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Econ Engineering

Yorkshire firm's £8m investment in 150 new gritters for UK roads



The operator of the UK's largest hire fleet of gritters has invested over £8m in new vehicles ahead of a winter that is forecast to bring earlier snow than usual.

Ripon-based Econ Engineering is the UK's leading manufacturer and operator of winter maintenance fleets and produces over 70 per cent of Britain's winter gritting fleet. The firm has grown its fleet by 50 per cent since the harsh winter of 2010 in preparation for the coming winter.

The firm has made a record order of 100 new DAF vehicles as well as several dozen Mercedes Benz trucks in the past months, growing the fleet to 420 gritters, up from 238 four years ago.



media relations and profile

The new vehicles also feature some of the world's most advanced monitoring and spreading equipment, ensuring the most accurate use of salt stocks and fuel loads, a key consideration for environmentally-aware, cash-strapped councils up and down the country.

"We have been working hard to build up our fleet of new 2013 vehicles, and have decommissioned some of the less efficient older vehicles as well, to ensure our rental customers have the most up-to-date equipment ahead of the winter season," said Econ sales director, Andrew Lupton.

"It used to be the case that only customers buying new vehicles could have the latest kit, but around half of our contracts are for rental vehicles and we have invested £8m this year to deliver the newest and most technologically advanced gritters for these hire customers, as well as outright buyers," he added.

The £26m turnover, family-owned Econ employs 200 people at its Ripon headquarters - making it the town's largest employer - and services the majority of the UK's winter fleet at the factory each summer. The company operates contracts with customers throughout the UK including councils, local authorities, contractors and private businesses that undertake road maintenance work across the UK.

"The weather outlook for this winter is pretty extreme, according to some forecasters, with an early cold snap and lots of snow anticipated. As a result, councils and operators all over the UK are preparing for a busier than average winter," he said.

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