



# THE PRAIRIE TECH POST

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## PROSTAR FLAT TOP CONVERSION

Recognizing the need for a low profile sleeper truck for several vocational applications, Prairie Technology's R & D group set out to design and develop a new low roof or flat top conversion for the ProStar sleeper truck. While there is a significant demand for the Prairie Tech standard day cab conversion that is currently under development, an opportunity presented itself for an immediate sleeper reconfiguration.

The conversion was dependent upon removing the roof to the lowest possible height (in this case about 9'6") without significantly impacting the interior cabinet layout. A roof was designed to incorporate the aerodynamic styling of the cab while creating a soft transition from the side panels and doors. Special consideration was given to maintaining the structural integrity not only of the roof but to incorporate the attachment protocol into the cab and sleeper as well.

After an intense effort by three craftsmen and designers over a six week period, the roof was completed along with a new headliner. The roof was installed and painted to match the cab and sleeper. No additional work had to be done to the exhaust or suspension as the chassis remained intact. The truck was delivered to the customer who was very pleased with the final product. The flat top configuration allows for a boom to rest comfortably above the sleeper without problems that would be encountered with a higher roof and bridge clearance issues.

This product is now available on a production basis for anyone interested in converting their high rise or skyrise ProStar into a low roof configuration. Give us a call today at 605-274-0444 to learn more about this exciting new product available from the industry leader in day cab conversions.



# BILL OF WRITES

by Bill Osman, Founder

Our nation has spoken! Our government continues to focus on changing our democracy to an ineptocracy. This government seizes nearly every opportunity to dismantle the Constitution that is the foundation for this great nation. Our forefathers must be rolling over in their graves as changes are enacted in what would have amounted to treason only a few short years ago.

It appears that there is a majority of our citizenry that expects a few of us hardworking tax paying capitalists to sponsor their ever demanding needs for financial support and handouts to support their uninspired and sometimes criminal lifestyle. Many of these selfish, narrow minded, and near sighted individuals have lost the importance of being self-sufficient and the sense of self-worth that comes from earning a living.

Our hearts and prayers go out to the victims and families of the Newtown, CT tragedy. Rather than addressing the core problem of violence, our government is again focusing on guns as the issue. I've been around guns all of my life and have a great deal of respect with how to handle them in a safe and law abiding fashion. Remember the high profile case of Lois Goodman, a respected tennis official, who killed her husband with a coffee mug? Perhaps we should develop a government registration or ban relating to coffee mugs or at least some program to limit the availability of automatic coffee makers.

At Prairie Technology we endeavor to be a positive influence for both our customers and employees. We recognize how truly blessed we are with all we have been given in 2012 working with our fabulous network of customers, vendors, and Certified Partners. We conduct our business with integrity and focus on Christian principles and respect. Respect is something in my life that is second only to eternal salvation. It cannot be bought and can be easily lost or destroyed. We will continue to work with you to earn and keep your respect as we strive together to remain the leader in our industry.

## FACILITY EXPANSION

As we expanded through the addition of new products and customers, we outgrew our main shop and office. Our shipping and receiving department has a greater need for space in which to process and ship orders as well as to store an increasing inventory of completed kits and parts. Dramatic growth in our R & D department coupled with a need to move metal fabrication out of our shop area further highlighted the need for more space.

In late September and again in mid-December, we acquired two identical buildings across the street from our current location. We previously leased the 8000 square foot building we used for shipping and receiving and for inventory storage of completed kits and parts. We purchased that building along with a group of storage units located on the same property. This gives us the flexibility to handle more orders and keep a larger inventory on hand to expedite same day shipments for our customers.

We also purchased another 8000 square foot building next door to accommodate our R & D group as well as our metal fabrication. The expansion of R & D will give these guys the room they need to work on several projects simultaneously and keep up to four trucks inside as they fit parts and kits on new models or modify existing ones. The relocation of the steel fabrication will give us much needed space in the shop to handle the ever growing number of truck conversions and frame work.

We are excited and bullish about our continued growth and diversification within the vocational and over the road trucking and transportation industry. With our new expanded facilities, we are poised to meet the opportunities of this New Year and those to come.

# RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT & STAFF

The success of any company lies in its ability to bring innovative ideas and technology to the market place in a timely, efficient, and economical fashion. Prairie Technology is recognized in the industry as the leader in design, innovation, quality, safety, and competitive pricing due in large part to the commitment we make to research and development.

Prairie Tech founder Bill Osman is the idea “guru” and mentor for a highly skilled group of R & D specialists. Under the direction of Duke Erickson, these guys are constantly looking at new ideas, concepts, and designs to bring new and improved products to the day cab and truck parts industry. With many day cab conversion kits already in full production, our R & D group continues to look at kit designs for newer models introduced recently to the market. With input from our own shop as well as our Certified Partners, enhancements are also pursued with existing kits to make them more efficient to install, safer to operate, and create an even better aesthetic appearance.

This group is working on a number of new projects to bring fiberglass parts to the heavy and medium duty trucking industry. These parts include bumpers, doors, roof and side fairings, visors, and fenders. Utilizing our experience and knowledge in manufacturing as well as first hand truck conversion experience, we are in a unique position to produce fiberglass and aluminum products of exceptional quality and structural integrity.

Check out our web site at [www.customdaycab.com](http://www.customdaycab.com) to see the many custom kits and parts currently available from Prairie Tech. We are always looking for input and suggestions from our customers and partners to create new and improved products for use in your business.



## NEW WEBSITE TO LAUNCH

Within the coming weeks, Prairie Technology will launch a new web site dedicated solely to after-market truck parts. Utilizing our knowledge and experience with fiberglass manufacturing and the use of related products, we will introduce a line of truck body parts featuring the quality, structural integrity, fit and finish, and price competitiveness that you have come to expect from us.

Our R & D group has completed the design and preliminary production of several different parts. We completed a fan shroud for the Pete 379 that we have been selling on a limited basis to area Pete dealers for several months. The reviews have been excellent and they continue to buy the product based upon durability and price point. We will also offer bumpers, chassis/side fairings, cab extenders, visors, doors, and other body parts.

The design criteria for these components have been predicated upon the importance of structural integrity, ease of installation, and aesthetics. We have incorporated several materials into the fiberglass manufacturing process that provide significant structural stability while also reducing the overall weight of some of these finished products. We are confident that our customers will discover that this new line of products will provide a great opportunity for cost savings while also increasing the useful life of each part.

Look for additional information which will be sent to you as we roll out this new web site featuring these new products from Prairie Technology. We are confident that you will find this to be an excellent alternative to the parts sources you are currently using.

# UPDATED VOLVO KIT AVAILABLE

In keeping with our commitment to constantly pursue safer and more efficient designs, we completed an updated and aesthetically more attractive Volvo day cab kit. Working closely with the body shop experts at Central Illinois Trucks, Inc., our R & D department extensively retooled the back panel and made some significant modifications to the interior of the cab.

The new kit includes a one piece back panel that incorporates many of the design features found on the factory day cab. A new visor includes a more subtle profile with molded cutouts to accept the lights and wiring harness from the sleeper truck. Molded side panels and headliner are easy to install and reflect a superior fit and finish for interior cab comfort and appearance.



The standard Prairie Tech structural components have been adopted to provide for a rigid and sturdy cab. Reinforcement is included in the back panel to accept hardware for mounting cab extenders for those customers who wish to include that feature to enhance fuel economy. A new suspension is also included.

We are very proud of our redesigned kit and invite you to view photos of it on our web site. Please give us a call at 605-274-0444 for more information on how to order your new Volvo kit today.



## TIPS FROM TRACY

By Tracy Koenekamp, Shop Foreman

Planning and preparation is the key to a successful day cab conversion. Before making any cuts or removing body pieces, know exactly what you need to do up front to insure that the final product is exactly what you or your customer wants. Measure carefully and clearly mark where you intend to cut. It is much easier to measure twice and then cut once than the other way around.

As you go through your planning process, make sure to identify those parts that you will reuse when the truck goes back together. Be sure that there are no cracked or broken interior components that will detract from the look of the new day cab. Order or secure replacement parts in advance so that when you need them they are available. Always check any air bags that will be reused to make sure they are in good condition and do not need to be replaced.

As you take the sleeper and interior components off, make sure that you have a good place to store them during the conversion process. Parts that are off the truck can easily be damaged or misplaced in a busy shop. Take care to properly mark pieces to be reused so they are easily identifiable and someone else does not "appropriate" any of them for another project. I would be very interested to hear from any of you who have developed a storage or tracking system for these parts and how you safeguard them for reuse during the process.

I wish all of you a joyful and prosperous 2013. Call me anytime if I can answer a question or be of assistance to you or a member of your staff.