

## KEEPING YOUR VEHICLES CLEAN

# Keep Safety In Mind When Washing Vehicle



BY JACK JACKSON

After attending a prominent two-day seminar in June with trucking companies, one theme that consistently emerged was that a clean image and truck is becoming more of a necessity for customers and employees, particularly for drivers.

Top notch truck drivers are a valuable commodity, especially those who have direct customer contact.

Personality and appearance are paramount for a successful business to garner clients and cultivate successful relationships from corporations right down to retail outlets.

Responsible drivers who know the importance of good customer service continually ask to be treated well and to deliver their goods in clean trucks. A clean truck with a uniformed driver is the best way to portray a professional image. We have all had an experience with the opposite presentation, and usually it isn't a good one.

There are a number of ways to wash large trucks, tractors and trailers, but is safety on your mind when you decide which method is best? There are many factors that an operations team must consider

to determine what best suits their company and vehicles when drafting a plan.

Whether you decide to outsource your cleaning to a third party or handle that task internally, you should consider many safety factors. Outsourcing to a third party can basically be handled by meeting with the company and ensuring all requirements are clear and both parties understand their responsibilities.

By providing a written agreement about responsibilities and expectations, both parties can be assured the equipment available or chemicals used are up to the proper standards and meet required guidelines. Failing to do so can be disastrous. A case in point is an Ontario company which was fined for

the death of a cleaning worker at their facility.

As for your own employees, the proper equipment and training is essential for safety, and the set-up of this equipment can be as important as the equipment itself. Today there are many methods available to ensure ergonomically correct procedures to reduce strain and slipping when using drop guns, power washers and even a regular garden hose.

As for any automatic machine you may be using, there are procedures to follow that not only allow the operator to be safe, but ensure that vehicles receive a clean wash. There are touchless washes and soft touch washes with brushes that can enhance the image of your fleet and, when operated properly, will not damage vehicle



graphics or paints. By allowing professionals in the wash industry to meet with you, you can not only achieve a better result, but assure efficiency and reduce any WSIB claims from staff members.

All of us, particularly drivers, would like to see a clean vehicle. This can be achieved by consulting with professionals in the

washing industry for solutions that best suit your company, your image, and your staff's well being.

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## Search Begins for 2013 Truck Driver of the Year

Who is that great driver in your fleet with an impeccable safety record, courteous attitude on and off the road, and a role model in his or her com-

who has been regularly employed for the last five years and during that period encountered no preventable collisions. This award program is open to company drivers and owner-operators contracted to OTA member

extended to other road users, customer commendations and any acts of bravery or kindness arising out of highway incidents.

Ontario's Truck Driver of the Year Receives a keep-

sake trophy engraved with the recipient's name and a \$500 cheque courtesy of Volvo Trucks Canada Inc.

The award is presented by a Volvo Trucks Canada official at the Ontario Trucking Association con-

vention, held in Toronto annually in November.

Ontario's Truck Driver of the Year will also be considered for the CTA/Volvo Trucks Canada National Truck Driver of the Year, which brings with it

a \$1,000 prize.

Submit to the OTA before August 30, 2013. By mail at 555 Dixon Road, Toronto, Ontario, M9W 1H8 or electronically via email to [OTACommunications@ontruck.org](mailto:OTACommunications@ontruck.org). ■