

A CUSTOMER'S SUCCESS STORY

Volvo Construction Equipment

KEEPING THE ROCK MOVING.

"Fuel economy is important to us, because that's how we hold down our cost of production."

Troy E. Kutz, Vice President, Materials Division.

William Charles Construction is a major player in the northern Illinois aggregates business. Based in Rockford, IL, William Charles' Materials Division produces an average of 3 million tons of crushed stone and gravel every year.

About half of that is used by the company's internal construction operations, and half is sold to retail purchasers. William Charles Construction owns three asphalt plants and manages three to four paving crews that pave everything from driveways to expressways.

"We own 13 quarries and gravel pits in the Rockford area, and five of them are currently active," says Troy E. Kutz, vice president of the Materials Division. "Plus we operate a portable asphalt recycling crusher." In 2009, William Charles Construction completed work on 20 miles of Interstate 90 construction. The project called for complete reconstruction of two lanes each way and the addition of one new lane on each side.

The Loader of Choice.

Naturally it takes a number of wheel loaders to keep all those crushers and asphalt plants up and running – and William Charles' primary loader of choice comes from Volvo Construction Equipment. In 2010, the company took delivery on three new Volvo L350F loaders; each one charges a crusher, and they replaced three L330E units. At Nimtz Quarry, an L350F loader charges the crusher while two Volvo L180F loaders charge the asphalt plant and maintain the aggregate stockpiles. Irene Quarry got a



The Volvo L350F works a one-quarter-mile load-and-carry operation at Nimtz Quarry.

new L350F loader – the largest one made by Volvo – and so did Farm Quarry. In all, William Charles' Materials Division owns 10 Volvo loaders. What do William Charles people like about Volvo loaders? "We like their speed, their uptime and their fuel efficiency," says Dan Johnson, vice president of equipment for William Charles Purchasing Inc. "And their fabulous supporting dealership, McAllister Equipment, is second to none."

Trying To Keep Pace.

The three big L350F loaders work their respective quarries in a load-and-carry mode. They plunge into the face of shot rock with 10.1-cubic-yard spade-nose buckets, fill up, and race back to the crusher. At Nimtz Quarry,

the haul is something just over a quarter mile long. "The L350F loaders are very quick for their size, and they're very fuel efficient in the load-and-carry mode," says Kutz. "We figure fuel usage runs about 10 to 11

gallons per hour," says Johnson. William Charles recently loaned an L350F to another quarry, and accepted a comparably-sized non-Volvo model to run while the other quarry demo'ed the L350F. William Charles found that the non-Volvo loader used 19 gallons of fuel per hour vs. 10.5 gallons for the L350F. Not only that, but the non-Volvo model could not keep pace with the crusher and they had to turn down the crusher. The result: the other quarry bought an L350F.



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"The L330E was a solid machine, and the new 350 has just gotten better," says Johnson. "Volvo improved the fuel efficiency and speed on the 350, and boosted the horsepower." The L350F boasts 528 net horsepower running at 1,700 to 1,800 rpms.

"Fuel economy is important to us, because that's how we hold down our cost of production," says Kutz. "Cost of production is huge, because that's part of how we calculate our end price of the materials we sell."

Long-time Customer.

William Charles has been running Volvo loaders from McAllister Equipment since the 1990s, when McAllister opened their store in Rockford. The larger loaders in the L330 to L350F class are traded at 10,000 to 12,000 hours, and the company keeps smaller loaders longer. "We have a couple of Volvo L220's with 15,000 hours on them," says Johnson. "And we've got L120 loaders with the Underground Division that have 16,000 hours plus."

Johnson says William Charles rotates the larger loaders more often to ensure 100 percent availability in the crusher-loading application. The company does not keep back-up loaders in case one of the L350F machines goes down. "If you lose those loaders, you lose the crusher," says Johnson. "And we do have minimum downtime with the L350F units."

William Charles operators prefer Volvo loaders as well. We found Zach Rackow operating one of the new Volvo L350F loaders in Nimtz Quarry. He would load at the rock face, then run forward to charge the crusher, then shift into reverse to return to the face.

"I like the power and the speed," says Rackow. "It has excellent speed in forward and reverse. And I like the joystick steering. I never use the steering wheel, because the joystick is easier and nicer to use."

Operator Angelo Washington was running a Volvo L180F to charge an asphalt plant when we caught up with him. "This machine has great visibility," he said. "It loads quickly, dumps quickly, has good operator comfort, and has joystick steering. I've tried other brands, and this is the best one for me."

McAllister Equipment, the Volvo dealer for William Charles, provides all preventive maintenance services for the company's Volvo equipment. Some technicians visit the equipment off-shift, early in the morning, to handle any repairs that are needed and do "check-and-starts." In addition, technicians visit the equipment late in the day to handle preventive maintenance.

Three Volvo loaders charge the company's three asphalt plants. At the Nimtz and Farm Quarries, those duties go to an L180, while at the Rochelle (IL) location, a Volvo L220 charges the plant.

"Those loaders have to be very quick and maneuverable, because we don't have a lot of space at our asphalt plants," says Johnson. "The loaders have to have a very short turning radius. And it's important for those loaders have good uptime, because we don't have spares. That's another reason we run Volvo equipment, because we can depend on those machines to be up and running daily."



Vice Presidents Troy E. Kutz, left, of William Charles Materials Division, and Dan Johnson, of William Charles Purchasing: holding down operating costs.



Zach Rackow, operator of the L350F, likes the joystick steering and never uses the steering wheel.



A Volvo 180F charges the asphalt plant the Nimtz & Farm Quarries.

