

Bashas' big rigs gain Eco-Edge

Grocer outfits fleet with gas-saving devices

by *Luci Scott* - May. 1, 2008 12:00 AM
The Arizona Republic

The Chandler-based supermarket chain Bashas' has been hit hard by the soaring price of diesel fuel that runs its fleet of 97 over-the-road 18-wheelers.

To combat [fuel costs](#)



, the company recently installed on its tractor-trailers and eight other trucks a device distributed by another Chandler company that cuts fuel consumption as well as reduces emissions.

The combustion-catalyst system, a device installed into the air intake of the engine, makes fuel burn more efficiently.

"What we know we're saving right now is 4 percent, with the potential of up to 10 percent," said Tim Handrick, Bashas' fleet-maintenance supervisor.

Commercial-diesel prices last week were \$3.96 a gallon, and Bashas' uses 30,000 gallons of diesel a week. Every week, the company buys four loads of 7,500 gallons each.

"We were taking a fifth load a week," Handrick said. They were able to cut back after installing the combustion-catalyst system, as well as modifying some routes and scheduling to save fuel.

"We were consuming 37,500 gallons a week, and between rerouting and this (device) and making sure drivers aren't idling their trucks, we were able to take that fifth load out of the equation," he said.

"We're saving a load of fuel a week. At today's price, it's just under \$30,000 a week."

The combustion-catalyst system is distributed by a Chandler company called Eco-Edge, which has grown rapidly since 2002, when the combustion-catalyst system hit the market.

Eco-Edge matches companies to a variety of products in order to increase profits and reduce environmental impact.

"Bashas' is not our largest customer, but they are the first in their industry to step up to the plate," said Eco-Edge President Debra Johnson. "We are proud that a local company like Bashas' is taking such a leadership role."

The device also helps the [environment](#) by cutting emissions. "Bashas' has achieved a 32 percent reduction in particulate matter in

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emissions, in black smoke," Handrick said.
"We're improving the air quality."

It's the equivalent of taking one-third of Bashas' trucks off the road and reducing the company's carbon-dioxide output by nearly 1,800 tons a year, Johnson said.

The device is manufactured by Emissions Technology of Scottsdale.

Bashas' tested the system for about two years. It started with two, then increased the test to 14 vehicles before equipping the whole fleet.

Handrick and Johnson declined to discuss the cost of the system, but Handrick said his projected payback point is one year - sooner if **savings** exceed 4 percent.

He has tested a lot of products through the years, saying many companies make claims about saving fuel but the devices ultimately don't work.

"This one has really given us results," he said.

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