



Kenworth T680 Delivers a Load of Benefits for Certified Express

NEOSHO, Mo. – When it comes to trucking and shipping logistics, the key to success is running with well-specified, quality equipment – like the Kenworth T680 – that gives drivers the tools to do their jobs, according to Certified Express Inc. (CEI) President and CEO Scott Wade.



Founded in 2003, CEI is a refrigerated carrier operating over 130 power units with a fleet of 53-foot refrigerated trailers. Aided by top-of-the-line equipment and professional drivers with decades of experience, CEI proudly guarantees that every shipment is efficient, on budget and on time.

The Kenworth T680 makes up 80 percent of the CEI fleet. The company found that the T680 offers superior build quality, excellent fuel economy and outstanding driver comfort. The strong relationship CEI has built with the local MHC Kenworth dealerships in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Joplin, Missouri, was also a deciding factor.

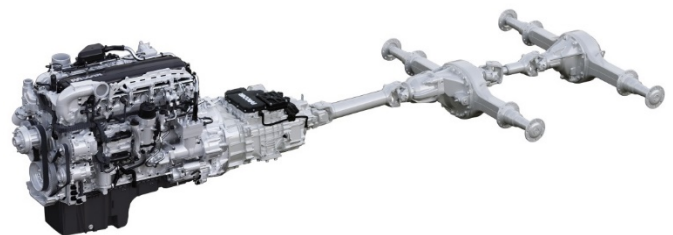
“Kenworth and MHC Kenworth do a standup job – they communicate and get you taken care of quickly,” Wade said. “When it comes to ordering equipment, we are not a cookie cutter company where the salespeople at the dealership have an easy job. Everyone involved goes out of their way to make sure specs and every detail is exactly right.”

The company’s latest order of Kenworth T680s features the full PACCAR powertrain, including the PACCAR MX-13 engine rated at 455-hp and a 1550/1750 lb-ft multi-torque specification, PACCAR 12-speed automated transmission, and mid-track PACCAR 40K tandem rear axles with a 2.64 ratio.



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“There is a world of difference with the PACCAR Powertrain setup when it comes to power and driveability. I average 42,000 pounds per load. It blows my mind how smooth it is,” remarked veteran driver Randy Rogers. “I’m sold on the PACCAR transmission and I won’t go to anything else.”



PACCAR Powertrain

The decision to go with automated transmissions, was based on its benefits in convenience, driveability and improved fuel economy, Wade pointed out. He estimated that there is up to a one mile per gallon fuel economy difference* between the PACCAR automated transmission and a manual transmission. In a team driving situation, he also noted that predictive cruise control can level the performance gaps between the two drivers.

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“I don’t need a stick to be a truck driver. All I have to do is get my load from point A to point B safely and on time,” Rogers said. “We’re able to sell people on joining this industry today because, when they ask how in the world you can drive such a big truck, we tell them it’s just like driving your car.”

Rogers, who drives as a team with his wife Elizabeth, had the choice of several trucks when he joined CEI, but experience told him to pick the Kenworth T680.



Elizabeth and Randy Rogers, drivers of the special Certified Express Kenworth T680

“I’ve driven other makes of trucks, and spent more time tightening screws and bolts, and listening to squeaks and squeals than anything else. That is not the case with a Kenworth, and there’s just something special about the Kenworth that retains the classic truck look,” he said. “I like the nice rounded exterior features, and the interiors are very roomy with lots of storage, which makes them very comfortable, especially for a team setup,” Rogers added.

CEI handles a wide range of shipping requests from frozen and live poultry to hauling liquid tankers and 53-ft space-saver trailers. To optimize payload capacity, they want their equipment as lightweight as possible. Key weight-reducing components include the 12.9-liter PACCAR MX-13 engine, aluminum air tanks, aluminum wheels, disc brakes, shortened fifth-wheel and rear wide-base tires.

“Saving 500 to 700 pounds versus traditional specs is a pretty big deal, especially when you can put everything in a package with a trailer, and know you don’t have to worry about being overloaded,” Wade said. “It takes weight out of the equation in our ability to do our job, and it’s one less stress point for the operator behind the wheel.”

Wade is not the kind of company owner that just stays in the office. He’s been involved professionally with the family business for the nearly 30 years – about half of that as a driver. He still buckles in on occasion, and one thing he reports is that the Kenworth T680 offers an exceptionally safe driving experience.

“Kenworth puts a lot of thought into designing their trucks,” Wade said, “from layout of the dash and gauges and improved visibility to safer contact points for entry and exit.

“Having the PACCAR automated transmission is another huge safety benefit,” Wade added, “If you’re driving in an urban environment, and getting ready to make a right or a left hand turn out of a busy intersection, you don’t have to worry about what gear you need to be in to make the corner.”

Wade said the company calls its men and women behind the wheel ambassadors out on the highway. “And, Kenworth is the face of our company going down the road,” Wade said. “We only put our logo on equipment that represents us well. The quality of Kenworth products is exactly what we want.”

SIDEBAR STORY: A Ride to Remember



Red is a popular color for trucks. But when it came time for CEI driver Randy Rogers to upgrade to a new truck, he had a more specific color in mind – fire engine red.

Rogers is a 16-year veteran of the fire service, having retired from the Seneca Area Fire Protection District (Missouri) in 2008 after fighting fires in both wild land and urban environments. His wife and driving partner Elizabeth was also involved as the president of the local auxiliary volunteer department.

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During the latter part of his career, Rogers served as public information officer for his department, and one of his most honored duties was helping to uphold traditions with respect to firefighter funerals and memorial services. Moving into his new life as a truck driver, he realized he rarely thought of his fallen firefighter brothers, except for on the anniversaries of their passing or when he drove past the site of an accident.



“I thought, ‘if I’m forgetting my own guys, what’s the rest of the world doing for all these other firefighters who have given their lives?’ ” Rogers said. “It was a no-brainer when I saw the new Kenworth equipment coming in.”

His new mission, with the full support of CEI, was to turn his new 2019 Kenworth T680 into a rolling remembrance “to honor and memorialize all of our fallen firefighters in this country.”

The truck, christened Memorial Run, is exactly that. The Kenworth T680 was custom-wrapped to honor the brave firefighters of 9/11 and the FDNY. The smooth rear wall of the T680 sleeper made a perfect memorial wall where the name of three of Rogers’ personal friends, Tim Hardy, Tyler Casey and Steve Fierro, along with other local heroes, are depicted on gold ribbons. Below that are graphics

commemorating “hotshots” who sacrificed their lives battling Arizona’s Yarnell Hill Fire and the South Canyon fire in Colorado. A bagpiper is also shown, referencing a fire and police memorial tradition going back 150 years.



Skinned in 3M high-reflective vinyl on each side of the sleeper is a giant Maltese cross, known around the world as a symbol of the fire service, and zebra stripes as seen on many fire trucks throughout the Midwest. QR codes can be scanned to take viewers to online firefighting resources.

“The truck has become a healing tool for friends and families of firefighters who have passed. One fireman followed us for 80 miles so that he could get a picture,” Rogers said. “Whenever we show the truck, nobody leaves with dry eyes.

“It’s kind of taken on a life of its own. We respect and honor that, and it’s become a responsibility in which we take great pride,” Rogers added. “I have to remember what I’m driving and who I’m driving for. This special Kenworth T680 has made me a better driver, there’s no question about that.”



Kenworth is The Driver’s Truck™. See what drivers are saying at www.kenworth.com/drivers. Kenworth Truck Company is the manufacturer of The World’s Best® heavy and medium duty trucks. Kenworth’s Internet home page is at www.kenworth.com. Kenworth is a PACCAR company.

**Individual fuel economy improvement will vary depending on use, road conditions and other factors.*