



**WATCO**  
COMPANIES, INC.  
"Your Transportation Specialists"

**Contact:** Julie Fortman  
Communications Coordinator  
**Phone:** (620)-235-7351  
**Fax:** (620)-231-0812  
**E-Mail:** [jfortman@watcocompanies.com](mailto:jfortman@watcocompanies.com)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

***Watco Companies receives Regional Award from KDOC&H***

**PITTSBURG—(June 9, 2005)**—Watco Companies, Inc. (Watco) of Pittsburg has been recognized as the Southeast Regional Service Division winner of the Kansas Business Appreciation Month Awards. The awards were presented by the Kansas Department of Commerce and Housing today in Iola and recognize Kansas businesses for important contributions they make to the Kansas Economy.

Additionally, Watco received the Governor's Award of Excellence, the highest award a business can receive from the state, during the Kansas Cavalry Encampment on June 1. The award honors a business that exemplifies Kansas values and makes a tremendous contribution to the economy and the quality of life in the community it serves.

Watco was nominated by the Crawford County Convention & Visitors Bureau and recognized for providing multiple rail services via twelve railroads nationwide. Two of those railroads, The South Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad and the Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad,

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cover more than 1,000 miles in Kansas. Watco also provides industrial switching services, full service repair, mobile repair services, railcar leasing, warehousing and locomotive repair and maintenance across Kansas and the United States.

The KDOC&H also recognized Watco Companies for its support and partnership with various community efforts including Heart of the Heartlands, a historical railroad preservation group. Through this partnership, Watco Companies and Heart of the Heartlands are able to provide nostalgia during passenger train rides, while educating passengers on safety and knowledge of the railroad industry. Additionally, Watco was recognized for initiating the creation of the Port of Pittsburg in 2002, which was established to preserve and protect current rail assets while creating additional ones.

Rick Webb, CEO, said the significance of receiving this award lies in its employees who provide quality Customer Service. “We feel honored to be recognized by the state of Kansas, but it’s our outstanding people in the company who deserve to be recognized. Their daily dedication to provide the best quality service for our Customers is the reason we are successful.”

Watco received Awards of Merit from the KDOC&H in 2000, 2001 and 2002. In 2003, Watco received the Regional Achievement Award. Created in 1983, Watco currently owns and operates locations in 19 states and employs 1,500 people. The Corporate office is located in Pittsburg.