



Kenworth T370s Lift Portable Storage and Moving Company with Uptime and Fuel Economy

1-800-PACK-RAT Becoming a Dominant Player

WAKE FOREST, N.C. – For many businesses, the key to success is to build a better mousetrap. Take an existing idea, and improve upon it.

That's exactly what a North Carolina entrepreneur did 13 years ago when he examined the home and commercial "container storage" industry, where household and commercial goods are stored in containers and then moved elsewhere for temporary housing.



Kevin Barbour, senior vice president of operations for 1-800-PACK-RAT, is shown with one of the company's Kenworth T370s.

"Our founder jokingly called what he developed a "pack rat" because of the container's ability to store everything," recalled Kevin Barbour, senior vice president of operations for 1-800-PACK-RAT, the company's actual official name. "It's a weatherproof unit, plus a lift system that can place an 8,500-pound container on a truck bed without swaying or shifting the contents. Instead of moving the container at an angle, which is common in the industry, the lift moves the container straight up. That means items in the container stay put and valuables don't shift or break with gravity. This patented system is what launched our business."



According to Barbour, the company began standardizing with the Kenworth T370 medium duty truck several years ago after moving from another brand truck due to reliability issues. "What we were running then was really limiting us in servicing our customers – we couldn't go 40,000 miles before a problem would crop up," recalled Barbour. "We needed a more reliable truck that could give us dependable service."

Barbour said he found a solution, thanks to a 1-800-PACK-RAT franchise in North Carolina that had begun buying Kenworths – having great success with uptime and fuel economy. "That caught our eye," said Barbour. "They tested out the Kenworths for us, and it gave us the confidence to move forward with an order. Today, we're running 115 of the Kenworth medium duty trucks, with 30 more on order, and we've standardized on the Kenworth T370." The trucks are purchased through MHC Kenworth – Wilmington in North Carolina.



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The transition in trucks has been a game changer, said Barbour. “The trucks have been ultra-reliable and we’ve been getting up to 2 mpg better fuel economy with the Kenworth T370s versus our old trucks. When you consider we drive about 60,000 miles per unit annually, going from 6 mpg to 8 means an extra \$10,000 a year in fuel savings per unit. That’s huge.”

The Kenworth T370s are equipped with PACCAR PX-7 engines rated at 280 hp, and driven through Allison automatic 5-speed transmissions. They feature a 230-inch wheelbase to handle the lifts and 16-foot by 8-foot container boxes. According to Barbour, many of the T370 straight trucks will also pull trailers with container boxes. “That gets us pretty loaded, but the Kenworths have plenty of power for the job. When we pick up the containers, we either bring them back for storage at our facility, or move them to a customer’s new location – if they’re relocating for example. We can handle short-haul moves, or if they’re moving across the country, we can accommodate that as well.”

Since most company drivers operate in residential areas, the company needs a truck with a tight turning radius. “The T370 is excellent in that area and the drivers all enjoy the performance and comfort the truck offers. We have a management program and the entrée into the company is first to become a driver to learn the business from the ground up,” Barbour said. “Spring is our busy time of the year and we augment our regular driver pool with temporary and on-call drivers. We frequently pull from local fire departments where the fire fighters often have multiple days off. It works well for them, as well as for us.”

Today, 1-800-PACK-RAT is one of the leading players in the moving container business with 62 warehouse location servicing more than 70 markets with a population approaching 200 million people throughout the United States. The company also crossed the border into Toronto in 2013 – opening a company store. It operates close to 200 medium-duty trucks overall and 30,000 containers for its customers – handling both residential business and corporate accounts.

Barbour said 1-800-PACK-RAT has seen significant growth since 2005 and continues to expand. We plan to gain new markets this year, next year, and into the foreseeable future,” he said. “We plan to add the Kenworth T370s in those locations and the trucks will help us get the word out about our service. They really project and mirror our company mantra of providing excellent and reliable service. People see our trucks and know we’re a quality company.”



More information on the company is available at www.1800packrat.com.

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.