

Issue 5  
**WATSON DIESEL INC.**  
Municipal News  
How to Choose Your Next Upfitter



2015 MACK CUSTOM UP FITTED AT WATSON DIESEL

**JUSTIFYING THE EXPENSE**

A few years ago I was sitting in on a meeting between a potential municipal customer and one of my salesmen. After the customer had toured both our maintenance shop and our up fit shop he said "Hey I love what I see. I love the facility, I see the level of quality that your fabricators produce, I appreciate the "Attention to Detail" that you guys talk about, but the bottom line is you guys are higher in price than your competitors. Why?" Not having much time to form a defensive reply I simply said, "We should be more expensive, and we are worth every penny of it."

So with this said I will try and explain what I meant by this bold statement. It falls into the old saying, "You get what you pay for." When it comes time to have your new truck up fitted there are many items to take into consideration, and sometimes it can become very confusing. What style of dump box should you use? Do you want a painted carbon steel box or the more expensive stainless steel model? What brand of truck do you want? What transmission do you use, manual or automatic? Who will up fit your truck, and on and on. One may think that picking the right truck or plow equipment is the most important decision to be made. But is it really?

**IT'S LIKE BUILDING A HOUSE**

When you are trying to decide on who to choose as an up fitter, think about it like you're building a new house. When you build a new house you spend money on the best foundation system that is available, the best insulation, kitchen counter tops, windows etc. The sum of all these building materials is not going to be any better than the carpenter's workmanship that puts all the pieces together to build the house. If the foundation is off by a little bit and the walls are not plumb and square, chances are that you probably are not going to be happy living in this house for the next 20 years. So why buy a top quality truck cab and chassis along with a collection of sub components that are not assembled in a quality fashion? If you look at a breakdown of the cost of the truck up fit job you will see by the chart below that the monies that you spend on the labor to put these pieces all together to make your new truck makes up the smallest percentage of the total amount in the building of your truck, but is easily the most important. So why go with the cheapest builder?

### BREAKDOWN OF UP FIT COST

TRUCK CAB & CHASSIS	56%
SIDE TIP DUMP BOX	16%
HYDRAULIC SYSTEM	13%
PLOW SYSTEM	8%
<b>UP FIT LABOR</b>	<b>7%</b>

*This chart shows that the labor spent comprises the smallest part of the new truck build cost.*

### CUSTOMER INVOLVEMENT

Unlike a lot of other shops, Watson Diesel encourages the involvement of the customer in their truck build from beginning to end. We like to have the customer come in as much as possible to check on the progress of their truck. This interaction has proven to us to create a better product in the end, with no surprises when the customer takes delivery of their truck. This gives the customer a chance to change or modify an item before the job is finished. We also require the driver or drivers of the truck to come in for a "fitting" of the controls. Having the proper placement of the cab controls is a big part of the build. Proper ergonomics is big when it comes to driver fatigue and comfort, and this simple step of custom fitting is just one more way that Watson Diesel goes the extra mile to produce a better built truck.

### THE SEAMLESS BUILD

So when you are picking an up fitter you should first look at the quality of workmanship that the shop does, and second how is that up fitter going to take care of any problems that should crop up on down the road. What kind of warranty are you given on the sub components? What kind of warranty does the up fitter extend on his workmanship? And last, how responsive is that up fitter to addressing any of those problems?

These are the things to think about before choosing who is going to build your truck. You must look beyond the purchase price and look at what you're getting for your money. At Watson Diesel we think that the customer should not be able to see where the truck manufacturer's work ended and the up fitter's work began! We think that the workmanship should be one in the same. We call it a "Seamless Build". You should not be able to tell the difference between the chassis manufacturer's welds, wiring, fit and finish and ours.

### SO WHY US?

When it's time for your next truck build, make sure to stop by our new fabrication facility, meet our guys and check out their work. When you meet our builders you will see that they take ownership and pride in their builds. Look at the quality of their welds and the attention to small details.

At Watson Diesel we are constantly trying to improve on the building process and in the end we think you will be happy with the difference that you will see.