

Automotive

Off Road

Heavy  
Duty

Power  
Gen



## Sleep. A Strategy for Driver Recruiting and Retention.

The trucking industry is faced with a significant driver shortage. To gain a competitive edge in recruiting and retaining quality drivers, some fleets are providing equipment to improve comfort in the sleeping bunk. The driver shortage doesn't just impact trucking companies. It ripples through the supply chain, causing a bottleneck of goods that delays deliveries and increases prices.

- Driver turnover in the first quarter of 2018 was as high as 94 percent at large carriers.
- 60 percent of over-the-road truck drivers will leave within the first six months.
- A shortage of 174,000 drivers is projected by 2026.

A demanding career, long-haul driving isn't just a job, it's a lifestyle. Expected to drive approximately 500 miles per day, drivers are often paid by the mile or the load. Also, the trucking industry has an aging workforce of which 94 percent are men. Consequently, fleets are recruiting nontraditional drivers such as women and minorities. In order to recruit and retain the best drivers, fleet managers are evaluating the needs and wants of current and future truckers, including time at home, improved income, job satisfaction and comfort while driving and sleeping. To meet the demand for comfort, drivers are influencing truck specifications.

According to a 2017 survey of company and independent drivers, 73 percent of truckers want special seats, and 60 percent of long-haul drivers want an auxiliary power unit (APU) to improve comfort when logging time in the sleeper bunk. For drivers, getting enough sleep is complex, and complying with idling regulations becomes extremely challenging without a way to keep the cab temperature in the bunk at an optimal level for sleeping.

## The Importance of Sleep

Getting adequate sleep is imperative to the health of over-the-road truck drivers and the safety of everyone on the road. While commercial truck drivers are required to adhere to the hours-of-service laws, there is no law regulating sleep. Most people need seven to nine hours of sleep per day. Sleeping less than seven hours per day is associated with an increased risk of developing chronic conditions such as obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke and mental distress. Although off-duty breaks are mandatory, it does not mean that a driver is getting the amount of sleep needed to minimize health risks and fatigue. Truckers face many challenges to get better sleep, including finding a place to park, temperature, humidity, light, noise, smells, vibration and issues related to health and diet.



## The Impact of Sleep Deficits on Safety

When drivers have sleep deficits, they are less able to react effectively to hazards on the road, weather conditions or unsafe driving of others. Also, sleep-deprived drivers are as or more impaired than if they were driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, making them more prone to accidents.

Safety organization statistics:

- Up to 40 percent of all semi truck accidents are a result of driver fatigue.
- 4,317 fatalities involving large trucks occurred in 2017.
- 82 percent of those killed in accidents involving a heavy-duty truck were occupants of passenger vehicles or pedestrians.
- Four percent of registered vehicles are large trucks, which account for nine percent of all motor vehicle fatalities.



According to webmd.com, bodies struggle to reach the optimal temperature for sleep in environments that are too hot or cold, which leads to restlessness, and difficulty falling and staying asleep. Temperatures in a closed environment can rise 29 degrees in just 20 minutes and 43 degrees in 60 minutes. Keeping the cab temperature at 68°F to 72°F (20°C to 22°C) provides the best environment for sleep. Leaving the windows open or using window screens lets in noise, smells and other disruptions. Optimum bunk temperature is best achieved with the use of an APU, which increases comfort and satisfaction and can contribute to improved retention.

### **Idle Free Series 5000 eAPU<sup>®</sup>**

Engineered for driver comfort, an Idle Free Series 5000 eAPU<sup>®</sup> provides maximum cooling capacity and direct airflow in the sleeping berth. The Series 5000 is a high-capacity cooling electric APU with automatic start-stop technology for uninterrupted cooling. Even in high ambient temperatures, trucks using Idle Free Series 5000 eAPUs need to start only once during the rest period, keeping drivers comfortable and fleets in compliance with idle reduction laws. The system also reduces engine hours, diesel particulate filter (DPF) repairs and engine maintenance costs. Minimizing unnecessary idling reduces emissions, pollution and noise. Warranted for two years, the Idle Free Series 5000 eAPU system has an easy-to-use control panel, multidirectional vents and a three-speed evaporator fan. Also, noise-generating components, such as the compressor, are located outside the cab. Backed by quality technical support, the Series 5000 eAPU requires no frame rail or storage space.



From its initial design to field testing, truck drivers and fleets were involved in the development of the Series 5000. Tested in the warmest regions of North America, drivers using the system were surveyed daily to provide feedback. Additional testing proved that even at high ambient temperatures, the truck only needs to start once during the rest period. Laboratory results also confirmed that the Idle Free Series 5000 cools a 90°F (32°C) bunk to 73°F (23°C) in less than five minutes and can maintain that temperature throughout the rest period in a 350-cubic foot (9.9-cubic meter) bunk.

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The Idle Free Series 5000 eAPU and the following strategies can help drivers get a better night's sleep for improved health and safety.

- Block as much light out of the truck as possible. Pull all the curtains shut. If needed, put a sunshade next to your windshield to block even more light. Limit light coming from electronics such as television, computer, CPAP machine and indicator lights. If needed, wear a sleep mask.
- Reduce as much sound or noise as possible. Avoid leaving the windows open or using window screens. Turn the sound of all electrics down or off. Wear earplugs. Consider adding a white noise machine to help block out other sounds.
- Eliminate smells and odors. A disadvantage of an open window or window screen is the smell of diesel exhaust. Don't park next to a dumpster or outdoor toilets. Dispose of garbage in the truck and keep the portable toilet clean.
- Reduce movement or vibration. Park where the truck and trailer won't sway from side to side. In high-wind areas, park behind a windbreak. Minimize or eliminate truck idling with the use of an APU.
- Address health issues. If a driver is tired all the time, it may be sleep apnea. While caffeine is a trucker staple, reduce caffeine consumption, especially before a scheduled break, and make healthy food choices.

To learn more about the Idle Free Series 5000 eAPU, visit [phillipsandtemro.com/series5000eapu](http://phillipsandtemro.com/series5000eapu), call +1 952.941.9700 or email [sales@phillipsandtemro.com](mailto:sales@phillipsandtemro.com).

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