



refrigerated services: equipment

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Temperature control and a clean environment are crucial for perishable shipments. Reputable companies invest in the right kind of equipment and create streamlined systems for getting your products where they need to go, fast.

Learn how companies offering refrigerated services ensure the safety of your shipment. Here are some questions to help you decide who to hire.



1. How do you make sure my products stay cold getting from A to B?

A transport refrigeration unit or “reefer” maintains temperatures in refrigerated trailers during transit, and companies have precise systems and practices to guarantee them. They may describe these strategies to you:

- Drivers use a **temperature probe** when loading to check that your product is at the right temperature and record it for you on your Bill of Lading.
- A reefer with **data download** gives access to temperature settings throughout the trip, which is important for confirming they are properly maintained (especially if there are product integrity issues upon delivery).
- Reefers have **warning lights**, visible to the driver in the cab. Drivers can access a reefer’s “fault codes” and take action with support from the carrier if a critical problem arises.
- Some companies use **satellite tracking** (e.g., via GPS) to monitor the location of their equipment, temperatures, and even how long the trailer door remains open during deliveries. They may also be able to resolve temperature fluctuations remotely.

The company should have a method for informing you about problems that may arise as well as what it has done to resolve them.

2. Can your refrigerated equipment handle more than one temperature?

Trailers can offer single, dual and/or tri-zone temperature control, which is particularly important for less than truckload (LTL) shipments with varying requirements. Evaporators (i.e., remote reefer units in addition to the main reefer) and cold walls help control temperatures in multi-zone trailers.

- Evaporators may be wall mounted or flush (roof mounted). Roof mounted evaporators allow more efficient packing of the space in a temperature “zone” or compartment. This reduces costs for you and the company.

Your way ahead





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- The cold walls separating compartments may be roof mounted or portable. Roof-mounted walls can create compartment size limitations but fit more precisely than portable versions. Unlike portable walls, they also can't be left off the trailer by mistake. Companies may also offer horizontal- or centre-divide cold walls, or both. These options can give you more flexibility in terms of compartment size and can allow better accessibility for loading/unloading LTL shipments, which helps reduce delays.
- "Invertible" evaporators allow carriers to set the coldest temperatures in the rear of the trailer rather than the nose (nearest the tractor, where the main reefer unit is located), which allows more flexibility for routing.

These technologies allow more efficient use of trailers with multi-temperature zones. You don't need to be an expert at how they work, but your carrier should be able to identify and explain the options offered and the benefits involved.

4. What happens if the vehicle is stopped or delayed?

An efficient system avoids any breaks in the cold chain. Ask carriers about:

- **electric standby capability** - a reefer unit that can be plugged in at the loading or receiving dock ensures a steady temperature throughout the process.
- **refrigerated crossdocks/warehouses** - especially for less than truckload shipments, if carriers need to transfer products from one truck to another before they reach their final destination.
- **refrigerated storage** - to maintain temperatures when there is a delay between receiving and shipment or a shipment is refused for some reason and must return.

Please ask questions! We share your concern for the safety of your products.

Your way ahead