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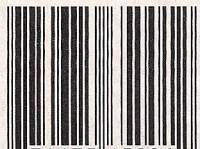
LONDON



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Featuring THE LONDON CHAMBER ADVOCATE

On the spot



4REFUEL'S KEVIN JOHNSON

FOR BUSINESSES TRYING TO save on the cost of fuelling their vehicles, the actual cost of the fuel is only one part of the puzzle. That's the premise of 4Refuel, a franchise refuelling business operated by the father-son duo of Bill and Terry Graham.

The local operation had been corporate-owned until they purchased it, effective May, 2005. That was around the same time the parent company, Mini-Tankers Canada, severed its ties with its U.S. parent, Mini-Tankers International. The Langley, B.C. company then adopted the 4Refuel name and has changed the focus of the business. It has moved from simply delivering fuel to managing a company's entire fuel supply system.

"Dad has experience in the propane business, so we thought this would be a good fit for us," says Terry. The Grahams use two tanker trucks—one holding 14,000 litres and one holding 11,000 litres—to deliver diesel fuel to their customers, among them: Coca-Cola, The Beer Store, Ellis-Don Construction, Tri City Equipment, Classic Excavation and C.H. Excavation.

Although the cost of fuel to customers is slightly higher from 4Refuel than if the companies purchased it directly, Terry Graham says the time saved more than makes up for the cost.

"We buy from the Suncor depot on Oxford Street. If our customers bought it directly from there, it would be about six cents per litre above the wholesale price. We charge them seven or eight cents per litre above wholesale for our service."

Because 4Refuel drivers deliver

fuel at night, delivery trucks and construction vehicles stay on the job all day long. That translates into greater efficiency, Graham explains.

"Take the Beer Store, for example. They have two people in their trucks. If they spend 45 minutes out of the day driving and stopping to refuel their truck, they make fewer deliveries. If we refuel their trucks for them at night, they can make deliveries non-stop all day, which means they deliver more beer and are more efficient."

In addition, 4Refuel technology allows customers to track fuel delivery and usage statistics for every vehicle or machine the company services, going back as long as three years.

"It's all accessible to them over the internet the very next day," says Graham. "That allows people to see whether a particular truck or machine is using more fuel than it should and needs servicing. They can track those things over time, which is also very helpful."

Since they took over, the Grahams have found business to be steady, if not spectacular. In a city like London where traffic jams are still infrequent and minor compared to larger centres, the time spent refuelling is not long enough for many companies to farm out the refuelling duties to 4Refuel. In Toronto, where drivers could spend an hour or more getting fuel, the advantages are more self-evident.

Still, the Grahams are encouraged by their first year in business. So long as fuel prices stay high, companies will always be looking for ways to manage their costs. ■ *Christopher Clark*

BUSINESS	4REFUEL CANADA LTD.
ESTABLISHED	Fuel supply and management
EMPLOYEES	2005
MARKETS	2
	London and area
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