

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORIES



Eastern Tank's Fleet a Well-Oiled Machine

Eastern Tank Services had a problem. A whole fleet's worth. Its trucks kept breaking down. A good number of them sat at the dealership awaiting parts. Those that operated delivered lousy fuel economy. And to navigate the raw landscape of Arkansas oil fields, bulldozers had to haul the trucks up hills.

That put owner Sam Ludington and vice president Delbert Underwood at a competitive disadvantage. Ludington, who bought the business in 2000, had built the operation from a handful of trucks to 50 transports and 150 workers, providing water, sand and chemicals to the oil and natural gas fields within a 170-mile radius of headquarters in Fort Smith. He and Underwood hated to see their business decline because of mechanical issues.

"We started out with Mack years ago and then went to another truck, which was the biggest mistake we ever made," Underwood said. "The transmission and rear ends kept going out. Every time something would break we'd have to wait two weeks for the dealer to take a vote to see whether they'd cover it under warranty. Those trucks weren't making us any money."

So Eastern Tank turned to James Carey. The general manager of Shipley Motor, the Mack dealership in Fort Smith, told the company about how Mack had reinvented its entire line of vehicles, with an emphasis on reliability and profitability. Underwood was skeptical. "James came in and said, 'I have a product you might want to look at.' I said, 'I'll try a couple, but if I'm not happy with them, you're taking them back.'"

Eastern Tank kept the trucks. They purchased five MACK® Pinnacle™ models with 505-HP MP8 engines, 10-speed MACK T310 transmissions, 14,600-pound-capacity MACK front axles and 38,000-pound-capacity MACK rears with air ride suspension. In 2011 the company purchased another 10. In 2012 it ordered 10 more.

Underwood was impressed with the trucks. "I couldn't believe how much they've changed," he said of the new Mack models. "From that day on we haven't bought anything but Mack."

For good reason: the trucks work. "We go where we need too," Underwood said. "With the Mack, you just lock it in, put it in second gear and go right up the hill. It's got all the power you need."



And they deliver the savings he needs. "The old trucks were getting 5 mpg and the Macks are getting six, six-and-a-half," Underwood said. "Last year our fuel bill was \$8 million. This year it's going to be around \$6 million."

Economy wouldn't mean a thing without power and reliability. "We run these trucks 24/7. They're delivering everything we could ask for. You can take them on the highway and they'll pass anything. The power, the fuel economy, the lack of failure—they're the king of the road. When I tell my customer I'll have a truck there, that truck will be there. I have confidence in Shipley Motor and Mack."