



Kwik Trip Helps Spearhead Movement in LNG and CNG Adoption

Fleet Includes Kenworth T440 Natural Gas Trucks

LA CROSSE, Wis. – There is an old saying that “a rising tide lifts all boats.”

And for La Crosse, Wis.-based Kwik Trip – a convenience store and fuel chain with more than 400 locations in three states – its work to promote liquefied and compressed natural gas as a fuel source is helping move the nationwide adoption of LNG and CNG as a viable fuel source in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, and beyond.



“We’re true believers and activists in making LNG and CNG go from an alternative fuel to a standard fuel,” said Chad Hollett, Kwik Trip director of transportation and distribution. “We’re moving forward with CNG at our stations (three are currently open) and have plans to have 15 to 20 sites completed by this time next year. Within those, up to six will also offer LNG at strategic interstate corridors. With this network in place, we can show customers and fleets that they can fuel with confidence and move forward in the purchase of CNG and LNG vehicles.”

To kick off the “local movement” toward LNG and CNG, Kwik Trip hosted a natural gas forum at its La Crosse campus in late May, where 1,500 people attended – learning about CNG/LNG and the planned infrastructure, and vehicles, big and small, that use the fuel source.



“It was a huge success and it still reverberates to this day,” Hollett said. “Not a day goes by that we don’t get 50 to 100 calls to learn about our plans with natural gas. Customers want to know when it will be available in their area.”

But Hollett said the calls often lead to questions about equipment. And, that too, is part of the Kwik Trip plan. “We not only supply the fuel, we use the fuel,” he said. “We have 400 vehicles ranging from cars to Class 8 trucks and we’re making the move toward natural gas in our own fleet. Today we have 20 natural gas vehicles in operation with more coming.”

Among Kwik Trip’s fleet are a Kenworth T440 LNG tractor and two Kenworth T440s powered by CNG.

“We purchased these vehicles without any government subsidies, to see how they operate and how they can reduce costs for our company. And they do – they all penciled out with a positive ROI. What’s more, we knew fleets would ask questions about the vehicles so we wanted to have answers for them,” said Hollett.

Working with Kenworth of Wisconsin, Kwik Trip spec’d the Kenworth T440s with the 8.9-liter Cummins Westport ISL G 320-hp engine, driven through automatic transmissions. Since much of the terrain is flat, Hollett said the power performance of the Kenworths is comparable to its other trucks with bigger engines.

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“The drivers say they’re operating just fine. And, they love the way they drive and how comfortable they are,” Hollett said. “What’s more, we’re not running light loads. The two Kenworth CNG tractors are hauling fully loaded 48 to 50-foot trailers, grossing out at 80,000 pounds. Our T440 LNG hauls a 9,600 gallon fuel tanker and it too runs fully loaded.”

Running a slip-seat operation, the Kenworths and other Class 6-8 trucks in its fleet run virtually non-stop. “We average between 200,000 to 250,000 miles on our trucks each year,” Hollett said. “And we’re getting close to 6 mpg in diesel and gas equivalencies with our LNG and CNG engines, and with retail fuel prices that range between \$1.59 and \$1.79 for CNG, and \$2.69 for LNG, the math pencils out well.”

On the conservative side, running 200,000 miles per year, the company expects to save \$80,000 a year in fuel costs with its CNG units; \$43,000 a year with its LNG engines.



According to Hollett, while the fuel savings is something to smile about, so is lessening the country’s dependence on foreign oil. “We have a vast supply of natural gas and it’s well documented. Since oil is a global commodity and price and availability is influenced by world conditions, prices will always be in flux, but on the whole, will only go higher. Compare that to our own supply of domestically produced natural gas and we have control over our own destiny. To us, that makes sense and it’s why we think of LNG and CNG as the fuel of the future.”

Kenworth Truck Company is the manufacturer of The World’s Best® heavy and medium duty trucks. Kenworth is an industry leader in providing fuel-saving technology solutions that help increase fuel efficiency and reduce emissions. The company’s dedication to the green fleet includes aerodynamic trucks, compressed and liquefied natural gas trucks, and medium duty diesel-electric hybrids. Kenworth is the only truck manufacturer to receive the Environmental Protection Agency’s Clean Air Excellence award in recognition of its environmentally friendly products. In addition, the fuel-efficient Kenworth T700 equipped with the low-emission PACCAR MX engine was named the 2011 Heavy Duty Commercial Truck of the Year by the American Truck Dealers. Kenworth’s Internet home page is at www.kenworth.com. Kenworth. A PACCAR Company.