



Steve Hansma – Electrical Engineer
Allied Electric, Inc.

“Chances are we won’t be buying anything but these Sprinter vans in the future.”

An electrical engineer by training and a car enthusiast by avocation, Steven Hansma was the logical choice to take on the responsibility for the fleet of service trucks run by Allied Electric, the 160-person electrical contracting company started by his uncle in 1969.

And just as logical was his decision last year to start buying Freightliner Sprinters for that fleet.

The promise of significantly better fuel economy was the major attraction for the switch. “The majority of our company business is in the construction market,” says Steve. “We have over 20 GM 1-ton and Astro vans. They go out heavily loaded with tools and materials, so they only average about eight to nine MPG. We thought we could do better than that.”

At first, Steve admits, the company struggled with the Sprinter’s higher initial price, so he bought two more GM full-size vans at the same time he ordered his first three Sprinters last September to see how they compared on fuel economy.



Freightliner
SPRINTER
FORWARD MOTION

ALLIED ELECTRIC, INC.
GRAND RAPIDS, MI

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The results? The Sprinters are averaging 22 to 26 MPG on diesel. With Allied Electric's trucks running 25,000 to 30,000 miles a year, “Tripling our fuel mileage makes up that initial difference real quick,” says Steve.



But it's not just fuel economy that makes the Sprinter such a logical choice for Allied Electric and a sister service company called Sherco Communications.

“The vans are primarily used for our service department which receives as many as 20 calls per day. The vans are fully loaded and operate as a stand alone warehouse for completing each project. As our service men work on the specific project or task they are constantly pulling material from the shelves in the van,” says Steve. “The Sprinter's



straight walls make it easier to fit with bins and shelves to hold that inventory.”

“We also use our vans for workshops at construction sites that don't have enclosed space,” Steve explains. “The extra height inside the Sprinter makes it much more comfortable when guys have to fabricate electrical boxes and other things inside the van because it's raining or snowing.”

It's not just a better working environment. “The old vans were stripped down,” says Steve. “The Sprinters come with air conditioning, cassette and CD players, keyless entry, and power locks. Even the seats are more adjustable.”

“Our guys have no trouble cruising at highway speeds, and they don't have to stop to put fuel in them every day. Those kinds of things are important,” Steve points out.

“Our guys take their trucks home at night so they can leave the next day directly for their assigned work sites. If they're in



an environment they like, they're going to be more productive on the job.”

The fact that it's a safer environment is another major

plus for the Sprinters. “They have dual air bags, as well as ABS and traction control,” Steve says. “In general, vans aren't great in the snow, but these seem to be a bit better than the others when they're tracking down a snowy road.”

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On top of better fuel economy and the safer, more productive work environment for technicians, the Sprinters are showing significant operational cost advantages as Allied puts on the miles.



“With the cost and hassle of relocating ladder racks and interior shelving, we tend to run our trucks a bit longer than most,” says Steve. “The GM vans are usually shot by 130,000 miles. It appears that we’ll get a whole lot longer life from the Sprinters. In fact, we’re hoping now that they’ll go 200,000 miles before we trade them.”

Even service intervals with the diesel powered Sprinters contribute to both lower vehicle costs and better productivity. “The oil change intervals are over 10,000 miles,” Steve says. “Not having people

sitting around waiting for an oil change so often is a real savings.”

And while he can’t put a dollar figure on it, the Sprinter’s appearance is another plus in Steve’s eyes.

“We’ve got that big, clean-looking vehicle out on the road with our name on it in big blue lettering,” he says. “It’s one way to help market our services without doing anything but going about our business.”

In the final analysis, the real recommendation comes from the company’s bank account.

“We bought three more Sprinters in the last year,” says Steve. “Chances are we won’t be buying anything but these Sprinter



vans in the future, especially if gas prices stay where they are.”

Safety, longevity, low maintenance, comfort, productivity, and appearance — all on top of exceptional fuel economy.

Add it up, and Allied Electric believes the Sprinter is clearly the right truck for their business.

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Some of its design features may seem insignificant.
The "check engine" light for instance.



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*See dealer for a copy of this limited warranty. A deductible applies.



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