

# Lipe Clutch Is Back And Some Owner-Operators Are Glad

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In our world of high performance diesel engines, we often produce enough power to slip the standard Eaton 2,050-foot pound clutch, especially during truck pulls. Even bobtail drag racing can slip the clutch with the power we can produce from today's engines.

Many of our performance engines produce around 3,000 foot-pounds of torque. Whether it's a 12.7-liter Detroit or a 15-liter Caterpillar, extreme torque is produced and transmission, drive shaft, or differential problems do not happen as long as owner-operators are behind the wheel.



The weak link is the clutch. Back in the '70s there was a clutch manufacturer called Lipe, and they made a great clutch. Unfortunately, they were bought out by their competitor and never made another Lipe clutch. We would search the salvage yards for old Lipe clutches, have them rebuilt and only sold them to owner-operators who used their trucks in competitive events or in heavy-haul applications.

The clutches were expensive. By the time we purchased the clutch from a salvage yard, had it rebuilt, and paid the freight we had \$1,200 invested. What made the Lipe clutch, or should we say pressure plate, so good, was the manner in which the straight springs pushed against the outside edge of the pressure plate. The competitor's clutch uses angled springs that push against the inner edge of the pressure plate. This is fine for stock engines, but it's not enough force for high-performance diesel engines.

Here is something I want you to think about: How many times have you been driving along and thought "wouldn't it be nice if they would bring back...something that you really enjoyed or a product that really worked well? Well, guess what. The Lipe clutch is back and doing a great job in the high-performance diesel engines. They are rated at 2,250 foot-pounds of torque, but they are holding around 3,000 foot-pounds on the street and in semi truck pulling. As far as the effort required to push the clutch pedal, it's just slightly more than an Easy Pedal®. It's a smoother engagement and disengagement because the three levers that pull on the plate have needle bearings at the pivot points. The Lipe disengages 25 percent further than the Eaton, which makes for easier shifting.

Another nice feature of the Lipe clutch assembly is that there are no adjustments to be made. Simply adjust the throw-out bearing one time during installation and that's it. Another reason the Lipe clutch is so smooth is that all of the pieces are balanced independently, which means they don't have to stay together as a set. Also, installation is much easier because you can install one piece at time.

The heaviest part is about 70 pounds as opposed to the Eaton, which weighs about 150 pounds. The Lipe clutch carries a two-year warranty while other clutch manufacturer warranties are one year. If your truck is stock...the 2,000 foot-pound (version) has six pads of ceramic, which is the same as the 2,250 foot-pound clutch. Both clutches have an 8 ¼-inch center so the only difference is in the springs of the pressure plate. The amount of force it takes to push on the clutch pedal is minimal. The 2,000 foot-pound pressure plate is slightly less than the 2,250 foot-pound pressure plate. We have (many) Lipe clutches to date and no one has mentioned the pedal pressure, but they have mentioned how smooth the engagement is. Andy Kushner of Pittsburgh, PA runs a C-16 600 hp Cat in a Pete and was never happy with the stock OEM clutches and now he runs a Lipe Clutch and loves how smooth the clutch engages and disengages.



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