

FLEETFLOW™ CLEARS SNOW OFF BOSCOV'S DEPARTMENT STORES' FLEET IN PENNSYLVANIA

Fleet Manager Calls the FleetFlow™ from Scraper Systems™ by Rite-Hite® the "Best Investment" He Ever Made

CASE STUDY

QUICK FACTS

COMPANY: Boscov's Department Stores

FACILITY: Approximately 650 trucks

PRODUCT: Fashion, beauty, and home goods

GOALS: Help prevent accidents and costly fines due to snow on truck rooftops

SOLUTION: Scraper Systems™ by Rite-Hite® FleetFlow™

RESULTS: Clear snow from 50 trucks dispatched daily

THE SITUATION

Boscov's Department Stores has nearly 50 locations across the Northeastern U.S., a region which sees its fair share of snow each winter. While Boscov's stores have no problems showcasing the latest trends in fashion, cosmetics, and home goods, the company does face major challenges in delivering its myriad products to its various locations during the snowy winter months.

More than half of Boscov's stores are in Pennsylvania, with a distribution center in Reading where annual snowfall averages 18 inches per year. That facility houses approximately 250 road trailers, with another 400 trailers housed in the nearby Birdsboro distribution center. Between the two locations, it's not unusual for more than 50 trailers to be dispatched on a given day. This is especially true during the winter holiday season and at the beginning of the new year when new product lines hit the racks.



SNOW AND SAFETY FINES

As it does for almost any distribution network in Snow Belt states, snow accumulation on the tops of trailers presents multiple problems for Boscov's.

"The current laws and the safety involved, you can't send trailers out on the road covered in snow like you did many years ago,"

said Joe Seifrit, former fleet manager of Boscov's Department Stores Distribution.

And he's right. In Pennsylvania, vehicle drivers are required to remove accumulated snow and ice from a vehicle within 24 hours of the end of a winter storm. Police can pull over drivers with a dangerous build-up of snow and ice on their vehicle. Any driver who violates the law would be subject to a \$50 fine for each offense, and a fine of \$200 to \$1,500 per offense if snow or ice dislodges and strikes another vehicle or pedestrian causing serious bodily injury or death. Laws against commercial vehicles traveling with snow-covered roofs have been enacted in Connecticut, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, New Jersey, and Quebec. More laws are pending in New York, Massachusetts, and Delaware. Fines range from \$75 for failure to clear a vehicle to \$1,500 per offense plus a court appearance (in New Jersey).

Pennsylvania drivers must remove accumulated snow and ice from a vehicle within 24 hours of the end of a winter storm.

Fines aren't the only penalty that commercial drivers could face, however; failure to remove snow could also lead to the revocation of their commercial driver's license, points assessed to their driving record, temporary or permanent loss of job, and higher insurance rates.

Even states and provinces with no specific rooftop snow regulations can present legal problems for snow-covered trucks. In some states, like Colorado, snow and ice blowing from the tops of fleets may be considered an unsecured load hazard subject to fines and penalties.

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In all states, snow may bring weight limit laws into play. The penalties for operating an overweight truck are severe; operating an overweight vehicle is generally a criminal offense that could result in prosecution, fines, and court costs. Depending on the type of snow, just six inches atop a standard 53-foot trailer can add 5,000 pounds.

Removing snow can be challenging and risky for truck drivers and facility personnel, as well. Using snow rakes can lead to drivers pulling snow and ice onto themselves. Using ladders to climb to the top of trailers to shovel snow off poses serious fall hazards.

THE SOLUTION

Bosco's found the perfect solution to this snow problem, an automated snow removal machine from Scraper Systems™ by Rite-Hite®. Both the Reading and Birdsboro locations are armed with a FleetFlow™ to help remove snow and ice safely and efficiently from trailer tops.

"When we get a snowstorm, we put every trailer that hits the road under the snow scraper [FleetFlow]," said Seifrit. "When you look at what one workman's comp claim costs you or one lawsuit costs you as a company, they're a great investment."

The FleetFlow is an adjustable-height plow assembly that – as the company name suggests – scrapes snow and ice off the top of trucks when they pass through the machine. It is available with different automation levels, as well as portability that makes the machine easy to relocate to store when snow season ends. During summer and non-snow months, portable machines can be moved out of the way to increase space in the yard. There are varying

models that can meet operational needs of a wide range of fleet sizes and types. The heaviest duty FleetFlow can remove up to 24 inches of wet, heavy snow in less than 30 seconds, up to 60 vehicles per hour. And while its design is strong enough to remove two feet of snow easily, it is gentle enough on the roofs of trucks to prevent damage.

"It's the best investment I've made as a fleet manager," exclaimed Seifrit. ■



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