

Terminal Tractor/Yard Spotter

Used Yard Spotter Texas - Tow tractors, sometimes call towing tractors or tow tugs, are vehicles used in transporting loads horizontally in warehouses, manufacturing plants, airports, arenas and other large facilities. These machines can tow numerous trailers in a train or snake-like formation. Tow tractors can move aircraft into and outside of airport locations such as terminals and hangars. Tractive effort is how these machines transport loads. Tractive effort refers to the total amount of traction a vehicle deploys on the ground. Tractive effort says that the heavier the load, the more tractive effort is required. The unit works by lifting a part of the load while it is towing; however, the load's wheels stay on the ground. The tractive effort is increased by the unit's hydraulic mast. This has been engineered to produce downforce on the drive wheel directly under the mast. Traction allows the machine to deliver very large and heavy loads. Types of Tow Tractors Heavy-duty tow tractors and load carriers are two types of tow tractors. Load Carriers Many industries including airport baggage divisions, manufacturing, parcel transportation and e-commerce rely on moving items of various sizes to and from different locations. Load carrier tow tractors or tow tugs are especially useful for these types of applications because they allow the single items to be gathered and stacked on the wheeled platforms, ready to be attached for tow and transport by the tow tractor. Load carrier tow tractor models are categorized in the material handling equipment that covers cranes, forklifts and pallet jacks. Load carrier tow tugs do not transport items from high places such as shelves or platforms. They only move cargo at ground level. Therefore, the load must already be on wheels or on a wheeled platform, ready to be transported. Wheeled platforms are called skates, trollies and bogies. The tow tractor attaches to the trolley and operates similarly to how train cars are attached to a locomotive. Generally, the steel coupling on the tow tug's male-end joins to the front trolley's female-end. Trollies move in a train-like system thanks to the male-end steel coupling on the back which can connect to numerous units and allow a single tug to transport them. These machines can transport a variety of items in varying conditions. The availability of many different types of trollies also allows for greater customization in transporting items. Many trollies can be connected since they are compatible with one another. Different kinds of trollies can be maneuvered in a single train, creating flexible transport options. Load carrier tow tractors deliver a clear view for the operator which can be better than relying on forklifts. Further, load carrier tow tractors tow their trollies behind them in a forward-only direction which decreases the safety concerns created by forklifts operating in reverse. This design is excellent for locations that have a high level of safety such as manufacturing locations and airports. It is more economical to tow multiple items when possible with a tug than using a forklift truck to transport single items. Tugs are easy to move and safe to use. A key benefit of these units is that typically, the operator doesn't need a license. Tow tractor operators do not need licenses since they don't lift loads off of the ground. There are three subtypes of load carrier tow tractors: 1. Pedestrian; 2. Stand-in; and 3. Rider-seated. Pedestrian Tow Tractors A walk-behind model that can transport wheeled loads is called a pedestrian tow tractor. These machines may go by the names of electric hand tug, electric tugger, electric tug or tow tractor. These compact machines are simple to use and can maneuver easily. Stand-in Tow Tractors The most common design for businesses that rely on horizontal manufacturing transport and order picking are stand-in tow tractors. These units deliver a secure driver platform and deliver a smaller footprint compared to the rider-seated models. Rider-Seated Tow Tractors Rider-seated tow tractors are similar to stand-in models except they offer a seated platform for the operator. These types of load carrier tow tractors are popular where loads are transported over longer distances, such as airport baggage systems where checked baggage is transported from the check-in counter at the front of an airport to the aircraft at the terminal, often a great distance from one another. These rider-seated options help to decrease driver fatigue allowing for greater efficiency. Heavy Duty Tow Tractors Aviation relies on the pushback concept for moving big passenger and cargo aircraft. Pushing an aircraft back from the airport terminal without using the aircraft's

own power is the pushback concept. Pushback is achieved by employing pushback tugs or pushback tractors. Pushback tugs feature a low-profile enabling them to travel under the aircraft's nose for easy attachment. Because of the added heavy weight of the aircraft, these tow tractors must be heavy enough to retain enough traction on the ground in order to move the aircraft. A common tractor for moving large aircraft can weigh in up to fifty-four tons. Their driver's cab has the ability to be lowered and raised for increased visibility during reversing. The pushback tow tractor and pushback tug are also employed when taxiing the aircraft is not an option. They are commonly used to move the machine into and outside of aircraft maintenance hangars. The pushback tow tractors come in two subtypes, the towbarless and the conventional. Conventional Pushback Tow Tractors Conventional units rely on a tow bar to connect the tug to the aircraft's nose landing gear. Laterally attached to the nose landing gear, the tow tractor can make certain slight vertical height adjustments if needed. At the end that attaches to the tug, the tow bar may pivot freely laterally and vertically. In this manner, the tow bar acts as a large lever to rotate the nose landing gear. There are a towbar and precise tow fitting that acts as an adapter between the standard-sized tow pin and on the landing gear of the aircraft. Heavy towbars have their own wheels for big aircraft and can ride on these wheels when disconnected from planes. The wheels are attached to a hydraulic jacking mechanism which can lift the towbar to the correct height to mate to both the airplane and the tug, and once this is accomplished the same mechanism is used in reverse to raise the tow bar wheels from the ground during the pushback process. The towbar is capable of being connected at the tractor's rear or front, depending on if the machine needs to be pulled or pushed. Depending on whether the aircraft needs to be pushed or pulled, the towbar can be attached to the front or rear of the tractor. Towbarless Pushback Tow Tractors Towbarless tractors work without a towbar and scoop up the aircrafts' nose landing gear to lift it off of the ground instead. This design facilitates higher speeds greater aircraft control and can eliminate the necessity of having a worker inside of the cockpit to apply the brakes. The main advantage of a towbarless tug is simplicity; there is no need to maintain multiple towbars. By connecting the tug directly to the aircraft's landing gear tug operators have better control and responsiveness when maneuvering.