

THE ROCK SOLID NEWS

LITTLE ROCK FARM *Trucking*

TURN YOUR
CLOCKS AHEAD IN
MARCH



Fast Card Info

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By June 1, 2009**

Driver Mailboxes

**Give Your Chickens
Air**

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Marks Message - Invincible?

During these tough economic times there are some good lessons to be learned.

We humans tend to think we are invincible at times... we get pretty "cocky"! There's nothing like a good hard cold or flu to remind us that we must take care of our bodies, and to appreciate the health we have when we were feeling good.

It's not so different in the working world. Companies, and workers within those companies take customers and work they do for granted sometimes. There is nothing better than hard competition or a deep recession to set us all back a couple of paces! Experiencing these challenges forces us back

to reality. Customers will choose a supplier who offers the best service for every dollar they spend. Customers spend a lot of money in return for the services of Little Rock Farm Trucking. Are they getting the best value for the transportation dollars they spend? In these tough times you can bet there are numerous other carriers standing on their doorstep promising them better service.

Take stock. Be aware. As employees of this company, your workmanship and attitude will have a direct bearing on how this company weathers the current economic storm. Don't leave it up to the next person...it falls squarely on your shoulders to do your very best.

**Providing
"second to
none"
products and
services we
defend
ourselves
against
possible
competition
protecting our
own jobs, as
well as those
of our
colleagues.**

Is Your Fast Card Updated?

Joe Murphy, one of our long haul automotive drivers, reported that he had complications with the Fast Card program. We submitted a memo out about Fast Cards in January 2009. Joe took it upon himself to stop in at the border to ensure his Fast Card was good to go and on track. What he didn't expect was a stern lecture.

Fast Card Information is critical and requires updating when you either Move, Change Phone Numbers, or even Switch Trucking Companies. You have 30 days after a change has been made to fax or report into the Fast Card Offices to update this information. To them, it's just as important as having a valid and updated driver's license. Joe wanted the entire fleet to know this is a rule and to be aware of it.

Change Of Information

You must notify CBP and CBSA of any change in the address provided as part of your FAST Commercial Driver application. This may be done in person at a FAST Enrollment Center, via the internet using your GOES account, or by contacting the Canadian Processing Centre at 1-800-842-7647 between the hours of 8:30 am -16:30 pm Eastern Standard Time (EST) or by fax to (905) 354-2332.

CBP requires that all information in your FAST Commercial Driver Account be kept current. Any changes not reported by phone, fax or the internet must be reported in person at a FAST Centre.

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While possession of a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) is not a formal requirement of the FAST program, FAST Commercial Driver Participants may use their GOES account to keep their CDL data current to avoid passage disruptions when entering the United States.



Fast Applications

For those who do not have Fast Cards for easier entry into the United States, we have some applications in the Payroll Box on the glass counter at Little Rock Walkerton.

The compliance for Passports to be done by June 2, 2009 is quickly approaching. For those who have no passport by June 1, 2009, you will no longer be able to cross into the United States.

For many, the Fast Program has made crossing the border simpler. You will receive less harassment and less questioning as Homeland Security has done their background check on you already.

For those who must get a passport in order to keep crossing the border and still do not have a Fast Card, you may want to take this opportunity to do a double whammy and get them both done.

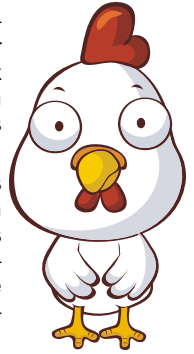
REMEMBER AS OF JUNE 1, 2009 travelers and commercial drivers will need a valid passport to cross into the United States.

Give 'Em Air

For the chicken haulers, the coldness of our winter will start to flux from day to night. Even in February we had days of +10 weather.

As the temperatures rise remember when pulling over the birds need air in order to survive the transit. Please use your tarp manipulation skills appropriately.

Just because it's warm during the day, doesn't mean the night time will be just as nice. **"Be Fair... Provide Those Birds With Air!"**



Driver Mailboxes

It's been noticed that many drivers have outstanding memos and/or information that haven't been removed from their mail slots.

Your mailbox is Little Rock's way of communicating with you about changes, updates, and information you need to be successful when doing your job.

Please check your mailboxes often and take the information with you.

Thanks

Tough Times Ahead

We are feeling the effects of the economy, just like everyone else. Loads are tough to find, customer's demands are very low making this industry even harder.

We are addressing this issue on all levels which also include administrative positions in order to see ourselves through it.

We intend to stay in business and have to make decisions that benefit the survival of Little Rock.

This will eventually turn around and loads will eventually increase. There isn't anyone here that is not affected by the economy.

THE BORDER

By: Steve Mc Entee

We all know how much a pain crossing the international border can be. Both to you as a driver and to us as dispatchers.

There can be lengthy line ups with little or no reason. They may only have a couple of booths open even though there is a 2 mile back up of commercial traffic. The Customs Border Patrol (CBP) Officer can be ignorant for no reason that has anything to do with the driver or the load. Your PARS may not be in when you arrive. It may take a long time for your PAPS to clear. A driver is sitting waiting for the entry numbers to be processed and the green light to cross. All of these things lead to driver frustration. I know, I have been there myself.

THE PAST

The good thing is the days before PARS and PAPS when you had to go to the customs broker and then to customs for final clearance. You would stand out in the hallway line ups waiting for your turn to get called up to the counter. This could often take 1–3 hours. Then when you finally got to the customs counter, something minor would be wrong and you would be sent back to the broker for corrections. Man... were those days frustrating.

However... that is what we did. That is how we all crossed the border. It was pretty much the same on both sides of the border.

CURRENTLY

These days with all the heightened security, it can be frustrating. The rules have changed. Carriers and drivers must change too. We must keep up to the ever changing rules or be left behind. We now use PARS

and PAPS or SCN Numbers to track shipments for the border. We must have entry numbers to prove the shipment is cleared before we go to the border or risk being refused entry and turned back.

We now must wait 4 hours for USDA or 2 hours for FDA before we can go to the border. We now have security programs in place on both sides that were not there a few short years ago.

We have C-PAT, FAST, and PIT, not to forget a hand full of other programs. We have X-RAY machines and armed guards. More and more trucks are being inspected for drugs and weapons. Even a lot of the food in your coolers are not permitted. Packaged meats and even apples without USA Stickers on them are not permitted.

All this can be both intimidating and confusing to the driver. A lot of this we cannot control or even do anything about.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO EXPEDITE OUR CROSSING PROCESSES?

1. Use proper fax cover sheets including our company name with our contact information, shipper name, consignee name, truck number, trailer number, PARS or PAPS number, your call back number, ETA and port of crossing.
2. Fax all your paperwork to the broker ASAP. Send everything you have. Do not wait for a day or 2 before faxing. Try to fax from the shipper. If you are missing something, it can sometimes take a day or two to replace missing documents. Especially loads that have permits associated with them.
3. DO NOT WRITE ON GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS. This makes them VOID. All you put on is the pars sticker or SCN number. Do not write your ETA or truck number on the customs paperwork. This is to be put on the fax cover. **CONTINUED**

Ray Pennington's Thoughts

Why English Is So Hard To Learn

1. The bandage was wound around the wound.
2. The farm used to produce produce.
3. The dump was so full that it had to refuse more refuse.
4. We must polish the Polish furniture.
5. We could lead if he would get the lead out.
6. The soldier decided to desert his dessert in the desert.
7. Since there is no time like the present, he thought it was time to present the present.
8. A bass was painted on the head of the bass drum.
9. When shot at, the dove dove into the bushes.
10. I did not object to the object.
11. The insurance was invalid for the invalid.
12. There was a row among the oarsmen about how to row.
13. The buck does funny things when the does are present.

CONTINUED

Satellite Macros Required By All Drivers

Most trucks are equipped with a satellite system. The satellite system is a super communications tool that we are not utilizing to the fullest.

The satellite system is linked with our dispatching programs. There are preprogrammed messages where the driver just needs to fill in the blank spots. **These pre-programmed messages are called MACROS.**

When a driver sends a Macro, our dispatch program automatically fills in the gaps with their information. Information such as Bills of

Lading, Bird Counts, Skid Counts and any other information... our dispatching system takes driver information and feeds it into our invoicing too. It also records their leaving times so if there is a problem during invoicing, we can look back and use that valuable information. It's a great tool for locating drivers quickly and see where they are during their run.

We require all drivers to send their macros to us during departures.

There are a number of pre-programmed messages where drivers just

need to fill in the information.

TO ACCESS THE MACRO

Press "Create MSG"

Using the + or - Key, keep pressing those until you see the Macro you want to use.

For Automotive Drivers, fill in Macro 2.

For Chicken Drivers, fill in Macro 10.

For regular freight drivers, fill in Macro 2.

Macros have space for items such as your Pars

number. It's an easier way for the dispatchers to locate this information to ensure you are ready to cross the border. It simplifies this process.

Go through the Macros and see what options are available to you. It saves a driver a lot of typing and answers the questions we need internally to deal with customer questions, customs, loading times, and anything involving the invoice process based on this information.

Effectively immediately, all drivers are to use the MACROS.

Trucks With Willis Alternative Power Units (APU)

Trucks that have the APU units on them have the luxury of consuming less fuel by running it verses idling the truck.

As the temperatures begin to rise. Adjust your sleeping comfort levels. Decide if the APU needs to be on at night time or

whether the truck can be completely off.

The APU uses only 3 cups of fuel per hour verses 18 cups of fuel per hour running the truck on idle.



Either way, fuel consumption is still being used.

We are not asking drivers to be uncomfortable during their sleep; how-

ever, we are asking that the drivers consider their locations and temperatures when deciding if any power is needed to be running during their bunk time.

Ray Pennington's Column Continued — Thanks So Much Ray!

1. A seamstress and a sewer fell down into a sewer line.
2. To help with planting, a farmer taught his sow to sow.
3. The wind was too strong to wind the sail.
4. After a number of interjections my jaw got number.
5. Upon seeing the tear in the painting I shed a tear.
6. I had to subject the subject to a series of tests.
7. How can I intimate this to my most intimate friend?

REGULAR FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Conscience is that uneasy feeling that warns a man his wife may be watching.

Insanity is hereditary; you can get it from your children.

Most committee chairpersons know that when all is said and done, more is said than done.

The Border Continued...

4. Call your customs broker within 1 hour to confirm they have received your paperwork and that they have everything they require. Also ensure it's readable and can be read.
5. When you arrive at the customs booth be certain you have all the necessary documents ready for the officer. If you have to go looking for them, you have started off with the wrong foot and that will complicate your life.
6. When you speak to a person at the custom broker, get their name. This way both you and your dispatcher knows who you are dealing with. Many custom brokers are not central calling centres. They are not at the border. They may have a couple of dozen people working there. If we don't know who a driver spoke with, we can't speak on your behalf without playing phone tag. Also, being polite will go a long way.

These are a few things that will help to get you and your truck across the border.

Remember, getting mad and frustrated will not get your cleared any quicker. If you give the broker a hard time for not having your shipment cleared, it will more than likely slip to the bottom of the pile. They have a large number of clearances each day and yours is not the only one they have to process.

Depending on the commodity there could be a lot of things that slows it down. The hold may not be the broker. It may well be some understaffed agency in Ottawa or Washington making the final decisions.

We don't want a driver held up at the border for any more than they should be. By dealing with the border in a rational and professional manner, you will have a much more pleasant experience. You have to come to realize that getting mad over something you can't control is a waste of good energy.



Canadian Spring Thaws



Quebec, Zone 1— March 16th—May 16th

Quebec, Zone 2— March 23rd—May 23rd

Quebec, Zone 3— March 30th—May 30th

Southern New Brunswick — March 8th

Northern New Brunswick — March 15th

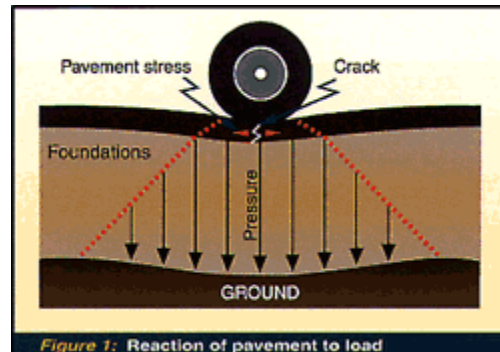


Figure 1: Reaction of pavement to load

Effective on the dates listed above, we must adhere to the spring thaw guidelines of weight restrictions for our tandem axle trailers. The maximum gross weight reduces down to 80,000 lbs total.

The roads in this region are subject to high stresses and flexing due to the winter climates. Water underneath roads in the subsurface freezes. Ice forms within the layers of the road underneath, ice then expands. It can cause the roads to lift up by up to 20 centimeters. This causes many cracks and ruts in the roads.

To avoid heavily damaged roadways, a "SPRING THAW" guideline of weight restrictions are in place. Our maximum weights drop and we must pay close attention to the total gross weight.

There are different thaw dates for different regions due to geographical locations. Please be sure to pay attention to these dates and adhere to the weight restrictions.

Working With The Recession

Everyone is feeling the pain of the recession. It's definitely a time in our lives we will remember in the years to come. In my age group of 35 years old, it's the first hard time we are seeing such a hard downturn in the economy. The last one was in the mid 90's when we were coming out of schools and joining the work force. Only the older generations know how the 80's felt and the cycle of the recessions before that. Little Rock has a number of older generation employees who have lived through multiple recessions.

What history dictates is that everything eventually bounces back to regular levels and companies can't find enough workers to accommodate the levels of demand. What my mind keeps thinking about is how I wished those times were back and even going as far to complain how busy we are. I miss that now.

At this time, walk in drivers seeking employment and calls coming into Little Rock have increased even more. It started in the middle of 2008 and now some people are showing up on weekends hoping for a job. Some people who refused to do particular work are now seeking to do jobs that are outside their "wants" in order to feed their families. Companies around us are decreasing staff with downsizing, who they choose to let go doesn't always make a lot of sense to the outsider. That makes many of us worry that there is no security, if that ever existed.

Decisions need to be made that are sensible for a company's survival. Realistically, what are the choices that need to be made? It's a game of chance, optimism, and strategy. Sacrifices on each employee's behalf are necessary, whether it's a change of routine, job expectations, hours, and in our case, the depleted level of truck trips available. Personally, I don't envy the "Powers That Be" (LRFT Executive) to make these decisions. I've always been open to change but, more so, I am open to what else I am able to step into to see the company through. I'm not alone, many of us in the office and drivers are trying to ride this wave.

It's not always Little Rock who bumps a driver out of the driver's pool or has a driver pushed down the dispatch list, it's sometimes the driver themselves. Yet it's those same people who feel victimized by the company, I had felt sorry because they had bitterly left the company until recently when I came to the realization there was more to the story. As the economy changes, so do our customers and what we haul. The driver had always refused to do certain types of loads such as runs with multiple stops, loads with certain types of products that required extra paperwork at the border, or even working for some customers. After presenting the driver enough times and the driver stating his "conditions" and telling dispatch no, that driver was no longer being called. There was an established behavioral pattern knowing that when those types of runs came available that the driver will refuse it. If you know the answer will

be NO, would you bother to pick up a phone to ask someone who always declines?

I recently have witnessed people complaining to me about the level of work they are receiving. One person called me and stated that they are not receiving enough work and are in dire need of money to keep the family going. A run came available and immediately I thought of this same person and when I called them they were so glad to hear from me. After attempting to offer the run, the person turned down the work stating they didn't prefer it because of the geographical location in comparison to a different run. The driver is known for turning down work to that certain location in Canada but because they were complaining about having no work, I figured I would take the chance to call anyway. The driver turned down the load stating his "conditions". There was nothing else for me to offer, so the person stayed home as the run was offered to the next person down the list. This person has established that if any last minute runs come available to a location that is similar or is complaining about lack of work when the locations they prefer are not available, they will be bypassed on the dispatching list because the answer is predictable.

The problem that is created is that we have employees who can do the work, and in Little Rock's situation, a few people who are known for not wanting or refusing certain types of work. We are a customer service based company and still must get the job done. If we have drivers or office employees who are known for declining work and we still have loads to cover or paperwork to administer, we are left with no choice but to hire people to fill in the gaps. The problem that is created is the new employee may be more motivated and eager or could be someone that is more accommodating, flexible, dependable, and reliable to the changes of the marketplace.

It's interesting during these times that people tend to forget that they have placed "conditions" on their work environment. When the pickings are slim, and the work available is not ideal or conflicts with the known "conditions" of an employee, it's not always the company that is at fault for the person to be out of work. It may just be a person's working history or limited conditions that have been established. Talk to your dispatcher or operations manager to ensure that conditions are not holding you back.

Did you miss any newsletters? Check out Little Rock's website at www.lrift.net Look under the news section and click Newsletters. All newsletters that have been written are now available for you to get up.