

# We Are The Z-Team!

Volume 4, Issue 4  
April 28, 2017

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## DRIVER'S ALERT: HERE'S HOW IT WORKS!

It's a program that's been around for a while, but it operates almost silently in the background. Literally, it's on the back of every trailer. That's where there is a decal showing a code and a number to call to report or praise a driver's performance on the highway. It's called *Driver's Alert* and it's from a company of the same name based in Deerfield Beach, Florida.



"We joined the program sometime back in 2004." That's what **Derek Ritzman** told us when we asked. "Our insurance company at the time urged us to sign up to boost our safety program."

"We get calls reporting problems and others with amazing praise for our drivers. It works both ways," according to **Geoff Hosband**, Safety Director. "If it's a call reporting a problem, then we follow a standard procedure. First and foremost a driver is presumed innocent until s/he gets a chance to tell their side of the story."

A few minutes after the call comes into the Driver's Alert Center, Geoff gets a report via e-mail with all kinds of information about the trailer, its location, and direction of travel. "I also get to listen to the recording of the actual call," he said. Geoff then consults the satellite tracking system to confirm the truck's location. If indeed the truck could have been involved in the reported incident, he then proceeds to call the driver. "I let them tell me their side of the story, sometimes it's radically different than what the other driver reported. And sometimes our driver admits that he could have done better. Often the other driver's perception of a truck's capabilities is unrealistic or the other driver even suggests our truck should have made a dangerous or illegal maneuver to get out of his way." Despite the fact that many complaints do not find our driver at fault, Geoff says the Driver's Alert is a useful tool. "It keeps everybody on their toes. We have one of the lowest safe driving CSA scores in our class. Driver's Alert is likely one of the factors why that's so."

At the end of the process, the printed alert form with it's remarks from Geoff, is filed in the driver's personnel file. When someone garners praise from another motorist, that driver gets a small token, a "Superior Performance Award," which also is noted in the driver's file.

**Just In Case You Missed It**  
**The Spring Safety Meeting dates have been changed to April 29th and May 6th!**

## **ROUTING: SO WHAT HAPPENED?**

Last month in this same space, there was an announcement that drivers would start to receive recommended routings for each of their loads. It started on March 27th, but based on the results and driver feedback, it was quickly discontinued. So what happened?

Derek Ritzman, Chief Financial Officer, explained the background. "In January we saw the percentage of out-of-route (OOR) miles had doubled since January 2015 from 5% to 11%. We figured some of this is probably due to the changed nature of the lanes we're running. It's such a costly problem — conservatively estimating over a million dollars a year — so we asked ourselves what we could do about it."

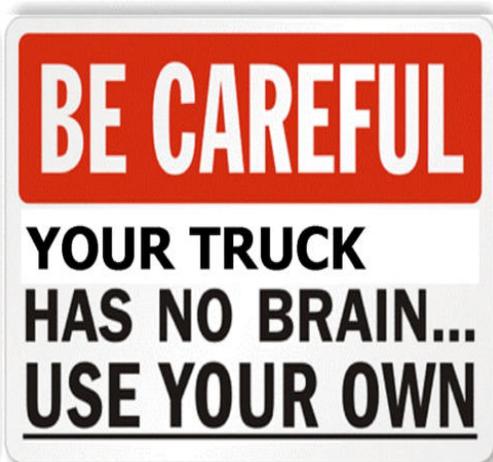
Dave Wetzler, Operations Manager told us, "It looked like we had a solution which would have been easy to implement. I'm referring to the routing system which is part of the fuel optimizer. It uses truck routable PC Miler practical miles and it can send a general route as part of every fuel solution. So we made an announcement and a week later turned it on."

"To put it kindly, some of the resulting routes raised concerns," Dave continued. "Drivers gave us immediate feedback. It didn't take long to see this wasn't going to meet expectations. It didn't turn out to be the ideal solution because the system isn't sophisticated enough to make nuanced decisions that suit our practical needs. It would route a truck differently just to save two miles or five minutes. The routing messages were turned off the second day of the trial."

Derek went on to say, "Because this idea didn't pan out doesn't mean we've given up on OOR miles. In fact, just talking about it has raised awareness with drivers and dispatchers. I'm not sure yet if it's related, but our March OOR miles are down to 7.8%. We'd like to see that decrease a bit more."

Mark Zimmerman added, "A few drivers are calling to ask for routings. This is a good start. More drivers should call and ask for routes. And we're going to get the dispatchers to offer preferred routes to the drivers when we have them on the phone. By getting everyone involved, we can move the needle lower on this crucial number."

Derek closed by saying, "If we could lower OOR miles to 5%, the savings would be significant. This would benefit everyone — including drivers and customers — in the long run."



### **LATEST CSA SCORES**

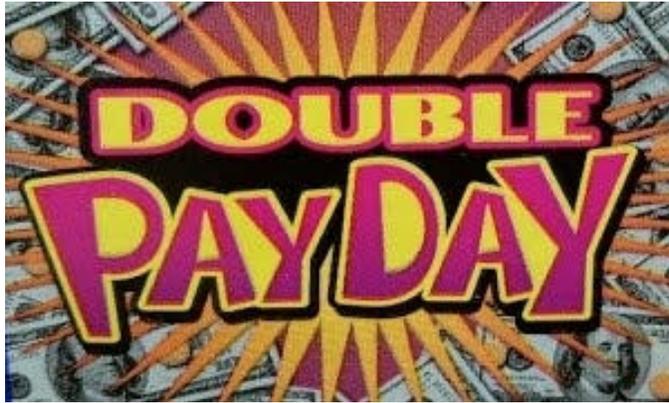
CSA scores as of March 31st with the thresholds in parentheses. Arrows show the trend change from last month (when our HOS score was 64). Also see six month HOS score trend on Page 4.

<b>Unsafe Driving (65)</b>	ZTL Score: 9	
<b>HOS Compliance (65)</b>	ZTL Score: 60	
<b>Vehicle Maintenance (85)</b>	ZTL Score: 21	

When asked about this month's scores, **Geoff Hosband**, Safety Director, said, "We've had five straight months of declining Hours of Service scores. That's five straight months of improvement! Keep asking for those Level 3 inspections—it's good for us and good for you."

## FEELIN' LUCKY?

Instead of scratching off a lottery ticket, why not improve your odds? Instead, hand a fellow driver you meet on the road one of your ZTL referral cards! For each successful referral made until May 31st, you can earn **DOUBLE** the usual



referral bonus! That can mean a payout between \$2,000 and \$4,000 depending on your referral history! Standard referral bonus rules apply otherwise. See anyone in the front office for free referral cards and start handing them out today!



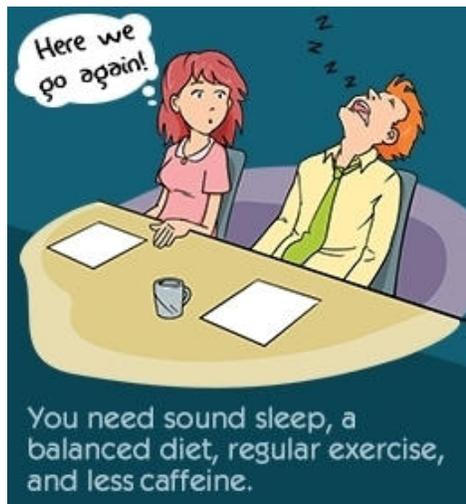
The ZTL rider program is now in effect. From March 1st through the end of October, drivers are allowed to have anyone over the age of 8 accompany them. (Drivers must not have been involved in a preventable accident for 60 days prior to completing an application form.) Applications are available from Geoff, one copy of which stays in the truck whenever the rider is there. Drivers call and talk to Samantha or Geoff to inform them when the rider is in the truck and for how long.



## FEELIN' TIRED?

Fatigue is a generic term used to describe anything from feeling sleepy to being completely exhausted. Two major causes of fatigue are "sleep deficit" (not getting enough sleep) and changes to the body's internal clock. Sleep, like food and water, is necessary for survival. Starving your body of sleep is not healthy. In general most adults need seven to eight hours of uninterrupted sleep to feel well-rested. Shorting yourself by as little as two hours can affect alertness and performance. Lack of sleep can impair judgment, slow reaction time, cause lack of coordination, and produce a sour mood (make you "cranky" as they say).

Circadian Rhythm is your biological clock or "body clock." Most people's body clock runs on a 24 hour basis with some high points and low points during that span of time.



Time cues, such as sunlight and darkness and work/rest habits, keep your body clock set to a certain schedule.

Almost everyone's body clock has two low points. One is between 2 AM and 6 AM, the other between 1 PM and 5 PM. The more dangerous of the two is the 2 to 6 AM low point as most people are programmed to sleep when it is dark and fighting fatigue during this time can be difficult.

By being aware of your body's clock and getting sufficient sleep on a regular basis, you can greatly reduce the affects of fatigue, as well as be a better, safer, and more alert driver.

[www.WeAreTheZ-Team.com](http://www.WeAreTheZ-Team.com)

**IF IN DOUBT ...**

14. Take exit 24 A-B-C on the left toward I-93 N/Concord NH/Station/I-93 S/Quincy	0.4 mi
15. Merge onto Atlantic Ave	0.8 mi
16. Turn right at Central St	0.1 mi
17. Turn right at Long Wharf	0.1 mi
18. Swim across the Atlantic Ocean Entering France	3,462 mi
19. Slight right at E05 Go through 1 traffic circle	0.6 mi
20. Turn right at E05/Quai Colbert	17.3 mi

**... REQUEST A ROUTE!**



**Final Reminder!**

Spring Safety Meetings — Saturday April 29th and Saturday May 6th. Mark Laurusevage from the PMTA Safety Management Council will be the guest speaker. Attendance at one of these meetings is mandatory. You can only be excused if you are dispatched on a load or otherwise previously excused. Drivers will be paid to attend!

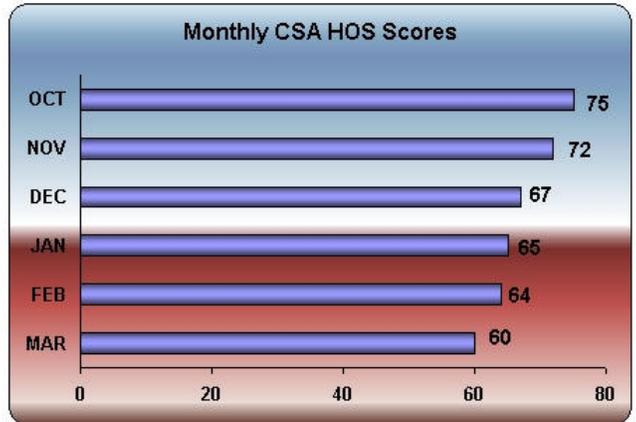
*Together we can make it better!*

**MAY BIRTHDAYS ...**

- Cinda Lauver — May 2
- Steve Denotsko — May 5
- Jerry Tussey — May 14
- Scott Landis — May 15
- Kirby Nickel — May 16
- Rich Bailey — May 19
- Mark Kling, Jr — May 19
- Roy Huffman — May 25
- Travis Twigg — May 27
- Andrew Ruble — May 29
- Derek Ritzman — May 30
- Julio Moralies — May 30

**... AND ANNIVERSARIES**

- Herb Haagen — 18 years
- Justin Henry — 9 years
- Marcel Ernst — 6 years
- Andrew Ruble — 4 years
- Richard Cressler — 2 years
- John Dickson — 2 years
- Steve Denotsko — 2 years
- Sal Raffa — 1 year



**QUOTE FOR THE MONTH**

*“When the oxygen mask drops from above, put yours on first, so that you are then able to help someone else.”*  
 —An aphorism for life, announced to over 9 million people per day worldwide, thanks to the Federal Aviation Administration

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