

KEEPING YOUR VEHICLES CLEAN

Most Important Elements of Truck Washing



BY JACK JACKSON

What are the most important elements regarding vehicle washing, company image, driver satisfaction, extended equipment life and environmental impact? All this can be accomplished by having a consistent wash, yet it is still generally ignored by most companies.

In today's world of environmental concerns, the trucking industry has given serious thought to

the environmental impact and has found ways to be efficient in tires, engines, fuel consumption, aerodynamics, etc. Building on this record, why not an analysis of washing methods as well?

There is technology available to meet any washing requirements, whether they are budget or environmentally based. Generally, the most popular automatic machinery to wash vehicles is the automated drive-through, rollover and walk-around units. These systems enable a truck to be washed and rinsed in 2 to 5 minutes. Also available are water reclamation and recycle systems to offset environmental concerns and save on water costs.

However, there are many operators still using the manual pressure washer and hand brush scrub system, taking up to 30 minutes or more to wash and

rinse. Reliable labor, time, and wash consistencies are the major frustrations utilizing a manual hand wash system.

Washing inside your building usually means you are tapped into your municipal water sewerage system, thus the grey water is being sent to the local treatment facility. This does help the environment but there may be big costs to pay:

Fees to the municipality to clean this water,

Costs to your company or building to pay for the water supply (possibly on a meter), and

Possible costs for sewage discharge. (Some areas meter water in and out, often charging twice the amount for water discharge.)

Today's technology allows for water treatment systems at your wash bay. There are many systems available that capture your

water, clean it and re-use for washing. This allows for zero discharge, thus saving money and minimizing impact on the environment.

The use and cost of water can be a major hidden cost. Do the analysis and find a major saving, especially when you look at your cost per gallon of water. For most of us, the municipality supplies our water through pipes to our

facility. Examine the water bill and determine a cost per gallon of water. This is not easy, but necessary to determine your cost per vehicle of washing. After determining the cost of water, capture the cost of labor, chemicals and supplies.

Overall, truck washing has much more of an impact than most operators take time to consider. Clean vehicles have a

major effect on company image, driver satisfaction, the environment and the bottom line of every company, city and municipality.

Jack Jackson is President of Awash Systems Corp. "We solve vehicle washing issues where no one else can." Email: jackjackson@awashsystems.com or call 800.265.7405. Visit our website www.awashsystems.com. ■



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