

Baby, it's cold outside

Keeping warm doesn't have to break the bank

Special to *Land Line*

Summer may be long gone, but the sting from soaring fuel prices isn't forgotten.

Truckers across the U.S. and Canada know that whatever relief they have right now from record-high fuel prices could be short-lived, and they aren't spending money quite like they used to. For example, many have gotten so rigid with their spending that they see idling their trucks as burning their hard-earned money.

Heading into the dead of winter, a lot of truckers may be looking for a way to make it through the days and nights in the bitter cold without having to idle. It's definitely possible, and one seasoned trucker who knows more than a thing or two about cold weather stays toasty warm in some of the most extreme temperatures.

OOIDA member Wayne Love has been driving truck for nearly 40 years. Of that, he's spent 22 years as an owner-operator.

Love's based out of Kelowa, British Columbia. He's leased to Mullen Trucking LP of Aldersyde,

Alberta, which is a provider of irregular truckload and less-than-truckload services throughout Canada and the continental United States. He hauls heavy equipment from manufacturing facilities and different ports around North America to remote mining and drilling sites located all across North America.

His disdain for the cold dates back to his childhood.

"I grew up in the '40s with wood and coal furnaces," he said. "We needed to have lots of blankets to keep warm as the fires died down during the night. Before you went to bed, you filled the furnace full of wood and coal to get it nice and toasty warm. Then you woke up early in the morning to get the furnace fired up."

To this day, he still doesn't like sleeping with lots of blankets because of all those cold winter nights sleeping beneath a pile of blankets.

One might assume that Love would have headed South and avoided driving and working in

regions with subzero temps. But that's not the case.

Many of Love's hauls take him to drilling and exploration sites in the tar sands area of northern Alberta – where temperatures are known to be bitter cold.

When "Ice Road Truckers" hit the cable television scene in 2007, the truckers who got the job done while braving extreme cold impressed viewers by the millions.

But for this seasoned trucker, the popular show was likely a "been there done that" type of scenario.

He drove for Mullen Transportation on the Mackenzie River Ice Road from Yellowknife to Diavik in the Northwest Territories, one of the roads featured on the History Channel's hit series "Ice Road Truckers."

When he first began his truck driving career in the '60s, Love said it wasn't unheard of for him to spend hours, even days, stranded in the middle of nowhere waiting for the weather to get better.

Love said one winter season in the early '60s, he spent nine



OOIDA member Wayne Love

Love said one winter season in the early '60s, he spent nine days in his cardboard-lined truck waiting a storm out on the middle of Great Bear Lake.

days in his cardboard-lined truck waiting a storm out on the middle of Great Bear Lake, with wind chill factors reaching down to the double digits below zero.

"Back then, it was necessary to idle the truck's diesel engine to keep warm, but the trucks didn't have the insulation that they have now so even when idling the engine it was still cool in the sleeper," he said.

"I can remember waking up in the middle of the night when those darn metal screws (that kept the cardboard liner attached to the sleeper) would touch my skin."

It's not so bad nowadays.

Love drives a 2002 International 9900, with a winter insulation package, and a 600-hp Cummins Signature 600 engine that provides 2,050 lbs.-ft. of torque powered through an 18-speed manual transmission. He gets an average of 2.5 to 3 miles per gallon.

About a year ago, Love had the Teleflex Proheat Air A2 auxiliary heater installed under his sleeper bed so that he could keep the temperature in his sleeper 80 degrees.

The system puts out

6,800 Btu of heating capacity while eliminating the need to idle the truck's engine.

Gone are the days of cold rivets and screws waking him up during the night. And even though it might drop down to minus 40 degrees, he just uses a thin summer-weight blanket and sheet. Which is more than OK with Love, especially since he probably stays a little bit warmer with the extra cash lining his pockets by cutting down on idling costs. **LL**



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— Steve McClintick, Gotcha Transport, Muncie, IN

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