

Con-way driver passes 2 million safe miles



15 HOURS AGO • KEITH BENMAN
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GARY | Con-way Freight truck driver Mike Blue has some advice for Northwest Indiana drivers dealing with this winter's treacherous weather.

"Relax and don't be in a hurry," Blue said at Con-way's Gary-Hammond depot off Blaine Street. "And when the weather gets bad don't be afraid to slow down. And worry about what's in front of you and not what's behind."

They were letting the 51-year-old truck driver from Hobart give out all the advice he wanted

Wednesday morning, as about 70 of his fellow drivers gathered to celebrate Blue passing 2 million truck-driving miles for Con-way without an accident or injury.

That's a lot of miles. It's equivalent to going around the world about 80 times or back-and-forth to the moon four times.

Only 255 Con-way drivers out of about 15,000 on the road have achieved the 2 million mile safe driving mark, according to David Burk, Con-way director of operations for the Chicago region.

Just last week, the Gary-Hammond depot celebrated driver Stevie Chronister, of Evergreen Park, Ill., passing the 1 million mile safe driving mark.

And drivers like Blue and Chronister do it day and night and while automobile and other drivers on the road are swerving around them, cutting them off, and challenging them to stay safe, according to John Warta, service center manager for the Con-way Gary-Hammond depot.

"Safety is our No. 1 core value and you've certainly shown you concentrate on that by what you do every day," Warta told Blue.

Warta and other Con-way managers then gave Blue a "2 million mile" Con-way jacket, plaque, ring and 100,000 bonus points for the company's safety rewards program.

Blue added there was another trick to his safe driving, a family that's considerate and lets him sleep during the day after making his night time runs to Toledo and back.

Blue made history in another important way on Wednesday, becoming the first Con-way driver to reach the 2 million safe driving mark after attaining his commercial driver's license through Con-way's own driving school.

As other drivers took turns alternately congratulating and good-naturedly ribbing him on the award Wednesday, Blue recalled going to Con-way driving school in Chicago in the summer of 1994 during the day and working the loading dock at the Gary-Hammond depot nights.

Warta said it's not uncommon for drivers to stick with Con-way for their careers despite plenty of opportunities available throughout the industry. Con-way is now hiring and people can get more information and apply for a job at www.con-way.com/careers.