

BUILDERS TRANSPORTATION

For Builders Transportation, the savings are in the specs.

The hauler of steel, wire and aluminum products wanted to stock up on EPA'10-compliant tractors to improve safety and reliability but was leery of the expense. So it turned to Mack Trucks, Inc. and its local dealer, who made the purchase affordable.

Builders Transportation ordered 145 Mack® Pinnacle™ models with the Mack ClearTech™ SCR system and had them spec'd for maximum fuel mileage, torque and driver comfort. The units are loaded and light: they ship with 415-HP Mack MP8 engines and 12,000-lb.-capacity Mack FLX front axles.

Dwight Bassett, CFO at the Memphis, Tennessee flatbed carrier, said the keys to cost savings are good planning and a good partner. "We worked hard setting up the parameters and with the help of the dealer created a template in our trucks. All the trucks are set at the same speed. Everyone uses the same progressive shifting techniques — it's uniform throughout the fleet. Once a driver is trained he can get into any of those trucks and it will drive the same. We even created a video with the help of Mack to help these guys drive this truck."

The higher cost associated with the purchase price of the 2010 models and the need to use diesel exhaust fluid (DEF) made lowering operating costs a challenge — one the dealership met. "Tri-State Mack helped us spec a truck for improved fuel mileage. Today we're getting a half-mile-per-gallon improvement over our pre-2010 engines, which cuts our operating costs significantly."

Fuel economy is averaging 6.7 to 7.2 mpg, he said. "It's just off-the-charts good. Reliability is good — the company hasn't had an issue with regens or the availability of DEF. The torque is impressive. We're hauling heavy weight; we're loaded to the max. We need that pulling power. And the drivers appreciate the performance and comfort of the new models. They get on the road, get it into cruise and it just goes. It can handle the grade."

Customizing the equipment for the application and the customer sets Mack apart.

"In the end," Bassett said, "we configured a truck that would best meet our needs. It's all about fuel economy, reliability and driver satisfaction and we get all of that out of these trucks."

