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Central Point, OR. -- Self-driving cars could be hitting the roadways in the next five to 10 years. Now the conversation is shifting to how it's going to impact jobs within the trucking industry. TP Trucking in Central Points says it's ready to adapt to new technology, but they still need drivers behind the wheel.

For clarification, self-driving cars do not have a driver inside, while autonomous cars are controlled by a computer or digitally, but still have a driver inside.

Today three local trucking companies told NewsWatch12 a lack of qualified drivers is the biggest problem within their industry right now.

"Now the younger generation doesn't want to be in a truck, they don't want to be away from home. So they aren't interested in becoming truck drivers," says David Hopkins, the Logistics Manager of TP Trucking.

While self-driving cars could pose another risk to this industry, the local companies say they still need drivers for safety reasons. TP Trucking says the majority of the driving in an autonomous semi-truck will be done by the computer, and the truck driver is still there for oversight.

"What happens when in an autonomous truck the computer goes down all of a sudden, and the truck is going down the road? That's one of the reasons to have an individual there," says Hopkins.

Siskiyou Transportation Inc. says we won't be seeing autonomous trucks for awhile because the public isn't fully on board yet.

"A lot of that is just going to be convincing the public that this is a safe mode," says Mark Gibson, President of Siskiyou Transportation Inc.

Professional Transportation Services Inc. in Central Point says autonomous semis will be a great job boost for smaller companies like their's.

"It will probably in the short term benefit our company because it will be easier to find drivers," says Nick Hewitt, Owner of Professional Transportation Services Inc.

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