

# PRO

PORTABLE RESTROOM OPERATOR

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February 2009  
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Louisville '09  
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## Show Issue!

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**PRO**  
PORTABLE RESTROOM OPERATOR

**Published monthly by**

COLE Publishing  
1720 Maple Lake Dam Rd. • PO Box 220  
Three Lakes, WI 54562

In U.S. or Canada call toll-free 800-257-7222  
Elsewhere call 715-546-3346  
www.promonthly.com  
E-mail: pro@promonthly.com  
Fax 715-546-3786  
Office hours 7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. CT M-F

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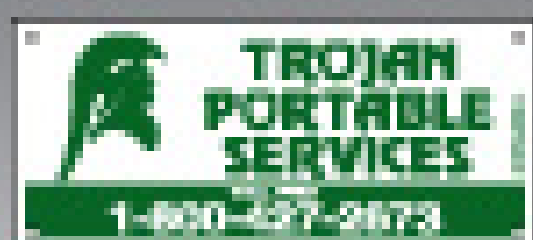
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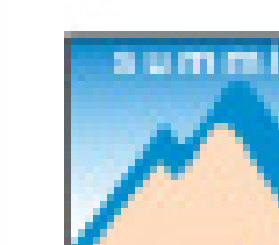


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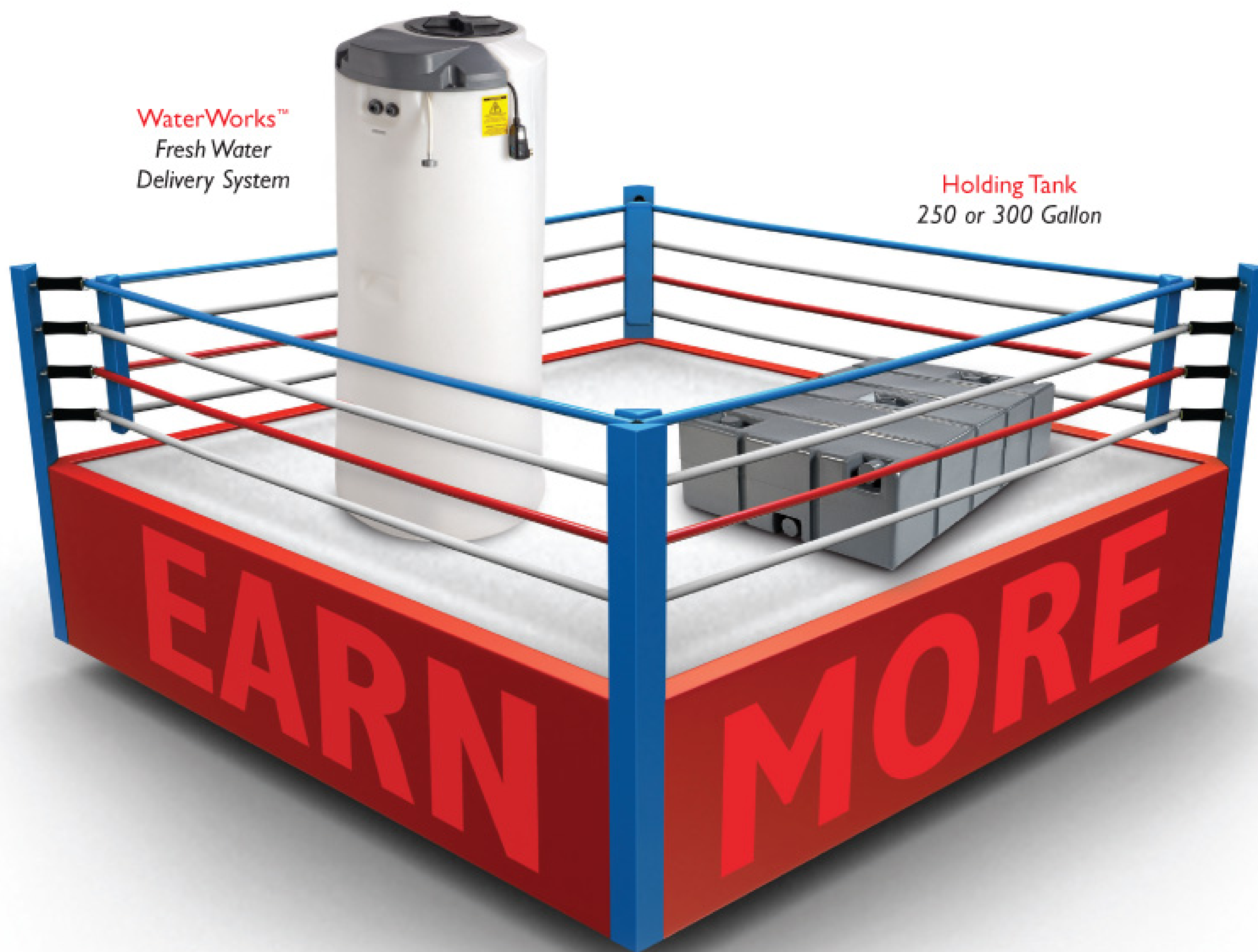
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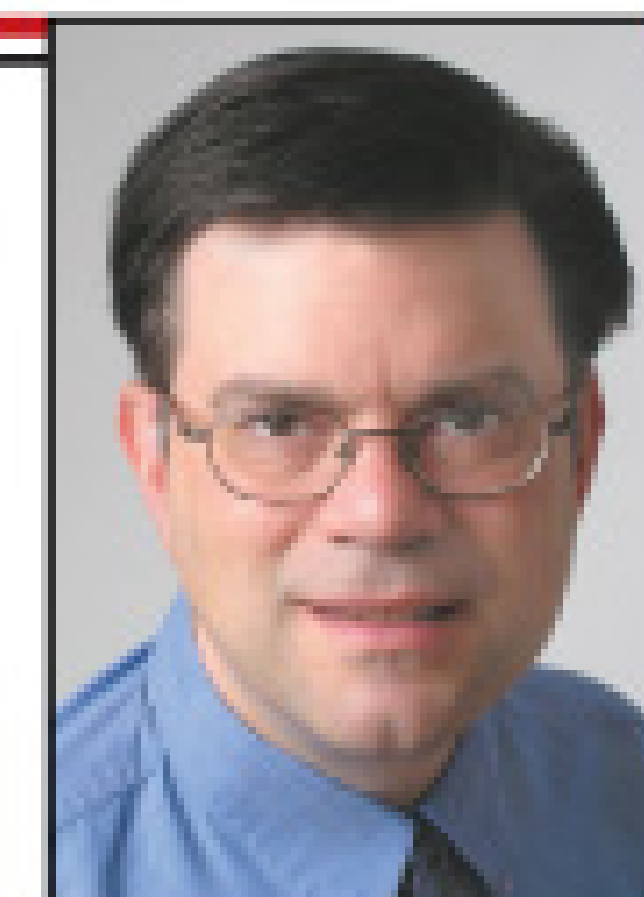
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## We've Got Your Back

**When disaster struck Maine PRO Jeff Bellino, portable sanitation rivals pitched in to help keep his company going**

*By Jim Kneiszel*

**I**t's said that in the face of great adversity, you find out who your real friends are.

When Jeff Bellino's portable sanitation business burned to the ground last October, many true friends emerged from an unlikely place ... his direct competition. Several of the first calls of support he received after an early morning blaze claimed his Royal Flush Portable Restrooms building in Scarborough, Maine, were from PROs he competes with head-to-head.

### **RALLY THE TROOPS**

The competitors offered restrooms, vacuum trucks, toilet paper, even route drivers to help him keep afloat during the days and weeks following the fire. Bellino is amazed and heartened by the offer of a helping hand from companies that could have benefited from his struggles to continue providing service.

"Whatever they did to help me cost them money and helped me," Bellino says, getting a little choked up retelling the story. "I couldn't thank them enough. It's a really amazing thing that they helped me stay on track and not miss a beat. It goes to show that you can be competitors and still help each other out."

Searching for a way to recognize the actions of the fellow PROs that meant so much to him, Bellino called me recently to share his story. He explained that shortly after the fire was covered on the local Portland, Maine, television news, offers of help started pouring in.

A-1 Environmental Services of nearby Wells, Maine, immediately provided a few restrooms, toilet tissue and chemicals so Bellino's drivers could maintain their service routes. Associated Portable Toilets of South Portland offered trucks and manpower. Other companies offered temporary warehouse space for the business, or simply called to offer support and encouragement.

"They didn't have to do this. It spoke volumes to me about them as people," Bellino says of the helping hands. "They really could have let me struggle."

### **WE HAD TO HELP**

Not so, says T.J. Troiano, who owns Associated Portable Toilets with his brother, Michael Paul Troiano. Troiano says he respects Bellino as a good competitor and he would

always have his fellow PRO's back in a time of emergency.

"I still go by the saying, 'Treat people how you would want to be treated.' What if the shoe was on the other foot? You help out and hope that if you're ever in need, the favor will be returned," Troiano says.

Another business owned by Troiano's family offered rented warehouse space, and Bellino accepted as winter was closing in. While the fire took many of Bellino's supplies, records and tools, he was lucky that



*"Whatever they did to help me cost them money and helped me. I couldn't thank them enough. It's a really amazing thing that they helped me stay on track and not miss a beat. It goes to show that you can be competitors and still help each other out."*

Jeff Bellino

the majority of his restrooms were still in the field and none of his four service vehicles were parked inside the building, a wooden structure that was a total loss.

All things considered, Bellino is thankful the fire happened near the end of the busy season, before trucks would be stored inside and his 600 units would be back on the property. And with demand on the decline for winter, Bellino doesn't have to worry about quickly replacing the 140 units lost in the blaze.

Despite competing for some of the same accounts — Troiano has lost customers to Bellino and vice-versa — Troiano views it as friendly competition among quality service providers. And if they're both doing

a good job for customers, that elevates the reputation of the portable sanitation industry, he says.

"I really respect what he's done," Troiano says of Bellino, who started Royal Flush from scratch in 2000, ironically after unsuccessfully trying to rent a restroom from Troiano's company. Troiano had all of his units in the field at the time, which gave Bellino the idea to start a competing







*"I still go by the saying, 'Treat people how you would want to be treated.' What if the shoe was on the other foot? You help out and hope that if you're ever in need, the favor will be returned."*

T.J. Troiano

company. Troiano holds no grudges, and learned something from the experience. "To say the least, we've never run out of restrooms since then," he jokes.

#### MET AT PUMPER & CLEANER EXPO

Nathan Gay, owner of A-1 Environmental Service, has a similar view about helping Bellino. Oddly enough, though, the two PROs share part of their service territories; they first met at the Pumper & Cleaner Environmental Expo several years ago. They became fast friends and work a number of big special event jobs together.

"I would view him as a stand-up, trustworthy guy. Not only is he a good competitor, but he's become a good friend," Gay says. "I'm glad to help him out and I'm sure he would return the favor if the same thing happened to me."



Nathan Gay

Both Gay and Troiano say worthy competition from Bellino keeps all the local PROs on their toes and working to provide quality service. And that, in turn, improves the perception the public has about portable sanitation around Portland.

"It makes for a better name for the industry, Troiano says. "Years ago, people saw a portable toilet and said, 'I don't want to go in that thing.' We've tried to change the industry. They're not portable toilets anymore. They're portable restrooms. We're making everything look better."

#### WISH THEM WELL

Upon reflection, Bellino says he could have expected the gratifying response from his nearest competitors. They offer the same helpful attitude he sees from other PROs when he attends the Pumper & Cleaner Expo. If you're at the Expo in Louisville this month, you might run into Bellino, Troiano and Gay. If you do, shake their hands and thank them for helping build on a positive reputation for the industry.

"The Pumper show is such an exciting time for me. At the Pumper show you can get pretty jacked about the industry," Bellino says. "I come back from the Expo and I'm on cloud nine."

#### SPEAKING OF THE EXPO ...

If you're planning your trip to Louisville for the Expo — or you're reading this issue for the first time on the exhibit floor of the Kentucky Exposition Center — I welcome you to stop by the COLE Publishing editor's booth to say hello.

The Expo provides my best opportunity to talk to PROs and learn about the issues that are most affecting their businesses today. In a challenging business climate, it's more important than ever for PRO to address the pressing questions and concerns of portable sanitation contractors. Your feedback is critical to helping us make that happen.

Thanks for reading, and we'll see you at the Expo. ■



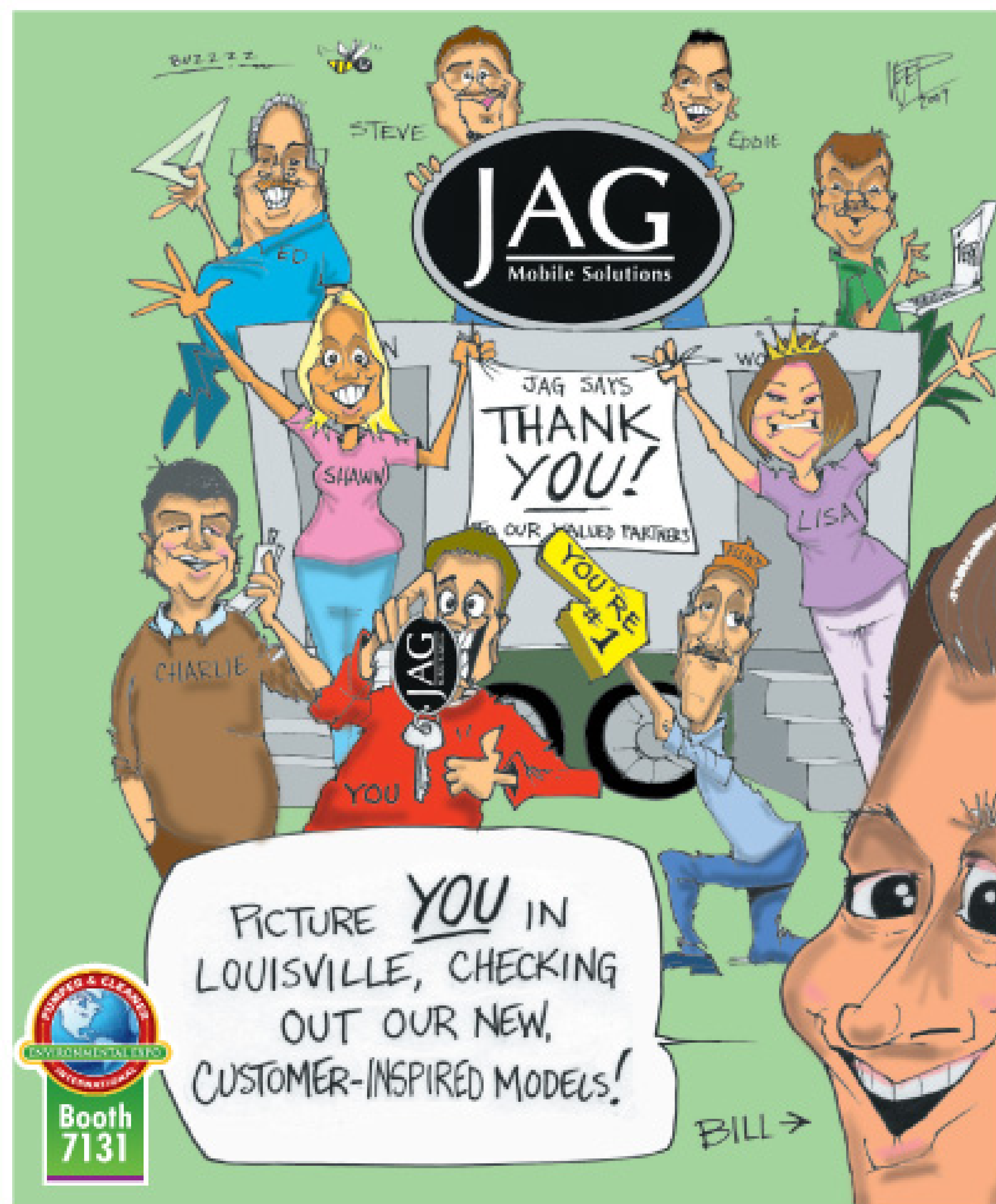
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# SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Schedule subject to change without notice.

## WEDNESDAY

February 25, 2009

- Education Day - All Day - No Exhibits
- More than 40 Educational Sessions
- Networking 5-7 p.m.

## THURSDAY

February 26, 2009

- Certified Onsite Installer Course
- Exhibits Open: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- Educational Seminars: 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.
- Women's Wine, Cheese and Fashion Show  
2 p.m - 4 p.m.
- Industry Appreciation Party  
5 p.m. - Refreshments Available

## FRIDAY

February 27, 2009

- Exhibits Open: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- Educational Seminars: 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.

## SATURDAY

February 28, 2009

- Exhibits Open: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
- Saturday Evening Jam  
5 p.m. - 38 Special  
7 p.m. - Montgomery Gentry  
*(Show times are approximate)*



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MONTGOMERY  
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# Show Me the Money!

**Collecting debt is no fun, but it's got to be done to preserve precious profits**

*By Judy Kneiszel*

**R**ecently on one of the COLE Publishing online discussion forums, the topic of conversation centered on what to do when customers refused to pay. One reader who had owned a septic pumping business, offered the following advice:

"... We used to imply that we would gladly give the customer a 'return' of his waste if he would rather not pay the bill. When they see your pumper truck rolling up ... you hand them the bill and settle the matter right there. Now, the trick is that you cannot, under any circumstances, redeposit the sewage back in the system. But they don't always know that."

While this strategy seems a bit extreme, it would get the point across. The key message here, I think, is your business needs to find ways to make it clear to the slow payers and the no-payers that you mean business when it comes to collections.

## **BEGIN AT THE BEGINNING**

Requiring a deposit of one-third to one-half of the total value of the contract upfront, or at least enough to cover materials used during the contract period, is a way of ensuring that at least some costs are covered should the customer come up short later on.

Another way to buy yourself a little security is to take the customer's credit card information as a "deposit" and inform them you will process their payment through the credit card if other payment is not received within 30 days of its due date.

*The key to successful collections is keeping lines of communication open, and keeping the pressure on. Constant communication trains customers to pay bills promptly and leads to an efficient, professional relationship with them.*

When a contract is complete you should be paid in full, so generally there's no need to extend credit to consumers unless you deliver service over a long period and bill monthly or

in stages. Some larger clients, however, may want some type of credit on a revolving-account basis, such as 30, 60, 90 or even 120 days after completion of the service. If you are extending credit to a new customer, safeguard yourself by conducting a credit check first.

To make sure you and your customers are on the same page when it comes to payment, before you do a minute of work for a customer, create a customer agreement that clearly states:

**1. When payment is due.** If one invoice a customer receives is due March 1 and another lacks a specific due date and money is tight, guess which the customer is going to pay first? Make sure yours is the one with the date.

**2. How payment should be made.** Who should the check be written to? What credit cards, if any, do you take?

**3. What will happen if payment is not made on time?** Is there a monetary penalty? Does interest accrue? At what interest rate?

Now at least you've got a document, signed by the customer, outlining terms. Those same terms should be repeated on the invoice when it is sent.

And send out invoices promptly. You can't expect to be paid promptly if you don't bill promptly.

Another effective addition to the invoice is a statement to the effect of: "Take X percent or X dollars off this bill if paid before ..." and then insert a date. People are looking to save money these days, if paying early means paying less, you may see a check quicker.

## **THE DREADED COLLECTIONS CALLS**

The preceding suggestions may help ensure payment of future invoices, but what do you do with those already past due?

If you have delinquent customers, you have to get their attention before you have any hopes of getting their payment. If you are still providing service to them, stop before their debt gets any bigger. And while it's no fun, it's time to actively start making collections calls.

If your invoices state that payment is due in 30 days, you might not want to call on day 31. Being too demanding can annoy customers, possibly costing you a valuable client. But don't wait until 60 or 90 days have passed.

The key to successful collections is keeping lines of communication open, and keeping the pressure on. Constant communication trains customers to pay bills promptly and leads to an efficient, professional relationship with them. Usually, a polite telephone call to ask about a late payment will get the ball rolling, or at least tell you when you can expect payment. If problems exist that need to be resolved before payment can be issued, your phone call will help start clearing them up. If your client is waiting for their customer to pay them, and you've successfully dealt with all parties before, that might be all you need to hear.

When making the collections call, be professional and use a pleasant, respectful tone of voice. But get to the point and clearly explain why you are calling. If you don't receive payment in the agreed upon time-frame after an initial phone call, call again. Generally the longer a debt goes unpaid, the harder it is to collect. You can continue sending past-due notices and collection letters, but phone calls are harder to ignore.

## **PAY THEM A VISIT**

If several phone calls fail to generate any response, try a personal visit. Set up an appointment ahead of time if you can. If this isn't possible, leave a message stating what date and time you will be stopping by. Bring all the proper documentation (remember that customer agreement they signed?) so you can prove exactly what is owed. If it seems



unlikely that you'll get full payment at this point, try to arrange a payment plan with the customer. Make sure, however, that you put it in writing.

#### OUTSIDE HELP

If the delinquent customer refuses to meet with you or won't commit to a payment plan, you may be facing a bad debt situation and need to take further action through an attorney or a collection agency. Compare the cost of using a collection agency to the cost of using your lawyer. You may be able to recover more of the money using one option or the other, depending on the total amount of the debt and the hourly rate or percentage the lawyer or agency charges.

#### THE BANKRUPT CUSTOMER

If a customer files for bankruptcy, you are legally prohibited from any further collection efforts. You will receive a bankruptcy notice with a "claims bar date," which is the deadline for filing the paperwork required if you want to share in any distribution of funds. An attorney can answer any questions you have about bankruptcy proceedings, help you understand your options and decide on the best course of action.

Don't assume you'll never collect what is owed you when a customer declares bankruptcy. Many companies emerge from bankruptcy stronger than before and able to pay their bills, and many companies that are liquidated are able to pay creditors at least a portion of their debts.

While collections issues are frustrating for all involved, when the economy turns around, a current delinquent customer just might become one of your best customers. ■

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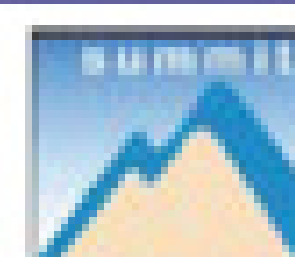
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# It's a CLEAN SWEEP

Robert Uphoff unloads a portable restroom from a Galbreath roll-off at Michigan music festival. (Photos by Jeff Wild)

Michigan's PTS and UPCO Waste Services make commercial construction sites spic-and-span by handling both portable sanitation and trash collection

By Richard Ryman

**P**roviding everything a construction contractor needs in the way of waste collection, and marketing it wisely and aggressively, is driving growth at PTS (Portable Toilet Service) and sister company UPCO Waste Services.

PTS staffers have big-company and big-city experience, which they apply to their small business located 40 miles northwest of Detroit. And they aren't content to stay a small business. They've added portable restroom services to their original trash collection business, and are expanding the portable restroom operations from construction services to fairs and festivals.

## PTS LLC and UPCO Waste Services LLC Milford, Mich.

**Owners:** Robert Uphoff, Alden Powell and Americo Capaldi

**Founded:** UPCO in 2001, PTS in 2005

**Employees:** 10

**Services:** Portable sanitation, roll-off containers, trash collection services

**Service area:** Counties within a 75-mile radius of Milford

**Web site:** [www.portabletoiletsmichigan.com](http://www.portabletoiletsmichigan.com)



### KEEP ON GROWING

"One of our theories is you have to keep growing or die," says Stephanie Powell, wife of co-owner Robert Uphoff, who leads the company's sales and marketing efforts.

It was that belief that led to the founding of PTS in 2005. Uphoff founded UPCO Waste Services in 2001 after working for other family members. He bought a truck and landed two large builders as clients, which got them off and running.

He was born in Chicago and has worked his entire career in the trash-collection business. Powell worked in New York for Liz Claiborne Inc. as a liaison between fashion designers and operations, and as a coordinator and commentator for local fashion shows. She also was a national sales manager for Citibank. They married in 1999 and moved to her Michigan hometown, considering it a good place to raise their children.

Construction contractors were and remain their biggest clients. The company was successful, but was looking for other avenues of growth as the housing market in Michigan slowed.

Their success is driven by the ability to pair restroom and garbage collection services to their core construction clients. They offer both to clients, and about 90 percent of the time get orders for both, she says.



John Lemcool uses a skid-steer to unload restrooms at the Detroit River Regatta.

They are finding similar success in the festival market.

"Usually when they require both, we get both. They like writing one check," she says.

### BUSINESS BRANDING

One of her goals for the PTS startup was a professional-looking Web site. She is convinced too many people try to get Web sites on the cheap. She wasn't going to do that.

"People don't want to put the necessary money into a Web site. It takes only a couple thousand more to get a company that will do



Customers appreciate the one-stop restroom and roll-off container service provided by PTS and UPCO.



it correctly," she says.

To get what she wanted cost more than \$6,000, and quite a bit of time convincing the owners — her husband, her father-in-law and her cousin — to spend the money.

"I had to argue with them about the money I was spending," Powell says. "They were not happy about paying the bill. I got two out-of-state customers (because of the Web site) that paid for it."

She looked at the expense as would a marketing manager, and hired branding company Graphic Visions Inc. of Northville, Mich. The result, besides a Web site she's happy with, is a corporate identity that is carried over to every aspect of the company. Their red, white, blue and gray colors are on everything, from trucks to business cards to portable restrooms and trash receptacles.

"If you put a roll-off trash container and a restroom together, you would know it was the same company," she says. "The other thing we do, we spend a lot of time on our restroom stickers. You can see them from far away. You can see our 800 number from two (traffic) lights away."

As to the Web site, Powell says it's not just for information. "It works. You click on a box and it works. It's designed the way people use a Web site."

The Web site is reasonably simple. Sections are plainly labeled — Services, Fairs & Festivals, Products, and Contact Us — and information is direct and brief. There are photos of all the company's products with bullet-point descriptions of each.

Initially, Powell wanted it to have a shopping cart function for the restroom site because she believes customers don't like to wait for e-mail answers. She found, however, that there

*"If you put a roll-off trash container and a restroom together, you would know it was the same company. The other thing we do, we spend a lot of time on our restroom stickers. You can see them from far away. You can see our 800 number from two (traffic) lights away."*

**Stephanie Powell**

were too many variables to price portable restroom services effectively using Web contact only, especially for jobs requiring longer travel.

Powell backs up the Web site with good telephone customer support. PTS gets four to five calls a day as a result of the Web site, and customers can view portable sanitation products on the site while placing an order over the phone.



PTS owns about 500 Satellite Industries and PolyJohn Enterprises Corp. restrooms. At left: Robert Uphoff unloads a unit at a weekend event. Below: John Lemcool unloads restrooms off a flatbed at the Detroit River Regatta. For larger events, PTS prefers using skid-steers and flatbeds to deliver restrooms.



#### MAKING SALES A PRIORITY

Aggressive selling has always been important to their success. When Uphoff started UPCO Waste Services in 2001, he would drive around with a roll-off container and not come home until he found someone to use it.

The main salespeople for PTS are Powell, Julie Cox-Frazer and Cathy Chapa. All three come from the fashion industry.

The PTS sales team members came from corporate America, but they wanted to get out of the rat race and work in part-time jobs. Accustomed to a professional atmosphere, they bring excellent time-management skills, Uphoff says. And when on sales calls, they dress as if they are going to a corporate meeting.

"When we go to trade shows, we all wear black and white suits," Powell says.

In the field, technicians wear jeans and plain T-shirts of their choice. They also wear

safety vests.

The main focus of sales efforts has been construction sites. While homebuilding is slow, she says commercial construction and large remodeling jobs continue.

"Every construction site gets a trash container and portable toilets. Those are two things construction guys don't want to deal with," Powell says. "Construction was a natural growth area. We cross-sell everywhere. That seems to be how we are getting our foot in the door."



*"We are not doing septic because we don't have a truck big enough, but 60 percent of the houses being built here have septic. I believe next year we will look at septic and residential garbage."*

**Stephanie Powell**



Sam Smith of the Detroit River Regatta and Stephanie Powell, PTS sales manager, determine where restrooms will be placed.

#### AT THE OFFICE

Powell says anyone who answers the phone is trained to sell all services except festivals and special events, which she handles.

Amy Sonnenberg is the office manager. She takes over client contact once the accounts are sold and is the logistics coordinator for deliveries.

Uphoff says one key to success is a willingness to easily adapt to a customer's needs.

"If you have to move 10 toilets over here, we are willing to do it," he says. "My dad says you get done at dark-thirty. We have a corporate mentality and an everyday-Joe work ethic."

Powell says they offer to pump campers and big rigs at fairs and festivals. They charge extra for it, but she says event managers tell them that is a service the competition doesn't offer.

"That has proved to be a bigger seller than I thought it would be," she says.

In 2006, they began edging into festivals and special events. They had 10 fairly large festivals in 2008, and with a little experience under their belts, Powell says they'll be pushing for more.

"We don't want to grow too fast," she says. "The one thing we don't do is go big and fail."

She says they will do one big event per weekend. One weekend last July, they had two events and Powell says she won't do that again.

"I'm not spreading ourselves thin and having one client mad at us," Powell says.

PTS festival consultants work with clients from start to finish, making suggestions and a few common-sense demands.

"If we don't get a map and look at the grounds ahead of time, we are pretty strict on saying we don't guarantee our service," she says. "At first, we may sound a little forceful, but when planning's all done, that's where we win them over."

Powell says planning is the hardest part because most festival organizers are volunteers who typically don't understand the most effective ways to place and service portable restrooms.

A sales consultant arrives with the initial delivery of units and meets with the client. "It's bringing a professional level of business," she says.

#### FUEL CONCERNS

The PTS fleet includes Ford F-550 and Ford F-450s with steel tanks from Satellite Industries, a Ford F-450 with stainless steel tank from Best Enterprises Inc., and a Ford F-250 yard truck with a freshwater tank. The F-550 is gas powered and the others are diesel.

On the UPCO side, they have seven Mack trucks with Galbreath Inc. roll-off frames.

## Waste and Trash: PROs Should Start Slowly With Combined Services

While many contractors handle both portable sanitation and septic services, pairing portable restrooms with commercial trash collection — as the owners of PTS and UPCO Services in Milford, Mich., do — is a more unusual business model.

"It's a great combination," says Stephanie Powell, wife of PTS and UPCO co-owner Robert Uphoff. While the company has found a recipe for success, Powell stresses that a background in trash collection is essential for a PRO wanting to hit the ground running providing both services.

"It's a whole different animal. Roll-offs are an extremely tricky business," she says. "It's a huge cost with a much lower margin than portable restrooms."

Powell says PROs considering adding trash collection should do a lot of research. A trash collection company has to have landfill contracts, its drivers must have CDLs, and workman's compensation and other insurance costs are higher. You also need a yard large enough to store roll-off containers, which typically are 22 feet long and 8 feet wide.

The containers are expensive, she says, and cross-company work is difficult.

"If worse comes to worse, I can get in a truck and go clean out portable restrooms for a day. I can't do roll-offs," she says. Also, she says, trash collection requires non-stop selling to keep equipment in service.

"A company down the road from us doing residential garbage collection tried to get into the roll-off business three years ago and it didn't work," Powell says.

She suggests PROs start slowly, with one truck and a handful of containers. Then

expand as the demand grows. Still, in all, PTS and UPCO continue to find customers — especially in commercial construction — who appreciate one-stop-shopping when it comes to waste and trash services.

Robert Uphoff, president of UPCO Waste and PTS, and Sue Dillon, president of Graphic Visions Inc., had many meetings to develop the PTS Web site.



The company owns about 500 Satellite Industries and PolyJohn Enterprises Corp. restrooms, including a number of handicap units, and hand-wash sinks.

They try to get the best equipment, Uphoff says. "We use technology to our benefit. We try to keep up with the latest trends," he says.

PTS operates three restroom service routes four days a week, with 30 or more stops per route, each taking from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. to complete. They recently hired an additional worker to cover the routes, although they were





At left: Stephanie Powell, sales manager, and Julie Cox-Frazer, account executive, lend a hand.



trying to hold off due to the lagging economy. They have about 275 units out on average.

PTS charges fuel surcharges on trash collection, but the surcharges are not so readily accepted by portable restroom customers, according to Powell.

"People are starting to ask, do you have a fuel surcharge? Is there a delivery charge? I'm finding just raising prices slightly and giving a bottom line works best," Powell says.

In an effort to look for greater efficiencies, PTS combined software systems to handle routing and billing. She says they use a routing system from DeLorme that was inexpensive and works well, and the Trash Flow program developed by Ivy Computer Inc. "Trash Flow does all our billing, but it doesn't give you the detail for mapping," she says, explaining the need for the DeLorme program.

#### NEXT ON THE AGENDA

The company recently bought a new 2,200-square-foot office in Milford with a 300-square-foot showroom, which is arranged to show customers what wedding or special event setups will look like. Powell says customers were asking for the showroom.

"If you have a wedding, which is going to be our next step, we will be able to show you how to set it up with a tent and everything," she says.

In addition to the new offices, the company maintains a 3,000-square-foot shop, as well as yards in Salem, about 15 miles from Milford, and Westland, 28 miles beyond that, to provide centralized locations throughout their service area.

The companies continue to look for expansion opportunities.

"We are not doing septic because we don't have a truck big enough, but 60 percent of the houses being built here have septic," Powell says. "I believe next year we will look at septic and residential garbage." ■

#### MORE INFO:

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Barrett Hope custom-ordered this crew cab Ford F-550 and had it built out by Satellite Industries. In the inset photo, note the aggressive bee logo on the back of the truck. (Photos courtesy of B's Portable Toilets)

# One Flashy Ford

**Idaho PRO Barrett Hope likes a tricked out F-550 as his home away from home on long service routes**

*By Jim Kneiszel*

**THE RIG:** 2008 Ford F-550 Lariat built out by Satellite Industries

**BEHIND THE WHEEL:** Barrett Hope

**COMPANY:** B's Portable Toilets, Rexburg, Idaho

**SPECS:** Hope's go-to rig has Ford's new 6.4-liter Power Stroke Diesel engine, but in custom-ordering the chassis from the Ford dealer,

*"If something looks good out there, you can get more (customers) to bite. Appearance-wise, I want to have the best. Then when they see my service, they understand why I have the best rig on the road."*

Barrett Hope

he swapped out the standard 410 axle for a 470, which has a slightly different gear ratio that lowers the rpms from about 3,000 to 2,500 when he runs 65-70 mph down the road. The result is improved fuel economy (averaging 10 mpg) with no noticeable difference in hauling ability. Satellite installed a 650-gallon waste/300-gallon freshwater steel tank coupled with a Honda-powered Masport pump and a Burks water pump. The truck was ordered with every available option, including aluminum wheels. "Rather than buying it off the floor, I went into the dealer and spec'd it out for what I wanted. If I'm spending that much time in the truck, I wanted it to be comfortable and have what I wanted."

**SHOWING MY COLORS:** The truck was ordered in an unconventional dark brown; Ford calls the color "Slate." Satellite had the tank painted to match Ford's specs, and painted the catwalks and toolboxes on both sides Ford's Pueblo Gold. The interior is finished in tan leather. Snappy graphics, including flaming toilet tissue rolls and comic book character bees, were conceived by Hope and a friend and carried out by Signature Signs of Idaho Falls, Idaho. "In this day and age, appearance is everything," says Hope. "If something looks good out there, you can

get more (customers) to bite. Appearance-wise, I want to have the best.

Then when they see my service, they understand why I have the best rig on the road."

**WORKIN' FOR A LIVIN':** Hope, 35, started his own business a year ago after working for another PRO for 11 years. He started slow, with 20 units, and is now up to 220, all Five Peaks Technology Aspen models. Most of the inventory is orange or gray, but he has 20 tan units for weddings and other events. His customer base is 90 percent construction, 10 percent special events. He works alone for now, driving as much as 165 miles one-way to place units. In the future, Hope plans to bring his wife, Colette, aboard with the business. Sometimes when he goes on long runs, he takes the kids — Cydnee, 13, Michaela, 10 and Nicholas, 7, along for the ride — hoping to spark a future interest in the business.

**ROLLING THE ODOMETER:** 45,000 miles per year.

**WHAT I LIKE MOST ABOUT MY TRUCK:** The crew cab. With years of experience in standard cab Fords set up for portable restroom service, Hope knew he wanted more room to stretch out on long trips and a place to put added supplies, like toilet tissue, on winter routes. He said the big cab allows him to put the seat back farther and also gives him flexibility to take the family along when necessary.

**CREATURE COMFORTS:** You name it; Hope ordered it. The only reason he didn't add a sunroof was because Ford doesn't offer it on the F-550 Lariat. In addition to the leather interior, which he says wears better than cloth, Hope enjoys a nine-speaker CD stereo system, satellite radio, factory GPS navigation system, power windows, doors, seats and folding mirrors.

**WHY FORD:** "I was leaning more toward Dodge until Ford came out with this motor (6.4 liter). If I had to buy a Ford with a 6.0, I would have bought a Dodge," he said, noting, however, that Dodge introduced the comparable 4500 and 5500 Series trucks just after he bought the rig.



He said the Ford wins out on roominess and hauling capacity. "When you look at how much a Ford can haul, it's just a lot better. But now, others are stepping up to the plate," he said, adding that he'll throw Dodge into the mix the next time he needs a truck.

**PAMPERING MY RIG:** The Ford gets a hand-wash once a week and a drive-through at the car wash a few times a week, depending on how much dust Hope kicks up on his routes. He waxes it every few months. Oil changes are done at 5,000 miles and transmission flushes come at 25,000 miles. Hope is in the process of building a heated shop where he can keep his truck inside.

**MY BACKUP SERVICE VEHICLE:** A 1988 Chevy 3/4-ton pickup with a 300-gallon slide-in tank from Satellite. The truck was a contribution from Hope's father, Dennis, who drives it to special events when Hope needs an extra hand.

**WHEN HE'S NOT IN THE CAB:** Hope spends as much time as he can with his family in off-hours. They enjoy wakeboarding, boating, fishing and hunting. He's a proud soccer dad, attending the kids' recreational sports events. Hope is a knife collector and he and his dad operate a small knife-making business. ■

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Do you have a truck that's a real head-turner on the highway? This feature is your opportunity to share it with readers of *Portable Restroom Operator*. Take a digital photo of your **PRO Ride**, posing the owner(s) with the truck. Any Portable Sanitation industry truck is acceptable. Please limit your submission to one truck only.

Your submission must include your name, company name, mailing address, phone number and details about the truck including tank size, cab/chassis information, pump information, the company that built the truck and any other details you consider important. In particular, tell us what truck features help make your work life more efficient and profitable.

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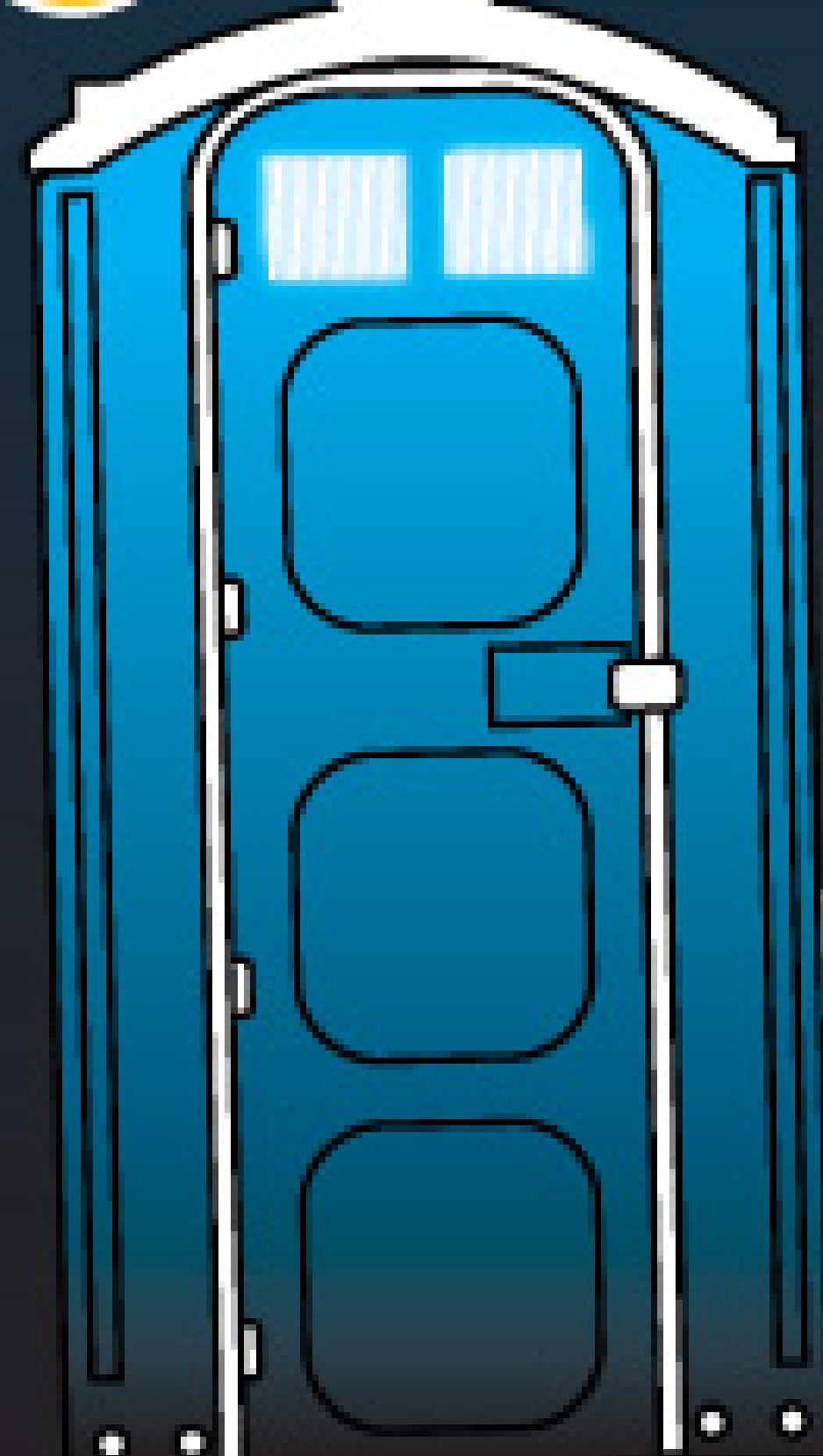
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Jim packed a bag, and took off with the truck toward the disaster area. He got as far as Montgomery, Alabama the first night. Due to the crush of evacuees, there were no hotels available so he slept in the truck cab. He arrived at the staging area the next day, and then spent a couple more nights in the truck, coordinating deliveries for his customer, and generally helping out any way he could.



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## ON LOCATION

**THE JOB:** The ING New York City Marathon

**LOCATION:** New York City

**THE PRO:** A Royal Flush Inc.



A Royal Flush Inc. of Bridgeport, Conn., has been servicing the New York City Marathon for 13 years. (Photos by Maggie Russo)

# 26.2 MILES, 2,250 RESTROOMS

The New York City Marathon is the biggest job of the year for Connecticut portable sanitation contractor A Royal Flush

By Betty Dageforde

### THE TEAM

A Royal Flush Inc. has its headquarters in Bridgeport, Conn. All administrative and sales functions for the company's five branches are managed from there. Operations for the marathon were coordinated out of the Bronx office. The race goes through all five New York City boroughs and the company divided tasks mostly along those lines: Bob Ploof in Staten Island, Mauro DaSilva in Brooklyn and Queens, Delfin Hernandez in Manhattan and Jason Melendez at home base in the Bronx. Ed Stead was in charge of trailers and special equipment.

The Bronx's special event workforce of seven expanded to about 50 as workers from all the branches helped out.

Alexandra Townsend, special event sales and marketing manager, has worked alongside her mother, Debbie Russo, one of the owners, since she was a young teen. She was involved in the pre-planning stages of this event, but for the first time in 13 years was not on hand to help on the day of the race — because she was *in* the race.

### COMPANY HISTORY

The company began in 1989 with the purchase of the portable restroom division of BFI Waste Services of Connecticut by five partners, all still actively involved. Russo handles special events, sales and office administration, Bill Malone does operations and finance, DaSilva is the events coordinator, Michael Streaman manages special projects and construction, and Tim Butler is an attorney.

After a few years, the company expanded into the Bronx. "We were doing a lot of work in New York and over time that was a nightmare because traffic in Connecticut is horrible," says Townsend. "So we started the Bronx office, which has easy access to all the boroughs." The company also opened offices in Springfield, Mass., Newburg, New York, and Philadelphia, and now



Alexandra Townsend, special event sales and marketing manager for A Royal Flush, not only helped prepare for the marathon but also competed in it.

employs 82 people. In general, the company splits its workforce into construction route service technicians, construction pickup and delivery people, and special events workers.

### MAKING CONNECTIONS

This was the 13th year the company serviced the New York City Marathon. Because of the size of the event and what that would do for the





A Royal Flush crew members (from left) include J. Dionne, A. Colon, J. Oliveria, V. Suarez, A. Cruz, G. Dos Santos and M. Maria. At right: Alexandra Townsend joins the team prior to the race. Below: co-owner Debbie Russo with Kristine Navarra-Madson, event coordinator consultant; Townsend, and fellow owner Bill Malone. (Photos by Sonny Maxon)



image of the company, A Royal Flush started going after it from the beginning. "More than anything in the world, we wanted this contract," says Russo. It took a few years, but when the prior portable restroom contractor was sold and some internal changes were made, "their misfortune became our fortune," she says, and they got their chance. That was in 1996 and they've been doing it ever since. The company works throughout the year for the client, the New York Road Runners.

#### THE MAIN EVENT

On Sunday morning, Nov. 2, 2008, the Manhattan skyline before them, about 39,000 runners from over 100 countries took off across the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge in Staten Island, beginning a 26.2-mile run through the five boroughs of New York City to the finish line in Central Park. The ING New York City Marathon is the largest marathon in the world. Runners either qualified for the race or were selected by lottery out of 105,000 applications. Two million spectators and 300 million television viewers cheered them on.

Elites polished it off in a couple of hours, competing for \$600,000 in prize money. Most of the others got there at some point in the 8 1/2 hour time limit, and did it for personal satisfaction.

#### BY THE NUMBERS

The company supplied 2,250 units, making it one of the largest portable restroom events in the country. Most were forest green Tufways from Satellite Industries. Workers placed 1,500 units at the starting area in Fort Wadsworth Park (a restricted area for runners only), 450 in small banks every mile of the course, and 300 at the finish in Central Park.

The race had several divisions for people with disabilities. The company placed 60 wheelchair-accessible units (Liberty from Satellite Industries) at Fort Wadsworth, and 50 along the route. Twenty-two, 210-gallon Kentucky Tank holding tanks for food vendors and 12 hand-wash stations (The Wave from Satellite Industries) were provided at Fort Wadsworth.

Three ACSI 24-foot Presidential restroom trailers were placed in Central Park for city officials and the media for Saturday night's pasta party for runners and their families, as well as Sunday's brunch for the dignitaries. One was placed at the start for the production crew and the media.

#### LET'S ROLL

The Bronx office began accumulating units in September. "We bring them in for some of the larger events and then roll them right into the marathon inventory," says Malone.

Two weeks before the race, workers started setting up units and



*"In 1996, the order was 750 units, so it's interesting how our company has grown as the marathon has grown. It's the last big event of the season and uses nearly everybody in our company, so it's just a real special event to us."*

**Debbie Russo**

holding tanks in Fort Wadsworth, 100 or so each night. "The Road Runners start using them the week before the race. Basically set up a village out there for food and medical. It takes a couple hundred people," says Malone.

Saturday, the Bronx office became command central as 50 technicians arrived from other branches for the day-long process of loading and unloading trailers. "We bring in Winnebagos for them to sleep in, we do a catering throughout the whole weekend," says Malone. "We roll people in and out. After the guys work for 14 hours, then another crew of guys comes in."

They began with the least disruptive locations and finish up by 3 a.m. with the major thoroughfares.

For setup, the company used eight vacu-



Colon drives under the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge in Staten Island, N.Y., making sure everything is ready for the start of the race.





J. Dionne services one of the thousands of restrooms placed along the NYC Marathon route.



um trucks pulling 20-unit trailers, one Mitsubishi FE649 for narrow locations, and seven International 4700s.

#### KEEPIN' IT CLEAN

Units at Fort Wadsworth were cleaned daily. Saturday night, two vacuum trucks were

fleet included a 2006 6,000-gallon Dragon Products Ltd. tanker, a 2006

stationed there, along with two technicians who stayed in a camper. They started pumping as soon as the area began to clear.

The company continued pumping through the day and night in a 400-man/hour marathon of their own "Every year we clock ourselves. We get better at it because we have different layouts, different equipment. Every year we try to reduce the number of hours to do the job," says Malone.

The pumping service

Kenworth septic truck with a 4,400-gallon Progress Tank, and six International 4700 vacuum trucks built by L.C. Tanks with 2,000 gallon (1,500 gallons waste/500 gallons fresh) aluminum tanks and Masport pumps.

#### A WINNER

"This is by far our largest event, requiring months of preparation and a lot of hard work," says Townsend.

Russo adds: "In 1996, the order was 750 units, so it's interesting how our company has grown as the marathon has grown. It's the last big event of the season and uses nearly everybody in our company, so it's just a real special event to us." ■

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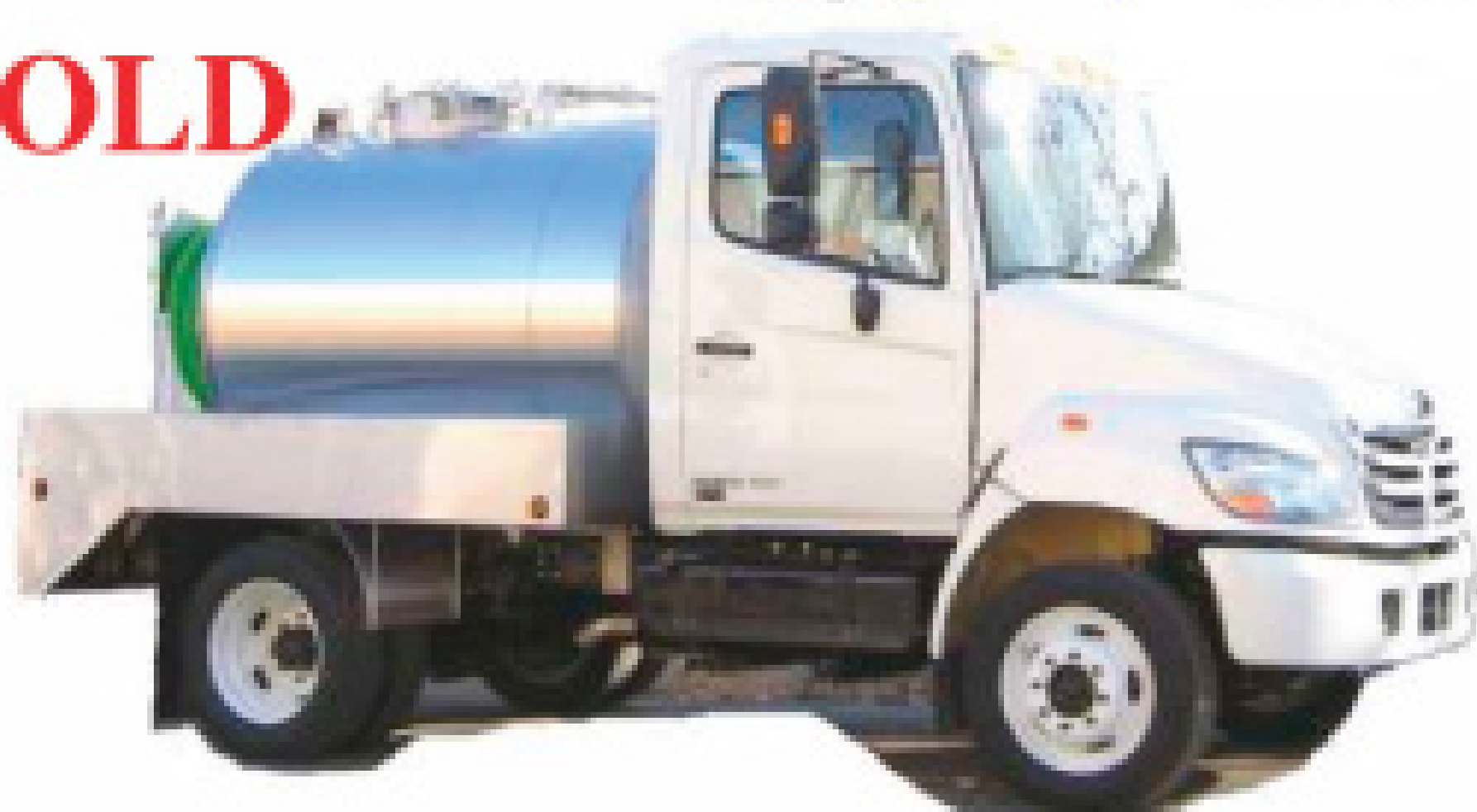
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# EXPANDING OUR REACH



Ben Pilquist prepares a bank of PolyJohn PJN3 units for the I-35 bridge re-opening ceremony in Minneapolis last fall. (Photos courtesy Jimmy's Johnnys)

**Twin Cities PRO Jimmy's Johnnys builds its territory and adds diverse services to grow the business**

By Erik Gunn



Founded nearly 30 years ago, Jimmy's Johnnys has made its mark as a homegrown, locally owned portable restroom business in and around Minnesota's twin cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul. Owner Rich Anderson bought the company, based in North Branch, Minn., from his great uncle a decade ago, and since then it has grown by leaps and bounds. Anderson took a break from delivering and servicing the company's 1,000 units to talk about the challenges of operating in a highly competitive market where cold weather shuts down business for nearly half the year.

## EXPLORE **FIVE CHALLENGES** that affect **RICH ANDERSON'S PORTABLE SANITATION BUSINESS:**

### MANAGING GROWTH

These have been boom years for Anderson's company. "When I bought it in 1999 it had about 250 units; now we're running around 1,000." The growth has come from aggressively pursuing new territory.

When Anderson took over the business it was based in Isanti, about 50 miles north of downtown Minneapolis. "They didn't really go into the metro area that much." But with the size of the competition, "we had to make that decision a long time ago." The firm once never crossed Interstate 694, which circles the north side of Minneapolis-St. Paul. "That just didn't work. We cover the whole Twin Cities now" — a total of 15 counties plus a bit of western Wisconsin.

Jimmy's Johnnys relies primarily on the PolyJohn PJN3 models. The business has about 30 PolyJohn 2005 Fleet units equipped with flushing systems. He offers another 40-

plus wheelchair-accessible Comfort Inn models and more than 20 We'll Care III units that comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Seven drivers and two to three office employees make things go. Jimmy's Johnnys has a fleet consisting of WorkMate vehicles from FMI Truck Sales and Service, based on the Isuzu chassis — three with 600-gallon steel

waste tanks and 175-gallon twin poly freshwater tanks (for a total of 350 gallons of freshwater), and two with 700-gallon waste/175-gallon twin freshwater tanks. Each truck can haul up to four portable restrooms and is equipped with a pressure washer. A pair of pickup and delivery flatbed trucks round out the fleet along with three 12-unit trailers.



Darrin Anderson loads one of the company's Isuzu WorkMate vehicles.



## SHORT SEASONS

Winter hits hard in Minnesota, and Anderson has to run his business with that in mind. "We have a very small, short season here that we have to make the most of our money in. One thing that really helped us was that when we first bought it we had very few units out over the winter. Widening the service territory, we have more of a base of customers that still work year-round. So we were able to grow the winter sales. Now we have one or two months that are not paying for themselves, whereas before we might have not broken even on three or four of the months."



Owner Rich Anderson (left) reviews a job with service technician Shawn Sullivan.

## PROFIT THROUGH DIVERSIFICATION

The core of the business is portable restrooms, but Anderson looks to diverse clients and services to smooth out the revenue streams. "We have restroom trailers; sometimes the people who can afford to rent restroom trailers aren't hurt by the economy as much," he says.

Since a number of customers were special events, such as festivals and parties, Anderson says, "We bought a small table and chair rental company. When we took the phones over for that business, the first three calls were, 'How much are your tents?' The first call, we said, 'We don't have tents.' The second call was, 'We don't have tents.' The third call was, 'Yes, we do have tents' " — and Anderson went out and bought some. Winter convention business from that operation "was one reason we bought it."



Jimmy's Johnnys is based in North Branch, Minn., about 50 miles north of the Twin Cities.



## GROWING ONESY-TWOSY ORDERS

As with many PROs, summer business for Jimmy's Johnnys is the typical mix of construction projects, community festivals and recreational facilities, such as golf courses and marinas. But Anderson has also found another niche: private homeowners, especially with swimming pools. "In the last couple of years more and more people were willing to pop for the monthly charge to have a portable toilet by their pool so the neighborhood kids wouldn't have to run in their house," Anderson explains.

Many people don't know they can rent portables. "They think they're only for construction." Party hosts call and ask, "Is there any way I can rent one of those just for the day?" Anderson's response: "Well, yeah, it's about 50 percent of our business." They think this is some new ground that they're breaking and no one ever thought of it before."

Anderson sometimes offers used units for sale, but for most customers, renting with regular service is cheaper, and only about 5 percent end up buying. "The only way it's good for them to purchase or own them is where they have it up at the cabin and they only get it serviced a couple of times or once a year," Anderson says.



## FACING THE ECONOMIC DOWNTURN

As the economy lags, "there's really no way to cope with it other than to watch your costs, pounding on a few more doors and making sure your service is perfect." Anderson has added surcharges for fuel and to offset disposal fees that are four times what they were when Anderson bought the business.

As prices rise, service has never been more important to keeping customers — especially when some competitors try to win customers just by cutting prices. "If you're raising your cost and not having good service, that's when they start looking."

Anderson tries to schedule his crews with no more than four days on the road a week. On a staggered schedule individual crew members spend their fifth day in the shop to help with tasks there. During holiday weeks, when employees get an extra day off, they don't come back to work a day behind on their routes.

"I always tell everybody, 'We're not in the toilet business, we're in the service business,'" Anderson says. "As soon as every employee understands that and they get on board, it comes through to the customer." ■

Jimmy's Johnnys has 1,000 portable restrooms in its fleet, primarily PolyJohn PJN3 models.

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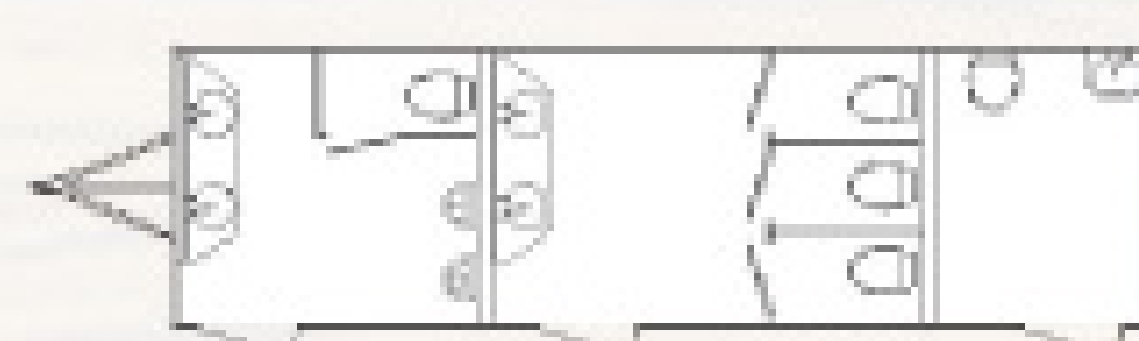
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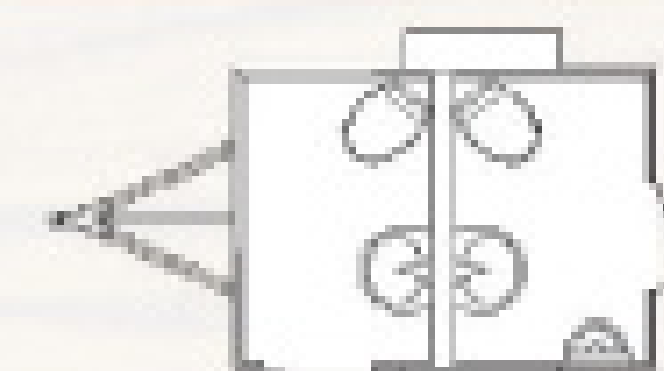
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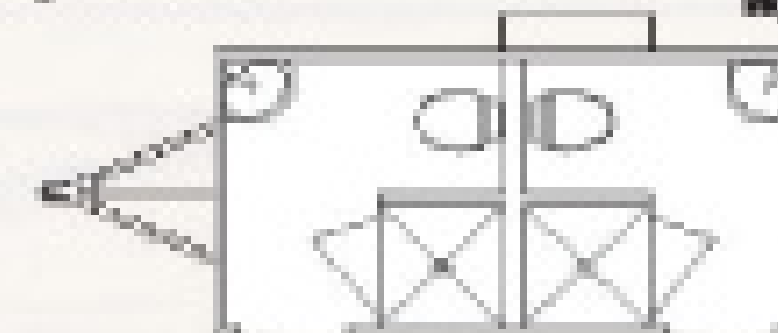
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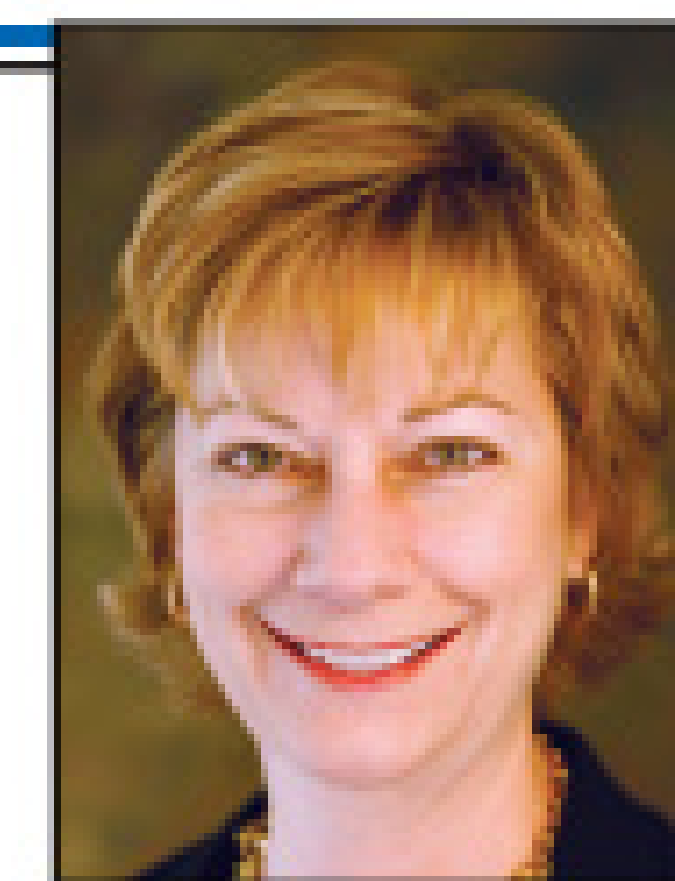
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Linda Bishop is an author, speaker and president of Thought Transformation, which provides sales training for all industries. Reach her by e-mail at [lindabishop@thoughttransformation.com](mailto:lindabishop@thoughttransformation.com).



# Back From the Dead

Think of former customers as qualified leads and take these five steps to revive your business relationship

By Linda Bishop

For many years, one of restroom contractor Mike's best customers was a large commercial builder. He loved the company as a client and thought they were happy with his work.

Then, work orders began to slip. The customer didn't call quite as often as they once had. Mike still got work orders, but they weren't as frequent or as large. He noticed, but didn't react. He didn't ask what was going on, or why the situation had changed. No one complained about quality or price, so Mike assumed the situation would turn around.

One day he woke up realizing it had been a very long time since he talked to anyone from that company. A queasy feeling gripped him as he counted backwards and realized how many months had gone by without any new work from them. His blinders fell away. For the first time, Mike recognized this customer was dead. Worse yet, he had probably killed them with neglect and indifference.

This story has a happy ending. Mike worked hard and resurrected his dead client. He continued to do business with the builder for the next decade. Everyone has dead customers and resurrecting them can be the shortest route to new business. Dead customers represent qualified leads. You already know they buy what you sell. Often enough, they will buy it from you a second time if you go out and re-sell them.

time if you go out and re-sell them.

Learn from Mike's mistake. Follow this easy five-step plan and bring dead customers back to life.

## STEP ONE: LIST DEAD ACCOUNTS

Make a list of dead accounts and jot down notes on what you know. Why did the account die? Was there a problem with quality, pricing or personnel? Was neglect the cause?

For the moment, don't expend any energy worrying about the probability of a successful resurrection. Just make the list, read it once, and then put it aside for 24 hours. Let your subconscious mind take over and work on the problem.

## STEP TWO: FIND OUT IF THE CONTACT IS CURRENT

A couple of days later, get out the list, and make calls. Talk to receptionists. Tell him or her you're updating files — which is the truth — and you want to make sure information is current. Get the name of the buyer and their title. Confirm phone numbers and e-mail addresses are correct. Be friendly. Be upbeat. Be positive.

Often, you discover the old buyer is gone. The slate has been wiped clean and you're selling to someone new.

## STEP THREE: SEND THE BUYER A LETTER

Whether you know the buyer or not, write a letter consisting of three paragraphs.

- Paragraph 1 explains why you're contacting the buyer.
- Paragraph 2 explains how you can help.
- Paragraph 3 thanks the reader for their consideration, and tells them when to expect a follow-up call. Include your business card.

Here's why a letter is better than e-mail or a phone call for initial contact: Customers get lots of phone calls and e-mails. They don't get a lot of letters. Everyone knows it takes effort to write and mail a letter; more effort than it takes to dial the phone or send an e-mail. People respect effort and they appreciate it when it's directed at them. For these reasons, letters stand out.

## STEP FOUR: FOLLOW-UP

Figure out when the letter will land on the ex-customer's desk. Call within 48 hours of the anticipated arrival time. If your target picks up the phone, great! Talk to them. Treat them as you would any new prospect, and try to get an appointment.

If you get voicemail, leave a message. Briefly repeat what you said in the letter. Keep calling. After you have called seven or eight times, tell them if they would like you to stop calling all they have to do is pick up the phone and let you know they're not interested.

## STEP FIVE: GO ON APPOINTMENTS

If they agree to see you, do what you normally do during a sales call with a new prospect. Tell them about your company. Explain how you can help them.

At the end of the call, smile and say, "We have worked with you in the past, and would love to work with you again. How can we make that happen?" See what they say.

This plan gets results. It's worth the effort to resurrect dead customers because plenty of them are perfectly willing to come back to life with a little nudging from you. Often, reviving them is quicker and easier than expected.

An experienced sales person named Chris followed the plan. He put together a long list of dead customers and made calls to update his contacts. At one old account, the busy receptionist mistakenly connected him directly to the buyer. The buyer was happy to hear from Chris and immediately agreed to see him.

Chris learned a lesson that day. Some dead customers aren't even dead. They're just hibernating and one phone call is all it takes to waken them. ■



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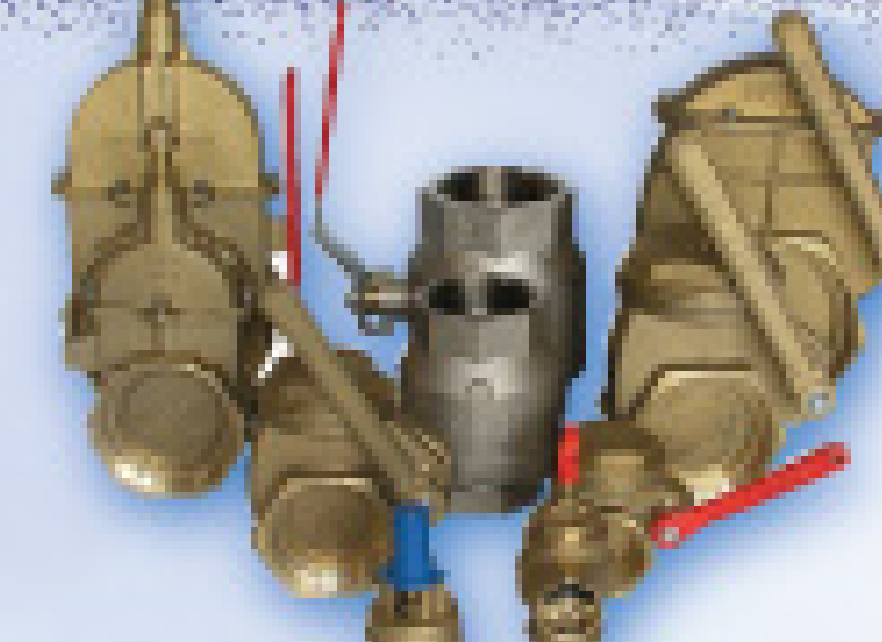


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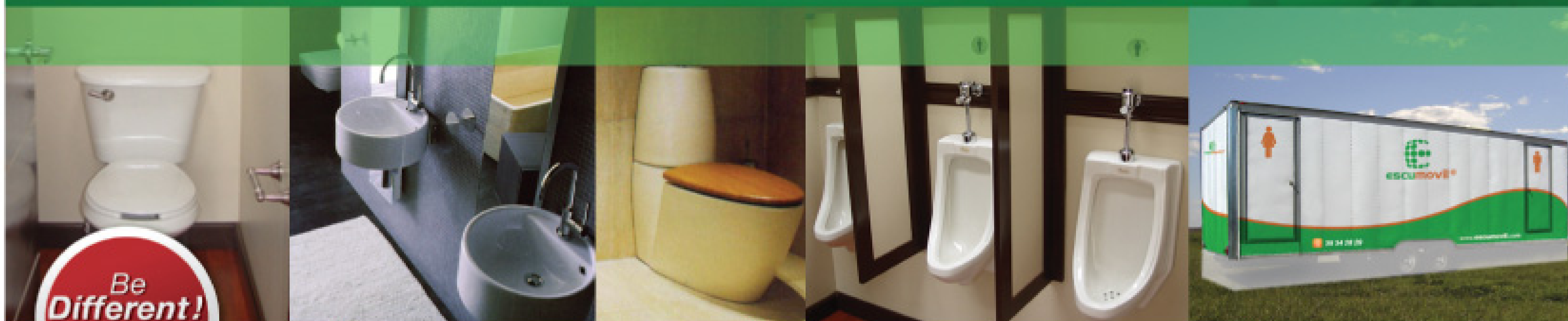
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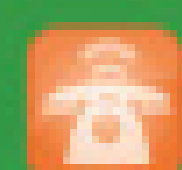
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**A New England PRO working through his first winter wonders how to mix a brine to keep his restrooms from freezing**

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I'm a first-year PRO in northern New England and am looking at making up a brine solution. What does everyone else use to prevent freeze-ups?

### ANSWERS:

The easiest way I have found to make saltwater brine requires a tank (150-300 gallons), a sump pump, 1 1/2-inch hose, and granular salt (looks like table salt). Fill the tank with water. Hook the hose to the pump. Place the pump in the tank and loop the hose back into the tank so that the water can re-circulate. Turn the pump on and let the water re-circulate, then start adding salt slowly. Here are the salt-to-water ratios for freezing protection: 1/2 lbs/gal. to 26 degrees F; 2 lbs/gal. to 0 degrees F. Let the pump re-circulate for 5-10 minutes. Turn the pump off, hook the hose to the truck, turn the pump on and fill the truck.



We use calcium chloride to make our brine, mixed at 617 pounds of calcium to 480 gallons of water in the coldest time of the year, and adjusted accordingly for warmer times. This will not freeze in -22 F. What we were finding is that urine was diluting the brine solution, and on really cold days, it was causing freezing.

*If you want to experiment, make your solution and fill a pop bottle with it, then hang it from a tree. If it freezes, you need more salt. Play with different mixes to see what works for your area.*

Last year, we started putting rock or road salt into the urinals, so as the user urinates in it, working brine is produced. We didn't have one unit freeze up last year. Remember if you use the rock salt in the urinal to put something over the hole so all the salt doesn't flow into the holding tank, but still allows the urine to flow through.

Here in Canada, we start with a weaker solution early in the winter and work up to that full strength in the coldest part of winter. If you want to experiment, make your solution and fill a pop bottle with it, then hang it from a tree. If it freezes, you need more salt. Play with different mixes to see what works for your area.

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The PRO Online Discussion Forum is found at [www.promonthly.com](http://www.promonthly.com). The forum is conveniently split into several topic areas: General Discussion, Business, Chemicals & Deodorizers, Parts & Accessories, Portable Restrooms, Portable Restroom Trailers, Portable Restroom Service and Trucks. Simply register with a user name and password and join the discussion! Information and advice in PRO Forum Chatter is offered in good faith by industry professionals. Readers should consult in depth with appropriate industry sources before applying the advice they read here to a specific business situation. ■

## INDUSTRY NEWS

February 2009

### Screentech Re-Designs Web Site

The re-designed Screentech Imaging Inc. Web site, [www.screentech.com](http://www.screentech.com), features an improved online store.

### United Site Services Acquires Nickel Ridge Portables

United Site Services has acquired Nickel Ridge Portables of Reliance, Wyo. The acquisition will allow the company to expand its services to the Wyoming Plateau areas, including Evanston, Green River and Rocky Springs.

### Hampel Names Bamberg Vice President

Dave Bamberg has been named vice president of business development for the Hampel Corp. portable sanitation division. He has nearly 20 years of experience in the sanitation industry. ■

### What's Your Opinion?

PRO welcomes letters from readers responding to articles we publish or offering comments and opinions of interest to the industry. You can submit your letter by:

**MAIL: PRO, P.O. Box 220, Three Lakes, WI 54562**  
**FAX: 715/546-3786 ■ E-MAIL: [editor@promonthly.com](mailto:editor@promonthly.com)**

All letters must be signed. Please limit your letter to 500 words or less. We reserve the right to edit all letters for length and clarity.

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# Explore the Expo

**Make the most of your first visit to the Pumper & Cleaner show, and don't be afraid to ask lots of questions**

Bob Carlson (left) and Jerry Kirkpatrick answer your questions in Truck Corner.



**QUESTION:** I know I'm not the only one who's going to the Pumper & Cleaner Expo for the first time. And I know men have their macho pride so they are uptight about asking questions. Not me. What should I look for? What is the best way to approach the show? What tips can you give me so I make the best use of my time?

Ruben Gutierrez  
Albuquerque, N. M.

**ANSWER:** You are right; guys can get uptight when it comes to asking for help or guidance in anything. How many guys stop and ask for directions? Here are a few tips to hopefully enrich your visit to the show.

First, relax. The staff that puts this show together is incredible when it comes to customer service. We're not plugging the crew of COLE Publishing because we need to make sure we get published every month. The people who work for COLE like their jobs, and it shows. If you've gone to the show for years, you've seen the same faces with the same smiles. Their goal is to make sure the show is worthwhile to you.

*If you're interested in vacuum trucks, you'll see trucks aplenty. This is a great opportunity to see how manufacturers are building their trucks. Not all trucks are alike and some of the trucks will have features that you haven't seen and may find useful.*

Second, check out the overall program. See what catches your interest. A full slate of seminars on Education Day, Wednesday, Feb. 25, are

included in the price of admission. If there's something that can help you be better at your job, then go for it. If you arrive early, then simply walk around and get your sense of direction. Find out where things are going to be, and if you can't find those places, ask someone.

## IT'S PUMPER CITY

Third, when the exhibition opens, brace yourself. I know they call it the Pumper & Cleaner Expo, but it's more like moving into "Pumper City." The place will be buzzing with excitement and there is something for everyone. If you're interested in vacuum trucks, you'll see trucks aplenty. This is a great opportunity to see how manufacturers are building their trucks. Not all trucks are alike and some of the trucks will have features that you haven't seen and may find useful.

Don't be afraid to ask questions. The people in the booths who represent their companies want to answer questions. They brought their best stuff to the show, so ask away. If you have a camera, bring it and use it.

When it comes to the trucks, compare how various builders put together a truck. Look underneath. Check out how the tank is mounted. Is it solid-mounted or spring-mounted? A solid mount will show less mercy over time than a spring-mounted tank. A spring-mounted tank has the ability to float over the bumps, which may be a priority if you work in an area with poor roads.

Check out the connection between the transmission, the power take-off, the gearbox, and the vacuum pump. Is there a Sure-Flex coupler (known in the industry as a Woods coupler) from TB Woods Inc., in the line to save major repairs if the driver begins to drive with the PTO engaged? If you don't recognize the various parts, don't be bashful about asking the folks in the booth for help. They will know how the system is assembled.

Some manufacturers use plastic accessories, like primaries and secondaries, while others use steel. Ask them to explain their preferences. Some items are chosen because they function better, while others are selected because it keeps the cost down. Every manufacturer has a different approach.

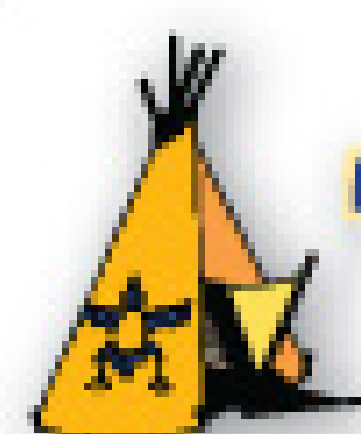
## TANKS A LOT

No doubt, there will be a lot of aluminum vacuum tanks at the show. Check out how the various manufacturers design and build their tanks and exactly what types of aluminum they are using. Manufacturers even make tanks out of varying thicknesses of aluminum. They all look the same from the outside, so ask about each tank's specifications, including its thickness, and find out why the builder decided on material thickness.

New technologies will show up in the cabs of a lot of trucks. More digital technology is finding its way into the controls of your vacuum system. Simple pushbuttons and better lighting systems make the operation of new trucks simpler and safer.

Finally, make sure to remember to enjoy yourself. The ideas on display for improving your business are immense and wide-ranging. The show is there for you, so make the most of it.

Bob Carlson and Jerry Kirkpatrick of Arizona-based Glendale Welding have over 50 years combined experience dealing with portable sanitation truck issues. Fax questions to them, addressed to Truck Corner, at 623/937-3688, or send Bob and Jerry an e-mail at [truckcorner@promonthly.com](mailto:truckcorner@promonthly.com). ■



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## BUSINESSES

Portable toilet/septic pumping business for sale in Fresno, CA. 96 double trailers, 5 single trailers, 5 triple trailers, 175 skid units, 50 sink units, 4 handicap units, 2 holding tanks, 7 freestanding sinks, 2003 International 1500 gal., 2004 Chevy Dually 600 gal., 1998 Chevy Dually 900 gal., 1991 Chevy delivery truck and 3 delivery trailers. This year sales \$275,000. 559-269-3270. (PT2)

## BUSINESSES

PORTABLE TOILET BUSINESS located in Albany, NY. 600+ units, 3 service trucks, 2 P&D trucks. 20 years family built business. Excellent growth potential. Call Stanley @ 518-441-7222. (CPT2)

FOR SALE: Septic and Portable Toilet Business located in White Mountains, Arizona. 150 toilets, 2 ADAs, 3 trucks. For more info, respond to: 11448 East Monte Ave., Mesa, AZ 85209. (PBM)

## JET VACS

2003 VAC-CON VPD4216LHA, mounted on Sterling 9501, 16 yard, 800' hose reel, 1500 gal., 85 gpm/3000 psi, hydrostatic blower, clean good running truck. \$149,800. Call 561-718-2736. (PT2)

## MISCELLANEOUS

2004 WEE ENGINEER 27', 12-UNIT HAULER, either 12 standard units or 8 standards + 1 handicap. Excellent condition. \$5,500 OBO. 815-970-7253. (PT4)

## PORTABLE RESTROOMS

500 OLYMPIC FIBERGLASS UNITS FOR SALE. Units are older construction grade. Located in Albuquerque, New Mexico. \$100 each. Call 505-345-3965. (PT4)

## PORTABLE RESTROOMS

100 GREEN POLYJOHN UNITS. Units are in excellent shape. Located in southeastern Michigan. We can provide transportaion. Call at 248-529-3159 or e-mail at info@portabletoiletsmichigan.com. (PT3)

Portable Toilets and Service Truck! Must sell! 16 PolyJohn units. Like new, \$75 - \$125 each. 1996 Chevrolet C3500 also for sale. Truck used daily, 600/200, Jupop pump, steel tank, engine and transmission replaced within the past 18 months. \$10,000 OBO. Please call 352-446-0475. (P2)

## PORTABLE RESTROOM TANKS

New 700 US gallon 2-compartment (450/250 split), carbon steel, portable toilet service unit. (Stock #13238V) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

## PORTABLE RESTROOM TRAILERS

NEW AND USED SANDDOLLAR COMFORT LOOS restroom trailers for sale. 864-787-6989. (PT3)

**Restroom Trailer - Gold Series:** 32', new and used. Women's - 5 stalls, 2 sinks. Men's - 2 stalls, 2 urinals, 2 sinks. CCI/Brian Touey 805-896-3777. (PBM)

## PORTABLE RESTROOM TRAILERS

Trading two new 18' bathroom trailers for two new shower trailers. Serious inquiries only. 608-835-3459. (P3)

New and used **RESTROOM TRAILERS** available immediately. 8 to 34 foot luxury trailers. Comforts of Home Services Inc. 877-382-2935. (PBM)

## PORTABLE RESTROOM TRUCKS

1994 International 4700 with a Keith Huber 1,500 carbon steel portable toilet service unit. (Stock #6499V) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

2007 Isuzu NRR, 16,000 miles, 600/300 tank. 2006 Isuzu NQR, Workmate 950, 4-place carrier w/hydraulic lift gate, 90,000 miles. Full factory warranty, 3-year unlimited miles on both trucks. Call Rich for details. 612-221-2800. (T2)

1998 International 4700 with a 1,500 US gallon, 2-compartment (1100/400 split), carbon steel, portable toilet service unit. (Stock #8734C) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

2005 Ford F550 Super Duty diesel pump truck. White with gray interior, Best built with a 1050 gallon stainless steel tank, PTO driven Masport pump, 75,000 miles. Perfectly maintained by Gabrielli Ford in Jamaica, NY. Wholesale price of \$32,900. 800-634-2085. (PT2)

1995 International 4700 with a Prime 1,500 US gallon, 2-compartment (1000/500 split) carbon steel; portable toilet service unit. "As is." **Available!!!** (Stock #3469C) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

## PORTABLE RESTROOM TRUCKS

2006 Peterbilt 366, less than 2,000 miles, 6-spd., 2600 GVW. Progress aluminum tank 1500/500. Masport pump, water pressure, scent tank. Like new! Call for info and pictures. 512-461-2419. (P4)

**MULTIPLE TRUCKS FOR SALE:** 2000 Mitsubishi 10-unit hauler, 300 waste/60 fresh; 1995 International 950; 2000 Mitsubishi 10-unit hauler; 1995 International 950 waste/400 fresh; 1991 GMC 3500, 500 waste/200 fresh; 1990 International 700 waste/300 fresh; 1989 International 700 waste/300 fresh; 1989 International 12-unit hauler; 1988 International 6-unit hauler 400 waste/ 150 fresh; 1990 Ford Vactor/Jetter 1800 gallon; 1989 Ford 12-yard tandem dump truck. All prices reduced for fast sale! **For pictures, descriptions & pricing: www.mrbobs.com. 1-800-521-2014 NJ.** (PT2)

1998 F-800 w/stainless 200/100, 5.9 Cummins w/Allison auto, 80,000 miles, holds 10 units. \$20,000 OBO. 334-319-1412. (PT4)

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## SLIDE-IN UNITS

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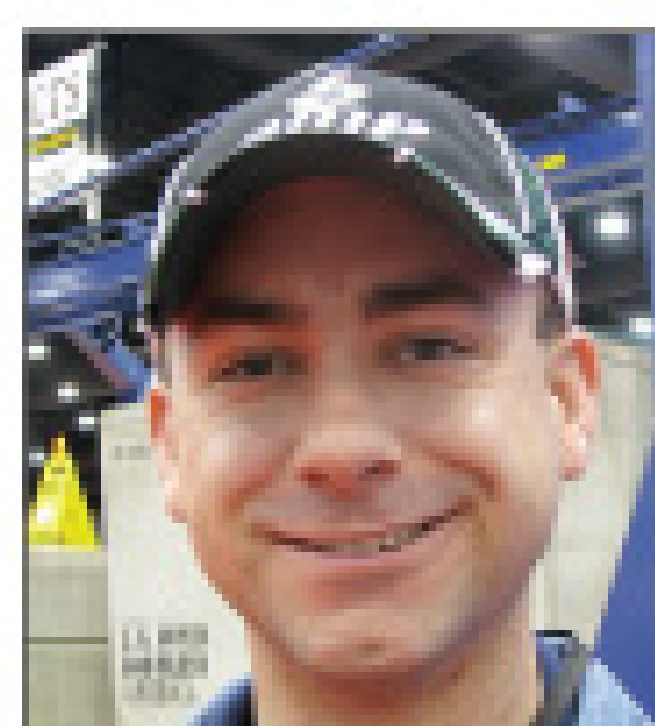
# Tough Job Tales

## What's the worst cleanup job you ever had to perform on a portable unit?

By Mary Shafer

**P**umping out the waste tank of a portable restroom might be considered, in the minds of most non-PROs, the worst part of the job. But we know that the toughest cleanup jobs are often outside the tank, all around it. Walls, doors and just about any accessible surface is vulnerable to graffiti, lighter burns, spray paint ... you name it.

Every PRO who's been at it for a while has a favorite nightmare cleanup job story. These two share theirs with us, and they share a mix of natural and man-made causes. We invite you to write in with your own *worst cleanup* stories that we may share in the future.



Josh Campbell

**Name:** Josh Campbell, owner  
**Company:** Fresh and Clean Restrooms  
**Location:** Park Hills, Mo.  
**Employees:** 5  
**Years in Business:** 3

Fresh and Clean deploys about 280 of its 425 units in its service territory about 60 miles southwest of St. Louis. The company's business splits out at

roughly 70 percent construction contracts and 30 percent special events.

"We've had some units at a new concrete plant being built right along the Mississippi River. There's a lot of wind there, and they get rolled around constantly. It gets pretty bad there. We do the best we can to keep them usable," says owner Josh Campbell, but before too long, they're beyond saving.

"We try to fix them as best we can, but a lot of times we'll bring them back to the shop and just exchange them for new ones. We're at that site three times a week. There's one company that's pretty rough on our units, and we make sure they get that same equipment back."

Another cleanup job Campbell often faces is salvaging what's left after vandals set fire to his units. "Just this week we had one that someone tried to set on fire. Our service man pulled up about three minutes after they set the toilet paper on fire and saved it. There was no damage. But last year, we had two units out at a park that were completely melted down."

*"We try to fix them as best we can, but a lot of times we'll bring them back to the shop and just exchange them out for new ones. We're at that site three times a week. There's one company that's pretty rough on our units, and we make sure they get that same equipment back."*

Josh Campbell

## DECALS

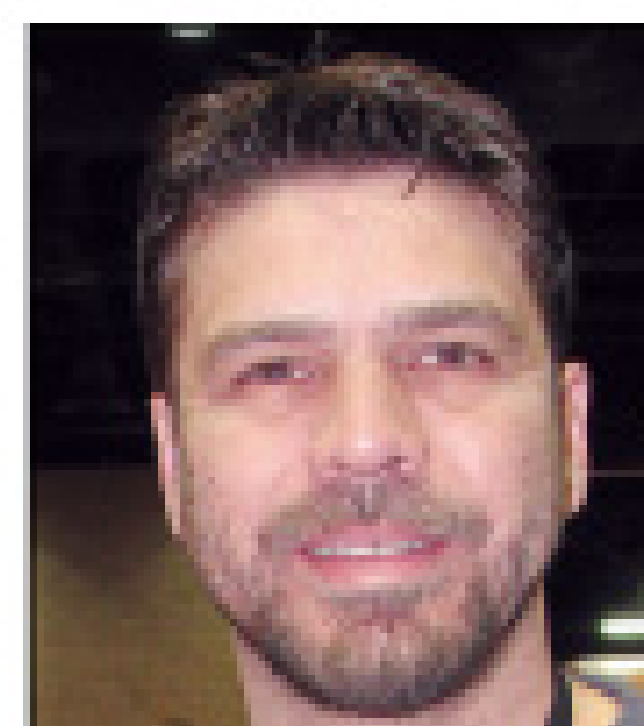
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Brad Reading

**Name:** Brad Reading, owner  
**Company:** Bullitt County Septic Service  
**Location:** Shepherdsville, Ky.  
**Employees:** 9  
**Years in Business:** 23

Bullitt County Septic Service fields about 400 units. The company is located just south of Louisville, next to the Fort Knox Military Reservation, which

secures the gold that backs our country's treasury. Owner Brad Reading's solid gold unit recovery job story has as its villain not vandals, but a vortex.

"We had a tornado go through here a couple years ago, and that was pretty bad," recalls Reading. "We lost about a dozen units and found one up in a tree. It was all mangled. The rest of the ones that got taken by the tornado were completely destroyed. There was no saving anything and we had to trash them all."

The worst actual cleanup work his crews usually do is graffiti removal, and he finds that task easier than it used to be. "Seems like the products they're coming out with now deal with it a lot better than they have in the past," Reading says. "We use a product called Wipe-Off (Sunrise Environmental Scientific, Reno, Nev.), and it really works well."

Send your worst cleanup tale to [editor@promonthly.com](mailto:editor@promonthly.com). We'll collect the stories and share them in an upcoming issue. ■





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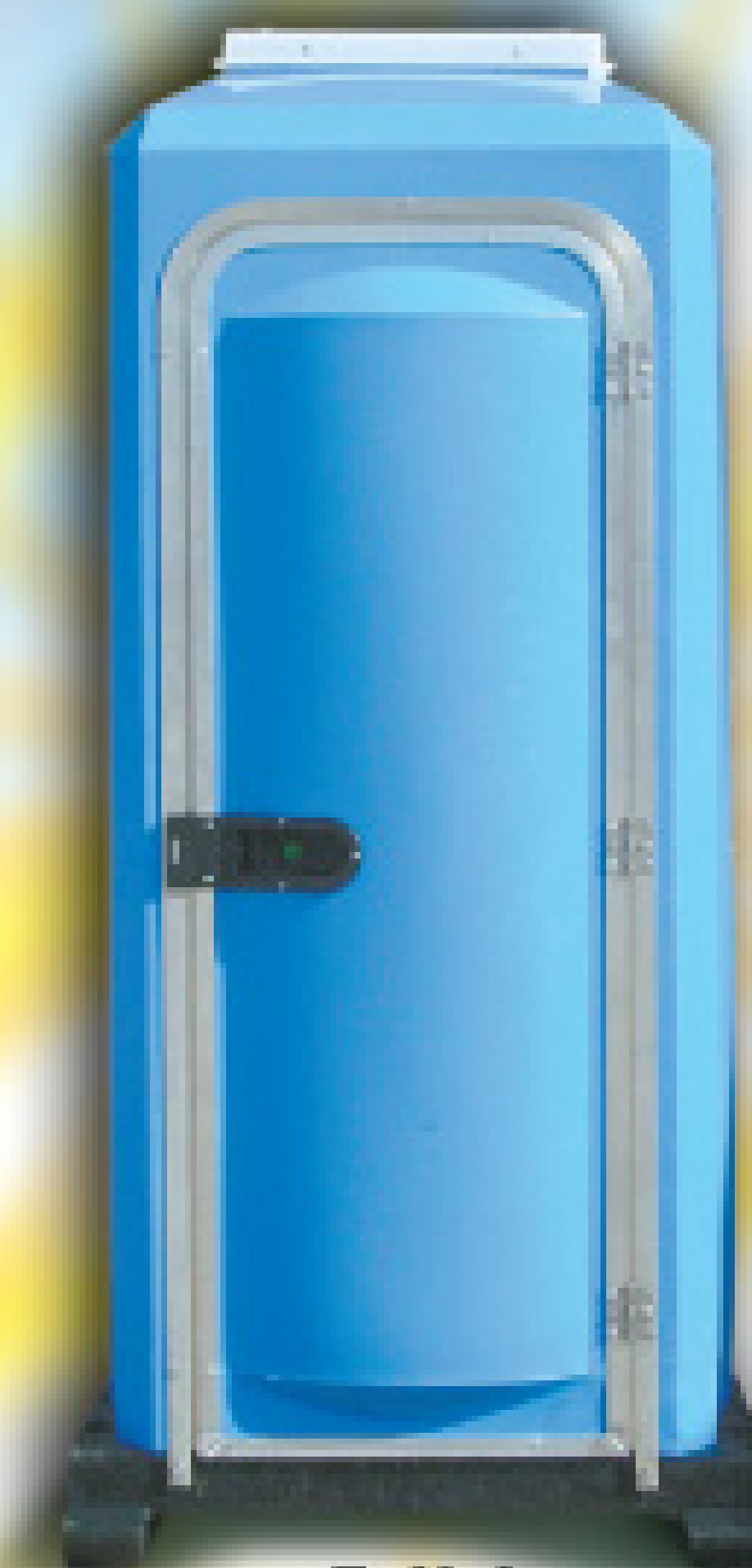
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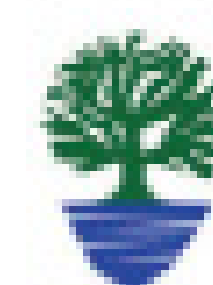
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