



CONSIDERATIONS FOR MAINTAINING LOW-COST TRUCK PARKING FACILITIES

There are a number of options that truck parking operators can choose to minimize maintenance responsibilities and costs at truck parking facilities. These facilities are designed around the needs of the truck drivers, and do not typically cater to the general travelers. Thus, usage is less than a typical truck stop or rest area. Below are descriptions of some of the options operators can select to save time and money.

TRASH REMOVAL

Organizations looking to operate low-cost facilities should consider their methods of trash collection. Using dumpsters to collect trash requires less frequent emptying, which will reduce maintenance costs and responsibilities. Dumpsters need to be emptied approximately once a week at truck-only facilities. Regardless of the method used for trash collection, it is important to provide trash receptacles at any truck parking facility.

SURFACE MATERIAL

Low-cost paving material facilities could consider using [soil-cement](#), a highly compacted mixture of soil/aggregate, cement, and water. However, it is better suited to warm and dry climates because moisture, freezing, thawing, and plowing create a lot of wear and tear on the material. Gravel is another low-cost paving material that could be considered. Consider which materials would work best for the climate and amount of use of the facility.

TOILETS

Vault toilets (non-flush toilets with a sealed container, or vault, buried in the ground to collect waste) are a toilet option for low-cost truck parking facilities. At a truck-only facility, a vault toilet would need to be pumped out about once a month. Vault toilets are well-suited to lower-use facilities that cater to truck drivers. High-use facilities would require more frequent emptying of the vault, increasing operating costs. The cost of maintenance is less than portable toilets.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

When building additional truck parking capacity, organizations should consider security measures. Safety measures may include emergency phones, fire extinguishers, and access to a defibrillator. Security measures may include fencing and/or other barriers, security cameras, and lighting. Operators may consider solar for decreased maintenance costs. While implementing all of these ideas may not be low-cost, it is something operators should consider when adding parking capacity.



Figure 1: Photo of a dumpster. Source: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Dumpster-non.JPG>



Figure 2: Photo of a vault toilet in Denali National Park. Source: <https://www.nps.gov/denali/planyourvisit/campground-tek.htm>

COST COMPARISON: REST AREA VERSUS TRUCK-ONLY PARKING

The cost of operating a truck-only parking facility is about ten percent of the cost of operating a rest area.



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