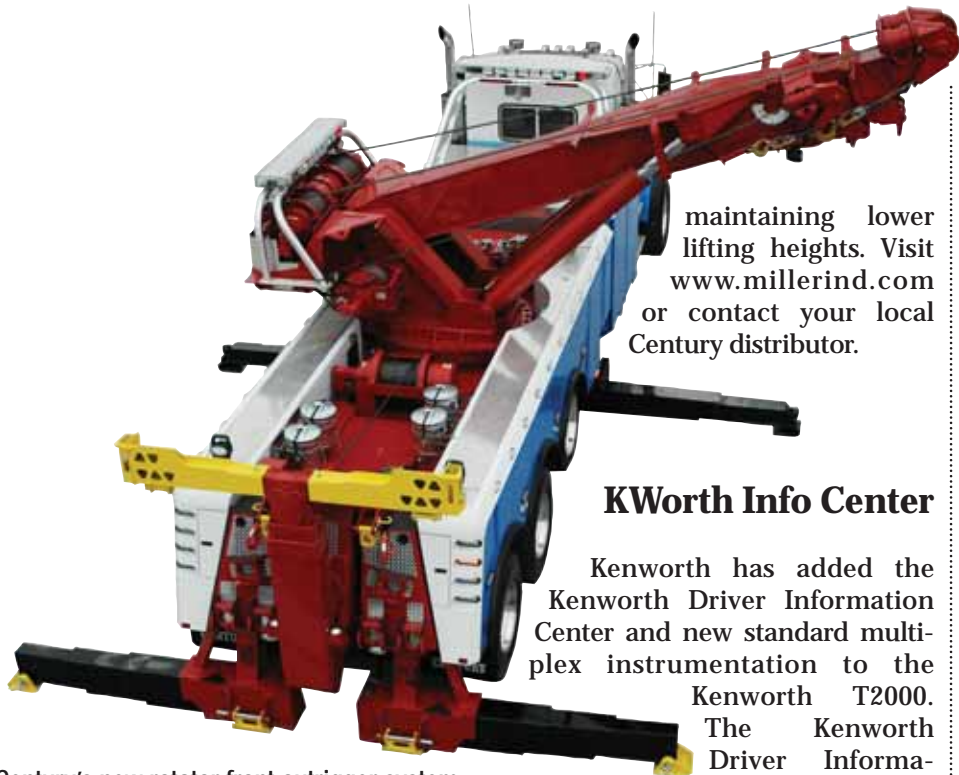
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KWorth Info Center

Kenworth has added the Kenworth Driver Information Center and new standard multiplex instrumentation to the Kenworth T2000.

The Kenworth Driver Information Center provides instant trip access information for miles per gallon, engine and idle hours, idle percentage, and optimum rpm range. A "sweet spot indicator" offers visual cues when the optimum rpm is reached, while a bar graph displays current mpg against trip average mpg.

The Kenworth T2000's new state-of-the-art dash offers a more ergonomic and appealing instrumentation system. A new speedometer and tachometer cluster features large gauges, an engine hour meter, odometer, trip odometer, and outside temperature gauge.

The system is supported by the Kenworth Electronic Service Analyst, a computer-based diagnostics tool which enables technicians to accurately pinpoint a malfunction and quickly troubleshoot dashboard

Century's new rotator front outrigger system

Email candler@traderonline.com about your new or improved tow truck chassis and bodies, towing parts and equipment, and accessories with any available photos or art and we'll include it here.

New Outrigger

Century is offering a new front outrigger system for its family of heavy-duty rotators. The optional design is an under-frame system that provides a 3.5-degree departure angle of the inner jack to allow ground clearance under the vehicle even on road systems with a crown. The system is available in a two-stage or a three-stage that provides 264 inches of span.

The new outriggers with the wider stance provides greater stability, additional tool compartment space, and the ability to reduce overhang between the casualty and the recovery unit while



Kenworth's Driver Information Center



Wally-Mo's 10-car Stinger car hauler

electronics. Kenworth's home page is www.kenworth.com

The Stinger

Wally-Mo Trailers is pleased to announce the release of the newly redesigned Wally-Mo 10-car EZ Load Stinger Car Hauler. This new design allows tall and oversized vehicles to be loaded in the trailer belly with ease.

Some of the Stinger's standard features include waist-high controls, rear hydraulic ramps, quick-release ratchet

tie downs and lightweight aluminum cylinders, LED lighting, and more. Optional features for the trailer includes aluminum wheels and a Monarch electric hydraulic system.

The Stinger also features a five-year, 500,000-mile Intraax axle suspension and a full-lift trailer floor for loading low-profile cars to the head rack without unloading the top of the trailer.

Wallymo also builds nine- or 10-car head racks and trailer setups for the truck of your choice. For more information, see www.wallymo.com

Bead-Seating Stand

From Ken-Tool comes the Easy-Lift Bead-Seating Stand, which provides a easier way to position large tire and wheel assemblies for proper bead seating. Ergonomically designed to increase productivity and reduce back strain and injuries, the Easy-Lift aligns tire beads concentrically on the wheel, resulting in improved vehicle ride and longer tire life. For more information, visit www.ken-tool.com

Green Additive

Neutro fuel additives increase mileage by as much as 10 percent guaranteed, and decrease emissions drastically. Neutro's additives will

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The Neutro fuel additive product line includes Gas Additive, Diesel Additive, Friction Block Oil Additive, and Emissions Fighter for those who fail the emissions test. For motorcycles, Liquid Horsepower and Super Gas Drops greatly increase performance and power. Visit www.greenmotoadditives.com



Neutro fuel additives

Low-Ride Suspension

Hendrickson's new, lighter weight Intraax AANL 23,000-pound-capacity low-ride/liftable integrated trailer suspension system offers a weight savings of 75 pounds over its predecessor, yet still gives fleets and owner-operators the same outstanding ride and reliability. Offered in ride heights from 6.5 to 17 inches, AANL brings road-proven Advanced Axle/Beam Technology to drop-decks, lowboys, platforms, tankers, bottom dumps, and specialty trailers. The lighter weight of the tapered-beam construction allows haulers to carry more cargo on each run. Visit www.hendrickson-intl.com or call 866-743-3247.



Intraax's integrated trailer suspension system

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The DocuDent Kit

Document Accidents

DocuDent revamped USA's Glove Compartment Kit offers a new design and updated features, including a powerful LED flashlight with built-in tape measure and a package of adhesive bandages. The kit allows drivers to record what transpires during a vehicle accident and serves as an important resource for drivers, police, the DMV, and insurance companies.

The DocuDent Kit is easily stored in a glove compartment and includes the following essential safety tools: a re-loadable camera with flash, accident documentation instructions, accident information form, adhesive bandages, a pen, a whistle, and a LED flashlight with a built-in tape measure. Visit www.docudentusa.com or call 888-221-1340.

Removable Rail

Century has introduced a removable aluminum blade rail option to its Right Approach Carrier. The forward two sections of the blade rail on the



Century's new removable rail option

main deck section may be removed to allow for utilizing a forklift for loading or unloading from the side of the carrier, or can be left off to ac-

“Tall and oversized vehicles can be loaded with ease”

commodate wider loads. The polished aluminum rail provides a custom appearance as well as more usable deck width for wider vehicles. See www.millerind.com or call 800-292-0330.

Pump Up The Power

Next Generation Power now offers a heavy-duty diesel air compressor. Able to run on the same fuel system, Next Gen's KS3030 Diesel Air Com-



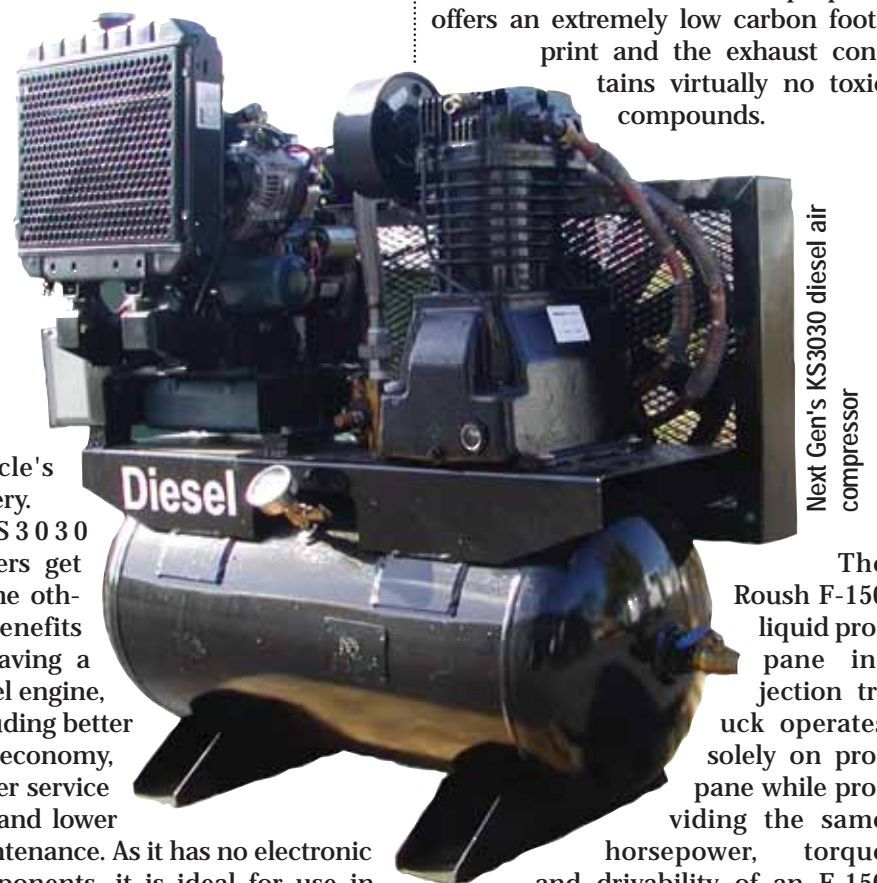
Roush's F-150 liquid propane pickup

pressor produces an air flow volume of 30 cfm at 175 psi and 35 cfm at 100 psi. It can continuously run a one-inch impact gun or wrench.

The durable, two-cylinder engine provides a high-performance, 12 hp powerplant that is water-cooled, and has its own fuel pump and alternator to charge a battery used for starting. It can also simply be attached to the

ings by using propane as an alternate fuel. Roush is a well-known advanced powertrain engineering company and so was a good candidate for developing a viable propane-powered vehicle.

The Roush F-150 propane-powered pickup qualifies for a maximum allowable credit of \$2,500. There is also a 50-cent-per-gallon credit on the propane used to power such vehicles. Used as a motor fuel, propane offers an extremely low carbon footprint and the exhaust contains virtually no toxic compounds.



Next Gen's KS3030 diesel air compressor

vehicle's battery.

KS3030 owners get all the other benefits of having a diesel engine, including better fuel economy, longer service life, and lower maintenance. As it has no electronic components, it is ideal for use in outdoor conditions.

Call 888-463-9879, email ngpower.sales@bellsouth.net, or visit www.nextgenerationpower.com

Propane Power

Fleet owners who put the 2008 Roush F-150 liquid propane injection pickup into service will receive both valuable tax credits and fuel cost sav-

The Roush F-150 liquid propane injection truck operates solely on propane while providing the same horsepower, torque and drivability of an F-150 equipped with a gasoline-powered 5.4-liter, three-valve Triton V-8 engine. The 2008 model year truck can be ordered through a nationwide network of select Ford dealers, and is available in Regular Cab, SuperCab, and SuperCrew cab styles and all three bed lengths.

See www.ROUSHtv.com, www.ROUSHperformance.com or call 800-597-6874.

TOW PROS

Big Tow & Little Tow

A tale of two Texans who ride hard for their industry

By Thomas G. Dolan

In Texas, bigger is usually better, but small can be beautiful too. This is the story of two Texas tows, one with a small company in a small town, and the other in a large com-

pany in a major city: respectively, Larry Cernosek, president of Cernosek Enterprises, Inc. in Deer Park, and Rick Chron, general manager and managing partner of WHW Towing Companies in Dallas.



Little Tow: Larry Cernosek

Little Tow: Larry Cernosek

Jeanette Rash, owner of Fast Tow in Houston and the legislative chair for the Texas Towing and Recovery Association, said of Cernosek, "Larry and I grew up in the towing business together. We have walked the halls of the capitol for many years."

Rash defines towing as "the politics of towing vehicles." She noted that "towing is always political but is extremely so in Texas. Larry loves politics, and one has to love politics to deal with it every day the way he does. It's definitely a challenge, for Larry also deals with many issues that aren't specific to towing, such as the sales tax and insurance. I don't think Larry ever sleeps. He has so much energy and manages to stay on top of so many things. He's also very active in his community."

Cernosek got into towing when he was working in a chemical plant and suffered a back injury. He used the \$3000 he got in workers compensation to buy a tow truck. He started towing in Houston in 1975, then moved to Deer Park in 1980 where he both towed and opened a body shop.

Cernosek opened in a good location that enabled him to do the towing for the police in both Deer Park and neighboring Pasadena. He also does wholesale towing for garages, dealerships, body shops, and motor clubs. He has seven tow trucks and five rollbacks, two of them medium duty. He has eight employees.

"Because of my involvement with politics, I've kept myself small so I would have the time for it," Cernosek said. "Early on in the business I found out that the industry is heavily influenced by the political divisions within the state. I have always been interested in politics, and missed becoming mayor of Deer Park by a low margin. A lot of my friends have become involved in politics. So I made a commitment to changing the laws to protect citizens and our industry."

Winners At Work

One of Cernosek's victories had to do with the issue of insurance companies "steering" their policy holders to insurance company-approved body shops. "The owner should have the right to say where he wants his vehicle repaired," said Cernosek. "There has been an anti-insurance steering law, but they

have found loopholes in it, so vehicles are steered to shops where the repairs are done on the cheap and so save the insurance companies money." Cernosek has helped to close those loopholes.

A big victory that Cernosek and Rash have been involved in on behalf of the Texas Towing and Storage Association has been to have tow companies registered in different categories with training and certification requirements. Towing had once been regulated, then became deregulated, but now the towers want it regulated again.

Government regulation? Isn't that something to avoid at all costs? "No," said Cernosek. "Towers are very professional here, but we want to make them even more professional, to upgrade the industry in the public eye, and make it more appealing to qualified young people."

Cernosek said that politics is hard work, but he enjoys it, especially building relationships with elected officials. "Rather than have them pass laws onto you, it's better to work with them and get laws that benefit the most people," he said. He added that he is also working with a U.S. Senator to get the industry recognized through a National Towing Week, which would have the additional benefit of getting the industry on the National Register with opportunities for grant money.

The Texas legislature passes bills on every odd year, so at those times Cernosek said he spends 46 nights straight in the state capitol of Austin.

***"He spends
46 nights
straight in the
state capitol"***

The rest of the time he spends at least two hours a day on his political activities. In 2000, Cernosek was inducted into the Towing and Recovery Hall of Fame in Chattanooga, and in 2001 into the Texas Trail of Fame.

Diverse Interests

Cernosek has also been very active in community service. He's been on the Chamber of Commerce for both Pasadena and Deer Park. From Deer Park in 1998 he received the award of the year for outstanding community involvement. He's a past member of the Deer Park Rotary Club, and in 2000 was awarded the Masonic Lodge award for Community Builder. He was also awarded the Deer Park Person of the Year award in 2002.

He teaches junior achievement for second graders at the local elementary school; serves as emcee for the Pasadena Philharmonic Mardi Gras Ball, which provides scholarships to music students; is on the board for the Pasadena Rodeo, and on the governing board and the outreach program of his church.

Cernosek, 64, said he has time for all these activities away from his business



Big Tow: Rick Chron

thanks to his loyal staff, but he is busy generally from six a.m. to midnight. He and his wife, Linda, have been married 32 years, and have three children: Joshua, 34; Lance, 21; and Leah, 18.

Cernosek doesn't have time for hobbies but loves to go to Las Vegas for five days during the Christmas holidays. Since he is in the business of both towing and politics, it makes perfect sense that he would want to spend his vacation gambling!

Big Tow: Rick Chron

"I've also known Rick for a long time," said Jeanette Rash. "I've watched him grow from being a manager of a towing company to a co-owner of a huge one. Rick leaves the politics to people like Larry and me, but his strength is training.

He's one of the best trainers in the country, and is a major player on our training committee. Rick is so hands-on in the way he relates to drivers. He is able to see and relate to them at their level, which is why he is so effective."

Chron's dad owned a small wrecking service in Charleston, MO, so Chron was introduced to the business at eight years old going out on calls with his dad. Later, the family moved to Schaumburg, IL, where Chron got his Class B license and started driving a wrecker at age 16. The next year he drove for a service station that had police rotation. He then went into the Marine Corps where he served for 10 years.

"When I got out I worked for my mentor, John Lewis, in Plano [TX]; we moved back to that area [because] my wife is from Fort Worth," said Chron. He worked for Lewis for eight years, the last two as manager. When Lewis sold his company to Road One,

Chron became marketing manager for the Dallas/Ft. Worth area.

New Horizons

Then he got fired. "They were cutting back and told me to fire seven people," Chron said. "I wouldn't do it, so they fired me." He went to work for that company's competitors. But one year later, his former associates bought their company back from Road One and offered him part ownership of the company to run the Plano shop, now called Signature Towing.

In 2005, his partners expanded his role by asking to manage the two other companies in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area: Walnut Hill Wrecker and Cornish Wrecker Service. The company now has 98 employees.

"They work hard and are responsible for our success," said Chron. "We treat them well, give them good units, with good pay and benefits, health, and medical insurance, and teach them safety. We show we care about them and want them to do the right thing, and they carry this attitude to our customers."

The company specializes in police towing, and has five exclusive police contracts, as well as doing some private towing. "We're deeply involved in traffic management, which we believe is the future of towing," Chron said. "I believe that we as towers, and not the municipalities, DOTs, police and fire departments, should take the lead. We have the equipment and the experience so should lead with our professionalism."

Chron fully supports the move toward professional training and certification his association is taking. "We've always had employee drug testing, require that they pass criminal background tests, and have certifica-



Rick Chron training fellow towmen

tion training," he said. "We believe that will echo throughout the state."

Teacher, Trainer

Chron has been through extensive training himself, and credits Tom Luciano and his training schools as being the key ones for him. Chron also instructs many police, fire, and DOD departments, as well as government organizations, such as the North Central Texas Council of Governments, which controls and advises on roadway safety for the seven counties in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area.

"I love teaching operators, especially people who have never towed before," Chron said. "It builds their confidence, and they seem to do a better job. But

See BIG TOW & LITTLE TOW, page 20

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An Unexpected Ally

OSHA wants to work with, not against, the towing industry

By Torrey Meeks

"The fact is," said George McRae of McRae Wrecker & Auto Service in Vermont, "if all employers were following OSHA guidelines, which are very simple, their employees wouldn't be dying."

A bold statement, McRae admitted, one he knows towers don't want to hear, even though since 2002 he's been trying to rehabilitate the "bad guy" image of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration within the towing industry.

And he isn't getting paid to do that work. OSHA isn't putting money in his pocket to cheerlead at conventions or sucker in gullible reporters with talk of its benefits, he said. His reason for wanting cooperation and collaboration between OSHA and towers is a simple and selfless one: He knows it will go a long way toward saving lives in this notoriously dangerous profession.

"We are an industry that's underfunded, under-trained, and overworked. Look at the fatality rate. I've been told by OSHA that we are a higher-risk industry than coal miners," McRae said. "At any given time there are 1,000 drivers on the road recovering a wreck. Of those 1,000 guys on the highway, at any given time, 75 guys could be dead."

The tragedy is that those deaths are avoidable, he said.

A Starting Point

The way to reduce the death rate in the industry, McRae said, is to educate drivers and shop owners by showing them that their wild misconceptions about OSHA are just that: wild misconceptions. Once that happens, he hopes towers will learn what he learned a long time ago: OSHA can be a strong ally, a source of free education, and a consulting service that helps employers create a safer, more efficient work environment.

The thrust of McRae's point is that there's no way to avoid OSHA, and in trying to do so, towers shoot themselves in the foot. By the time OSHA is knocking on the door to audit a shop after an accident, by then it's too late, he said.

McRae noted that what most towers don't understand is that there are two faces to OSHA: Compliance, a kinder, ready-to-help consultative branch, and enforcement, which issues fines. But most people only know about enforcement. It's the consultative services side that teaches employers the best ways to protect their workers, without ever threatening to issue fines. The enforcement and consultative services aspects of OSHA are like parents. The enforcement side is



George McRae, McRae Wrecker & Auto Service, Vermont

the disciplinarian parent, while the consultative services side is the dedicated caregiver and instructor.

"If people are afraid of the enforcement side then that means they're trying to skirt the rules," McRae said. "And in a lot of cases what they're trying to skirt is so simple [to fix]. It would bring them into full compliance with OSHA, and keep their drivers safe."

McRae said that one of his biggest frustrations is that he feels like he's struggling against the wind trying to

"We are a higher-risk industry than coal miners"

get industry leaders to recognize the benefits of the consulting services of OSHA. He's gone to the TRAA, the Conference of Northeastern Towing Associations, and other people and agencies, anyone he thought would listen. But, he said, they've all given him the cold shoulder, and he doesn't understand that.

The OSHA Man

Harlo Wells is an OSHA man. He's the Occupational Safety Consultant for Project Worksafe in Vermont and he handles a lot of different industries. But that doesn't make him an expert on every industry right off the bat, and he admits as much.

"Before starting the partnership in Vermont, we [OSHA] didn't know anything about the towing industry. Once we got into it, our eyes were opened," said Wells. "I have a better consideration for their industry now.

I think that as far as how the industry feels, they think we want to put them out of business, but that's not our job. We're trying to make sure people get home okay, or aren't exposed to something that'll kill them 30 years down the road." The towing industry isn't the only one that's afraid of OSHA, Wells said, but they don't have to be.

One time Wells was out inspecting a fence manufacturer, who was angry that he was there. The guy was sure that Wells was going to bankrupt him. The two talked for awhile, and Wells pointed out a few things about a piece of fencing equipment. They walked around the rest of the shop. "By the time I was done he realized we were just there to help make his company better," Wells said.

Oftentimes, he'll receive a call after he's talked to someone in a new industry, and they'll want to know more about how they can work with OSHA, Wells said. The company owners come to understand that it doesn't take much to create a better work environment, and that fixing equipment that could cause injury isn't as big a deal as they thought it'd be. "Who wants to see their workers get hurt if it can be avoided?" Wells asked.

A Big Deal

Since the Vermont branch of OSHA has signed its partnership with the Vermont Towing Association, there have been no major incidents. In an industry that's known for being so dangerous, that's a big deal, Wells said.

"Once towers started the partnership, we got an annual meeting going with towers for Vermont. Pretty soon I basically said, you guys are doing great. You're policing your-

selves now," Wells said. He attributes this to better education on how to stay safe on the job.

And it's not only in Vermont that towers can work constructively with OSHA. "In every state there's a state plan, or there is a Federal OSHA consultation program," said Wells. "They can get someone in the consultation program to check the shop out. It's not going to cost anything for that. We don't write fines. To have a private company come in and audit, it's going to be lot of money. We do it free. No signs or citations involved."

From there, towing associations can form alliances with the compliance side of OSHA, Wells said, and if the success in Vermont is any measure, the increased knowledge on both sides of the fence will go a long way toward reducing casualties and injuries.

See AN UNEXPECTED ALLY, page 19

How OSHA Enforces

Though Bob Kowalski is on the consultative services side of OSHA, he also has some things to say about the enforcement side. OSHA employees don't get anything for bankrupting a business, Kowalski said. They get paid a straight salary just like every other government employee.

In Kowalski's words, here's how it works: "The process is this. We have to have something that initiates an inspection, whether it is a planned inspection, a complaint, or a referral. We don't just arbitrarily drop in on a company. When an OSHA officer goes to a site he'll consult with the owner and tell him why they're there. Then the OSHA officer does a walk-around with the owner. From there the compliance officer returns to his office, writes up a report, and from that report – if the citations are warranted – they're generated from this report. Depending on the class of violations, there may or may not be monetary penalty associated with it."

Another aspect to the enforcement side is that they can reduce the size of the fine if the employer makes an effort to fix the safety issues. OSHA gives employers time to fix the problems in their shop. Then OSHA checks things out again, and if the employer's tried to get his act together, many times they'll cut the fines in half, if not more.

"We don't work on commission," Kowalski said. "The money doesn't go in our pockets. We're not trying to stick it to employers."



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2004 385 PETE, 3406 Cat 475hp, 10 spd, a/r, cruise, Jake, ac, 478K mi, 260" WB, alum whls, New Century 4024t, 20 ton boom, 2-20K lb planetary winches, 182" ca alum body, air winch free spools, air cable tensioners, 24K lb 3 stage underlift, alum tubular pylon, hydr rear spades, 8 pr axle forks, underlift light kit, D-rings on tailgate, air shift PTO over ride, wired remote underlift, stk#811776



1994 GMC TOPKICK 7500, 3116 Cat, automatic, spring susp, 195" wb, 33,000 lb gvw, odometer shows 357,000 miles, Holmes 16 ton, 16 ton boom, 20,000 lb winches upgrade, 3 stage underlift w/tilt, manual rear spades, spring hanger adapters, winch free spools, amber light bar, lower work lights, 6,000 lb, l-arms, #stk503103



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2008 DODGE 4500, 6.4 Cummins, auto trans, p/w, pl, 15,000lb GVW, ac, am/fm/cd stereo, stainless steel sims, tilt, cruise, Vulcan 882, 8 ton boom, composite modular body, 2-8,000 lb. winches, Ramsey level winders, 2 insert tool boxes, remote winch free spools, Whelen light bar, led bed lights, pop up dollies w/alum axles, stk#125855



2008 DODGE 5500, 6.4 Cummins, auto trans, p/w, p/l, cruise, ac, AM/FM/CD stereo, stainless steel wheel sims, sliding rear window, Vulcan 19' alum, 8,000lb winch, stationary Cab protector, MX7000 light bar, dual controls, lower worker lights, 48" tool box, independent wheel lift, led bed lights, stk#123929



2002 KENWORTH T800, N14 435hp Cummins, 374K mi., 10 spd, air ride, single chrome exhaust, pw, 260" WB, ac, tractor package, alum. wheels, new Century 4024, 20 ton boom, 2-20,000 lb. Planetary winches, 182" CA alum. body, 24,000 lb. 3 stage underlift, air winch free spools, alum. tubular pylon, hyd. rear spades, spring hanger adapters, 8 pr axle forks, underlift light kit, air & electrical hook ups, stk#888789



2008 335 PETE, Cummins 330hp, px 8, 10 spd, 26,000 lb GVW, air ride, ac, dual chrome exhaust, tractor pkg, alum whls, polished alum fuel tanks, Century 3212, 16 ton boom, 2-15,000 lb winches, air winch free spools, cable tensioners, alum body, air & elec hook-ups, 84" 12K underlift, 3 sets forks, hd pylon, mx 7000 light bar, stk#767652



1995 FREIGHTLINER, 350hp Cummins, 9 spd trans., 511K miles, Integrated sleeper, air ride, alum. wheels, engine brake, 266" WB, Vulcan 3025, 30 ton boom, 2-25,000lb. winches, 3 stage underlift, hyd. rear spades, air winch free spools, 4 pr. axle forks, amber light bar, lower work box, air & elec. hookups, lower work lights, steel tool box, stk#707409

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AN UNEXPECTED ALLY

continued from page 17

The Panic Button

Bob Kowalski, the OSHA Bridgeport Area Director in Connecticut, isn't blind to how his organization is viewed. One thing Kowalski sees time and time again when he shows up at a tow shop is, "Panic. They panic, that's a typical reaction."

And it doesn't have to be that way, Kowalski said, citing many of the benefits the consultative side of OSHA offers. In order to prove that OSHA isn't just around to hand out fines like candy on Halloween, Kowalski created the first formal

slings safety procedures. With slings, they covered whether web slings or alloy chain slings were right for the occasion based on vehicle weights.

Rather than scaring towers off, it gave a lot of operators better appreciation for the agency, Kowalski said. By increasing their confidence in their ability to create a safe work place – on the side of the road or in the shop – towers became less hesitant to reach out for help.

Reaching Out

One of the areas that's a sore spot for Kowalski is when an industry is hesitant to reach out for help and tragedies result. For example, one time a guy was doing some shop



The McRae Wrecker lineup

alliance in the United States between a towing association and OSHA. The Connecticut towers teamed up and started a dialog with Kowalski.

"We felt that there was a need, because as soon as you mentioned OSHA they clammed right up," Kowalski said. "So we went out and provided assistance to the association in whatever areas they needed assistance."

After talking with the Connecticut Towing Association, Kowalski formulated training plans using their input. The local OSHA office then provided free courses: Electrical training and info on OSHA standards, first aid instruction, good record-keeping practices, appropriate ways to handle and store flammables, and

work and was told to use a plasma cutter to take the top off a 55-gallon drum. The drum had previously con-

"They always think we're just about the big fines"

tained flammable fluid and as soon as he cut into the top, it turned into missile. "Normally when an accident like that happens there's a decapitation," Kowalski said.

Common things he sees when he goes into a tow shop are improper

See GET ALONG, page 20

A Friend of OSHA

Getting hurt while on the job ultimately led George McRae to becoming an advocate of working with OSHA. McRae, 52, started McRae Wrecker & Auto Service in the late 1970s when he was 21. The accident, which happened in the fall of 2001, left him with 300 stitches in his head and subsequent facial and sinus surgeries.

At a training class he attended after the incident, McRae said the instructor told him to contact OSHA directly with his questions about hard hat regulations on a scene. "I called OSHA," McRae recalled, "and they directed me to the consultant side."

There, McRae reached Harlo Wells of the Vermont OSHA's Project WorkSafe and began a working relationship that would eventually help bring about the

OSHA/Vermont Towing Association partnership.

Beginning with the answer to his inquiry about hard hats, McRae noted, Wells provided straightforward information from the agency. (Hard hats, by the way, are necessary on any job site when there is a recognized hazard or possibility of head injury from falling or swinging items.) "Once you get (the reasons for OSHA regulations)," said McRae, "the light bulb snaps on over your head."

He voluntarily had his business reviewed for hazards by OSHA in the spring of 2002. According to McRae, addressing the issues found in his shop during the risk assessment cost him less than \$700 to become fully compliant. "I tell you what, it's cheap insurance," McRae declared, and the benefits of being OSHA-compliant are two-fold. "The employer can protect himself while protecting his employees," he said.

For McRae, OSHA is a resource for all employers. "It's not my OSHA," he pointed out, "It's everybody's OSHA."

THE LAW & YOU

The Shield

That's what towers need for protection from liability

By Jill Coley

Consider the following scene: A tractor-trailer full of auto parts traveling down the highway topples over, sliding to a stop on its side. Fire, police, and recovery respond. Rush hour is approaching, and traffic is beginning to snarl.

The highway patrol orders the vehicle dragged from the road into the ditch. The tower knows he could right the truck with minimal damage by removing the cargo and inflating air bags. But the scene commander insists.

The tower – the only agent on-scene with no liability protection under the law – obliges. Later, the trucking company sues, claiming the tower did more damage to the rig than the wreck. The cargo is a complete loss, so the automobile manufacturer, who was expecting the parts, sues for loss of profit.

While the scenario above is hypothetical, it is similar to what recovery experts use when they talk about the vulnerability to lawsuit of towers who work in highway incident management recoveries.

"Towers are often the only private-sector responders at crash scenes and we bear a lot of responsibility," said Mike Scott, Director of Education for the Towing and Recovery Association of America (TRAA). "We are responsible for removing wrecked or disabled vehicles and debris from the roadway."

"The problem is everyone at the scene – police, fire department – they all have immunity if property is damaged," said Jeanette Rash, president of two companies with SAFEClear contracts in Houston. That municipal program requires that any vehicle involved in a traffic incident on a Houston freeway, from a flat tire to a wreck, be removed quickly.

Rash said that when responding to municipal calls for quick clearance, "our trucks are being hit on a regular basis because we're taking the role of police."

In addition to property damage, bodily harm is a risk for towers. In many states, if a tower is injured on the scene, he may be considered a pedestrian and is not protected by the same umbrella insurance coverage as emergency responders.

Holding Harmless

"We've got mandates all over for quick clearance," said Harriett Cooley, Executive Director of the TRAA. "To do that, we need some kind of shield."



Charles Rash

Representatives of the Texas Department of Transportation block traffic at an accident scene.

Peter O'Connell, attorney for TRAA, said, "Towers are the only nongovernmental parties at the scene and are the most susceptible to liability because they're in the private sector. Statutes can be passed on a state-wide basis to protect towers for damage caused for following the lawful directive of a police officer."

A handful of states offer protection under the law. The Interstate 95 Corridor Coalition States, from Maine to Florida, include three states that have hold-harmless clauses with respect to agents acting under the direction of the police officer. Those states are Pennsylvania, Virginia, and North Carolina.

The Pennsylvania statute reads, "No liability shall attach to the police officer or to any person acting under the direction of the police officer for damage to a vehicle or damage to or loss of any portion of the contents or load or spilled cargo."

Hold-harmless policies will not stop people from suing, however. And in the many states lacking such protective legislation, insurance for towing and recovery operators is a must. Many incident management contracts require a certain amount of coverage, usually one million dollars, O'Connell said.

Insurance agent Shawn Carroll of Gulf Coast Underwriters in Florida recommends towers have one million in coverage, whether they do incident management recovery work or not. "You're picking up a mess somewhere," he said.

Rash said she carries one million in coverage, the amount most road clearance programs require, but is doubling her insurance soon.

Many motor clubs require towers to have only \$300,000 in liability coverage, Carroll said, but he's seen plenty of accidents that have gone beyond that. "People don't want to hear it, but carry the most you can afford," he said.

See GET ALONG, page 23

LITTLE TOW & BIG TOW

continued from page 15

many owners put a new driver in a truck for a week and then expect them to know everything there is about towing. If they have an accident or damage a car, the employer bad-mouths them. But you can't expect anybody to know all about towing after just a week!"

Chron teaches policy first, then towing procedures, then the recovery techniques. "They utilize the techniques in recovery that they've learned," Chron explained. "And you don't stop when they get in the truck. You keep training all of the time. They then come to class and say what they did in their last recoveries. If they did great, you say so, or you let them know they could have done this or that. We open the classroom to discussion. If you have five different guys talk about five different ways to deal with a situation, three may be no good and two outstanding. They are always learning. It's a constant, continuing education."

Chron spends about 70 percent of his time on the business and 30 percent on training. "I believe the two go hand-in-hand," he said. Chron, 46, typically works a 16-hour day Monday through Friday. His wife, Denine, and he have been married for 28 years, and have a 23-year-old son, Kyle, and 17-year-old daughter, Ashley. Chron is an elder in his church and active in Rotary Club. For fun he enjoys riding his motorcycle — safely, one can assume. ❄

AN UNEXPECTED ALLY

continued from page 19

storage of oxyacetylene torches, rags that have flammable and combustible residues stacked on top of each other, and unmarked drums that lead to things like the plasma cutter incident.



Bob Kowalski, Bridgeport Area OSHA Director, Connecticut

Kowalski also recognizes that there's no such thing as a one-size-fits all way to keep every industry safe. That's why he appreciates it when an industry that has traditionally steered clear of OSHA, like towing, reaches out to him: The more he knows, the more he can help.

"When we go out and do training, we take a look at the type of industry that we're assisting with and figure out what hazards are associated with that," Kowalski said. "I'm on the side of OSHA that nobody realizes is there. They always think we're just about the big fines." ❄

Don't Rush Me!!

Like many longtime towers, George McRae of McRae Wrecker & Auto Service knows that people have a tendency to try to rush towers at incident scenes. And, he said, when you start hurrying, you get hurt. However, if an operator is familiar with the consultative services branch of Occupational Safety and Health Administration or OSHA, there is no need to feel harried or harassed when recovering a wreck — not by the police, DOT officials, or an impatient night manager.

As soon as a tower hops out of the tow truck to recover a vehicle, that space of road becomes the work site. At that point, noted McRae, the operator is protected by OSHA, which is, of course, the governmental body whose goal is to ensure the safety of all workers on all work sites. That means any work site — anywhere, anytime — including the roadway at an incident scene.

It's not OSHA's intent to issue fines first and keep people alive second, McRae said. The agency's goal is to keep people alive. Issuing fines is the method used to strongly encourage compliance when someone puts workers in needless danger.

"The cops here [in Vermont] have had it made very clear to them [by OSHA] that if we need an extra five or ten minutes to suppress traffic speed, we get it," McRae said. "We don't duck and dive in and out of cars anymore. My guys feel much better now, because if someone starts rushing them, they turn to the man and say, 'Do you want to talk to the OSHA guy we talk to about creating an unsafe work environment for me?'"

For McRae, the police are part of the equation for keeping towers safe on a scene. The public's recognition of flashing blue lights gives officers the power to slow down the tempo of traffic in a work zone. "A tow truck alone can't do it because we don't have that respect," he said. Plus, McRae added, it's much more productive to slow or re-direct traffic temporarily instead of facing the aftermath of a secondary incident.

The only reason he and the majority of Vermont towers have that protection, McRae explained, is because they've reached out to the consultative services OSHA offers, starting in 2002. In fact, he noted, "OSHA protects people the way a union was supposed to."

Stated McRae: "OSHA is one of those unique parts of government that we shouldn't be afraid of. It's a powerful, powerful tool."

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Our Lost Men

CA Tow Truck Operator Killed.

Miguel Angel Ramos, 42, of Bakers-field, CA was killed on April 11 after he stopped his tow truck on the shoulder of Interstate 80 to check on engine trouble. Ramos and his tow truck were hit by a tractor trailer driven by Lakhwinder Singh Sidhu, 34, of Brampton in Ontario, Canada. A passenger in the tow truck who had been standing outside was also injured, but has been released from the hospital. An investigation is under way.

NY Tow Truck Operator Killed.

Kevin Coffta, a 28-year old employ-ee of Marty's Towing of Grand Island, NY, was killed April 2 while preparing to tow an abandoned vehicle from the shoulder of I-90. Coffta, was hit by an SUV driven by 64-year old David Brown, who has been charged with DWI and vehicular manslaughter. A fund for Coffta's six-year old son, Dawson, has been set up. Donations may be sent to the Dawson Kinzly Fund, c/o HSBC Bank, 2300 Grand Island Boulevard, Grand Island, NY 14072.

TN Tow Truck Driver Dies In Flood Waters. Also on April 2, Clyde Stewart, 55, who worked for Star Towing of Collierville, TN, died when he slipped into flood waters while recovering a vehicle from a ditch. His body was recovered the next day. The husband, father, and grandfather was honored by more than 150 fellow tow operators who joined a truck procession throughout the city the following week.

Body Of Missing OR Tow Truck Driver Found. Dario Rolon-Centeno, a 61-year old North Portland, OR tow truck operator went missing on March 27 after leaving for a routine call. His body was found by a hiker on the afternoon of April 12 in a park and identified the next day. An autopsy ruled out homicidal violence, but the cause of death was still unknown at the time of the story. Rolon-Centeno did have a serious heart condition and his medication was found in his truck.

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THE SHIELD

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State & Local

Most experts agree that the complex issues surrounding incident management work will not be worked out on a national level. "It's rarely solved through federal government," Cooley said. "It always lands at the local and state level. It

"He missed being mowed down by two tractor trailers"

has to do with the relationship between towers and incident management teams." How each state classifies emergency responders differs, so how or whether to add towing and recovery operations to those chains of command will vary widely.



An Apple Towing driver works a roll-over recovery in downtown Houston

Liability was among the questions 19 national agencies studied over the last year, working toward the National Unified Goal for Traffic Incident Management. Representatives from EMS, fire, law enforcement, public safety, towing and recovery, and transportation communities came together to agree on best practices with regard to traffic incident management.

The National Unified Goal was released November 20 in Gaithersburg, MD, and represents a unified front pushing for best practices to be adopted nationwide in three areas: responder safety; safe, quick clearance; and prompt, reliable incident communications.

Clarifying Roles

Communication is key to the issue of tower liability. When it comes to who makes decisions on the scene, municipalities or states should agree on the

chain of command, said Scott.

Each responder may see the situation differently. Consider a brush fire affecting visibility on a major road at rush hour. A firefighter's main concern is smoke and visibility. The

Lowering Liability Risks

Drew Zuccala is part of the Open Roads Recovery Team, a partnership among four Palm Beach County, FL towing companies that provide quick clearance on the Florida Turnpike from mile marker 0 to 160. The team comprises Zuccala Wrecker Service in Boynton Beach, Kauff's Towing in Mangonia Park, Sister's Towing in West Palm Beach, and Moss Towing in South Bay.

Zuccala is confident his team has created a formula for reducing vulnerability. Being prepared with large equipment, training, and expertise keeps risk low, he said. Also, having a good working relationship with both the Florida Highway Patrol and Turnpike Enterprises is key. The chain of command is clear and works, Zuccala said.

The pressure to clear scenes quickly is immense. Each hour that a major highway is blocked costs about one million dollars in lost time and productivity, Florida transportation officials say. Also, security experts have imagined scenarios where only three wrecks – on Interstates 75 and 95, and the turnpike – could essentially shut down the state.

The Open Roads Recovery Team



Drew Zuccala

must meet time goals in order to get paid for their work. A 50-ton truck and rotator must be on the scene within 60 minutes of "activation," Zuccala said. If the scene is cleared in 90 minutes, they receive an activation fee. If the scene is not cleared in 180 minutes, they are charged \$10 a minute.

In more than 200 incidents, the Open Roads teams have met their goal 97 percent of the time. Zuccala said liability isn't much of an issue for him. "I've never had a problem in three years," he said. But he's heard horror stories of towers being directed to drag a truck two miles before they can right it.

"We're able to get it upright and do it as damage-free as possible because the equipment we bring out is overwhelming," Zuccala said. He once cleared a burned fuel taker in 88 minutes. "We don't get to the job and scratch our heads."

trooper, however, knows that shutting down the highway would leave drivers gridlocked for hours.

The first step toward resolving liability issues for towers during incident management is to recognize towers as first responders, Scott said. "If they were a first responder, then under the Unified Goal, we would be ex-empt if everyone at the scene said, 'For the greater good for the community, we need to slide this off the road.'"

The term "first responder" being applied to towers may be a sensitive issue to other emergency personnel, however. Whatever term is chosen, Scott said, the tow operator needs to be part of the instant command group and be included

in hold-harmless policies.

Scott said, "The towing industry shares the safety concerns of other responders. We too mourn our fallen responders, and the number of towers struck, killed, or injured seems to be increasing steadily."

Sam Brewer, legislative representative for Professional Wrecker Operators of Florida, said that formal training and certification could go a long way toward raising the profile of towers in incident management.

The National Unified Goal is a step toward pushing good practices onto legislative agendas across the country. When it comes to liability, O'Connell said, "It's a high legislative priority for TRAA and the I-95 Corridor Coalition." ❖

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RULES & REGS

Right On Regulation

*Nevada gets good marks
from its towing industry*

By Andrea Evans

No Downside

Situated between the Rockies and the Sierra Nevada mountains, Nevada is the seventh largest state, encompassing 109,825 square miles. Besides the mountains, Nevada's geography includes lush river valleys and the high plains desert of the Great Basin.

The southern third of the state, including the Las Vegas area, is in the Mojave Desert. Eighty percent of Nevada's 2.6 million people live in the urban centers of Las Vegas, Reno-Sparks, and Carson City.

Nevada was the first state to regulate the towing industry three years after federal de-regulation of the transportation industry. Ten years later, here's what several Nevada towmen had to say about regulation in their state.

"A lot of us really care and we live by these rules," said Dean Kirsch of Milne Towing in Reno. "You have to invest in safety, so in that respect, I favor the regulation."

"The way the NTA [Nevada Transportation Authority] operates now, I approve of what they are doing," said Norman Chamberlin of Valley Towing in Carson City. "It's in the best interest of motoring public safety."

The Nevada Transportation Authority administers and enforces state laws pertaining to passenger transportation, household goods movers, storage of household goods, and towing. Specifically, the agency regulates non-consent towing [law enforcement and private property tow-aways or impounds] in three ways: based on insurance, price, and safety. The NTA reviews business and liability insurance coverage, oversees regulation of prices, and inspects towing equipment and operations to evaluate proper vehicle maintenances and employee safety.

"The downside of regulation? Honestly, there is no downside," said John King of Cal-Nevada Towing in Sparks. "What it does is keep a lot of companies in line."

The application to obtain a non-consent towing certification includes a variety of business elements, including a description of the company's office and storage lot, samples of the dispatch log and receipts, proof of insurance and truck ownership, ensuring that trucks are properly



The Valley Towing team: Mark Tompkins, Kirk Harig, David Sedivy, Chellsey Hutchison, Norman Chamberlin

lettered and safety inspected in compliance with standard federal DOT safety regulations. In addition, the company must submit their proposed tariffs [regulated prices] and definitions according to a specific format and within the regional price range.

They [the NTA] do full background checks on you and it's good. When I filed my tariffs, it took almost eight months before I could operate," said John King of Cal-Nevada Towing. "It's a process - not like getting a business license, a truck, maybe an office, and 'wham' you're in business."

"The number-one goal of the agency is putting people in business,"



Dean Kirsch of Milne Towing in his office

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John King of Cal-Nevada Towing

said NTA Chairman Andrew MacKay. "We firmly believe if you put good, legitimate operators in business, you are also taking care of the illegals."

Tariff Regs Work

Regulated tariffs help the NTA prevent illegal, predatory towers from taking advantage of the public and overcharging for services. Although tariffs are standardized, it does not mean that all non-consent towers charge the same prices. When a company files its tariffs, the NTA determines whether the tariffs are suitable based on price comparisons in that geographic region.

Norman Chamberlin of Valley Towing said, "You can submit for an annual increase in tariffs but again it's based on their [NTA] approval. Once approved, you have to stick with them [the tariffs]. There's no variance."

There are significant variations, however, in business practices and prices for Nevada's consensual and commercial towing operations. "They [the NTA regs] don't get involved when we are towing for dealerships or consent tows. So we can set our prices according to what we think our services are worth," noted Clark Whitney, formerly of Quality Towing, now vice president of operations for Smith-Christensen Enterprises, the parent company for salvage operator Nevada Pic A Part. He is also half owner of Silver Dollar Recycling.

With the tariffs on file, the regulatory agency can effectively investigate consumer complaints for non-consent towing. According to John King, "Instead of leaving it to the public to take it to small claims court, the NTA will follow up right away. The consumer's written complaint is sent to the towing company and it's usually dealt with in 10 days...I'm on the Tow Service Agreement Committee for the California Highway Patrol. The biggest problem we have there [California] is price gouging. Nevada has some but it's handled a lot easier up here by NTA."

Kudos To NTA

These four Nevada towers agreed that the agency is an advocate for towers as well as the traveling public. "The agency works for both sides because it's a public office. If a complaint turns out to be false against a tow company, they [NTA] will follow-up with the motorist," said Whitney. "It's a good clearing house for complaints. If somebody wants to

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RIGHT ON REGULATION

continued from page 25

stand in your office shouting that they have been unfairly treated, you can just say here you go, here's the place to go and complain."



Clark Whitney

Dean Kirsch said, "You can avoid small claims court cases if you say to the customer 'Let's take it up with the NTA and both parties respect that. They [NTA] are a good mediator and I like to say they keep us all honest.'"

For compliance review, NTA agents visit tow companies and review office records such as non-consent invoices and dispatch logs to ensure current legal statutes are being followed. "They make sure invoices are complete, that drivers are up to speed, that the company has drug testing in place for drivers, and that insurance, registration, and all that stuff is in order," said Norman Chamberlin.

"From an enforcement standpoint the agency's number-one goal is to go after illegal operators, not our certificated carriers," said Chairman Andrew MacKay. "We work with our carriers to ensure compliance. Just because we regulate them [towers], doesn't mean we are the enemy. I think we are allies. Between them and us, the traveling public is more than protected."

How It Works

Public meetings are generally conducted by one of the three commissioners of the NTA and dockets include everything from applications to citations. If a company is cited for a violation, one of the commissioners hears the case.

Generally, decisions are rendered during the hearing, but it is strictly a recommendation. Then the commissioner drafts an order and it is submitted to the full board of the NTA, which approves the order, or remands it for additional hearing, or tables it for further discussion.



NTA Chairman Andrew MacKay

The agency also hosts public workshops that increase open communication and cooperation between the industry and the agency. When considering new or revised regulations, the NTA invites operators to attend round-table discussions.

"In workshops we get to hear from the industry," said Chairman Andrew MacKay. "Times change; sometimes regulations can become antiquated. Something that made sense 10 years ago might not now, but that's not always the case, of course."

"What it does is keep a lot of companies in line"

"Workshops occur when we have a major rule-making docket open that focuses on tow operators. We had a public meeting in October. Several operators came forward with proposed drafts of regulation changes. Workshops help keep that cohesive relationship with our industry."

Some Issues

The four towmen interviewed for this article confirmed that there is a cohesive relationship between Nevada's towing industry and the NTA. When pressed, however, each towman offered a suggestion for possible regulatory improvement.

Clark Whitney is working on a legislative proposal concerning public safety. This proposal would allow tow companies to contract with community homeowner associations and condominiums and apartment managements to keep the red zones clear of vehicles for fire departments.



Dean Kirsch

Norman Chamberlin said, "It isn't so much NTA as it is DMV but we have some issues to work out concerning the way our lien sales are processed. That's giving us a bit of heartache."

Dean Kirsch noted that he'd "like to see the NTA and DMV line up on a valid way to dispose of abandoned, unregistered, destroyed [beyond make and model] recognition junk cars."

"Like everywhere else, the state has money problems so the NTA agents they do have are understaffed," said John King. "They don't have enough rules and regulations as to training of qualified operators or equipment standards. Because the state is more rural, Nevada is more lax in those areas than California. Each side has its benefits, though."



Walt Phillips

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2004 385 PETE, 3406 Cat 475hp,
 10 spd, air ride, cruise, Jake brake, a/c, 478K miles, 260" WB, alum. wheels, New Century 4024t, 20 ton boom, 2-20,000lb. planetary winches, 182" ca alum. body, air winch free spools, air cable tensioners, 24,000lb. 3 stage underlift, alum. tubular pylon, hyd. rear spades, 8 pr. axle forks, underlift light kit, D-rings on tailgate, air shift PTO over ride, wired remote for underlift, Stk#811776

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 Cat, automatic, spring susp, 195" wb, 33,000 lb gv, odometer shows 357,000 miles, Holmes model 16 ton, 16 ton boom, 20,000 lb winches upgrade, 3 stage underlift w/lift, manual rear spades, spring hanger adapters, winch free spools, amber light bar, lower work lights, 6,000 lb I-bars, Stk#503103

2004 MACK CX 613, 460hp Mack
 engine, 13spd trans, 304" WB, 60" raised sleeper, Jake, a/c, alum wheels, air ride, 52,000lb. GVW, dual alum fuel tanks, Century 5130, 25 ton boom, 2-25,000lb. planetary winches, 129" 3 stage underlift, 156" ca alum body, Code 3 MX 7000 strobe light bar, air winch free spools, LED marker lights, 8 pr axle forks, alum tubular pylon, tailboard remote, docking lights, Stk#018886

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1995 FREIGHTLINER, 350hp,
 Cummins, 9spd trans, 511,000 miles, integrated sleeper, air ride, alum wheels, engine brake, 266" WB, Vulcan 3025, 30 ton boom, 2-25,000lb winches, 3 stage underlift, hyd. rear spades, air winch free spools, 4 pr axle forks, amber light bar, lower work box, air and elec. hookups, lower work lights, steel tool box, stk# 707409

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 95 INT'L 4600, T 4, 175 H/P, 5 SPD., A/C, P/W, Chevron 19' Aluminum and Wheel Lift, All Lighting and Options. \$14,900.

TWINLINE WRECKER BOOM
 CENTURY 412 Twin Line Hydraulic Wrecker Boom, Winches, Cables, Inner Boom, Sheave Heads, Hydraulic Cylinders Complete and Assembled. \$1,500.

CRACKED MOTOR
 CHEVRON 12 TON WRECKER ON 6500/108" C/A

02 6500, 3126 CAT, 210 H/P, 6 SPD, 25,900 GVW, 104K Miles, Aluminum Wheels, Loaded, Chevron 512 LMD 12 Ton Wrecker & 8,000LB Underlift, All Attachments Lighting & Options (Nice Shape) \$26,500.

SERIES 14 INDUSTRIAL CARRIER
 98 FREIGHTLINER FL60, Wht, Cummins 210, 6 SPD., 125K Miles, Loaded, Chevron 21' Steel Car & Wheel Lift, R/Rails, All Lighting & Options.

\$28,900 VERY CLEAN
 00 CHEVY 6500, CAT 3126, Allison Auto, 184K Miles, New Rubber, New Injectors, Loaded, Chevron 19' Steel Carrier & Wheel Lift, All Lighting & Options.

02 CHEVY 6500, CAT 3126, 210 HP, Allison auto, 132K miles, loaded, new rubber, Chevron 22' Series 14 Industrial carrier, diamond plate deck & 4K wheel lift, strobe bar, (2) 49" alum. boxes, All Lighting & Options.

INTEGRATED WHEEL LIFT
 99 INT'L 4700, Diesel, Auto, 119K mi, Runs Like A Top, 60" Integrated 10-Ton Wrecker, Single Line Extendable Boom, L-Arms, Frame Forks, New Paint & Lighting, In-Cab Controls, Simulators.

94 Ford 450, 7.3 DIESEL, XLT, 78,000 mi, Auto, Push bumper/grill, rubber 100%, 60" C/A Dynamic Single Line, 601 BSW & Auto Loader Tow Sling, 2 Tool Boxes, All Lighting & Options. \$15,900

97 FORD F450 XLT, 7.3 Diesel, 84" C/A, 5 SPD, 8-ton Alum. Body w/Twin 10K Winches, Double Doors Each Side, All Lighting & Options, Red, All New Injectors.

MOTOR REBUILT 7-06
 02 INT'L 4300, DT-466, Auto, 230K mi, loaded, Vulcan 21" Steel, Stationary Pylon, Diamond Deck, Clean, All Lighting & Options.

26,000 MILES/4300 CARRIER
 05 INT'L 4300, DT-466, Auto, A/C, P/W, P/D, Tilt, Tele Wheel, 25,500 GVW Compressor, Jerr Dan 19' Aluminum 2 Car Carrier and Wheel Lift, All Lighting and Options, Removal Rails.

DYNAMIC AUTOLOAD
ONE YEAR WARRANTY ON BODY
\$15,900 NEW RUBBER / RBLT WHEEL LIFT
OLD WRECKER BODIES

NORAR 4 TON WRECKER, 60" C/A, Angled Tailgate, Tow Sling, Hanger Bearing, Stop/Tail/Turn & Marker Lights, Chrome Rails, (Good Shape) No Rot. \$1,600 or B/O

HOLMES 440 FOUR TON WRECKER 60" C/A, Angled Tailgate, Tow Sling, Hanger Bearing, Flood/Stop-Tail/Turn & Marker Lights, Chrome Rails, Decent Shape. \$1,500 or B/O

ALL 4X4'S REDUCED, CALL

04 FORD 550, Super Cab, XLT, 6.0 Diesel Auto, Loaded, 148K miles, Chevron 19' Aluminum 2 Car Carrier & Wheel Lift, R/Rails, Stainless fenders All Lighting & Options.

93 F350 4X4, 7.3 Diesel Engine, XLT, 108K Miles, Challenger 10-ton Twin-Line, 5K Wheel Lift, Concept Boxes, 84", New Paint, Sling, Strobes, Rebuilt Wheel Lift, Lots of New Items, All Lighting & Options. **Reduced!**

25 TON WITH HDU UNDERLIFT
 89 PETE 378, CAT 3306B, 350 H/P, 9SPD, 65% Rubber, A/C, P/S, Tilt, 80 Gal. Alum. Tank, Dual Exhaust, 138" C/A, 155K Miles, Alum. Wheels, Century 25 Ton Hydraulic with 25,000 LB. Underlift, 2 up right boxes P/Side 5PR, Tools, Lanyard Control, All Lights & Options.

4x4 EAGLE SELF LOADER 50,000 MILES
 86 F-350 4X4, 7.3 Diesel, 4 SPD., 60" C/A, Eagle Single Line Integrated Wrecker & Wheel Lift, Fiber Glass Sides \$6,900

GMC TOP KICK
 95, 3116 CAT, 170 H/P, 5 SPD., Loaded, Century 412 Hydraulic Wrecker & Wheel Lift 86" C/A (Well Maintained) All Lighting & Options. \$17,500

00 INTERNATIONAL 4700 white, DT466, 195hp, Loaded, 114 mi, New Clutch & Cam Sensors, Chevron 21' Alum. Series 14 Industrial Bed & 4k lb. Wheel Lift, All Lighting & Options.

AUTOGRIP WRECKER
 01 F-550 XLT, 6.0 Diesel, Auto, Loaded, 155K, Chevron 408 TVA Single Line Integrated Wrecker and Autogrip Wheel Lift All Lighting and Options. \$25,000

(4) 89 F-450 4x4, 5 SPD., 460 Gas, A/C, P/W, P/D, Tilt, Cruise, Am/FM/Cas, Century 412 8 Ton Wrecker and Wheel Lift (Nice Shape) \$10,500

USED 08 F-550 AUTOGRIP
 08 F-550 XLT, 6.4 Diesel, Auto, Loaded, 8,500 Miles, Chevron 408 TVA, Single Line Integrated Wrecker and Autogrip, All Lighting and Options.

CHEVY 4500 W/ AUTOGRIP
 03 CHEVY 4500, Duramax Diesel, 300 H/P Auto, 19.5 Tires, 84" C/A, 17,500 GVW, Chevron 408TVA single line integrated wrecker and wheel lift, 24" tunnel box, all lighting and options

CLEAN GOOD CONDITION
JERR-DAN WRECKER BODY
 Hp1 1000 Twin Line 8 Ton hydraulic, aluminum body, 3,500 lb. wheel lift, light pylon, tow sling, pump. \$4,500

14 TON MED DUTY WRECKER
 00 INT'L 4700, DT-466 225 HP, 6+1 trans, 77,000 miles, airbrakes, Vulcan 897 14 ton hyd, wrecker & 10,500 LB. underlift", all attachments & lighting.

NEW PAINT
 91 F-800, Ford DSL, 6 spd, 240 H/P, Approx. 40,000 miles, 120" C/A, Century 714 HYD wrecker and 10,500 underlift (nice shape), all lighting and options.

AUTOGRIP WHEEL LIFTS
 03' RED F450, 6.0 Diesel, Autotrans, XLT (80K) Miles, Chevron, Singleline Integrated Wrecker, X-Boom, All Lighting & Options. Still has warranty.

FORD CHASSIS NO START
 90 F-450, 7.3 DSL, 5spd, P/W, P/D, P/S, A/C, (Battle Scars) "As is where is", No Title. \$1,800.

WRECKER WITH SNOW PLOW \$6,500
 87' F350, W/54K ORIGINAL MILES, 460 4 SPD w/ Power angle Plow, New Tires, A/C, P/S, Chrome Wheels, Run Boards, P/Bumper, Dollies, Single Cable Hydraulic & Wheel Lift.

AUTOLOAD WHEEL LIFT
 01 FORD F-450 XLT, 7.3 Diesel, Auto, 224K mi, Clean, Century Midnight Express D/Slide Box, In-Cab Controls, Rubber Good, All Lighting & Options.

\$28,900 VERY CLEAN
 00 CHEVY 6500, CAT 3126, Allison Auto, 184K Miles, New Rubber, New Injectors, Loaded, Chevron 19' Steel Carrier & Wheel Lift, All Lighting & Options.

CHEVRON TWIN LINE 84" C/A
 92 F-450, Diesel, 5 SPD, XLT, Rubber 80%, 84" Chevron 408 Eight Ton Hyd & Wheel Lift, 60" C/A Body w/24" Tunnel Box, (2) 9000 LB Planetary Winches, All Lighting & Options.

ALL HIGHWAY MILES
 00 INT'L 4700, Black, DT-466, 210hp, 6+1 trans, loaded 324k miles, Chevron 19' aluminum 2 car carrier & wheel lift, All Lighting & Options. \$20,500

BACKHOE/CLEAN/\$12,500
 85 JOHN DEERS 4100 TURBO, additional 2' bucket, ground breaking tallinn, rear wheel and tire, forks for bucket, Well Maintained Runs Great!

EX CAB FORD 650
 04 WHITE F-650, XLT, 230HP Cummins, Automatic, Loaded, 150k, Chevron 21.5' Aluminum 2-Car Carrier, Removable Rails, All Lighting & Options.

2003 INT'L 4300, 230 H/P, A/B, AR, 6 Spd., 200K Miles, Loaded, Rubber 85% Chevron 21.5" Aluminum (Series 14 H/D) Removable Rails, Air Brake & Ride, All Lighting & Options.

EXTENDED CAB/NEO SHAPE
 04 INT'L 4300, 225 H/P/A/C, P/W, P/D, Tilt/Tele Wheel, HTD Mirrors, 173K Miles, Champion 21' Steel 2 Car Carrier and wheel Lift, Removable rails, All Lighting Options.

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07 International, RED loaded chassis, auto, air brakes, air ride, exhaust brake, alcoas, 21' Century Steel removable rail (vin 9588) **\$72,950**

07 International, RED loaded chassis, DT466, auto, airbrakes, air ride, exhaust brake, alcoas, 21' Vulcan Steel, removable rails (vin 5930) **\$72,950**

07 International, Red loaded chassis, auto, airbrakes, air ride, exhaust brake, alcoas, 21.6' Vulcan Aluminum BLADE removable rail (vin 8849) **\$71,950**

NEW International Units Ready to Build
 2008 International WHITE EXTEND CAB, DT466, 245hp, auto, airbrakes, air ride, exhaust brake, alcoas (Vin 1394)

NEW Peterbuilt Unit
 2009 Peterbuilt 330, white loaded chassis, auto, GVW 26,000, 260 HP, 144CA, ready to build

NEW Ford 450 Units
 08 Ford F450, SUPER CAB black loaded chassis, auto, diesel, Vulcan 810 Stainless Steel Body (vin 6830) NEW EMISSION UNIT, **\$66,250**

08 Ford F450, SUPER CAB black loaded chassis, auto, diesel (vin 6833) NEW EMISSION UNIT

NEW Ford 550 Units
 07 Ford F550, white loaded chassis, auto, diesel, 84CA (vin 3173) ready to build

07 Ford F550, 4x4 - white loaded chassis, auto, diesel, 60 CA (vin 5762) ready to build

NEW GMC Units
 2007 Chev C6500, Black Auto, Duramax Diesel, GVW 26,000, 21' Vulcan Steel, removable rails (vin 3132) **\$68,950**

2007 Chev C6500, White Auto, Duramax diesel, GVW 26,000, 21' Vulcan Steel, removable rails (vin 3227) **\$68,950**

NEW HINO Units
 2008 Hino, white loaded chassis, auto, air brakes, 21' Century Steel Removable Rails (102") (vin 0016) **\$72,500**

NEW Dodge Units
 2008 Dodge Ram 4500, auto, white, loaded chassis, Vulcan 810, auto loader (vin 9877) **\$59,796**

(2) 2008 Dodge Ram 5500, auto, 4 X 4 White (vin 3612), Red (vin 9910), loaded chassis, 84CA

(1) 2008 Dodge Ram 5500, auto, white loaded chassis, 84CA (vin5510)

NEW Kenworth Units
 (1) 2008 Kenworth T270, Air ride, Air brakes, White loaded chassis

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 2000 Ford F650 Super Cab, 6 Speed GVW 26,000, Century 612, 12 ton wrecker **\$34,950**

Used HEAVY Duty Wreckers
 1979 GMC General, Holmes 750, Hydraulic x7 booms, Zack lift, EXCELLENT CONDITION, lots of equipment (vin 8780) **\$29,950**

Used Carrier
 2000 International 4700, 175 hp, 5 speed, black chassis, 19' Century Steel carrier, removable rails (vin 8924) **\$25,950**

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 1989 Ford F350, Holmes singleline wrecker (vin 3172) Truck runs, as is **\$4,950**

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