

MIXING IT UP WITH A & A AND MACK

When contractors want innovation, they call on A & A Ready Mixed Concrete. When A & A wants innovation, the company calls on Mack Trucks.

"A & A tries to be a visionary in the placement of concrete and the concrete industry," said Mike Cook, fleet/purchasing manager for the Newport Beach, California firm.

That's an understatement.

A & A and its related companies have embraced innovation from day one. When Andre P. Caillier founded the company in 1949, he started with 40 trucks and two batch plants. Today his sons, Kurt and Randy Caillier, own the largest family-owned supplier of ready-mix concrete in California. A & A operates 28 plants, employs 500 people and is responsible for 1,000 vehicles. It works on some of the biggest projects in the state, including the \$2.4 billion Alameda Corridor rail line, the largest high-rise in Los Angeles and airport expansions in San Francisco and Oakland.

"We have a hard-working group of people and a lot of support from the owners," Cook said, citing hundreds of consecutive successful inspections by the California Highway Patrol as evidence of that support. "We have inspection teams that go to all locations, conduct inspections and help our on-site mechanics fix trucks. Our plant and maintenance managers all work together as a team to help achieve a common goal of having well-trained drivers and safe, reliable equipment."

That led A & A to purchase trucks from TEC of California at La Mirada – originally the big, beefy R and RD models, and now Mack® Granite® models that hold up to years of punishment on and off road. Recently the company bought a fleet of 22 Mack Pinnacle™ models with EPA-2010-certified MP™ engines for the company's sand and gravel operation. "Mack is the only truck that can last that long," Cook said. But when California tightened its weight and emissions laws, the company needed another shot of innovation.

Enter the Mack Granite Medium Heavy Duty model. Built on the rugged *Cornerstone™* chassis with lighter frame rail, engine and transmission options, the MHD weighs in at hundreds of pounds less than its bigger sibling. That appealed to A & A, which ran a MHD demo for several months with good results.

"A mixer here needs to be different to carry a decent sized payload," Cook said. "We need a truck that will last a long time and still meet the weight requirements. The MHD Granite's spec allows us to haul a payload that is better than the other trucks we have in a similar class. Mack has made a more competitive truck for the California market."

Cook is pleased with the performance. "It gets good fuel mileage. It's a good fit for our company."

Drivers like it, too. "The MHD is quiet and smooth-riding, loaded and unloaded," said Dennis Pyle, who started driving in 1984. "The cab is comfortable, visibility's nice, steering's good. I think it turns tighter than the competition. It looks good. The truck gets the job done."

So does A & A.

