



## *News Release*

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***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

### **HISTORIC ROOTS AND LEADING-EDGE TECHNOLOGIES:**

#### **TANKSTAR USA'S CONTINUAL PURSUIT OF SAFETY**

*110-Year-Old Milwaukee-Based Company Supports Drivers  
with Bendix® Air Disc Brakes and Advanced Driver Assistance Systems*

**AVON, Ohio – June 7, 2023** – To look at the origins of the Tankstar USA family of companies is to travel the history of trucking in America, marking a series of mileposts on a 110-year journey. Furthest back is 1913, the year Fred Schwerman Jr. founded Schwerman Trucking Company to deliver agricultural goods around Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Rogers Cartage Co. was formed in the 1930s to transport petroleum products across Illinois. North American Bulk Transport, Inc. and McCorkle Truck Lines trace their roots to the 1950s and Bulk Logistics to the 1980s. Tidewater Trucking was born at the close of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in 1999. Together, they've moved just about everything, from produce and bomb casings to liquid chemicals and dry bulk.

Today, the Tankstar USA family of companies employs more than 900 people and runs a total of 775 Kenworth, Mack®, and Volvo tractors and 2,200 trailers from its base in Milwaukee and 32 locations across the country. Three of its fleets have been honored with National Tank Truck Carriers safety awards. And Tankstar's unwavering commitment to safety includes supporting its more than 700 drivers with Bendix® ADB22X® air disc brakes and Bendix® Wingman® Fusion™ advanced driver assistance technologies from Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC (Bendix).

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“They bring another level of safety to not just our drivers, but to the motoring public as well,” said Russ Hull, Tankstar’s director of maintenance. “Everyone sharing the roads benefits when we provide the people behind the wheels of our trucks with the safest vehicles possible, and we’ve been spec’ing Bendix since at least 2012.”

### **Building a Safety Culture and Supporting Drivers**

New hires begin learning Tankstar’s safety culture as soon as they walk through the door. “From day one, whether you’re a technician or a driver or in any other position, we emphasize the value we place on safety,” Hull said. “There’s hands-on training, computer-based training – everything we can do to instill the shared beliefs and safety practices that matter so much to everyone here, workers and leadership alike. The No. 1 goal is that everyone goes home safe at the end of the day.”

Hull, who has been in trucking for 30 years and holds a CDL with a tanker endorsement, routinely gets behind the wheel of new trucks so he can fully appreciate the driver’s perspective, as well as the real-world performance and capabilities of Bendix® Wingman® Fusion™. “Experiencing these things firsthand really puts me in the best place to understand our drivers’ wants and needs, and their feedback is crucial,” he said. “And I do hear from them that they like lane departure warnings and adaptive cruise control and technology that can potentially prevent rollovers – which is particularly valuable to fleets like ours. Drivers need to be comfortable, and they need to be confident, and anything that helps them do their job better and more safely, they appreciate that.”

The Bendix® ESP® Electronic Stability Program full-stability system is the foundation of Bendix collision mitigation technologies, utilizing a system of sensors and advanced algorithms to recognize and assist drivers in potentially mitigating conditions that could lead to rollover and loss of control. It functions in a wide range of driving and road conditions, including snowy, ice-covered, and slippery surfaces, and can activate the brakes in ways the driver cannot replicate. Wingman Fusion is built on Bendix ESP and integrates a forward-facing camera with the radar, creating a powerful driver assistance system. With a suite of sensors working together, and not just in parallel, Fusion uses multisystem integration to create a more comprehensive data picture, setting it apart from radar-only systems.

Tankstar also equips Bendix® ADB22X® air disc brakes on all its tractor axles. “I’ve never heard a driver wish they could go back to drum brakes,” Hull said. “We’ve spec’ed Bendix disc brakes for more than 10 years, and the drivers absolutely love them. They’ll say, ‘This thing brakes like a car: It grabs harder than drums, but it’s smoother.’”

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Air disc brakes provide shorter stopping distances compared to drum brakes and virtually eliminate brake fade, providing greater reliability with more consistent stops. During heavy stop-and-go traffic situations or mountain descents, brake fade can start to set in on drum brakes, extending stopping distances as drum brakes heat up. Air disc brakes also provide improved brake stability from side to side, reducing the risk of brake steer for straighter, more stable stops.

### **A Partnership on and off the Roads**

“It really is a privilege to work with the Tankstar team on putting their drivers behind the wheel of safer trucks and helping them keep those vehicles in top operating condition,” said Lance Hansen, Bendix vice president – aftermarket sales, fleet, service, and field operations. “With every visit, phone call, or virtual training session, we’re reminded just how deeply their commitment to highway safety runs, and we’re proud to share the journey with them.”

Tankstar utilizes Bendix in-person and computer-based education programs – including courses at [brake-school.com](https://www.bendix.com/brake-school) – for both its drivers and technicians. The company also relies on Bendix® ACom® PRO™ diagnostics for maintenance and calibration.

Bendix – the North American leader in the development and manufacture of active safety, air management, and braking system technologies for commercial vehicles – emphasizes that safety technologies complement safe driving practices. No commercial vehicle safety technology replaces a skilled, alert driver exercising safe driving techniques and proactive, comprehensive driver training. Responsibility for the safe operation of the vehicle remains with the driver at all times.

“Sometimes it’s hard to measure the effects of everything we do in our pursuit of safety – if an accident doesn’t happen, you don’t hear about it,” Hull said. “But I do think it’s reflected in the mindset of our drivers, because they know we care enough about them and their families to put this equipment on their trucks. And you can’t put a number or a dollar figure on that.”

### **About Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC**

Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems, a member of Knorr-Bremse, develops and supplies leading-edge active safety technologies, energy management solutions, and air brake charging and control systems and components under the Bendix® brand name for medium- and heavy-duty trucks, tractors, trailers, buses, and other commercial vehicles throughout North America. An industry pioneer, employing more than 4,400 people, Bendix – and its wholly owned subsidiary, R.H. Sheppard Co., Inc. – is driven to deliver the best solutions for improved vehicle safety, performance, and overall operating cost. Contact us at 1-800-AIR-BRAKE (1-800-247-2725) or visit [bendix.com](https://www.bendix.com). Stay connected and informed through Bendix expert podcasts, blog posts, videos, and other resources at [knowledge-dock.com](https://www.knowledge-dock.com).

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