



# Whiz through Ontario

THANE BURNETT INDULGES IN A LITTLE GUTTER JOURNALISM AND FINDS A REAL TRUCK-BOMB OF A STORY

By [THANE BURNETT](#), TORONTO SUN

COME ALONG with me on a trip down our yellow brick roads.

As I stand here in a stream of warm wind whipped up by Canada's busiest highway, urine for a big shock at what's simmering at my feet. They're "Truck Bombs" -- bottles of pee, tossed out the cabs of 18-wheelers as they whiz by us.

Truckers on the go, apparently, aren't slowing down to go. So, as they rumble beside minivans and family cars, an untold number of big rig drivers have one hand on the wheel and the other guiding a line of urine into plastic bottles or even pickle jars. Flushing means simply shipping their toxic cargo out their window without slowing down.

## 'PEE BOTTLE CORRIDOR'

The practice began to make a splash with horrified U.S. highway officials a few years ago. A crew near Spokane collected more than 300 along a state highway in a week. The I-80 in Nevada has become known as the "pee bottle corridor." In North Dakota, one official estimates road crews are covered in a golden shower 20 to 40 times a year by the containers -- also dubbed "torpedoes" -- as they explode in the hot sun. And as soon as a mower hits one, things also hit the fan.

Some U.S. legislators have developed a new category of litter -- toxic toss, which includes piddle jugs and fecal waste. Fines can be \$1,025, though in Ontario, it's a \$110 ticket.

In the late '90s, a trucker in Utah was killed in a wreck -- his pants around his knees and a pee jug on the floor of his cab.

A single, small county in Washington state decided to do their own count, and in a year found 2,666 bottles of urine and 67 feces-covered items. That didn't include diapers.

Last December, a county waste office in that state took out a full-page newspaper ad featuring a photo of a plastic milk jug filled with urine. The caption read: "Okay, One last time: This is not a urinal."

My call to Ontario's ministry of transportation found little concern. Spokesman Will Mackenzie said of the jugs: "It's not a common situation."

He's wrong.

I've picked a spot along the 401 -- a single kilometre, just an hour west of Toronto and 20 km from a rest stop.

Gutter journalism? Sure. But you have to see this.

## BAKED BOMB

Past a fading Tim Hortons cup and two empty beer bottles -- a few steps from where I've parked my car -- I nudge the first truck bomb with my boot. I'm careful, having been warned they can burst open after baking for awhile.

More steps and more jugs of trucker whiz.

Pepsi bottles, a Gatorade container and more water jugs -- all glistening yellow under the hot sun as nearby, lush green farmer fields push into blue skies. It would make a great postcard for the province's old slogan -- Ontario; Keep it Beautiful -- if it wasn't for the, you know, body waste.

In this one stretch, picked at random, I stumble over a dozen undetonated truck bombs. And I'm not looking too closely at the multitude of other smashed and open bottles. At one point, the head of a bottle points -- like an accusing finger -- at a baggie filled with tissue and possibly fecal matter.

As I walk past an XXX video box for young vixens in Mexico, it almost seems at home.

## URINARY TRACK

Standing here, on the side of the highway near Kitchener, this urinary track of infection has me more concerned about stepping on some driver's specimen than being hit by the truck he's driving.

John, a 30-year veteran trucker, explains the interchanges are even more ripe with inexcusable excreta.

"It's just disgusting ... the guys push back their seats and let go," he explained -- not wanting to give his last name.

We talked in the parking lot of a gas stop, minutes from where I'm now avoiding picking up urine samples.

The 58-year-old Guelph trucker -- heading to Montreal -- laments he used to see them only on U.S. trips. Now, trucker bombs seem as common as shredded tires along our roads.

Many drivers -- pressed for time and wanting to earn a diminishing dollar -- are willing to ignore their biological systems in favour of a delivery clock.

"It's all about money and time," John said, noting a 15-minute rest stop can mean hitting Toronto or Montreal traffic.

OPP Sgt. Cam Wooley said officers are noting more and more ditched pee bottles.

"Long-haul truckers just don't want to stop," he explained.

At a gas station, he watched a car driver try to clean off his vehicle. The traveller was out of washer fluid and thought he found a jug with some liquid left in it.

It turned out to be a special delivery, left by a trucker.

Welcome, summer travellers, to Ontario the once-beautiful.

Now just another fun-filled urination.