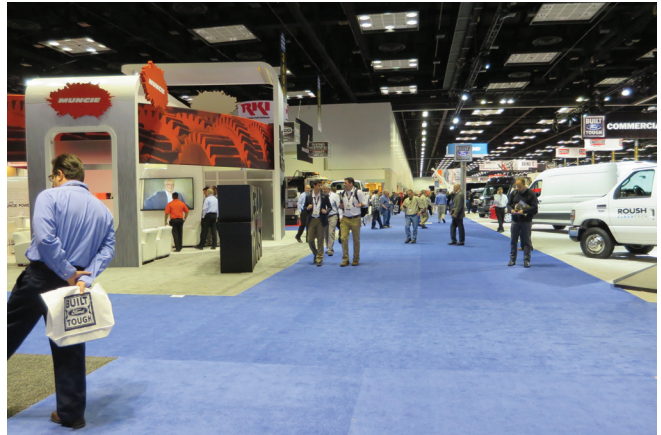


# TRUCKS



## Trick Out Your Truck Cool new gear from the Work Truck Show

BY DAVID FRANE

The Work Truck Show features the latest and greatest equipment and technology for work trucks and vans—including these items from this year's show.

The show is held each March in Indianapolis, and it's the premier event for work trucks and related accessories. Sponsored by the National Association for the Work Truck Industry (NTEA), it's where truck owners and people in the industry go to meet with suppliers and see the latest products. This was my first time attending the show, although I definitely plan to go again.

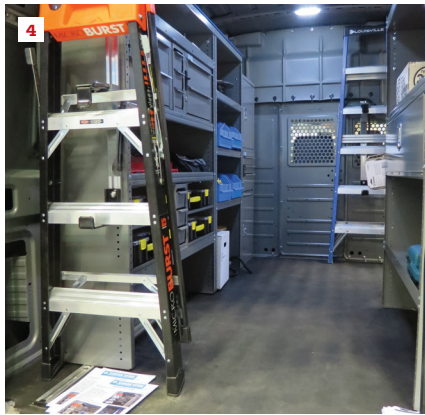
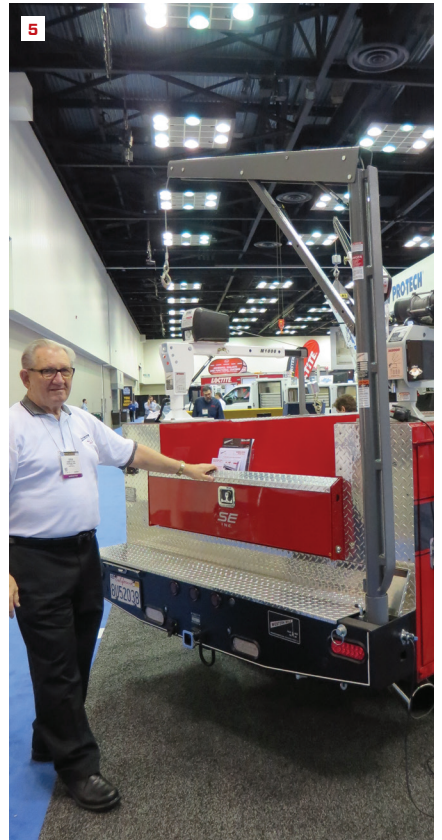
While there, I saw everything from caps, service bodies, and storage systems to high-tech gizmos for converting vehicles to elec-

tric, CNG, or hybrid operation. It's a great show; the only downside is I can no longer drive down the highway without checking out every work truck and van I see.

The photos here contain a small portion of the equipment seen by the more than 11,000 attendees at this year's show. Next year's event runs from March 2 to March 4, at the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis. Check out NTEA's website, [ntea.com](http://ntea.com), in the coming months for a schedule of events for the 2016 show.

*David Frane is the editor of Tools of the Trade ([toolsofthetrade.net](http://toolsofthetrade.net)), where a version of this article first appeared.*

Photos: David Frane



**1.** BrandFX makes composite truck bodies and the BFX Easy Lift, a tonneau cover that pivots up on a pair of arms with gas cylinder assists. When open, it provides shade; when closed, it provides security. If you need to haul a load that won't fit under it when closed, you can drive up to 75 mph with it open. The cover weighs about 180 pounds and sells for about \$2,600. (brandfxbody.com)

**2.** Weightlifter makes lifts for trucks and vans, and its newest van model is called the Slide Lifter. Powered by

electricity and hydraulics, it's capable of lifting more than 1,000 pounds. (weightliftertruck.com)

**3.** The Decked Truck Bed Storage System fits in the bed of a pickup. Made from high-density polyethylene (HDPE), the unit can support 2,000 pounds on the deck. Available for 5-foot-6-inch and 6-foot-6-inch beds, it has two 4-foot drawers—each rated to carry 200 pounds—that ride on rollers and are secured by heavy spring-loaded latches. If your tailgate doesn't lock,

there's the option to equip the drawers with keyed cylinders. The 12-inch-tall unit is held in place using existing hold-downs; there's no need to drill holes in the bed. (decked.com)

**4.** Adrian Steel makes this General Service Interior for the Chevrolet City Express, a cargo van about the size of a long wheelbase Ford Transit Connect (there's a package for that vehicle, too). It includes a steel partition, shelving, drawers, removable bins, hanging hooks, a locking door kit, and a ladder rack

for the top of the van. (adriansteel.com)

**5.** Western Mule is one of a number of companies that make cranes that fold into the bumper when not in use. Shown is the A-Series crane. Models are available to lift between 750 and 2,500 pounds. (westernmule.com)

**6.** ARE's 3DL Series fiberglass tonneau cover provides three points of access and 4 inches of storage above the bedrail. The bed can be accessed by lifting the cover from



the rear or opening doors on either side of the lid. The unit can be painted to match the vehicle. Options include LED strip lighting and remote keyless entry to control the doors of the truck and the locks on the bed cover. (4are.com)

**7.** Cummins (the diesel folks) owns Crosspoint Kinetics, the company that makes the Kinetics Hybrid PM Motor. It installs behind an existing transmission and functions as a regenerative braking assist, in a manner similar to that of a hybrid car's

motor—but with a couple of major differences. The electricity generated by braking is stored in a large capacitor pack instead of in a multitude of batteries. And the unit doesn't completely power the vehicle; it aids during acceleration from 0 to about 30 MPH (speeds where traditional engines are least efficient). The unit fits class 3-7 trucks and buses and is currently aimed at fleets. (crosspointkinetics.com)

**8.** Here, a Ford Transit is upfitted with a MasterRack

shelving system geared toward HVAC work. The bins with chains across the front, on the left, are for holding Freon or other gas tanks. (masterack.com) The white "box" on the bottom right is a Fleet Gold AC power inverter that lets you run computers, power tools, cellphones, and more. (fleetelectric.com)

**9.** A variety of ErgoRack ladder racks were shown on vans. This one is on a very tall Sprinter. The rear end of the ladder swings farther down and can be brought lower

still by pulling on a slide mechanism. The ladder can be lifted off the rear bracket and then off the front. (primedesign.net)

**10.** The cylinders on either side of this custom Freightliner chassis may look like torpedoes, but they're actually compressed natural gas (CNG) tanks. There were many CNG-powered vehicles at the show because CNG is cheaper than diesel—and fuel is a major expense for companies that run fleets. (freightlinertrucks.com)



**11.** The TruckOffice replaces the console and jump seats found in extended cab trucks. The console replacement is a lidded box with places for office supplies and files. The storage area behind the seats is made from blow-molded plastic and has hinged lid compartments. A second, mostly-metal version is an enclosed platform where tools and other supplies can be stored securely. Both versions can be outfitted with 120V receptacles and an inverter. (truckoffice.com)

**12.** Knapheide exhibited service bodies, vans, and this cap outfitted with Sortimo modular storage boxes that are secured by clips on the shelf. If the boxes look familiar it's because Sortimo makes Bosch L-Boxxes. These Sortimo L-Boxxes can be used interchangeably with those from Bosch. (knapheide.com/sortimo)

**13.** Most service bodies are made from steel, aluminum, or fiberglass. Stahl's Razorback service body is made from high impact polypropylene—a

first for the industry. Lighter than a steel body, it allows for better fuel economy and larger payloads. Supposedly, you could hit the thing with a hammer without leaving a dent. (stahltruckbodies.com/razorback)

**14.** Maxilift's Ant M50 is a crane small enough to be mounted inside a van—though it can also be mounted on the bed of a truck. It can lift 1,100 pounds with the boom retracted to 3 feet 3 inches and 440 pounds when fully extended to 8 feet

1 inch. It's available in several configurations; the simplest model uses a hydraulic hand pump for lifting. (maxiliftcrane.com)

**15.** This particular Sprinter has 7 feet of headroom in back, which, according to Mercedes, is more than can be found in any other van. (mbsprinterusa.com)

**16.** Via Motors turns new trucks and vans into plug-in hybrids. The vehicle is powered by an electric motor connected to batteries, which can be charged



with household current or the engine. The batteries are installed under the bed; the transmission is removed because it isn't needed. Under battery power alone, the truck has a range of 40 miles. When the batteries get low, a small 2.0- to 2.4-liter engine kicks on to drive the generator used to recharge them. The motor is not connected to the drivetrain; it only powers the generator. Total range (electric + gas) is said to be 350 miles. Price: about \$90K. (viamotors.com)

**17.** Switch-N-Go makes detachable work truck bodies that are hoisted onto the vehicle the way dumpsters are hoisted onto their trucks. With this system, a single truck can be used to haul multiple bodies, including storage boxes, flatbed/equipment bodies, stake beds, and of course, dumpster boxes. (switchngo.com)

**18.** SpaceKap makes fiberglass service bodies. Built on the same principle as slide-in camper bodies, one of

these service bodies can be quickly removed from a truck and transferred to another without being unloaded. Or it can be dropped at the jobsite and left on four jacks (only one shown here). (spacekap.com)

**19.** You're looking at MasteRack SmartSpace configurable van shelving (masterack.com) installed in a Morgan Mini-Mover Pro box (morgancorp.com). The shelving is made from structural foam and aluminum and is up

to 33% lighter than comparable steel interiors. The units are modular, so they can be quickly reconfigured.

**20.** This Ford Transit 250 is equipped with a Reading Classic Service Van Body. Made from welded aluminum, it is said to be half the weight of a steel body—which results in greater fuel economy, payload, and life (it won't rust like steel). Inside the roll-up rear door, you can see the translucent roof panels. (readingbody.com)