



Let's All Take a Minute to Give Thanks for Trucks

By Paul R. Landry, President & CEO

Most of us who travel B.C.'s roads know that they carry large numbers of trucks of all sizes. What we may not consider is that the loads those trucks are moving will end up in our homes or offices or at local hospitals or banks through an efficient supply chain that transfers goods from manufacturers, distributors, farmers, importers and other suppliers to locations that serve us all.

In honour of National Trucking Week, which falls from September 7th to 14th this year, let's take a minute to think about the trucking industry and the thousands of men and women who work within it to make our lives functional, comfortable, healthy and safe.

While we're just getting up, trucks have already visited grocery stores, restaurants and fast food outlets to deliver both fresh and packaged foods.

If you commute by car or take transit to work, trucks help get you on your way. They deliver gasoline and diesel to service stations and to bus, air, rail and marine terminals throughout the province. Because a truck got there, you'll get where you need to go too.

If someone you love is due for a hospital stay or cared for in a nursing home, you have trucks to thank in part for their clean, safe, well-stocked surroundings. Many hospitals have meals delivered daily. Trucks also deliver clean, sterile sheets and gowns and pick up soiled articles for treatment. Medications, radiopharmaceuticals and oxygen all come in by truck.

Trucks whisk domestic garbage and recycling away from curbsides or drop-off depots. They move potentially toxic biomedical and hazardous wastes – batteries, oil, asbestos and solvents – to facilities where they can be treated and disposed of. The livability of our communities and homes is enhanced because trucks are on the job.

In addition to our day-to-day reliance on the industry, we also benefit from its contribution to the economy of both B.C. and Canada. Here are a few facts:

- In 2005, trucks transported 66.7 million shipments across Canada, carrying 6.15 billion tons of cargo.
- Trucking is the link that allows other transportation modes to work together. Marine, air and rail transportation need trucking to complete the chain to and from their terminals.
- In 2006, trucking was a \$1.67 billion industry in B.C., with a growth rate of 4 percent a year between 1997 and 2006. The growth rate of all other B.C. industries combined was less than 3 percent.
- The Pacific Highway border crossing in Surrey, the sixth busiest in Canada, saw \$7.2 billion worth of exports and \$6.8 billion of imports in 2006.

- In 2006, the trucking industry employed about 366,390 people across Canada, of which about 55,000 are in B.C. Projections continue to show a shortage of truck drivers and mechanics, creating employment options and career paths for many.

Few of us ever think about the ways in which truck transportation supports both the economy and our well-being. And we shouldn't have to. Trucks quietly, consistently and efficiently keep things moving, because that's what the industry is about. But we should all occasionally remember just how important the industry is to B.C. and our communities – to our daily lives. If you got it, a truck brought it. It doesn't get much simpler than that.