



## Beer Distributor J.J. Taylor Brings the Suds To Minnesota and Florida with Kenworth T370s

JUPITER, Fla. – With beer distributorships in Florida and Minnesota, J.J. Taylor Distributing has made a name for itself. It's the largest beer distributor in Minnesota – selling 7 million cases last year – and the second largest in Florida, distributing 21 million cases in 17 counties in 2017.



Its main brand is Miller in both states, while Coors is also in the mix in Florida, along with Heineken, Guinness and Sam Adams.

J.J. Taylor operates a fleet of 240 trucks – mostly medium duty tractors – managed in part by Jose Rivera, who serves as corporate vice president of administration. The company began converting its fleet to Kenworth in 2015. Last year, the fleet added 43 Kenworth T370 medium duty trucks to serve its longer regional routes. Kenworth T440s, powered by compressed natural gas (CNG), are utilized for shorter beer delivery routes.



According to Rivera, spec'ing and weight savings, coupled with driver preference and image helped convince the company to convert to the Kenworth T370. "Working with Todd Hays (dealer principal at Kenworth of South Florida) really opened our eyes to the value of Kenworth," he said. "Todd did a great job of understanding our routes and made recommendations that helped our company be more efficient."

With tight delivery areas, Hays analyzed ways to allow more cushion in turns. "By shortening the wheelbase of the T370, and T440s, we were able to give them a tighter turning radius," Hays explained. "We moved them from horizontal to vertical exhaust pipes, plus put some components on the outside of the frame rail – like the DEF tank. By coming up with a standard spec we were able to give them a template for operations in both Florida and Minnesota."



The Kenworth T370s put into service – 25 in Florida, and 18 in Minnesota – are powered by the PACCAR PX-9 engine rated at 300 hp, and use Allison automatics. "We haul 28- and 36-foot rear loading trailers with our T370, which can accommodate up to 700 cases on the smaller trailer and up to 1,200 cases on the 36-footer," said Rivera. "To give us flexibility, and different hauling capacities, we have both single and tandem axle T370s."

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“Typically our T370s will make between 12 and 18 stops per day,” said Rivera. “In Florida alone we have more than 14,000 customers. Those can be mom and pop stores, restaurants, supermarkets and big box outlets. When we began running Kenworths we immediately saw an impact with drivers. They like the ride and felt they were easier to drive. Plus there is more room inside and the visibility is greater. It’s proven to be a great truck with our drivers.”



It’s also making an impact with customers, according to Rivera. “Image is important in our industry,” he said. “We’re a rolling billboard for the beers we distribute, so we want to project quality in everything we do. And, the Kenworths certainly project that image.”

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