News Release

For more information, contact:

Barbara Gould  or  Ken Kesegich
Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC  Marcus Thomas LLC
(440) 329-9609  (888) 482-4455
barbara.gould@bendix.com  kkesegich@marcusthomasllc.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FLORIDA ROCK & TANK LINES EQUIPS BENDIX TECHNOLOGIES
TO SUPPORT DRIVERS AND HANDLE CHALLENGES

Tanker-Dominated Fleet Utilizes Bendix® Wingman® Fusion™
and Bendix™ BlindSpotter® in Striving for Safety

ELYRIA, Ohio – June 28, 2018 – Increasingly crowded highways; densely trafficked city streets; more distracted drivers in cars everywhere: There’s not much room for error handling a big rig these days – and even less so for truckers hauling tankers loaded with petroleum or hazardous chemicals.

“When you’re transporting the hazardous commodities we do, a collision or a rollover is a completely different situation than if you’re pulling a van load of paper towels,” said Jim Anderson, vice president of safety and risk management at Florida Rock & Tank Lines, Inc. “We’re incredibly proud of our drivers’ abilities and safety efforts, but even the most skilled person at the wheel can’t control everything that happens around them, so we support and complement their talents with the best safety systems available. And I can’t even begin to put a number on how many potential incidents Bendix technologies have prevented over the years.”

Founded in 1962 as a dump truck hauler of raw sand and aggregate materials, Florida Rock & Tank Lines is currently a tanker-only fleet, delivering mostly petroleum and chemical products across the southeastern United States. The safety award-winning carrier complements its extensive driver safety and training programs with advanced technologies from Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems, including its flagship collision mitigation system, Bendix® Wingman® Fusion™. Florida Rock & Tank Lines has made Fusion standard on all of its tractor orders since 2016, and recently added 70 Wingman Fusion-equipped units to its fleet. The company also specs the Bendix™ BlindSpotter® Side Object Detection System.
“I can remember when we didn’t even have antilock brakes,” Anderson recalled. “But back in the early 2000s, when roll stability systems started coming into the marketplace, we were an early adopter of the technology. When [Fusion predecessor] Bendix® Wingman® Advanced™ was available, we equipped that, and then we transitioned to Fusion™ and added BlindSpotter®. They’re all effective complements to our drivers’ skills, and I wouldn’t want to go back to the way it used to be, the safety technologies available today are reducing crashes and have made us a better company.”

Drivers and Safety

Florida Rock & Tank Line’s fleet consists of 406 tractors – a mix of Kenworth and Mack® models. The company employs more than 700 people at its headquarters and 20 terminals, including 600 drivers. In 2011, they earned an Outstanding Performance Trophy in the National Tank Truck Carriers (NTTC) Tank Truck Safety Contest.

“That was a huge achievement for us, and we’re very proud of our drivers and everyone in the company who made it happen,” Anderson said. “When you look at the quality of tank truck fleets operating out there, and the fact that most of our loads are one-way, 100 miles or less, and involve urban traffic congestion, plus getting in and out of tight delivery spots, it was a huge honor.”

“Over the years, we have really focused on developing a proactive, prevention-based safety culture that starts with the hiring of our drivers,” Anderson continued. “We have a proven process of finding and vetting the best drivers for our positions, and then giving them the absolute best training we can provide, and putting them at the wheel of the safest trucks.”

The company regularly offers safe driving incentives – including bonuses, Safe Driving Awards, and an annual pickup truck giveaway – and also recognizes drivers’ families for their sacrifices and support.

Alex Sherrer, fleet director of maintenance and facilities, said even after extensive research pointed toward Fusion’s benefits, it was firsthand experiences with the system that made a truly indelible impact.

“The ability of the system to intervene and complement the driver’s expertise is very important to us because of all the variables they have to contend with: lots of stop-and-go; traffic cutting in front of you; Florida’s rainy season and fog,” Sherrer said. “There were any number of reasons why we went with Bendix Wingman Fusion. And when we got both senior drivers and newer drivers into the trucks for testing, the feedback we heard strengthened our belief that this would improve our ability to prevent accidents and become a valued, accepted tool by our drivers.”
Technology That Makes a Difference

Bendix, the North American leader in the development and manufacture of active safety, air management, and braking system technologies for commercial vehicles, launched Wingman® Fusion™ in 2015. Built on the foundational full-stability technology of Bendix® ESP® Electronic Stability Program, Fusion can help mitigate collisions, potential rollovers, and loss-of-control situations.

By gathering input through radar, video, and the vehicle's braking system, with the sensors working together and not just in parallel, Fusion combines and cross-checks the information from all sources to create a highly detailed and accurate data picture. This enables the system to deliver enhanced rear-end collision mitigation, adaptive cruise control, along with following distance alerts, stationary object alerts, lane departure warning, alerts when speeding, and braking on stationary vehicles – all while prioritizing alerts to help reduce driver distraction.

The forward-facing camera of Wingman Fusion is powered by the Mobileye System-on-Chip EyeQ processor with state-of-the-art vision algorithms.

Bendix™ BlindSpotter® Side Object Detection System is a side-radar system designed to alert drivers to vehicles or objects in adjacent lanes to help drivers mitigate sideswipe crashes. BlindSpotter operates independently of the Bendix Wingman Fusion system.

“When you implement something like this, it’s important to educate the drivers, and Bendix really led our training on this technology,” Anderson said. “When the system does intervene, we need the drivers to understand what’s going on and why – and it could be something that’s not a deficiency on their part, like a car cutting them off unexpectedly – so that they can apply what they learn.”

Striving for Safety

“Whenever someone on the Bendix team talks about working with Florida Rock & Tank Lines, almost the first thing out of their mouth is, ‘Wow: These people really get safety,’” said Lance Hansen, Bendix North America regional vice president – fleet/trailer sales & service engineering. “They work every day to ensure safe trips for their drivers, and safer highways for everyone. A company like that is one we’re proud to say equips our technologies, and we’re excited to keep moving forward with them as a partner.”

Both Bendix and Florida Rock & Tank Lines emphasize that no commercial vehicle safety technology – no matter how advanced – can replace a skilled, alert driver exercising safe driving techniques and supported by proactive, comprehensive driver training. Bendix safety technologies are not meant to enable or encourage aggressive driving, but to support safe...
driving practices. Responsibility for the safe operation of any commercial vehicle remains with the driver at all times.

“When people think of Florida Rock & Tank Lines, we want them to think of us as the carrier that safely delivers our customers’ products on time and accurately,” Anderson said. “That’s what we strive to do each and every day, on each and every load – and that means supporting our drivers to the greatest extent we can, so that they can succeed in fulfilling that goal.”

Bendix delivers on safety, vehicle performance, and efficiency, lowering total cost of operation, and unparalleled post-sales support: all areas critical to fleet success. In doing so, the company aims to strengthen return on investment in advanced, effective commercial vehicle safety systems, enhancing the safety of North America’s roads.

Visit the Bendix Knowledge Dock® multimedia center at knowledge-dock.com to explore blog posts, podcasts, videos, and more about a range of trucking-related topics, including advanced safety technology development, driver assistance systems, and the commercial vehicle regulatory landscape.

For more information about Bendix safety technologies, call 1-800-AIR-BRAKE (1-800-247-2725) or visit www.bendix.com.

About Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC

Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems, a member of the Knorr-Bremse Group, 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 3,200 people, Bendix is driven to deliver 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. Stay connected and informed through Bendix expert podcasts, blog posts, videos, and other resources at knowledge-dock.com. Follow Bendix on Twitter at twitter.com/Bendix_CVS. Log on and learn from the Bendix experts at brake-school.com. And to learn more about career opportunities at Bendix, visit bendix.com/careers.

# # #