

ENCOUNTERS

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Kosher Trucking – Part II

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In Part 1 of this series, we discussed the challenges of maintaining the laws of kashrus while transporting bulk products. Only by ensuring that the bulk container was used exclusively to haul kosher products can one be certain that the kosher integrity of the product hasn't been compromised during the transport phase. In this segment we will discuss a related concern with bulk transport.



Truck Washes

After carrying a product, the bulk tanker is generally washed in a truck wash, a large facility where the interior of the tanker is washed with hot, high-pressure water, often supplemented with detergent. A common wash cycle consists of a three-step process: Initial Flush (a pre-rinse to remove the actual product), a Wash (which is generally a hot detergent wash for 15-20 minutes), and the Final Rinse (to remove any residual detergent water). As one can imagine, this utilizes a huge amount of water and energy, and companies are challenged to conserve their utility usage. As a result, they have developed cleaning methods to alleviate these concerns – which create serious *kashrus* issues, as will be explained.

Recycling

In order to conserve energy, a truck wash may recycle water from one tanker to the next, using water from the final rinse of trailer A (which, after an extensive wash, is already clean) to pre-wash trailer B. This raises serious *kashrus* concerns if trailer A

was used to haul a non-kosher product, and trailer B is a kosher tanker. The reason for this is that the wash water used to wash trailer A absorbs non-kosher absorptions and will subsequently cause trailer B, the kosher trailer, to absorb non-kosher absorptions when washed with the recycled water.

Water Recirculation

Another concern relates to recirculation of wash water. In order to avoid the cost of maintaining a huge hot-water tank, the truck wash may recirculate wash water through heat exchangers (high-temperature heat transfer points) and the tanker, making a complete loop, thereby heating water quickly and efficiently. The problem here, as above, is if the truck wash washed a non-kosher tanker. In this case, the non-kosher wash water was recirculated through the wash equipment (such as vats, pumps, hoses, and spinners), causing it to become non-kosher. Trailers which are subsequently washed using the same equipment will become non-kosher (even if the water is not recycled).

The Solution

To alleviate these concerns, it is imperative to only wash kosher trailers in truck washes which don't recycle or recirculate wash water. As with kosher trucks, *kashrus* agencies work with companies across the country to provide certification for kosher truck washes. (Many solutions have been devised to work with truck washes which utilize one or both of the above cost-saving methods, such as the use of hot detergent to neutralize, *pogem*, the non-kosher absorptions.)

Kashering Bulk Tankers

Finally, we will discuss how to *kasher* bulk tankers. If a tanker hauled non-kosher product (such as lard), it will need to be





kashered prior to hauling kosher product. *Kashering* such large containers (which can hold around 45,000 lb. of product) can be quite challenging. After all, the two standard methods for *kashering* (via *hag'alah*), 1) dipping a utensil in a vat of boiling water, or 2) boiling water inside the container, seem virtually impossible with bulk tankers. (It should be noted that some have developed a *kashering* method which involves filling the tanker with water a third full followed by high-pressure steam injection until the water boils, followed by a hot water rinse, but this method is a lengthy process and must be carefully employed to avoid damaging plant personnel and equipment.) What, then, is the *kashering* process?

Iruy Nimsheches

The most common method involves *kashering* via a process known as "*iruy nimsheches* – an extended spraying." As explained above, tankers are generally washed after hauling products to ensure that the vessel is clean. The tanker is washed with high-pressure hot water, using a spinner inserted in the top hatch. According to manufacturer specifications, after 12-15 minutes of washing, one can be sure that every inch of the interior was hit directly with a blast of water. Tankers are not usually washed with temperatures

hot enough to count as a *kashering*, but when necessary, the temperature can be raised to count as a *kashering*. [As an aside, experience shows that it is insufficient to measure the temperature of the water going *into* the tanker because the water cools off as it passes through the length of the tanker. Therefore, it is crucial to measure the water in the *discharge*, ensuring that the temperature is sufficiently hot the entire duration of the *kashering*.] How does this work?

Kli Rishon vs. Kli Sheini

As a general rule, we only *kasher* utensils in a *kli rishon* (the utensil which was in contact with direct heat) – not a *kli sheini* (a second-hand utensil which wasn't in direct contact with heat) or *irui kli rishon* (pouring from a *kli rishon*). If so, how can we *kasher* tankers by spraying hot water through the tanker, presumably considered *irui kli rishon*? The answer is that by spraying water through the tanker for an extended period of time, the tanker walls become heated to such an extent that they qualify for a *kashering*. This is commonly referred to as *iruy nimsheches*. The source for the above concept is based on *Tosfos* in *Shabbos* (40b) which discusses the difference between a *kli rishon* and a *kli sheini*. The *Gemara* states that a *kli rishon* has the ability to halachically cook foods whereas a *kli sheini* doesn't. What is the

difference? *Tosfos* explains that the walls of a *kli rishon*, since it was directly exposed to heat, maintain their heat for extended periods (even when removed from heat) and are able to continue cooking. A *kli sheini*, however, was never directly exposed to heat, and its walls cool off relatively quickly. Based on the above, as long as one sufficiently heats up the *kli sheini* so that it no longer is in the process of cooling off, it qualifies for a *kashering* just like a *kli rishon*. Thus, spraying the interior of a tanker with hot water for an extended time has the ability to heat the walls so that it is no longer considered a *kli sheini*.

As has been demonstrated, it is crucial to maintain the kosher integrity of products and ingredients from the point of manufacture until the final packaging. By examining every point of production, including the transport and wash phase, we can be hopeful that the kosher status of all ingredients hasn't been compromised. Just another example of the intricacies of kosher certification.

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