

# IN THE AGGREGATE SPACE, *TRINITYRAIL* IS TRIPLING DOWN

**A new triple hopper car design will provide customers with yet another menu option to meet their evolving equipment needs**

For *TrinityRail*®, the aggregate space is a growth market. It's also a market in transition. Federal infrastructure funding in recent years has led to new roads, new buildings and other new construction, and "all of it requires rock," says Mike Frey, *TrinityRail*'s Senior Vice President of Energy, Construction and Metals.

So do energy and e-commerce related products. There's also been "a big push for more data centers, which is a new realm for the aggregate space," says *TrinityRail* Director of Sales Brad Krocheski. "Millions of tons of product are needed for this space. Once we start to see housing come back, there's going to be even more growth."



***TrinityRail*'s 2,403-cubic-foot rapid discharge triple hopper is equipped with three pneumatically operated discharge gates, featuring a transverse design to support versatile and efficient unloading operations for aggregates.**

Aggregate shippers' equipment needs also vary widely. And as their rail cars age, they're seeking new equipment solutions.

Enter solution-focused *TrinityRail*.

"We take a holistic view of the supply chain to see how we can fill any voids and gaps," Krocheski says.

One recent gap-filling solution: a new triple hopper car design that provides aggregate shippers with another option to help them meet their evolving requirements.

"Customer feedback is a big reason we decided to stay hyper-focused on the triple hopper," Krocheski says. "We've got a triple hopper car that works well, but we thought: 'What can we do to make it better for our customers and the industry?'"

*TrinityRail* has a long history of asking such questions, particularly in the aggregate space.

In 1961, the company introduced Rapid Discharge® (RD) open hoppers for coal and woodchip service. A decade or so later, the RD's versatile transverse discharge door system was adopted by sand, rock and minerals shippers in the form of the RDL™.

"The gate was longitudinal, and fewer gates meant less maintenance," says Frey, who joined *TrinityRail* in 2015 after stints with Norfolk Southern Railway, food shipper Redgold Inc. and chemical company Celanese Corp.

With the 2008 unveiling of the 2,402-cubic-foot longitudinal RDL-A™ Hopper, *TrinityRail* applied the technology for aggregate shippers. Available in all-steel or hybrid designs, the RDL-A provides touch-pad control and quick discharge.

"The RDL-A staked our claim in the space," Frey says.

*TrinityRail* also offers the 2,403-cubic-foot Rapid Discharge Triple Hopper. Equipped with three pneumatically operated discharge gates, the car features a transverse design to support versatile and efficient unloading operations. Like the RDL-A, the cars offer touch-pad control. Operators also enjoy safer, hands-free operation, which eliminates manual intervention and streamlines the unloading process even more.

But aggregate shippers have a range of needs. Many don't have the capacity to handle high-volume cars.

"They want a safe, lightweight, high-capacity design, and the new triple hopper design provides the solution," Frey says.

The *TrinityRail* product development team began working on the new triple hopper design last year.

"We took what we learned with the RDL-A and optimized the underframe using different materials," says Senior Design Engineer Daniel Cortez. "We're also optimizing around the center sill to gain more [cubic feet] without widening the car." The new triple hopper design will offer a capacity of 2,430 cubic feet.

*TrinityRail* plans to unveil the new triple hopper this year. It will join an array of equipment solutions the company has developed over the years, including the A-Gon, a 42-foot gondola suited for customers that don't have the flexibility to unload into a pit; and cut-down cars (coal cars "cut down" to create a reduced capacity car).

The point: Whether aggregate shippers unload into a pit or with an excavator, *TrinityRail* has a menu of options to meet their needs, says Frey, who has made listening to customers and acting upon what he hears a priority during his time with *TrinityRail*. Krocheski has, too.

"We're not going to say, 'Here's a car, accept it,' he says. "It's about listening to feedback from customers and thinking about what we can do to help them — and to make the industry better. The new triple hopper design is a testament to that." ■