

<http://infotruck.blogspot.com/2009/10/driven-away-usa-ports-clean-air-program.html>

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Driven Away * USA - Ports' clean air program shuts down some truckers.

Randy Thomas Trucking is preparing to close his business, he's unable to purchase new trucks to comply with port regulations taking effect in January

Reprinted from October 12, 2009 Los Angeles Business Journal article by FRANCISCO VARA-ORTA
<http://labusinessjournal.com/accounts/login/?next=/news/2009/oct/12/driven-away/>
<http://los-angeles-business-journal.vlex.com/vid/driven-ports-clean-air-shuts-truckers-69119761>



Randy Thomas has spent the last four decades proudly running his South Los Angeles trucking firm, which services the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach... As the ports ballooned to become the largest trade complex in the country, Thomas' business grew from one truck he drove to a thriving little firm with 15 drivers. He put his three children through college – the first generation in his family to go. He was starting to look forward to retiring. He planned to leave his business to his family... Instead, the 60-year-old owner of Randy Thomas Trucking is preparing to close his business about Christmas. The reason: He's unable to purchase new trucks to comply with port regulations taking effect in January... In all, about 900 trucking companies shuttle cargo containers in and out of the two ports. Hundreds of them, like Thomas' company, are in danger of slipping out of existence in the next few months. Following them are thousands of truckers who own their own rigs and contract with small companies like Thomas'... The recession-driven downturn in trade has pushed them to the precipice, but many believe what's shoving them over the edge is the Clean Trucks Program, which falls hardest on small operators... The program seeks to eliminate old polluting trucks from the ports. The program in October 2008 banned trucks made before 1989. But on Jan. 1, a more stringent ban extends to all trucks made before 1994 and those that have an engine made before 2004... It's unclear how many trucks will be sidelined as a result, but the number is a big one. The ports earlier estimated that as many as 12,000 trucks would fall into that criteria, but last week the L.A. port estimated 4,000 to 6,000 trucks would be banned Jan. 1... A new diesel truck costs about \$100,000, while retrofitting a truck with a new engine costs about \$10,000 to \$15,000. Many small trucking firms, already scraping by on low margins, paying off existing trucks and whacked by the downturn in business at the ports, say it's not worth it to load up on debt to stay in the industry... (End of Road: Randy Thomas will cut the ignition on his trucking firm in December)

posted by truckbus @ [6:40 AM](#)