



Fleet Management Consulting

WINTER DIESEL FUEL TIPS

It seems every year the transportation industry faces new perils during the winter months and this year is no different. Currently the weather forecasters are predicting a frigid winter with less than normal snow fall. Among the challenges above and beyond the weather, fuel prices are inching higher again and most states and many municipalities have mandated idling restrictions. Here are a few simple tips to help maintain your equipment and fuel tanks.

1. Please be sure you have adequately treated the bulk fuel tanks for the temperatures you will be dealing with. Think in terms of where the coldest point the truck will run to and treat accordingly.
2. Block heaters are not designed to warm an engine. They are designed to maintain the heat already generated in the engine. Thus it is crucial that the truck be plugged in while the engine is still warm.
3. Remind the drivers to UNPLUG the truck before starting it. 2 – 3 seconds of the engine running while the block heaters are plugged in is enough to burn out the block heaters.
4. Do not idle the trucks. You will do more to COOL the engine by idling a truck coming off the road vs. shutting it off. (Engine temperature rises approx. 18 degrees when it is shut-off.) Conversely, starting a cold truck and letting it idle is futile. If you need to 'warm' a truck that's been sitting – get in it and drive it around the yard and 'exercise' the truck once it has reached maximum oil-pressure. This will warm the engine, transmission, differential and suspension. Not to mention prevent running the risk of potential fines for idling for both the driver and the organization.
5. Remember to drain air-tanks and fuel water separators. As the ambient air temperatures fall, the ability for water to condense in fuel tanks increases and can be carried into the filter/heater unit. During periods of extreme cold this should be done on a daily basis. The fuel filters are the only protection the engine has against contaminants in the fuel. A larger micron fuel filter should never be used to extend filter life or increase flow. It may void the warranty and can be damaging to the pump and/or the injectors.
6. Be sure air hoses are 'hooked up' to each other or if equipped to the dummy glad-hands when the equipment is not in use. This is one of the leading causes of brakes freezing up.
7. If moisture is present in an air-line, use one cap full of brake line anti-freeze in the EMERGENCY (red) side ONLY. Never put it in the blue side or you may cause the brakes to lock up. Use only company supplied brake line anti-freeze as there are many products out there that will cause damage to the internal brake system.
8. Be sure glad-hands hook up 'tight'. If they go on 'loose' they will come off in a tight turn and will cause unnecessary cycling of the air compressor. Make sure you have a nice and snug fit.

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9. There are many great tips for proper fuel system management in cold weather but best tip is to increase driver awareness and subsequently hold them accountable for action or inaction.

These few tips can make the difference between go or no go situation, making that delivery commitment, or completing a run vs. a breakdown as well as profit vs. loss in this economic environment of tight margins.

MCB Consulting is dedicated to making the global marketplace a safer and more economical place to live and do business.

For additional tips on managing your fixed and variable costs see <http://www.mcbfleetmanagementconsulting.com/fuel-conservation/>

- Dirty light fixtures provide less headlight range and tail/brake/running light illumination. Reduced headlight range, even a few percent means it's harder to see road debris as well as other conditions. The resulting tire damage and suspension wear increases accident risk.
- Dirty windshields reduces the ability to see and react to road conditions there is more glass wear when wipers are used to clear dirt, leading to wiper abrasion and distorted views.
- Dirt and grease buildup on steps, frame rails and grab handles increases the chances of slip-and-fall accidents.
- Dirt and grease buildup also can interfere with proper operation of hitches and doors, leading to accidents and injuries.

Can you put a quantifiable figure on what it costs if you fail to implement an effective equipment image wash program? The answer is "yes." Taking into account what a wash program will cost the organization, not having one will increase your equipment costs a minimum of 25%. The key to have such a program is to manage it in the same manner you do the other important aspects of the business.

How you do anything, is how you are perceived to do everything. If the fleet is clean the perception will be that your organization is a well managed with a strong attention to detail.

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ABOUT MCB CONSULTING

MCB Fleet Management Consulting is the foremost provider of fleet management, procurement, litigation and safety consulting services to private, public, corporate, and governmental fleets and is NOT affiliated with any other organization other than industry councils. We will identify opportunities to reduce costs in maintenance, procurement, fuel, tires, and labor while simultaneously improving service to internal and external customers. Additionally, we will train your fleet management team in the most current leadership development methodologies to ensure these goals are **sustained**. Our area of expertise is to reduce unnecessary fixed and variable costs in order to obtain the maximum return on your investment (ROI) in the maintenance, procurement, safety, and remarketing of all types of fleet equipment. Through the implementation of cost effective fleet asset and leadership processes, it is our goal to make the global marketplace a safer place to live and do business.

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