

# Kenworth Chillicothe Plant Delivers Milestone 750,000th Truck to Heartland Express

## Keys Given to Kenworth T680 Signature Edition Anniversary Truck

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A Kenworth T680 Signature Edition with a 76-inch high roof sleeper was delivered today to Heartland Express during a special ceremony at Kenworth's Chillicothe plant. The truck represented the 750,000th truck produced by the plant, which opened in 1974.

On hand for the ceremony was Heartland Express' CEO Mike Gerdin, who received the keys to the historic truck from Kevin Baney, Kenworth general manager and PACCAR vice president. Also participating were Jim Walenczak, Kenworth assistant general manager for sales and marketing, Doug VanZuiden, Kenworth Chillicothe plant manager, and Preston Hinkle, MHC Kenworth regional vice president and general manager.



Photo: Dan Ramey, Litter Media

"This is a special year for Kenworth. We're celebrating our 100th anniversary, and our Chillicothe plant met yet another milestone with the production of its 750,000th truck," said Baney. "It's a tribute to all that have worked at this plant over the years since it opened nearly 50 years ago. We couldn't be happier this historic truck is going to a long-time customer like Heartland Express. It's a fleet that began operation just after the Chillicothe plant opened, and it's in its second generation as a family-run business – growing to more than 6,000 trucks."

Heartland Express, a public company based in North Liberty, Iowa, has four trucking companies under its umbrella: Heartland Express, CFI, Millis Transfer, and Smith Transport. The T680 Signature Edition is one of more than 500 T680s Heartland has on order with Kenworth in 2023,

through its dealer MHC Kenworth – Cedar Rapids. It's equipped with a PACCAR MX-13 engine rated at 455 horsepower, and PACCAR TX-12 automated transmission.

"We're so excited to receive this Signature Edition Kenworth T680 anniversary truck. The Century Platinum paint job will really stand out from our traditional white Heartland fleet trucks," said Gerdin. "This truck is going to be presented to a special driver shortly and will mean as much to that driver as it does to us. We are so very proud and honored to drive the 750,000th truck out of the Chillicothe plant. The employees here do a great job – they have pride in the quality of the trucks they're building, and you can see their passion."

The T680 Signature Edition Diamond VIT features a black onyx grille and side air intake, and prominent Kenworth 100 badges on the sleeper. It has black interior with legacy red stitching accents throughout the cab and sleeper. The package also includes a Kenworth 100 branded GT703 seat with red accents, special brushed platinum dash and door trim, and Kenworth 100 logo stitched into the sleeper back wall.



Photo: Dan Ramey, Litter Media

Gerdin said after a plant tour several years ago, it reinforced his decision to purchase Kenworths. "The first thing I noticed was the people," he said. "I talked with many of those working on the line and you could tell they cared deeply for what they were doing and had pride in the quality of trucks they were producing. When trucks are delivered to us by MHC, drivers are almost fighting to get in them. We love the fuel economy and reliability we get from these trucks, and the drivers love the look and the ride."

"It's great that Mike understands and appreciates what happens behind the scenes building trucks at our Kenworth plant," said VanZuiden, Kenworth's Chillicothe plant manager. "We delivered our 500,000th truck back in 2016, which doesn't seem that long ago. We take our

World's Best slogan to heart.”



Photo: Dan Ramey, Litter Media

In 2016, Gerdin said his company expanded its relationship with Kenworth – ordering more than 500 trucks annually -- thanks to a great relationship established with MHC Kenworth. “They are a fantastic operation,” he said. “They’ve always gone the distance for us and have proven their worth to me over and over. It’s why we purchase so many trucks from Kenworth. But my relationship with Kenworth goes back decades. I have a picture of my grandpa, dad and myself standing in front of a Kenworth cabover when I was three years old. That was in 1972. Back then, my first job was washing wheels, since that’s all I could reach. Trucks have always been in my family’s blood, and it continues to this day.”

Kenworth Truck Company, founded in 1923, is the manufacturer of The World’s Best® heavy and medium duty trucks. Throughout 2023, Kenworth is celebrating its historic 100th anniversary. To learn more about the 100th anniversary celebration visit [www.Kenworth100.com](http://www.Kenworth100.com). Kenworth is “Driving the Next 100 Years.” Kenworth’s Internet home page is at [www.kenworth.com](http://www.kenworth.com). Kenworth is a PACCAR company.