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Three Canadian fleets recognized as top fuel-savers by SmartWay

LAS VEGAS, Nev. -- Three Canadian carriers were recognized this week by the EPA SmartWay program for significantly reducing their CO2 emissions.

Thirty-seven organizations were recognized during the 2009 SmartWay Excellence Awards, including Bison Transport, Challenger Motor Freight and MacKinnon Transport.


"EPA's SmartWay partnership helps freight companies go the extra mile by saving fuel and money, while cutting air pollution," said Gina McCarthy, assistant administrator for EPA's Office of Air and Radiation. "Within our nation's hard-working freight sector, SmartWay Excellence Award winners have stepped up to help protect our health, climate and environment."

Bison earned SmartWay's praise by modifying its idling policies, reducing its speed and reducing its emissions by taking advantage of intermodal opportunities. Bison invested in auxiliary power units (APUs) for 391 of its sleeper cab-equipped trucks, slashing idling by over 650,000 hours, according to SmartWay. Bison shipped more than 5,000 loads intermodally in 2008 and also lowered its governed speed from 65 mph to 62. Bison also has an incentive program for drivers willing to reduce their speed to 59 mph, which has been embraced by 40 drivers. Bison estimates it improved its fleet-wide fuel economy by 0.3 mpg since introducing the changes. SmartWay estimates Bison saved more than 9.1 million gallons of fuel and slashed its CO2 output by 101,796 tonnes.

For its part, Challenger has equipped its entire fleet with idle-reduction equipment including 730 bunk heaters. It's also in the process of deploying 350 APUs. Challenger takes advantage of intermodal opportunities, saving the company 771,850 gallons of diesel per year, SmartWay claims. Challenger also takes advantage of satellite technology to track its fleet and improve its operating efficiency. Tractors are dispatched loads based on factors such as proximity to the load, reducing empty miles and idling. Challenger also puts its drivers through a full week training course on fuel economy and efficient driving. SmartWay estimates Challenger has saved more than 11.1 million gallons of diesel and slashed its CO2 emissions by 123,337 tonnes in 2008.

MacKinnon Transport meanwhile implemented a corporate speed limit of 60 mph, saving it 125,000 gallons of fuel. It has also focused on driver training and behaviour to improve fuel economy. MacKinnon has a cash incentive program to reward low idling time, high gear percentage and maximum use of cruise control. MacKinnon uses wide-base tires on new equipment and its efforts have collectively saved about 732,689 gallons of fuel and 8,133 tonnes of CO2 emissions, according to SmartWay.

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