

# TOP 100 Fleets

## Recognizing excellence in fleet management

### The Top Ten

1. Chicago, Ill.
2. County of San Diego, Calif.
3. Allegheny County, Pa.
4. Las Vegas Valley Water District
5. Charlotte, N. C.
6. Cincinnati, Ohio
7. Culver City, Calif.
8. Denver, Colo.
9. Fort Wayne, Ind.
10. Troy, Mich.

To date, there have been over 60,000 books published on leadership. Without a strong leader with a clear vision and commitment to operational excellence, quality cannot be achieved. One theme often highlighted in books on leadership is; if you treat the employee right, they treat the customers right. Additionally, the books tend to reinforce the idea that exceptional leaders find ways to motivate skilled professionals to excel and encourage them to share their expertise for the benefit of the operation.

Encouraging leadership in fleet maintenance shops is a wonderful way to build quality of service. Building on the idea that fleet maintenance managers who exhibit leadership skills need to be rewarded for their work, the 100 Best Fleets in North America Award was created.

### Awarding excellence

To recognize the efforts of some exceptional fleet managers, Tom

Johnson developed The 100 Best Fleets in North America criteria to scrutinize fleet applicants and acknowledge excellence, has chosen this year's winning fleet maintenance managers. The purpose of the award is to bring every fleet operation to the standards of the best corporations in America and, hopefully, raise the bar for other fleet operations in North America.

According to Johnson, "The criteria for the award was compiled by a team of industry consultants with more than 100 years combined experience in assisting fleet operations to be effective and efficient. The award application process has proven to be the driver of

excellence in the shops that participated. It has gotten everyone on the same page, thinking about improvement. It has given them a clearer plan to achieve goals and, provided a blueprint for developing quality.

"Awards carry with them many things, from recognition by friends and colleagues and acknowledgement of a job well done, to a sense of achievement that distinguishes these fleets from the other 93,000 fleet departments in North America."

### Best place to work

Johnson believes that the award process helps fleets develop into an excellent place to work. He says, "It's



Howard Henneman takes the podium after Mayor Richard M. Daley names him Commissioner of Fleet Management.

often difficult to pin down the key factors that create reliable, quantifiable metrics that help us to understand what makes a great fleet shop. The core element may be linked to the skill and efficiency of an organization's employees. Top fleets often foster an environment where all workers are able to work together productively. Often these fleets are known for their quality technicians, and for the respect they show to those workers."

Everything starts with leadership. Leaders create the culture of success where every employee gives his or her best every day. Johnson goes on to say, "The 100 Best Fleets are led by

## Every award winning organization has a mechanism for communications from the bottom up and the top down.

— Johnson

extraordinary leaders. Our methodology was to look only for what is already working. These organizations have demonstrated excellence in productivity and effectiveness."

Here are the 10 basic questions and

requested measurements, and program objectives:

*Identify outstanding operations*

*Promote pride in the industry*

*Educate "up the ladder" in respect to fleet operations achievements*

## 100 Best

**Editor's note:** Fleet consultant judges determined the winners based on the criteria and site visits. The award ceremony will be held in Chicago in October.

Atlanta, Ga.  
Alyeska Pipeline, Fairbanks, Ala.  
Allegheny Co., Pa.  
Arlington, Texas  
Austin, Texas  
Anaheim, Calif.  
Arizona Depart. of Transportation  
Augusta-Richmond Co., Ga.  
Beverly Hills, Calif.  
Baldwin Co., Ga.  
Beaufort Co., S.C.  
Broward Co., Sheriff's Office, Fla.  
Charlotte, N.C.  
Chicago, Ill.  
Culver City, Calif.  
Contra Costa Co., Calif.  
Colorado Springs, Colo.  
Coconino County, Ariz.  
Cape Coral, Fla.  
Collier County, Fla.  
Chandler, Ariz.  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
Denver, Colo.  
DeKalb County, Ga.  
District of Columbia  
Dallas County, Texas  
Daytona Beach, Fla.  
Evanston, Ill.  
Everett, Wash.  
Exxon Mobil, Baytown, Texas

Fort Lauderdale, Fla.  
Fort Wayne, Ind.  
Fort Worth, Texas  
Fresno, Calif.  
Florida Power and Light  
Groton, Conn.  
Greensboro, N.C.  
Georgetown, S.C.  
Grapevine, Texas  
Galveston, Texas  
Glendale, Calif.  
Harford County, Md.  
Hydro One, Ontario, Canada  
Iowa State University, Ames  
Inglewood, Calif.  
King County, Wash.  
Lee County, Fla.  
Loveland, Colo.  
Longmont, Colo.  
Loudoun County, Va.  
Lewis Tree Service, Rochester, N.Y.  
Las Vegas Valley Water District, Nev.  
Marietta, Ga.  
Miami, Fla.  
Manatee County, Fla.  
Montgomery Co. Sheriff's Office, Texas  
Montgomery County, Md.  
New York Parks  
Nevada Depart. of Transportation  
Orlando Airport, Fla.  
Ohio State University  
Oneonta, N.Y.  
Peoria, Ariz.  
Polk County, Fla.  
Plant City, Fla.

Port St. Lucie, Fla.  
Pasco County, Fla.  
Palm Springs, Calif.  
Pennsylvania Power and Light  
Philadelphia, Pa.  
Richardson, Texas  
Richland County, S.C.  
Sumter, S.C.  
State of Utah  
Salt Lake County, Utah  
San Antonio, Texas  
Safeway Stores, Phoenix, Ariz.  
Salt River Project, Phoenix, Ariz.  
San Bernardino County, Calif.  
San Clemente, Calif.  
San Jose, Calif.  
San Diego County, Calif.  
San Luis Obispo County, Calif.  
Syracuse Police Department, N.Y.  
Sunrise, Fla.  
Tyler, Texas  
Tucson Electric, Ariz.  
Tallahassee, Fla.  
Topeka, Kan.  
Thorton, Colo.  
Texas A&M University  
Troy, Mich.  
University of Minnesota, Minneapolis  
University of Calif., Davis  
University of Washington, Seattle  
University of Nebraska, Lincoln  
Vancouver, British Columbia  
Volusia County, Fla.  
Wilmington, Del.  
Westminster, Colo.

Transform society through a better workplace  
Increase productivity of employees  
Encourage the career of Fleet operations

**The 10 criteria were:**

- Accountability
- Technology
- Collaboration
- Creativity
- Celebration
- High trust culture
- Performance recognition
- Doing it right the first time
- Quick/efficient turnaround
- Competitive pricing

**Above and beyond**

Providing encouragement and support for employees demonstrates concern for individuals and helps build loyalty. Fleet managers that made the list demonstrated the ability to create an environment in which their employees were able to succeed. For instance, Sam Lamerato from Troy, Mich. writes a note to every spouse or significant other of his employees telling them how valued their husband, wife or significant other is to the operation, giving concrete examples

of contributions. Sam has a waiting list of 80 technicians for every job opening in the Detroit area.

It is good corporate stewardship to be involved in area trade schools to support technician training and to look for quality technicians. Paul Condran from Culver City, Calif. spends time talking to high school

seniors about the value of a trade and financial security. His networks send him students that are ASE certified when he gets them. He is training his replacement already (he's moving up the latter).

Johnson says, "Every award winning organization has a mechanism for communications from the bottom up and top down. They all make themselves accessible to employees. Technical employees are highly motivated by peer reviews and peer esteem which leads to the number one motivators of employee excellence: pride and purpose. The award process gave everyone involved a detailed strategic 'blueprint' with a few key measures for success that all employees could understand. They had a common goal and sense of responsibility to one another."

As Pam Nelson, CEO of Faster CCG Systems, puts it, "Defining success is difficult because it represents many things to many people. What we do know is that every person desires success. What we have come to know is that success is not something to be arrived at but something to continually strive to embrace. Success then is a journey not a destination."

Congratulations to some of our industry's most accomplished achievers. **FE**



City of Chicago, Department of Fleet Management takes top honors. The fleet was named number one fleet in the country based on the 100 Top Fleet criteria.

