

Truck Stop Article October 2017

I have GOT to get a dash-cam for my truck... as I would love to share a video of the run-in I had with a bona-fide Idiot last week with the proper law enforcement types.

I was on the interstate in Great Falls about to take the 10th Avenue South exit, and as I was going by the Central Avenue Exit I could see a car coming down the on-ramp. Whereas there were two cars beside me in the passing lane, I could not move over and politely let that car merge.

Whereas again, I have the right of way, and the car coming down the ramp doesn't, and dictated by what my 80,000 pounds of truck was telling me to do, I stayed in the driving lane and said car had to slow down and pull onto the interstate behind me. Lucky Me! ... the guy in the car had no knowledge of proper on-ramp procedures and immediately went whacko. (Here's where the dash-cam would have been nice...) This nice person came charging up around me, pulled back in front of me and immediately hit his brakes.

There's a whole list of "*Good Things*" that suddenly came into play right then... *Good Thing* I had brakes that were in perfect operating condition... *Good Thing* I was paying attention and not reaching for my iced tea right then (which by the way did rocket itself off the jump seat and smacked the dash)... *Good Thing* the guy in the pickup behind me wasn't texting just then and didn't squish into the back of me in my moment of rapid deceleration... and *Good Thing* the poles I was hauling stayed put and didn't try and come join my iced tea...

Needless to say, the dash-cam would have been nice to have shown the proper authorities, as the antics of this motorist about caused a crash as he slowed to a crawl going up the off-ramp as three cars and another truck behind me likely bounced items off their dashes as well. The Idiot eventually disappeared into the afternoon traffic and—as I'm a firm believer in the Karma thing—I have to think that the guy had some sort of a problem with an ant pile later that day...

Anyway, the Electronic Logging Device requirement is fast approaching so I have narrowed the ones I'm thinking about installing down to just 3. One of them according to Uncle Google is available at my local truck dealer. I stopped there today to look at what they had, but the parts guy's blank stare when asked to go fetch something he had never heard of quickly narrowed my possible ELD device choice down to 2.

One of which I got in the mail about 3 months ago. Yesterday, for the *Good of the Order*, I decided to install it and give it a try. Problems soon came about from trying to get the cord for the darned thing with its giant plug-in routed from the dash to a spot just above where my clutch pedal is. Not wanting to undertake the job of dismantling most of the cab to run this cord I decided to "duct tape" the cord across the dash via the speedometer/tach area just to see if it even worked. Glad I didn't attempt permanent installation because when I tried to plug it into the truck it wouldn't fit.

A quick visit with Uncle Google revealed that the J1708/J1939 9-pin Y-cable that came with the box was the 500k version and, of course, not compatible with the plug-in that comes standard on the 2003 Kenworth. Silly me... I should've known... I dropped a quick e-mail to the manufacturer of the ELD box requesting the right cord, but all I got back from them was a link to a website advertising (in color) their box and how wonderful it is.

So now I'm leaning towards choice #3... but it is borderline on being not very affordable after one factors in all the "extras" one needs to make it work. Hopefully sometime between now and the 18th of December an ELD that makes sense will pop up... But I'm thinking that the real headaches aren't going to show up until we actually start using them.

There's talk of delays of implementation of the ELD requirement, but every attempt so far has failed. The only definite ruling I know of is they aren't going to write us any tickets while we get used to them—the Spring of 2018?

I can't wait til the screen on mine suddenly goes dark for some unknown reason and—as I've been told—I can simply use a paper log in the meantime. What?

That said, I must close now as I have to go put the boat in the water one last time before ice starts forming on my favorite lake...

Until next time, That is All. **Rich Tee**