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B & N Trucking Leads the Way

There is a new generation of trucks and trucking companies on the road. Trucks that create a greener footprint on our highways and trucking companies who desire to run a more economical and environmentally safe fleet. If you think only big transportation companies are stepping out into this new frontier guess again. Thanks to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District and funds from Proposition 1-B even small private mom and pop trucking companies are arming themselves with new CNG trucks. The goal is to take as many diesel particulate emitting trucks off the road as funding will allow.

Let's face it, trucks play a huge part in the San Joaquin Valley economy which is home not only to large distribution centers but includes the main distribution channel on the West Coast. Jerrad Johnson is Vice President of B&N Trucking, a family-owned business started by his grandfather in 1968 and Jerrad has a vision for their fleet. B&N Trucking moves everything from diatomaceous earth to wine grapes and does it on rough terrain and smooth highways, all over the West Coast. Jerrad was interested in CNG technology as a way to cut costs on new equipment and fuel. Little did he know he was stepping into a technology that would energize his company and open up new possibilities.



B & N Trucking

First B&N Trucking rented a CNG Class A heavy duty truck to see if it would meet the demands of the hauls they were making. Yes, even on the rough roads of mining locations the CNG trucks were right there with diesel. With diesel prices at \$4.00 a gallon compared to CNG costing \$2.31 per gasoline gallon equivalent (gge) they experienced savings right away. Jerrad started educating himself on CNG technology. One discovery, CNG gets close to the same miles per gallon (mpg) as diesel. Yet CNG trucks were miles ahead on over-hauls, traveling roughly one million miles or more before needing an overhaul. As Jerrad put it "This is a new technology and educating yourself with the help of CNG fuel and fuel system vendors plus truck manufacturers is important. A CNG truck is not just an engine with fuel as diesel trucks are. CNG fuel systems have sensors, regulators, pressure relief devices and more." Further when a truck is ordered a CNG fuel system manufacturer of the buyer's choice sends the fueling system to the truck manufacturer to be installed.

The decision to go with CNG on B&N Trucking's next purchase came in 2015 as Prop 1-B funds were becoming available and with CARB regulations eliminating older diesel trucks from the road in 2020 the choice was obvious. "B&N received a voucher for \$50,000 dollars for our first truck and \$60,000 on our second truck." Jerrad added, "Believe me we could not have added CNG trucks without the help of Prop 1-B funding." As this program was designed to replace polluting diesel trucks with cleaner CNG trucks, B&N chose the trucks they had purchased in 2000 to be hauled off by the certified CARB dismantler who also helped with the paperwork.

The real time learning curve started once B&N received the trucks. “When we could not get assistance from our original CNG fuel systems manufacturer we turned to our truck manufacturer Pape’ Kenworth Bakersfield and they sent two of their service technicians to solve problems.” Jerrad discovered Momentum Fuel Technologies, a fuel system manufacturer, who not only solved issues with the old system but proved they were competent and committed to CNG technology. Custom Vehicle Solutions (the installer for Momentum) is now training Pape’ Kenworth Bakersfield to install and trouble shoot Momentum’s GreenLync CNG fuel system . “Things seemed to run smoothly, but after a few months we had issues which didn’t seem to connect. It wasn’t until we discovered we needed to change the spark plugs every 50,000 miles that the problems were solved. Now we change the spark plugs every 45,000 miles. Compared to maintenance on diesel, spark plugs are minor,” Jerrad laughed.



B & N CNG Truck

After two years of having CNG trucks in their fleet, what is in the future for B&N? Two more CNG trucks were delivered in October/November 2018. With a savings on the first two of \$50,000 in fuel per truck per year, greener transportation and happy drivers who notice less driver fatigue due to a smoother, quieter ride with no fuel smell, who could resist? The voucher for the next two will be \$100,000 each. With each truck costing \$215,000 that leaves \$115,000 per truck. With the fuel savings of \$50,000 per truck per year and maintenance savings those two will be paid off in approximately 24 months. B&N will continue to replace its aging diesel fleet as Prop 1-B or other grant funds become available.

With 169 truck fueling stations in California and B&N traveling to the Long Beach Area, Jerrad plans their routes carefully even though CNG trucks can have a refueling range equal to diesel. Currently B&N CNG trucks fuel up en route to most of their destinations, at the American Natural Gas fueling station on Highway 58 and I-5 approximately 20 miles away. However, B&N Trucking, American Natural Gas and Dynamic Renewal Solutions are planning to work together to locate a



American Natural Gas Filling Station

fueling station on Highway 46 in the B&N yard. This will provide fuel for CNG users large and small, out of the area and local. New funding incentives arise from time-to-time. For instance, in 2018 the City of Shafter was selected to participate in a new program established by California Assembly Bill 617 (AB 617), which may provide funding for fleets that travel in the area.

It appears Jerrad Johnson and B&N Trucking will be stepping even farther into the next generation of CNG fuel fleets by becoming a fueling station thanks with the help of San Joaquin Valley Air District, Prop 1-B funds and potentially AB617 funding.



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