

Slow Down & Smell Cleaner Air



Interviewed for this article
Joe Monteleone
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SmartWaySM Transport Partnership Drives Performance Foodservice – AFI Closer to Environmental Responsibility

Performance Foodservice – AFI is one of the increasing number of progressive organizations that recognize that they can improve their bottom line and the environment at the same time.

Consumers and organizations alike are more and more aware of their responsibility to take action for a cleaner environment and socially responsible business practices. By joining the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) SmartWaySM Transport Partnership program in 2008, Performance Foodservice – AFI made yet another important step toward expanding green initiatives all across the company.

“To be a partner in the SmartWaySM Transport Partnership, companies have to fulfill certain criteria to demonstrate their diligence in saving fuel,” said Joe Monteleone, Vice President, Operations. “Simply put, this program provides guidelines for ways to run our trucks’ engines smarter.”

The goal of the SmartWaySM Transport Partnership is to save 33 to 66 million metric tons of carbon dioxide and up to 200,000 tons of nitrogen oxide per year by 2012 by increasing energy efficiency while significantly reducing greenhouse gases and air pollution.

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line and the environment at the same time. “The most effective strategy for achieving this objective is slowing down,” says Monteleone, who oversees a fleet of 100 power units and 80 trailers. “In addition to setting the computers in our straight trucks not to exceed 58 miles per hour and our tractors not to exceed 62 miles per hour, we are educating our drivers on better shifting techniques and how to reduce idling.”

To ensure consistent progress in the program, the EPA provides a set of specific metrics that companies have to record on a monthly basis and report annually. These metrics include amount of fuel used, engine idle hours, and technologies used on the delivery equipment. In return, there is payback on the technology investments within three years, reduced maintenances frequencies and expenses, and the value of B2B sales advantages.

In 2009, Performance Foodservice – AFI saved 90,000 gallons of diesel fuel reducing CO² emissions by 600 tons. According to the EPA, this is the equivalent of removing greenhouse gas emissions from more than 105 passenger vehicles or CO² emissions from the use of electricity in 66 homes for one year.

“Our customers and the communities we serve have given us valuable feedback that the SmartWaySM decals on our trucks tell them we are a company that takes environmental stewardship seriously,” Monteleone said. “Our goal is to continue to demonstrate our leadership in this area.”

Adhering to strict standards of environmental responsibility requires ongoing training. Through formal and informal channels of communication, management continues to reach out to associates and supervisors to educate them about program objectives and the milestones they help achieve by working every day to improve energy efficiency while also contributing to bottom line savings.

Corporate social responsibility at Performance Foodservice - AFI goes beyond fuel savings. Two years ago, the company installed an energy management system and the results are impressive. In its first year of operation, the system saved 200,000 kWatts of power and reduced energy costs by 25 percent. Converting to fluorescent lighting in all warehouses, the company is also getting a quick return on investment, and the installation of cardboard and plastic compactors keeps 600 cubic yard of waste away from landfills each year.

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