

# PRO

PORTABLE RESTROOM OPERATOR

## The Graveyard Shift

So-Cal PROs hit the cemetery for "Day of the Dead" event

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## Old-School PROUD

Clean and straight is how Blue Bowl rolls

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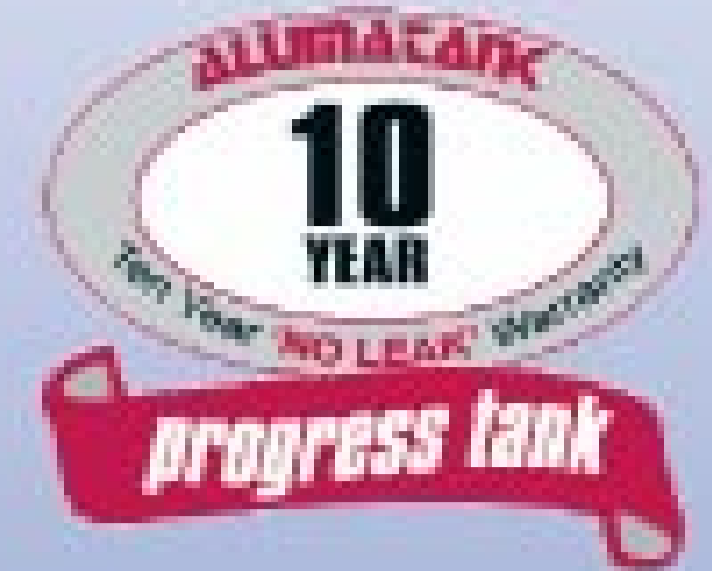
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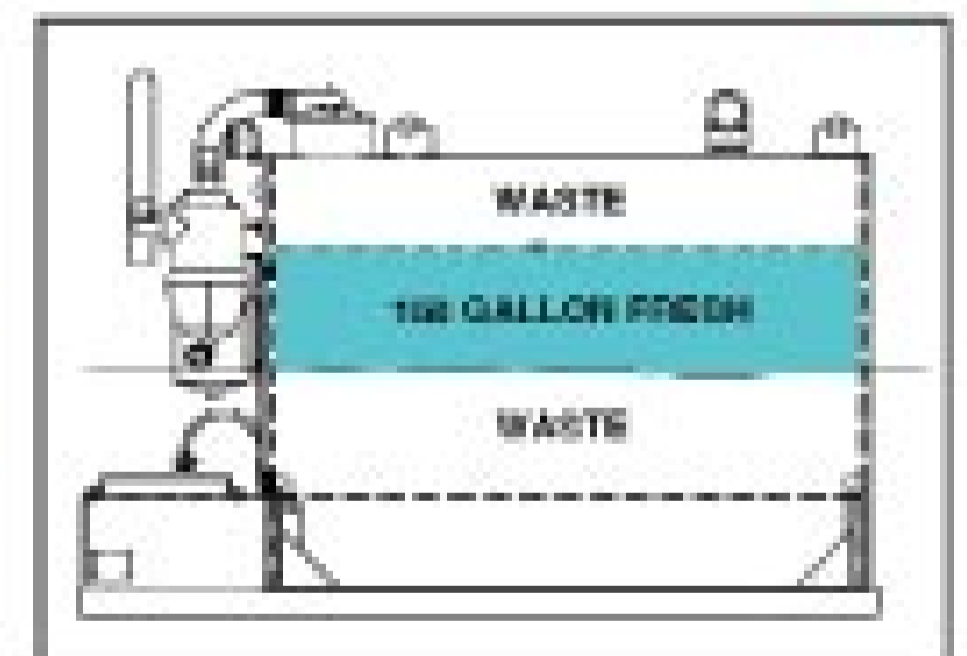
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# PRO

PORTABLE RESTROOM OPERATOR

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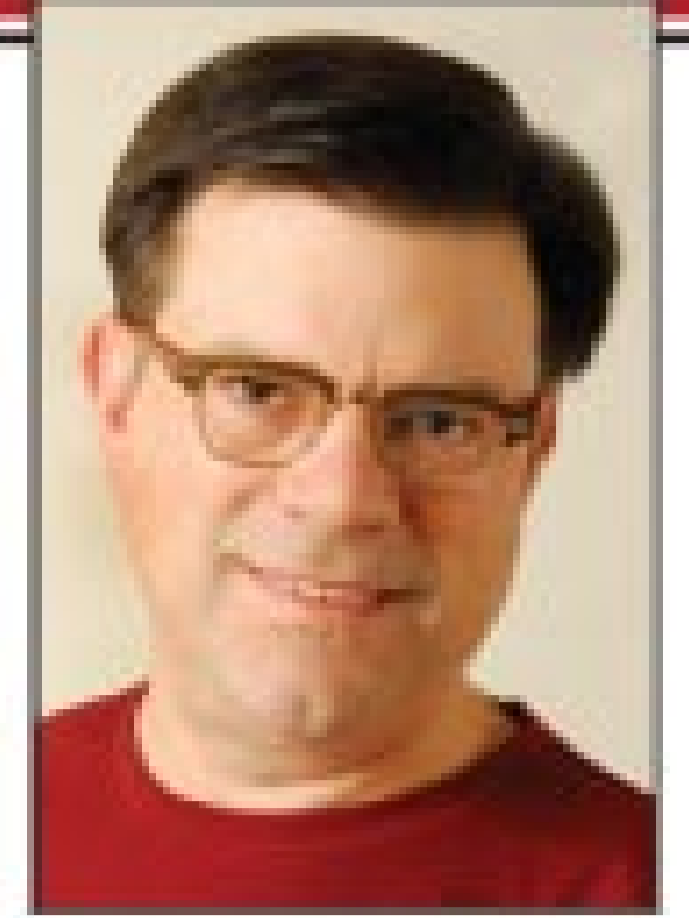
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# Picture Perfect

## A DIGITAL CAMERA IN EVERY SERVICE RIG WILL HELP YOUR PORTABLE SANITATION BUSINESS IN MANY WAYS

By Jim Kneiszel

There's one everyday tool that all portable sanitation contractors should carry on each of their trucks, and it's one you may never have considered: a digital camera.

You might argue that cameras are a frivolous expense, especially now, when you would rather invest in a new restroom unit that is a direct revenue generator. While it's a great idea to update the inventory, I would counter that a digital camera — well utilized — can help you operate more efficiently and build your business in many ways. And the cost of new camera technology is a drop in the bucket when you consider what it can do for you.

As the editor of *PRO*, I spend much of my day writing and editing stories for the magazine. But I am also a part-time professional photographer, so I keep a close eye on camera technology. Over the past several years, the quality of cameras has skyrocketed at the same time they have nosedived in price. A camera that would have cost \$1,000 five years ago now costs \$150. Given the low price, portability and ease of use of cameras today, there is no longer a financial barrier to prevent any small business from using their handy capabilities.

Today's most common consumer cameras are 1. smaller than a deck of cards, 2. produce high-quality images that can be made almost poster size, 3. have automatic settings that allow anyone to pick them up and shoot decent photos and, 4. seamlessly transfer images to be stored and used in any computer. Most so-called point-and-shoot cameras also offer limited digital video features that will allow you to post commercials on your Web site or to a YouTube account.

Here are a few ways you can use a digital camera to help your business:

### **Document equipment placement for future reference.**

Let's say you have a regular summer event that doesn't change much from year to year, but staffing requirements or worker turnover mean the job might be handled by a different driver every year. Have the driver shoot photos of each restroom placement, showing a building or other reference point in the background. Next year, the day before setup, print the photos of each bank of restrooms and give it to the new driver to take along on the delivery.

The photos can come in handy if you want to suggest portable sanitation coverage changes based on usage. The photos are a great reference in your year-to-year planning with the customer. As an example, if one bank of eight restrooms was overused last year, and another bank of eight was underused, you can use placement photos (maybe even showing the condition of overused units) to suggest re-allocating units to improve the restroom user experience.

### **Protect your business against liability claims.**

Snap photos of each restroom placement from every angle at setup to protect your company from liability claims later. For instance, document that there is plenty of room for users to move about to defuse a claim that your placement created a tripping or restroom-tipping hazard. Date-stamped photos will prove that your units were in good condition upon arrival and that your drivers didn't damage any property — like causing ruts in a lawn or breaking a concrete curb — while they were working.

These photos will also strengthen your case if you have to go after a construction or special event client to pay for damage to your inventory. Photos of your units in good working order at delivery, then follow-up photos of your damaged units after the event, will put you in a good position to collect money for repair or replacement of your equipment. If customers see a unit is in good shape one day, and burned to a crisp the next, they won't be able to argue the point.

### **Create visual content for your Web site, social media marketing.**

If a picture is worth a thousand words, you want some photos on your Web site and included as an element in other marketing materials. What better way to pitch a new events client than to show rows of sparkling clean units set up at the local county fair?

And you can use your camera to shoot detailed images of your units for the "products" page on your Web site. There is value to showing off your actual restrooms, restroom trailers and service vehicles on your Web site rather than posting generic photos provided by the manufacturer. The photos you take show the color of the units, your logo on the door sticker and your meticulous care of the inventory. You can also show off the nice touches you offer, for instance, flowers on the purse shelf in a unit used for weddings, or special screening or beautification you can provide.

And, using your own photography for Web sites, brochures or on your Facebook page ensures a consistency of quality wherever you use photos.

*Given the low price, portability and ease of use of cameras today, there is no longer a financial barrier to prevent any small business from using their handy capabilities.*



**Track worker efficiency.**

Enable the date-stamp feature and have your driver snap a photo of the work site or his delivery vehicle upon arrival, then again after setup is complete. The next time you question how long a setup took, you can review the photos and the driver can explain what the job involved and make suggestions to save time the next time this job rolls around.

In addition to tracking efficiency, photos will show you if a driver is detail-oriented. Look at how well the units are lined up, if everything is straight and as level as possible on the site. Are the hand-wash stations positioned where you would like them? Is there enough room around the outside of an ADA unit for a wheelchair user to move freely? The photos are equally helpful to keep an experienced technician on his toes or as a training tool for a new worker.

**SHOPPING FOR A CAMERA**

So you see the value in using a digital camera, but you don't know where to start looking for one? In today's retail world, where full-service camera stores are as rare as hen's teeth, this is a good question. You may need to turn to the Internet to find the camera that's right for your business needs.

To get you started, I'll share two educational Web sites that are bookmarked on my computer and I return to frequently. The first is Steve's Digicams ([www.steves-digicams.com](http://www.steves-digicams.com)). When you visit the site, you can read camera reviews, ask questions on the forums, look for online camera deals, or go straight to the buyer's guide. Click on the "best cameras" tab and choose your price range, starting with sub-\$150 cameras if you want an inexpensive choice. The other Web site is Digital Photography Review (<http://dpreview.com>), which gives more detailed reviews and is a favorite site of amateur to professional shutterbugs.

**FORGET THE PHONE**

A parting word of advice as you plan to get into photography: Put away the camera phone! Most cell phone cameras will not produce the quality images you'll be looking for. Poor optics and image sensors in most phone cameras render photos that have no use beyond texting snapshots to your friends. On the other hand, even a \$100 dedicated digital camera will make photos good enough to post on your Web site, use in print materials and enlarge to look at important details, like cigarette burns in a restroom panel.

Oh, and one other thing: You're invited to send your favorite new photos to me at *PRO* and I might use them in one of our features. See you in the pictures! ■

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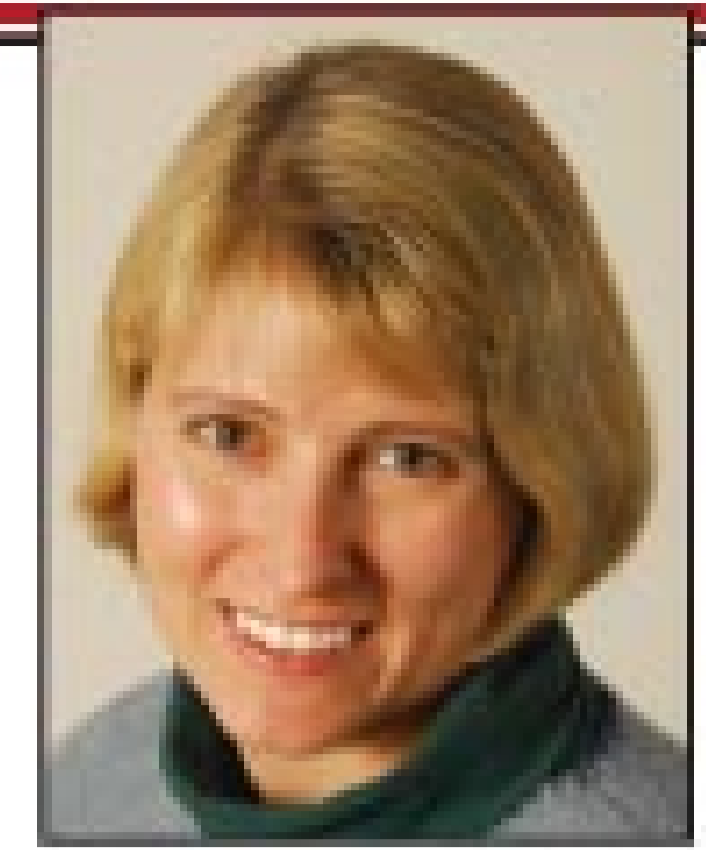
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# First National Bank of Uncle Fred?

**BORROWING MONEY FROM A FAMILY MEMBER OR FRIEND TO START OR GROW A BUSINESS CAN BE REWARDING TO BOTH PARTIES ... OR SET OFF THE WORLD WAR III OF FEUDS. IT IS DEFINITELY NOT SOMETHING TO JUMP INTO HAPHAZARDLY.**

*By Judy Kneiszel*

**B**anks, credit unions and other conventional business lenders have tightened credit in the past several years, and don't seem to be loosening their grip anytime soon. As a result, small businesses fortunate enough to be in a position to expand are having trouble securing the money needed to do so and are looking at alternatives. One such alternative may be borrowing from a family member or friend. This is sometimes referred to as a social- or peer-to-peer loan.

According to SCORE, a non-profit association of retired executives and business owners who assist small businesses, investments by family and friends account for more than half of all investment dollars for startup businesses.

Of course, loyal family members and true friends might loan you money just because they want to see your business succeed. But let's face it, with the low interest rates being paid out on bank CDs and money market funds, they might be willing to invest in hopes that your company will pay them a higher return on their money than they can get anywhere else.

Don't just blurt out a loan request in the middle of Thanksgiving dinner or at your class reunion, however. Politely ask the potential lender if you can meet privately. Then prepare ahead of time what you are going to say. The first step in successfully borrowing money from friends or family is to assure them:

1. Their investment is smart financially.
2. Their investment won't harm your personal relationship.

## **IT'S ALL IN THE DETAILS**

If you introduce the topic of securing a loan from a friend or family member and get a positive response, plan to meet again to discuss it further. This time, take a list of details, including how much you want to borrow, any other sources you are using, the interest rate you're offering to pay, your proposed repayment schedule, the legal and financial pro-

tections you'll offer to the lender and how much you have available for the down payment for the item you are looking to finance.

Don't pressure the potential lender, but be reassuring. Be realistic about how much money you want to borrow. Don't base your request on how much you need, but how much an individual can afford. And don't ask for more money than a person can afford to lose, even if it means asking several different people for loans.

## **GET IT IN WRITING**

Treat whomever you approach for a loan like you would a bank. Be willing to show them a detailed business plan and put up some collateral. Show them your credit report and any other personal financial statements they might be interested in.

Once a friend or relative agrees to loan you money, proper documentation is essential. For one thing, it will ease your mind if you are worried that grandma will meddle in how you run your business after you borrow money from her. Formalizing the loan makes it clear that this is a loan, not a favor, and her role does not go beyond that of lender. Setting up a mutually agreed upon repayment plan lets her know you are serious about paying her back.

One more argument for proper documentation: Even if the uncle you approach for a loan slaps you on the back and says, "Aw' shucks, sonny, just pay me back when you can," and refuses to charge you interest, you should draw up a contract or promissory note for the loan because otherwise, the IRS can actually attach a rate to an interest-free loan for you, or decide that the loan was a gift, and either action will have tax consequences.

Yes, even if Uncle Fred trusts you, Uncle Sam might not. If you do not clearly document that money provided to you from a friend or relative is a loan by defining interest and payment terms and specifying the collateral, the IRS may mistake it for a gift or an inheritance and it could cut into your gift tax or estate tax exemption.

## **HELP IS AVAILABLE**

If all this paperwork seems overwhelming, you may be relieved to know there are services that will prepare documents, create repayment schedules, process payments and provide year-end tax statements and do whatever else is needed to facilitate loan transactions between private parties. Using an outsourced loan service can go a long way toward reassuring family members or friends that borrowing money will not

*According to SCORE, a non-profit association of retired executives and business owners who assist small businesses, investments by family and friends account for more than half of all investment dollars for startup businesses.*

harm your relationship. If an outside company is managing the repayment processing and record keeping, for example, your lender won't have to initiate an uncomfortable conversation that might put a strain on your relationship if, say, a payment is late.

Several online loan service companies match people wanting to lend money with people wanting to borrow money. A better first stop, however, if you are investigating loan service companies, is [www.virginmoneyus.com](http://www.virginmoneyus.com) because it focuses specifically in facilitating and managing loans between family and friends. In fact, Virgin Money was started by British industrialist Richard Branson, who, thanks to a loan from his aunt that got him started, founded Virgin Atlantic Airlines, Virgin Records and more than 300 other businesses. Now there's a family and friends loan success story!

#### IF YOU ARE TURNED DOWN

The key to successfully borrowing money from a friend or family member — whether you are in the music business like Branson or the portable restroom business — is to be as honest and professional as possible.

If a bank turned you down, the mature, professional thing to do would be to accept their reasons, revamp your presentation and take your request to another bank. So if a friend or relative refuses you, assume they have their reasons, and move on to Plan B. Maybe they've been burned in the past and have sworn off loaning money to friends. Maybe their spouse isn't comfortable with the idea. Or maybe they just don't have the resources you think they do. Whatever the reason, it's not worth spoiling a relationship, so let it go and drink a toast to your business with them next Thanksgiving. ■



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# Old-School PROUD

**FOR NEARLY 50 YEARS, THE EL-HAGE FAMILY HAS BEEN SHOOTING STRAIGHT WITH CUSTOMERS AND KEEPING RESTROOMS CLEAN**

By Ken Wysocky

**F**or almost 50 years and two generations of family ownership, Blue Bowl Sanitation in Fulton, N.Y., has made old-fashioned customer service and a common-sense business mindset the cornerstone of its portable sanitation operation. And Joe El-Hage, the company's majority owner and son of company founder Hider El-Hage I, doesn't plan to change that strategy any time soon.

"My dad was extremely strict on a lot of things, especially the quality of work and the cleanliness of our restrooms, and we keep the same principles," says El-Hage, who owns the business with his brother, Hider El-Hage II. "I'm old-school, just like he was."

That means the pair and their crew of service drivers still clean restrooms top-to-bottom with a bucket and a brush, just like the elder El-Hage did when he started the business in 1952. To do anything less than scrub the walls, along with the seat and floor of every unit, is considered taking the lazy

way out to the El-Hage family.

El-Hage's no-nonsense approach extends to how he communicates with customers. In short, there's no room for stuffed shirts in this company. The brothers are hands-on in the field and like to talk directly to their clients.

"We're a corporation, but as president, I still service, pick up and deliver units," says El-Hage, who started running routes for his father when he was 16 years old. "A lot of times, I meet with people face-to-face and discuss what they want. There's no texting or Twitter or e-mail. Things get misinterpreted in writing. A lot of people I deal with would rather talk to me face-to-face, if they have the time."

Blue Bowl also serves customers by dealing with complaints quickly and effectively. The way El-Hage looks at it, he'd rather have a customer call with a complaint than call a competitor. And providing good customer

*"A lot of times, I meet with people face-to-face and discuss what they want. There's no texting or Twitter or e-mail. Things get misinterpreted in writing. A lot of people I deal with would rather talk to me face-to-face, if they have the time."*

Joe El-Hage

Blue Bowl Sanitation's Rose El-Hage fills a paper towel dispenser to refresh a restroom ready to go out to a special event (Photos by Chuck Perkins)

## Blue Bowl Sanitation Fulton, N.Y.

**Owners:** Joe and Hider El-Hage II

**Founded:** 1952

**Employees:** 6 to 13

**Service area:** 11 counties in central and northern New York

**Services:** Portable sanitation and drain cleaning







The Blue Bowl Sanitation team includes (from left) Joe El-Hage, Rene Wood, future PRO Hunter El-Hage, Rose El-Hage, Hider El-Hage II and Dan Berry.

service also means being available all the time. "When no one is in the office, calls go directly to my cell phone or Hider's," he says. "You can talk to someone no matter what time of day it is. Hider has taken calls at 3 a.m. For us, service is a 24/7 commitment."

#### OPEN TO EXPANSION

Despite their old-school stance, the El-Hage brothers aren't mired in the past when it comes to running the business, which gets about two-thirds of its sales volume from special events and one-third from construction rentals. Their father, who passed away in 2002, believed in keeping the business small, but one of the first things the brothers did after

assuming control of the business was buy 90 new restrooms from PolyPortables Inc.

"Then we bought out another (portable sanitation) business that had been around for 25 or 30 years," El-Hage says.

Today, Blue Bowl owns between 800 and 900 units, most from PolyPortables and the rest a mix of units from PolyJohn Enterprises Corp. and Olympia Fiberglass Industries. About 50 of the units are handicapped-accessible.

To service those restrooms, the company owns a 1991 Ford F-450 outfitted by Keith Huber Inc. with a steel tank (600 gallons waste/250 gallons freshwater) and M2 pump from Masport Inc.; and 1992 and 1995 Ford F-450s, both with steel tanks (500 gallons

waste/300 gallons freshwater) and Masport M2 pumps.

The company owns seven other trucks: two 1999 Ford F-550s, a 2000 Ford F-550, a 2000 Ford F-450, 2000 and 2003 Chevrolet 3500s and a 1978 Chevrolet C-60 rollback truck. Blue Bowl also relies on four slide-in pumping units: a homemade unit equipped with a stainless-steel tank (300 gallons waste/150 gallons freshwater) and a Conde pump from Westmoor Ltd.; two built by Crescent Tank Manufacturing with steel tanks (500 gallons waste/250 gallons freshwater) and Masport HVL3 pumps; and one generic unit with a steel tank (750 gallons waste/300 gallons freshwater) and a Masport HCL4 pump.



Part of the Blue Bowl Sanitation fleet is ready to roll. The company employs both vacuum trucks with a fixed tank and flatbed trucks with slide-in units to serve a two-thirds special events, one-third construction customer mix.





Rene Wood (right) directs Hider El-Hage II as he backs up with a load of PolyPortables Integra restrooms at the Blue Bowl Sanitation yard.

*"I say if you want it that cheap, you go right ahead. I've seen a lot of companies come and go, and I'm not quite 40 years old yet. I'm not going that low."*

Joe El-Hage

## How Low Can You Go?

Low-balling competitors who try to buy market share with unrealistic rates for portable restroom rentals and service have plagued Blue Bowl Sanitation for decades, says co-owner Joe El-Hage. His strategy for fighting cut-rate competition is simple: He sticks to his guns on price, and maintains good relations with customers who leave for a lower bid, because they often return when they see what they get for their money.

"We lost the New York State Fair to a guy who is charging \$4 a day per unit for pumping, washing and toilet paper," El-Hage says. "That also has to cover labor, fuel and insurance costs. I say if you want it that cheap, you go right ahead. I've seen a lot of companies come and go, and I'm not quite 40 years old yet. I'm not going that low."

Every five years or so, El-Hage watches as a new restroom startup company comes in and charges ridiculously low prices. One year, a newcomer charged less for upgraded units with sinks than what competitors charged for standard restrooms.

"One season we lost a bunch of little park rentals to a competitor," El-Hage recalls. "But we got most of them back the next year. Customers realize you get what you pay for. Guys figure they can put other guys out of business, then raise their prices after that. But it doesn't always work that way."

In the end, El-Hage is convinced that providing great service is the best way to deter customers from falling for the lure of low prices. And sometimes the customers who pick operators based solely on price aren't customers Blue Bowl can afford to keep.

"A lot of people are loyal, while some will jump from company to company, depending on the price," he says. "And if they do leave, we keep calling them and try to keep our foot in the door."

### SLIDE-INS BOOST FLEXIBILITY

Blue Bowl uses the slide-in units — mounted on flat beds — primarily for special events, and the fixed-tank vacuum trucks for service routes.

"We like to use the slide-ins because we can still carry four restrooms behind it — even six if we use the lift gate," El-Hage says. "If we use one of our vacuum trucks with a fixed tank, we can only haul two units with the fold-down gate, so the slide-ins offer more flexibility ... we can also carry an extra tank for water, or put boxes of toilet paper in the extra space behind the slide-in."

"Plus, using the slide-ins reduces the wear and tear on the vacuum trucks," he adds. "It only takes me 15 minutes to put a slide-in unit in or take it out."

Blue Bowl services its own vehicles, unless employees don't have time or a repair involves something major, such as a blown engine or transmission. To preserve vehicle longevity, El-Hage is careful about hiring employees.

"If you've got a driver that doesn't care, they break more things on trucks and beat them up," he says. "Someone who takes pride in their work does a job right and takes good care of equipment."

To motivate employees, they're eligible for the same product discounts the company gets at places where it does business, such as auto parts stores and for heating fuel. They also receive discounted tickets at special events the company services, such as concerts and car races. The company also allows proven route drivers to use their truck to commute

to and from work, he says.

### STATE FAIR CHALLENGES SERVICE

Every portable restroom operator has a particular even that tests its customer service commitment. For Blue Bowl, it was the 12-day New York State Fair, held in Syracuse in late August — and ending on Labor Day. While Blue Bowl recently lost the job to a low-ball bid, El-Hage says the job still exemplifies what his company's service ethic is all about.

"For almost two weeks, we lost two vehicles and four workers because they don't have time to do anything else," El-Hage says of the



Joe El-Hage inspects a new PolyPortables Inc. Diplomat unit in the Blue Bowl yard.



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event, which is about a half-hour drive away from their home base. "It's hectic, with a lot of 12-hour days. Plus, there are a lot of other special events we service on Labor Day weekend."

Blue Bowl had delivered and serviced about 50 standard and 10 handicapped-accessible units at the fair. They also pumped out the waste tanks of hundreds of RVs at the event. For waste disposal, Blue Bowl used on-

site dump stations.

To handle the overflow workload, El-Hage typically hired two or three extra workers, who took vacations from their regular jobs to help him at the fair.

"Our trucks drove up, stayed for 12 hours and came back," he says. "It's extremely intense. My brother and I typically didn't talk much during that time. One of us was in charge of the guys up there and the other handles the yard. We flip-flopped jobs to give each other a break from what we were focused on, plus then both of us knew what's going on at both

ends. In either case, one of us was always at the fair so we could resolve situations in a timely manner."

#### SERVICE TRUMPS ALL

Overall, El-Hage doesn't see any challenges that can't be solved by providing top customer service. It's a commitment that comes easily for the El-Hage brothers, who are both military veterans and firmly believe in service — both corporately and to their country. Again, that's an ethic instilled by the elder El-Hage.

"We've always differentiated ourselves by providing great service," El-Hage says. "You have to take pride in what you do if you want to go anywhere. I'm old-school and proud of it. It's been working since 1952, so I don't see any sense in changing that now." ■

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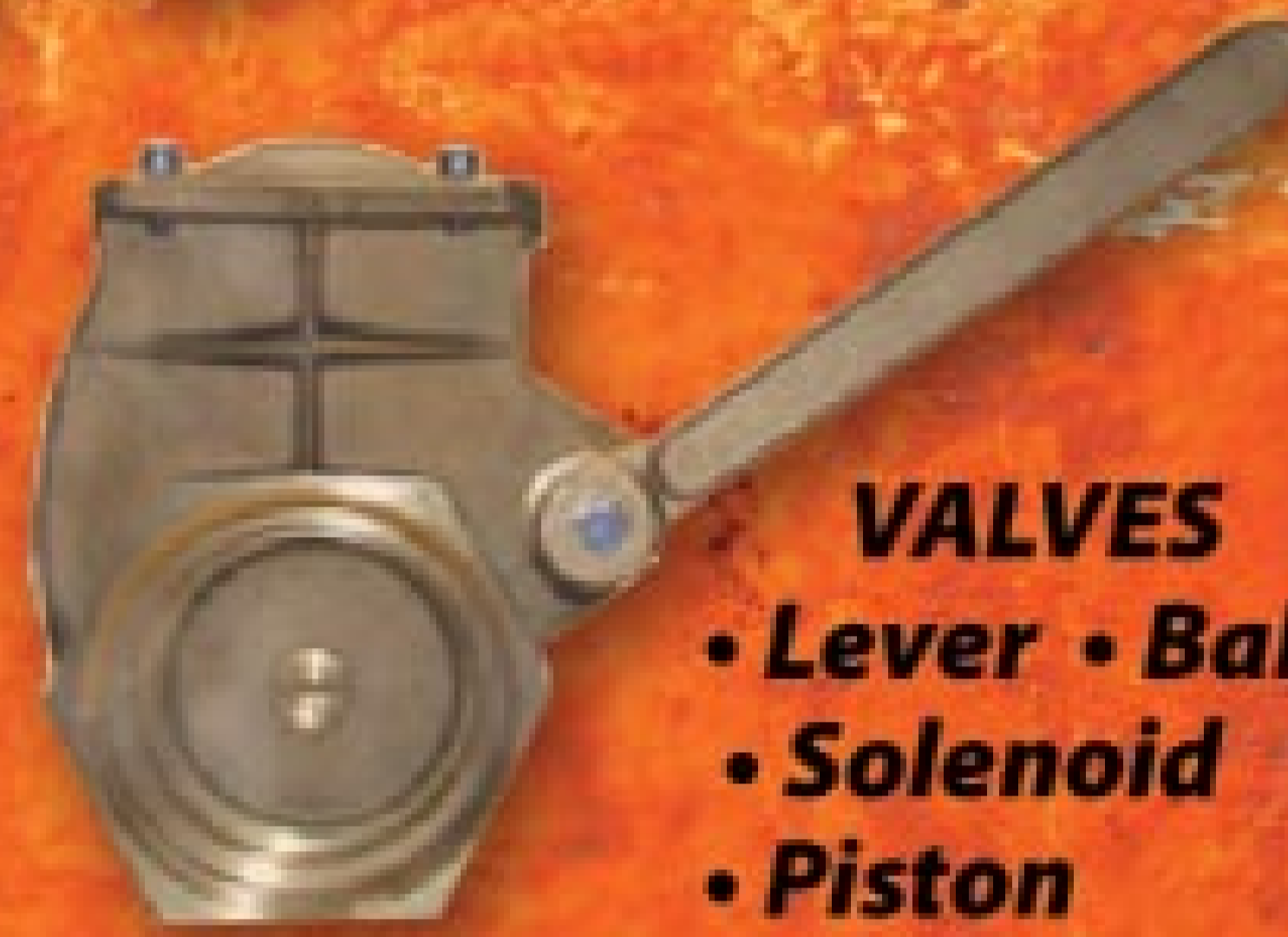
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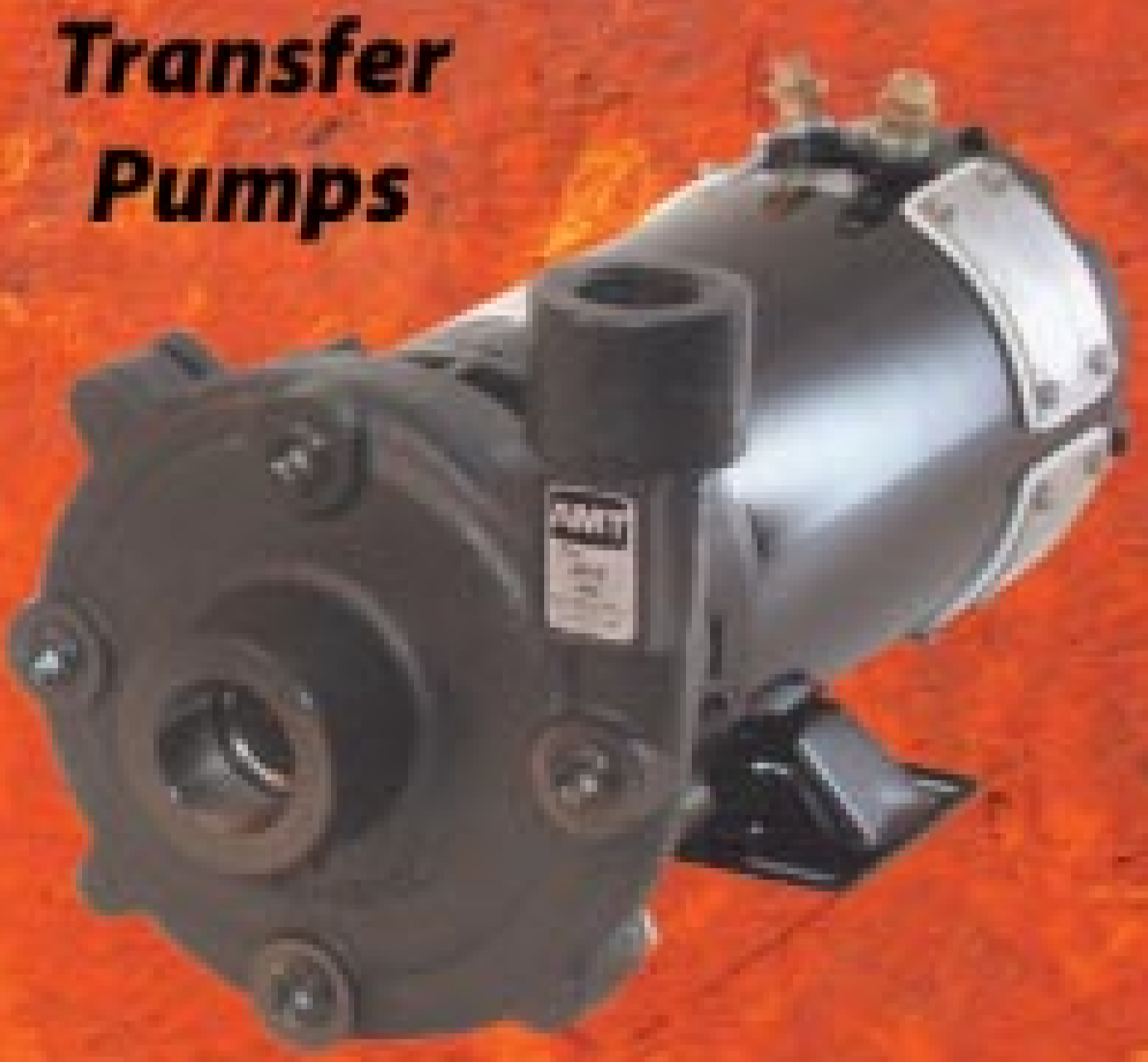
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An Eagle Portables truck makes its way through the busy Hollywood Forever Cemetery while serving the Day of the Dead celebration during last Halloween season. (Photos by Sergio Dennis)

## ON LOCATION

THE JOB: Dia de los Muertos

LOCATION: Hollywood Forever Cemetery, Hollywood, Calif.

THE PRO: Eagle Portables Inc.

# The GRAVEYARD SHIFT

California's Eagle Portables provides services for quirky "Day of the Dead" celebration at the deceased-star-studded Hollywood Forever Cemetery

By Betty Dageforde

## THE TEAM

Ellie Madrigal, Carlos Moreno, Jose Plascencia and Luis Plascencia are the owners of Eagle Portables in Lynwood, Calif., a suburb of Los Angeles. Jose Plascencia's daughter Maria also works for the company, and another son, Eder, helped with the Dia de los Muertos project. Job descriptions are flexible. Everyone does a little bit of everything — sales, pickup and deliveries, washing units. Moreno focuses on servicing. All hands were on deck the weekend of the cemetery event as the company also provided units for the University of Southern California home football game. "We worked a good 23 hours that day," Madrigal says.

## COMPANY HISTORY

Madrigal spent 12 years working for a large portable restroom company. When it was sold, and then sold again, she ended up with a very long commute. Out of frustration she told co-worker Moreno, "We should just open up our own business." He agreed, they bought 12 units, and in 2006 put out their shingle.

With a few successes under their belt, they quickly realized they needed more units, and for that they needed funding. So in 2007 they brought

in Jose Plascencia, owner of a roll-off container business, and his son Luis, and created a more



Dancers (above) dressed in colorful costumes and some painted their faces for the festivities. Below is the grave of Johnny Ramone, of the legendary punk rock band, The Ramones, adorned with many fan tributes.



Aguila Plascencia gets ready to place a portable restroom at the Day of the Dead event.





The Eagle Portables crew (from left) includes Carlos Moreno, Ellie Madrigal, Maria Plascencia and Aguila Plascencia.

*“It was crazy. We couldn’t get in and finally had to be escorted by police officers on motorcycles ... (Next time) I would recommend more restrooms because the paper was out of them already and they were filled pretty much to capacity.”*

Ellie Madrigal

pany, and in the end selected Eagle.

### SEEING RED

The owners are proud of their choice of red restrooms. Madrigal firmly believes having attractive restrooms at an event is something appreciated by both sponsors and users. The company also chose its color to complement the patriotic theme of their name. “We have red toilets, blue corners and white roofs,” Madrigal says of the PolyJohn

formal corporate structure for the business. They came up with a list of about 20 possible names for the company, but when the vote was taken they unanimously agreed on Eagle Portables.

They have 310 portable restrooms and work within a 45-mile radius of their office. About 60 percent of their business is special events; the rest construction.

### MAKING CONNECTIONS

The Hollywood Forever Cemetery sponsors a number of events throughout the year that require portable restroom services. A friend of Luis Plascencia knew organizers of this event and suggested they try out Eagle. That remark opened the door for the company to put in a bid. The cemetery tried them out for three events, along with another com-

pany. “Even the towel dispenser is red.” Eagle’s red hand-wash stations come from PolyPortables Inc. The color scheme extends to company shirts and is used throughout the company’s Web site.

### THE MAIN EVENT

Hollywood Forever Cemetery, founded in 1899, sits adjacent to the back lot at historic Paramount Studios. This picturesque cemetery is the final resting place of such screen legends as Rudolph Valentino, Douglas Fairbanks, Cecil B. DeMille and Jayne Mansfield.

On Saturday, Oct. 24, 2009, the cemetery sponsored its 10th annual Dia de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead, a 3,000-year-old Aztec tradition celebrated in many parts of the Americas. It’s a day to honor and even, in a sense, to reunite with one’s deceased ancestors.

The scene at the graveyard was festive. Attendance was around 20,000, many in costumes. The celebration began with a procession and ended with a concert by Latin Grammy winner Lila Downs. Attractions included arts and crafts, performing artists, lectures and children’s interactive activities. Doors opened to the public at 4 p.m. but thousands arrived early in the day to get a head start on one of the main



Moreno (left) services a unit during the event and places a hand-wash station at the cemetery.





With a brightly colored backdrop (above), a band plays music at the Day of the Dead festivities. At right, participants in ceremonial garb parade through the cemetery.



activities, the creation of elaborate altars and shrines for the deceased. This was a competitive event with \$3,000 going to the first place winner.

#### BY THE NUMBERS

The company provided 65 PolyJohn PJN3 units, five Comfort Inn wheelchair accessible units, and eight PolyPortables Inc. TagAlong hand-wash stations. They were placed in five locations throughout the 62-acre cemetery.

#### LET'S ROLL

To drop off units, the company made the 20-mile trip to the cemetery four times via downtown Los Angeles, using a 2006 Chevy Silverado pickup that held six units, pulling a 12-unit trailer. Hand-wash stations were hauled in a 2007 Silverado. They started at 5 a.m. and by the time they brought in their last

load around 2 p.m. the cemetery was packed. "It was crazy," Madrigal says. "We couldn't get in and finally had to be escorted by police officers on motorcycles."

The event officially ended at 11 p.m., and although the company arrived at midnight hoping to start pumping units, it wasn't until 3 a.m. that crowds thinned enough for them to get through. It made for a long cleanup shift, as they finished around 11 a.m.

#### KEEPIN' IT CLEAN

For servicing, the company used a 2007 Ford F-550 built out by Satellite Industries with a 650-gallon waste/300-gallon freshwater steel tank and Conde pump from Westmoor Ltd.. They returned to their shop five times to dump waste into a 2,500-gallon storage tank at the yard.



#### FINAL REWARD

Although the event took on an extreme party atmosphere, the company experienced no incidents of vandalism or graffiti. "People were drunk, but everything was peaceful," Madrigal says. However, the company would prefer to do a few things differently next time. "I would recommend more restrooms because the paper was out of them already, and they were filled pretty much to capacity," she says.

The company didn't get a chance to sit down with event coordinators to express these concerns, but they're confident the cemetery was happy with their service as they were hired again the following two weekends for Halloween movie screenings. ■



A row of Eagle Portables' signature red restrooms and hand-wash stations is set up along a roadway in the Hollywood Forever Cemetery.

#### MORE INFO:

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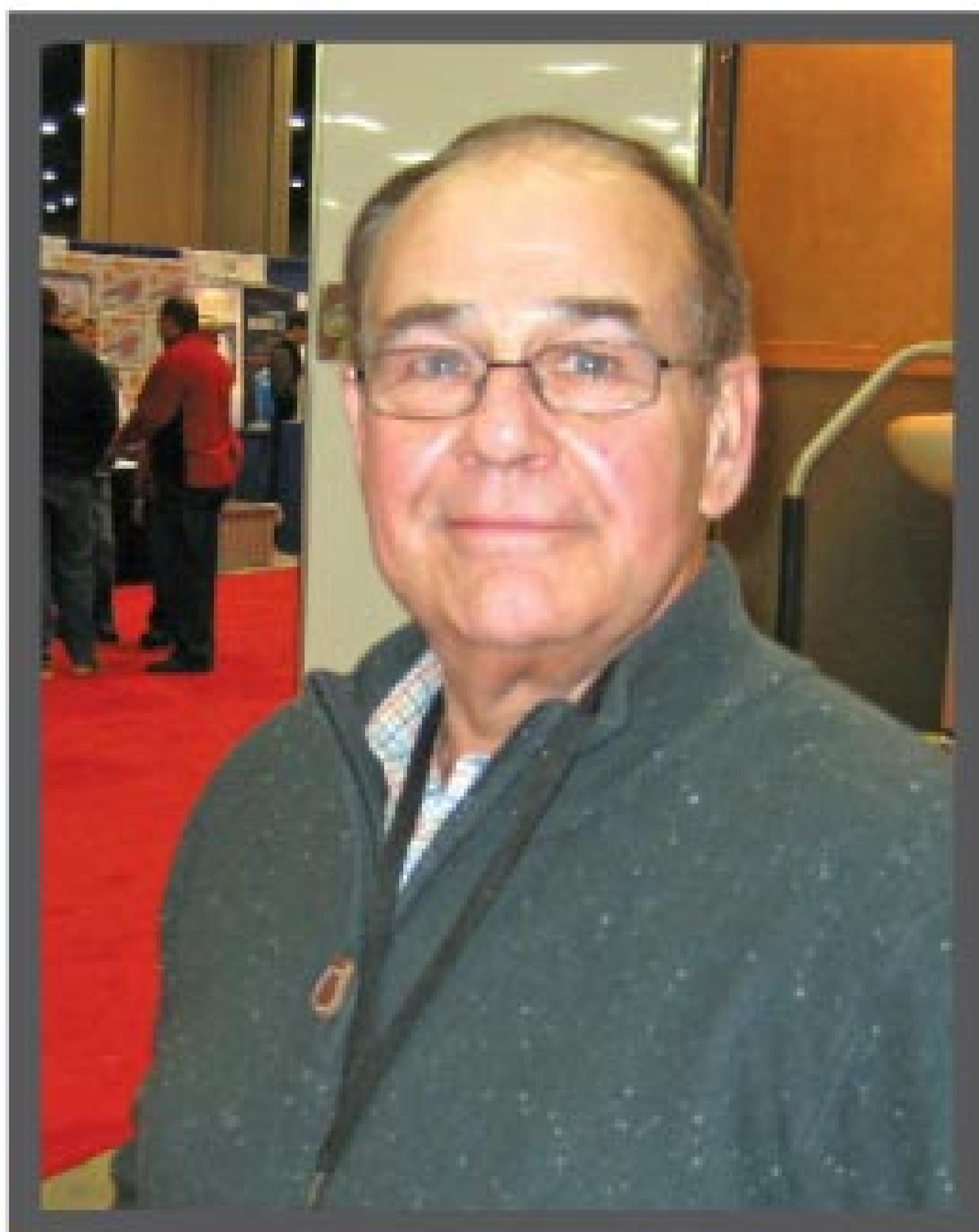




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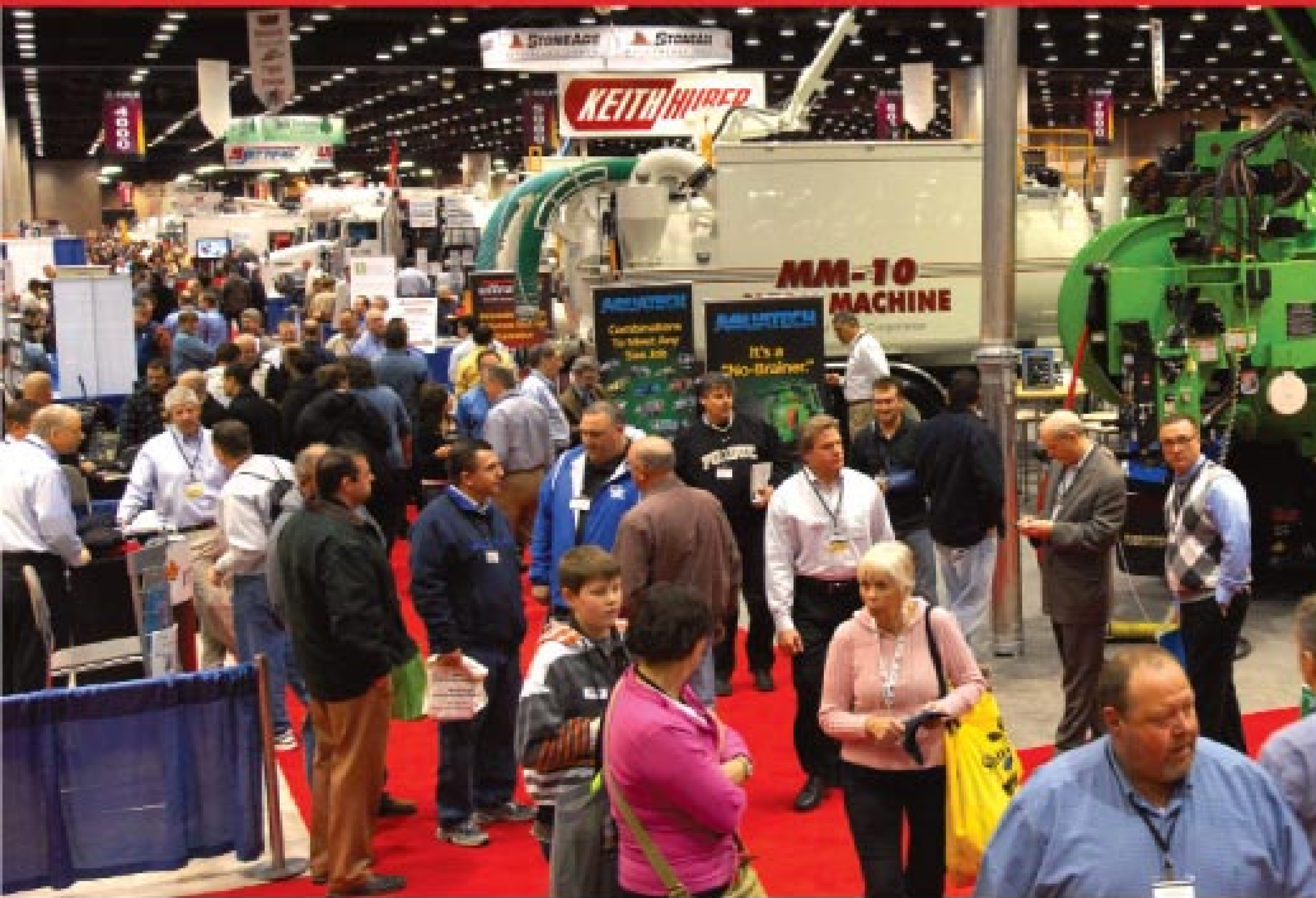


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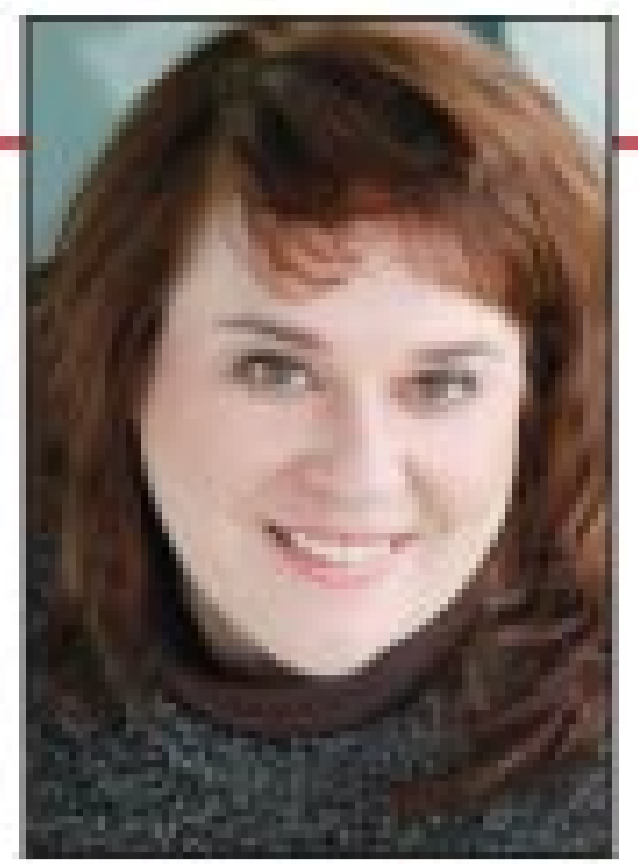
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# Little Things Mean a Lot

## WHAT'S THE BEST EMPLOYEE BENEFIT YOU OFFER THAT DOESN'T COST A LOT?

By Mary Shafer

Small business owners know one of their biggest challenges is holding onto valued employees. Even in recessionary times, no one wants to see a highly trained employee walk out the door.

Generally, the big things — prevailing wage, insurance packages, vacations, paid holidays — tend to be similar across any given market. Providing a cheerful, low-stress work environment is frequently counted as a high-ranking perk. And all the other large favored benefits cost a lot of money.

So what's a small businessperson to do to retain quality workers without breaking the bank?

There's always making yourself more available for a little one-on-one time with employees who thrive on that kind of attention. And even those who seem self-sufficient can sometimes really use a friendly ear, even if it's not necessarily a work-related issue. An open-door policy may help. Encouraging employees to approach you with solutions to workplace challenges may solve problems you weren't aware of and reveal a creative-thinking employee.

Can't afford paid days off as a rule? Maybe using them once in a while as a reward for someone who's gone above and beyond the call of duty might inject a little unexpected joy into the day, while not going overboard on something you can't afford. If you keep it rare, it also stays extra special.

Let's see what some of your colleagues are doing to keep their employees feeling valued ... while keeping more of their own value in the bank.

Paul Cooley says higher wages are meant to offset the company's inability to pay for health insurance coverage for workers.



**Name: Paul Cooley**  
**Company: Paul's Potties**  
**Location: Grundy Center, Iowa**  
**Employees: 9**  
**Years in Business: 17**

*"Everybody gets together and has a good time. Yeah, the common bond is work, but you also see the whole person, maybe their wife and kids. And they see you, the person they talk about when they go home at night."*

**Bob Viox**

"We're on our own, too," he says, referring to his own family's insurance plan. "Let's hope we don't have to go there. It's just so expensive. But that's why our wages are so generous, hopefully to make up for that."

Company-wide, he says probably the best benefit is the provided uniforms. "Everybody gets shirts, and they wear jeans." Asked if Paul's Potties offers flex time or anything similar, he says no, but the small company is working toward offering paid vacation time. One other benefit? "A couple of our employees drive a company vehicle, which is a nice perk for them."



**Names: Bob Viox**  
**Company: Rumpke Portable Restrooms**  
**Location: Dayton, Ohio**  
**Employees: 12**  
**Years in Business: 78**

Bob Viox heads the portable restroom division for Rumpke Consolidated Companies Inc. Each of several Rumpke divisions operates as a separate company within the larger business. As for the portables

division, says Viox, employees receive a generous benefits package including health insurance, paid holidays off and 10 days paid vacation annually. Viox says furnished work gear or the many annual company get-togethers might be the most popular low-cost perks for employees.

"We supply uniforms — shirts, caps and a gift card each year to buy pants — and all their personal protective equipment," he reports. Viox feels this creates a sense of company pride and cohesion that contributes to a teamwork attitude. But he thinks there's an equal sense of teambuilding through Rumpke's company gatherings.

"Each year, we throw a Christmas party, two to three (smaller division) cookouts, as well as the larger, full company employee picnic," he explains. "It definitely builds morale. Everybody gets together and has a good time. Yeah, the common bond is work, but you also see the whole person, maybe their wife and kids. And they see you, the person they talk about when they go home at night. It's kind of neat to get everybody together like that." ■

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# Raising Employee Morale

**HERE ARE FIVE LOW- OR NO-COST STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TODAY TO KEEP THE TROOPS HAPPY**

By Mike Michalowicz

In case you've been living under a rock, we've encountered some challenging economic times. The "new" economy is getting to everyone, including your employees. While you may not have the cash to offer a big raise or add other major benefits these days, there are nice little perks you can offer to raise employee morale.

Here is a list of small things you can do to make a big impact on the well being of your team:

### Thanks

A sincere "thank you" can go a long way to improve employee morale. Everyone wants to feel valued and appreciated. Take time out to personally thank workers for a job well done, a great idea, or a nice customer service save. Blanket statements of thanks are disingenuous, but specific expressions of gratitude always feel good.

### Food & Drink

Stock up on drinks and (healthy) snacks at your local discount store. It may seem too expensive, especially when you're cutting corners, but this line item is a keeper. A full and happy stomach will prevent distractions and random trips to the corner store. And yes, they will take a few drinks for the trip home, but that's a good thing.

### Volunteer Time

Offer your employees a day

off (with pay) every quarter to volunteer at a local charity with fellow workers. Service projects are a great bonding experience. Helping an organization gets the mind off work for a day — and gives people perspective so their own problems seem more manageable. They will come back to your office the next day with renewed enthusiasm.

### Flexible Scheduling

Offer employees the option of setting their own schedules to suit what works best for them. With freedom to work when they are most productive you may actually reap benefits beyond improved morale. If you need employees to work specific hours, try flex scheduling one or two days a week.

### Exercise Program

Exercise is a proven mood booster and stress reducer, so get your team moving. Start a walking program, allowing your staff to take an extra half-hour break each day to walk together. Or, if walking isn't their thing, put up a basketball hoop in the parking lot so they can go blow off some steam.

### A FINAL WORD

Implementing one or all of these suggestions will help keep your hardworking staff happy — and hard working. ■

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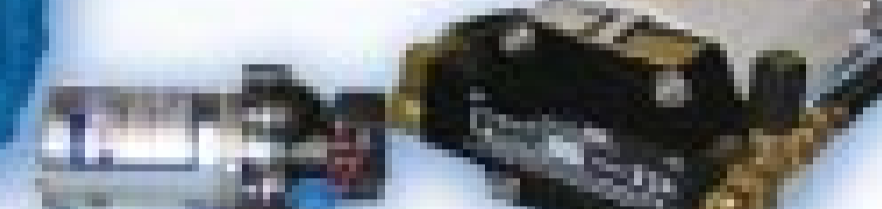
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## Slide-In Unit Round-Up

# Versatile & Maneuverable

By  
Ed Wodalski

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waste/freshwater/chemical combinations, these compact units can help you expand your restroom business and also serve as an inexpensive emergency backup vacuum unit.



Crescent Tank Mfg.

### Crescent Tank Mfg.

The slide-in tank from **Crescent Tank Mfg.** has a low center of gravity for greater protection against rollover. This unit features a 350-gallon waste/200-gallon freshwater tank, with all operations at the rear. Other features include Masport vacuum system, 9-hp Honda electric-start engine and electric water pump. **585/657-4104;** [www.crescent-tank.com](http://www.crescent-tank.com).



Lely Manufacturing Inc.

### Lely Manufacturing Inc.

The **Econoline** portable pumping unit from **Lely Manufacturing Inc.** has a 300-gallon waste/100-gallon freshwater tank. The waste compartment includes a primary shutoff, two 2-inch sight glasses, 2-inch inlet and 3-inch discharge, while the freshwater compartment has a 1 1/4-inch fill, 1-inch drain and one sight tube. The unit has a Jurop PN23/N or MEC 2000/PAL pump (74 cfm at 15 inches Hg and 1,300 rpm) and 8-hp electric-start engine. Other features include a 25-foot by 2-inch Panther Tail hose, 2-inch full port valve and wand, vacuum relief and pressure relief, 12-volt, 30 psi Flojet water pump, 50-foot garden hose with nozzle and lift hook. The unit with accessories weighs 1,200 pounds and measures 48 inches wide, 48 inches deep and 72 inches high to the top of the muffler with engine on top of the tank. **252/291-7050;** [www.lelyus.com](http://www.lelyus.com).



Vacutrux Ltd.

### Vacutrux Ltd.

The **PickupTanx 660** from **Vacutrux Ltd.** is made for a 1-ton chassis and features galvanized steel construction with full vacuum and pressure in both compartments.



FMI Truck Sales & Services



Marsh Industrial



TOICO Industries



Vacuum Sales Inc.

The unit has a 400-gallon waste/260-gallon freshwater tank and measures 101 inches long, 74 inches wide and 63 inches high. Designed for pickup beds, flat decks, trailers, dump trucks and stationary use, all models are equipped with Wallenstein vacuum pumps and range in size from 2.5 to 38 hp. **800/305-4305;** [www.vacutrux.com](http://www.vacutrux.com).

### FMI Truck Sales & Services

The three compartment, 325-gallon waste **WorkMate** slide-in unit from **FMI Truck Sales & Service** features twin 75-gallon poly water tanks that can be isolated for a three compartment unit or allowed to flow together for a two-compartment system. Other features include a 5.5-hp electric-start Honda engine, Masport HXL1V pump with matching primary and oil catch muffler, and 10-gpm, 12-volt freshwater delivery system. Options include passenger-side supply storage box, dump hose storage above the storage box and driver-side tool storage. **800/927-8750;** [www.fmitrucks.com](http://www.fmitrucks.com).

### Marsh Industrial

The 400-gallon slide-in tank from **Marsh Industrial** is available in carbon steel or 3/16-inch stainless steel. The 300-gallon waste/100-gallon freshwater tank fits in a 6-foot box with controls, fill and dump lines to the rear. Measuring 90 inches long, 55 inches wide and 63 inches high, the unit has a Battioni MEC 2000 pump and is powered by an 8-hp Honda engine. It has a primary shutoff at the front of the waste tank and secondary shutoff to match the



pump's cfm. Other features include 50 feet of 5/8-inch hose, nozzle and filler, two waste tank sight glasses and vacuum-pressure gauge with guard, 30 feet of 2-inch hose with wand and full-length tank cradle for mounting. **231/258-4870; [www.marshind.com](http://www.marshind.com).**

## TOICO Industries

Built from carbon steel, slide-in tanks from **TOICO Industries** are available in sizes from 60 to 1,200 gallons with waste only or waste and freshwater compartments. All tanks include primary and secondary moisture traps, oil catch muffler, and choice of vacuum only or vacuum/pressure pump (Masport, Conde or Jurop). The units are powered by electric-start Honda engines. All pumps include automatic lubrication system. Tanks also include check and relief valves, waste and freshwater level indicators, 30 feet of Hi-Vac Plastiflex suction hose and wand assembly. Freshwater systems include a 12-volt water pump, pressure washer with garden hose or self retracting hose reel with spray nozzle. **888/935-1133; [www.toico.com](http://www.toico.com).**

## Vacuum Sales Inc.

The 450-gallon slide-in unit from **Vacuum Sales Inc.** has a 300-gallon waste/150-gallon freshwater tank made from 10-gauge, 3/16-inch stainless steel. The unit features a Masport HXL3V pump with 9-hp Honda electric-start engine. Other features include vacuum and pressure relief valves, gauge, primary and secondary shutoff systems, oil catch muffler, two 2-inch sight glasses for waste, a 2-inch vented water fill and 2-inch waste intake with 30 feet of 2-inch hose and wand. The unit also has a 3-inch discharge, water and waste hose hooks, all poly fittings, 12-volt Whale water pump, 50 feet of water hose and 3/4-inch manual water dump. **856/627-7790; [www.vacuumsalesinc.com](http://www.vacuumsalesinc.com).**

## KeeVac Industries Inc.

The rear engine mount, two-compartment slide-in vacuum tank is one of three styles available from **KeeVac Industries Inc.** Other models include a side engine mount and space-saving KeeVac two-compartment aluminum slide-in, available in 54- and 66-inch widths. The rear engine and side engine units are available with 435-, 600-, 800- and 1,000-gallon tanks in 58-, 60-, 66- and 76-inch widths. Hose reels for freshwater bucket fill and 30-foot, 2-inch suction hose with valve and wand are included. The KeeVac, weighing 685 pounds, has a 300-gallon waste and 135-gallon freshwater compartment. A 600-gallon model, weighing 875 pounds, measures 60 or 66 inches wide with 400-gallon waste and 200-gallon freshwater tank. All units feature Conde or Masport pumps and have a 5-hp electric-start Honda engine. Larger pumps and engine, dual service, additional sight glasses, manways and heated coils for hot water washdown are available. **866/789-9440; [www.keevac.com](http://www.keevac.com).**

## Specialty B Sales

The 288-gallon waste/100-gallon freshwater stainless steel vacuum system from **Specialty B Sales** features two, 5-inch sight glasses, 9-hp Honda elec-



KeeVac Industries Inc.



Specialty B Sales



Tri State Tank



Advance Pump & Equipment Inc.

tric- and pull-start engine, vacuum/pressure gauge and freshwater pump. Other features include a primary and secondary float assembly, oil catch muffler, 3-inch valve for dumping, 90-cfm vacuum pump with four-way valve, 25 feet of 2-inch hose with ball valve, 25 feet of water hose with nozzle and lifting eye for loading. **800/364-7307.**

## Tri State Tank

The 300-gallon waste/150-gallon freshwater, self-contained aluminum slide-in unit from **Tri State Tank** has a 70-cfm Conde Super 6 pump, four-way valve, 12-volt washdown pump with 50-foot hose and nozzle. Other features include an electric-start 5.5-hp Honda engine, 30-foot 2-inch Tiger Tail inlet hose with stinger, work light, battery box and 3-inch discharge. Pump options include a 9-hp Conde SDS 6 with four-way valve (115 cfm), 9-hp Masport HXL (106 cfm) with three-way direct drive and 5-hp Masport HIV (30 cfm) with direct drive. Tank options include 200-gallon waste/100-gallon freshwater, 400-gallon waste/200-gallon freshwater, single compartment and custom sizes. **888/281-9965; [www.tristatetank.com](http://www.tristatetank.com).**

## Advance Pump & Equipment Inc.

The **ADV500-100SLD** 400-gallon waste/100-gallon freshwater powder-coated aluminum tank from **Advance Pump & Equipment Inc.** measures 54 by 52 inches and is designed to fit an 8-foot pickup bed. A smaller 300-gallon waste/100-gallon freshwater tank is available. The 20-inch top hatch provides full view and access to the tank interior. Forklift pockets at the bottom allow for transport when empty. The unit has a Battioni MEC2000AL vacuum pump (80 cfm at 15 inches Hg) and 8-hp Honda engine with electric and pull start. Other features include standard flanged and dished aluminum heads, 3-inch Banjo poly ball valve discharge at the rear of the tank and 2.5-inch intake port reduced to 2-inch quick coupler for intake hose connection with 30-foot, 2-inch Bumblebee vacuum hose. The unit has two, 5-inch removable sight glasses, 7-gpm, 12-volt water pump, 50 feet of 5/8-inch garden hose with pistol grip nozzle, secondary moisture trap, relief manifold and oil catch muffler. **877/557-7867; [www.advancepump.com](http://www.advancepump.com).**

## Imperial Industries Inc.

Slide-in vacuum units from **Imperial Industries Inc.** are available in 300-, 450- and 550-gallon capacities in waste only or waste and freshwater tanks. The slide-in units, offered in 3/16-inch steel and aluminum or 10-gauge stainless steel, have a Masport HXL3V vacuum/pressure pump and 9-hp Honda engine or Conde Super 6 vacuum only pump with 5.5-hp Honda engine. **800/558-2945; [www.imperialind.com](http://www.imperialind.com).**

## Erickson Tank & Pump

Slide-in vacuum tanks from **Erickson Tank & Pump** are available in 270-gallon waste/100-gallon freshwater, 300-gallon waste/100-gallon freshwater, 400-gallon waste/125-gallon freshwater and 500-gallon waste/200-gallon freshwater models. A 9-hp Honda engine and Masport HXL vacuum pump (76 cfm) can be mounted on the front or side. Features include 12-volt washdown pump



(4.9 gpm, 35 psi), eight, 2-inch sight glasses, primary and secondary shutoffs, vacuum and pressure gauge, oil catch muffler and four-way valve. Other features include 2-inch intake valve with fittings, 30 feet of 2-inch Tiger Tail suction hose with valve and wand, 30 feet of freshwater hose with spray nozzle, 6-inch inspection port with 3- or 4-inch dump valve with camlock and cap, tie down rings and bolt down tabs. **509/785-2955; [www.ericksontank.com](http://www.ericksontank.com).**

### LMT Inc.

Made to be mounted in the back of a pickup or on a flatbed truck, slide-in units from **LMT Inc.** are available in a range of customized tank sizes and compartment combinations. Pump platforms can be placed on top or any side. Engine choices include gas, diesel and electric. The Hertell B-400 fan-cooled electric vacuum pump produces 30 cfm or up to 20 psi for unloading and can be controlled from the truck cab. **800/545-0174; [www.tanksandpumps.com](http://www.tanksandpumps.com).**

### TankTec

Aluminum slide-in units from **TankTec** are available in 200-gallon waste/100-gallon freshwater, 300-gallon waste/150-gallon freshwater and 380-gallon waste/170-gallon freshwater sizes. Features include a Conde Super 6 pressure vacuum pump (70 cfm) with 5.5-hp Honda electric-start engine or Masport HXL3V (106 cfm vacuum and pressure) pump with 9-hp Honda engine. Other features include two 2-inch sight glasses, 3-inch discharge, primary and secondary shutoffs, oil catch muffler, hose and wand with valve, 12-volt Whale water pump, 2-inch vented freshwater fill, 50-foot freshwater hose and sight tube in freshwater section. **888/428-6422; [www.tanktec.biz](http://www.tanktec.biz).**

### Best Enterprises Inc.

The stainless steel 400-gallon waste/100-gallon freshwater/100-gallon chemical unit from **Best Enterprises Inc.** has a 12-volt water pump, Honda electric-start engine, Conde vacuum pump, hose hanger, 10-foot dump hose, 2-inch by 30-foot Tiger Tail suction hose with wand, sight glasses for waste and sight tube for freshwater. **800/288-2378; [www.bestenterprises.net](http://www.bestenterprises.net).**

### Pik Rite Inc.

The PR300 (200-gallon waste/100-gallon freshwater) and PR450 (300-gallon waste/150-gallon freshwater) skid-mounted portable service units from **Pik Rite Inc.** include Jurop PN23 vacuum/pressure pumps (Masport pumps available), electric-start 8-hp Honda engine, all steel

components, freshwater compartment designed for stable weight distribution, 30-foot, 2-inch Kanaflex fill hose, 3-inch discharge, 12-volt washdown pump with 50-foot hose and nozzle. Grease units without freshwater, full-dump trailer and aluminum units are available. **800/326-9763; [www.pikrite.com](http://www.pikrite.com).**

### L.C. Tanks

Powered by an electric-start, 5.5-hp Honda engine, the 300 waste/150 freshwater, self-contained aluminum slide-in unit from **L.C. Tanks** has a 30-foot, 2-inch Tiger Tail inlet hose with stinger, work light, battery box and 3-inch discharge. Other features include a 70-cfm Conde Super 6 pump, four-way valve, 12-volt washdown pump with 50-foot hose and nozzle. Pump options include a 9-hp Conde SDS 6 with four-way valve (115 cfm), 9-hp Masport HXL (106 cfm) with three-way direct drive and 5-hp Masport HIV (30 cfm) with direct drive. Tank options include 200-gallon waste/100-gallon freshwater, 400-gallon waste/200-gallon freshwater, single compartment and custom sizes. **888/848-3727.**

### Dultmeier Sales

Designed for grease trap, campground and construction site service, the 3/16-inch aluminum (stainless steel available) units from **Dultmeier Sales** feature 450-gallon tanks for waste only or waste/freshwater applications. Units weigh from 850 to 910 pounds and feature 5.5-hp and 9-hp Honda engines with Conde 70-cfm and Conde and Jurop 115-cfm vacuum/pressure pumps. All units measure 48 inches wide and 94 inches long. Other features include oil catch muffler, primary and secondary shutoffs, 2-inch by 30-foot suction hose with wand and valve, 2-inch freshwater fill, waste discharge valve and sight tubes for waste and freshwater compartments. Waste and freshwater units also have a 12-volt water pump and 50-foot garden hose. **888/677-5054; [www.dultmeier.com](http://www.dultmeier.com).**

### Abernethy Welding & Repair Inc.

The 400-gallon waste/200-gallon freshwater steel tank from **Abernethy Welding & Repair Inc.** has three, 5-inch sight glasses, 4-inch dump valve, 17-inch top manways, 3.5-gpm Shurflo water pump, Masport HXL2V vacuum pump, primary and secondary shutoffs, oil catch muffler, 5.5-hp Honda engine, 2 1/2-inch vacuum gauge, coal tar epoxy interior and 35-foot hose with wand. **800/545-0324; [www.abernethywelding.com](http://www.abernethywelding.com).** ■



L.C.Tanks



Best Enterprises Inc.



Pik Rite Inc.



Dultmeier Sales



Abernethy Welding & Repair Inc.



Imperial Industries Inc.



Erickson Tank & Pump



LMT Inc.



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## LISTINGS

#### Northern Minnesota Septic & Drain Cleaning Business For Sale.

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#### Chicago-Area Biosolids, Land Application, Dredging and Industrial Services Business.

Established in 1985, owner is retiring. Reputable business includes real estate servicing the entire Chicagoland area with sludge and biosolids disposal and treatment services. Real estate and shop included with sale valued at \$750,000, business grosses in excess of \$3 million annually, \$6.3 million in equipment and assets including several TerraGators, Vac Trailers, dump trailers, loaders and much more.

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#### Texas Septic and Sewer Business.

Grossing in excess of \$1,000,000 annually. Includes 2007 2500 gallon septic truck, 1995 2500 gallon septic truck, 2007 and 2008 Chevy service trucks, portable restrooms and more. 430 contracted customers. **\$799,000.**

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Grossing in excess of \$125,000 annually. Includes 2,000 gallon service truck, backhoe, jetters and more. **\$110,000.**

#### New Jersey VIP Restroom/ Portable Toilet Business.

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#### Green Bay, Wisconsin Area Septic & Drain Business.

Solid and steady revenue history and nearly 20 years established. Excellent opportunity to expand or start your own business. Includes very well-maintained 3,800 gallon septic service truck, fully outfitted 2002 Chevy drain service van, drain & sewer equipment, all office equipment and computers, 2,700+ customer list, and more - a true turn-key or easy expansion opportunity. Very meticulously maintained equipment all kept inside a heated shop. Current owner is retiring. Large shop and real estate is also available if desired at additional cost. **Asking \$249,000.**

#### Massachusetts Sewer & Drain Franchise For Sale.

Confidential listing. Non Disclosure Agreement required. Turn-key business, good revenue. **Asking \$165,000.**

#### Allentown, Pennsylvania Area Sewer Business.

Specializing in collection systems, video inspection, jetting, municipal work. Includes CUES TV & grout truck, Sewer Equipment Corporation jetter truck, Vactor 2100, RIDGID camera, confined space equipment and more! Good revenue history. Great opportunity to expand or start your own business. Current owner wants to retire. **\$330,000.**

#### Florida Plumbing & Sewer Business For Sale.

Established in 1969, owner is moving on. Nearly 8,000 customers in database including some contracted. Business grosses in excess of \$1 million. Extensive equipment including septic, Guzzler and Safe Jet trucks. Equipment has been featured in Cleaner magazine. **Asking price is 649,000, make an offer.**

#### Dallas/Fort Worth Texas Area Sewer/Rehab Business For Sale.

Drain Cleaning, TV inspection, Pipeline & Manhole Rehab/Relining, Municipal Cleaning and Maintenance business for sale. Excellent opportunity to expand or start your own business. Good revenue history and priced to sell. Includes all equipment to get started. **Asking \$150,000.**

#### South Florida Commercial Real Estate, Plumbing & Sewer Business For Sale.

Established in 1969, owner is moving on. Nearly 8,000 customers in database including some contracted. Established name with real estate on turnpike. Real estate appraised in excess of \$2 million, business grosses in excess of \$1 million, close to \$1 million in equipment including Vactor, Guzzler and Safe Jet trucks. Equipment has been featured in Cleaner magazine. Assumable SBA loan for bulk of selling price. **\$2,799,000 for the entire package.**

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## INDUSTRY NEWS

### Walker Group Names Miller VP-Sales and Marketing

Jim Miller has been named vice president of sales and marketing for Walker Group Holdings and its transportation tank companies. Miller will integrate the sales and marketing efforts of WGH's seven transportation tank companies: Brenner, Bulk, Defense, Garsite, Progress, TST and Walker. As part of the reorganization, Thomas Ballon was appointed vice president of sales for the Brenner and Bulk product lines.



Jim Miller

### McKee Launches Explorer Line Web Site

McKee Technologies Inc. has launched a new Web site, [www.explorertailers.com](http://www.explorertailers.com), for its Explorer line of portable restroom products. The interactive site is designed to connect portable sanitation contractors with Explorer distributors. It also features detailed product information.



### Nature's Calling Acquires Fenn-Vac

Russ Perkins, owner of the portable restroom company Nature's Calling in Charleston, S.C., has acquired Fenn-Vac, the solid waste handling company which he helped start in 1983. Perkins sold his interest in Fenn-Vac in 1995 and later bought the Fenn-E-Let restroom business, which was renamed Nature's Calling. The deal was closed in July. Terms were not disclosed. Fenn-Vac has averaged between \$3 million and \$5 million in sales the past three years. ■

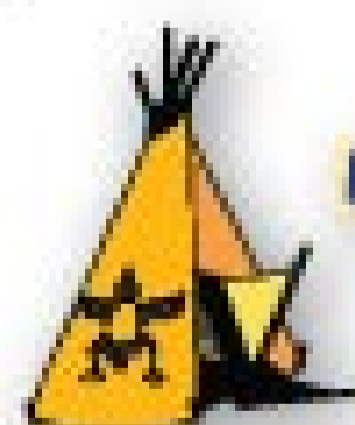
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October 2010

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- Portable Restroom Tanks
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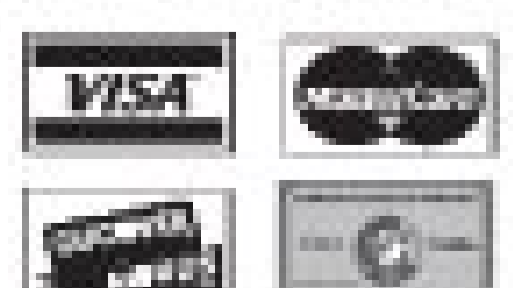
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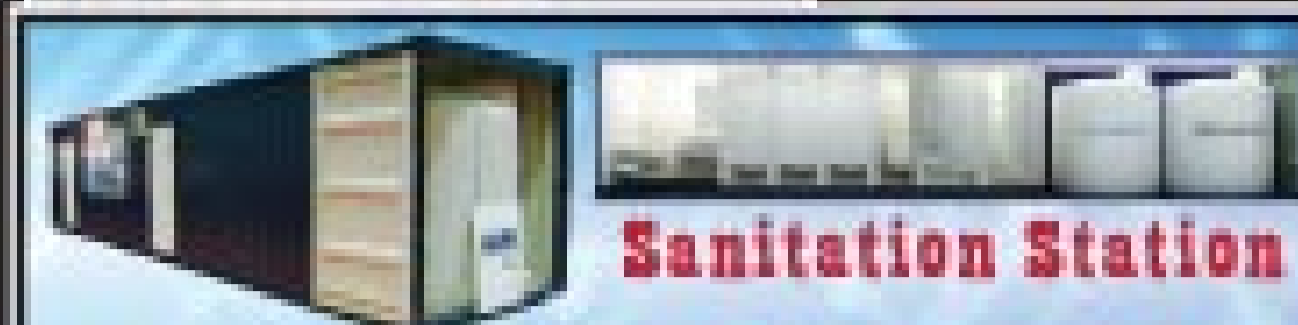
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Bob Carlson (left) and Jerry Kirkpatrick answer your questions in *Truck Corner*.



# Keep Good Records

## WARRANTY INFORMATION AND MAINTENANCE DETAILS ARE CRUCIAL TO PROMPT SERVICE AND LONGEVITY FOR YOUR VACUUM TRUCK EQUIPMENT

### QUESTION:

Every time I buy a piece of equipment, the seller gives me warranty papers or other relevant information that I may need later on. But by the time I need it, I don't have a clue where it is. I just need to get better organized. When it comes to my vacuum truck, what kind of information should I keep on hand in case of emergency?

Roy Tarpence  
Portland, Ore.

### ANSWER:

This sounds like a question that doesn't need asking. But looking at it closer, keeping track of things and documenting your equipment can save a lot of money.

First, cherish the owner's manual for every truck. Most of the information you will ever need is located in that book. For equipment beyond the chassis, it's a good idea to have a file on each truck. It doesn't take long to set up a simple file folder for important documents related to the truck. Slide the owner's manual into the file for the appropriate truck.

In addition to your hard copy records, it's a great idea to create a computer file for each vehicle, which can be updated regularly to reflect regular maintenance tracking and all new equipment and repair information. Basic computer software usually includes a spreadsheet program that is easily used to set up and track important maintenance items.

### WHAT TO INCLUDE

If your fleet includes multiple trucks, identify them in a way that you understand. It's simple enough to identify truck No. 1, No. 2 and so on. For example, do you know when you changed the oil on Truck No. 2? Do you have the receipt verifying when it was done or did you do it yourself? These business expenses are also tax deductible, providing another good reason to keep careful records.

If you have multiple trucks, they are used differently and will have varying maintenance intervals. So, knowing when it's time to change the oil can make a dramatic difference in the longevity of your fleet. It's easy to check scheduled maintenance for the entire fleet using the computer spreadsheet.

Third, do you know what type, brand and model of vacuum pump is on each truck? For multiple trucks, do you have the same pump on all of

them? Remember, putting the wrong type of oil in a vacuum pump is going to make for an expensive mess. So in your vehicle files, write the exact brand and model of vacuum pump being used and important information like the type of oil recommended and how often the pumps should be serviced.

Make a note of the date the pump was put into service. Even if you've bought a used unit, you are going to keep an ongoing history of your pump. In recent years, most, if not all, pump manufacturers have gotten away from using asbestos in their vanes. Most have begun using a synthetic material with a trademarked name of Kevlar. This requires an oil made for high-heat conditions because Kevlar swells when it is hot, and the oil in an air-cooled pump must handle the heat.

### PAY ATTENTION TO THE PUMP

Most pumps (check your owner's manual) require some type of turbine oil due to its viscosity and ability to stay cooler during lubrication. Standard motor oil will increase heat inside the pump, which will result in the vanes swelling and, eventually, locking up. More contractors using the newer pumps are either moving to water-cooled pumps or considering the move based on pump performance at their location and altitude.

Always have the right type of oil on hand. Do not, under any circumstance, try to substitute with a different type of oil. Your owner's manual will tell you the acceptable oils for your pump. Go by the book and always have that type of oil on hand.

Fourth, know when you last installed a rebuild kit. As time goes on, you'll notice when you're not accumulating as much vacuum as you did when a pump was new. Have at least one rebuild kit ready for each type of pump you own. Oftentimes, the vanes will wear down or the seals will begin to leak. Those signs, as well as the decreasing vacuum, tell you it's time for a rebuild. Like the oil in the pump, don't try to substitute one brand's rebuild kit for another. Most likely, it isn't going to work.

Obviously, keep on file the phone numbers you'll need for help with any piece of equipment. Those contacts may be with the pump or truck manufacturer. You shouldn't have to waste time trying to find the phone numbers for these people. When you call for parts, they will want to know the exact type of pump you have. If you have all this information ready, business goes on smooth and easy.

If you follow these tips for keeping good records for each of your vacuum trucks, you'll save a lot of trouble down the road. If you don't keep good records, you'll be losing time, money and maybe some customers.

**IN YOUR VEHICLE FILES, WRITE THE EXACT BRAND AND MODEL OF VACUUM PUMP BEING USED AND IMPORTANT INFORMATION LIKE THE TYPE OF OIL RECOMMENDED AND HOW OFTEN THE PUMPS SHOULD BE SERVICED.**

*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). ■*



# How a plastic recycling program can help portable restroom operators save the world – and some money

It's not often that a company can save money and positively impact the lives of every human being on the planet at the same time. We recently had the opportunity to learn about a program that will do just that. **PolyJohn Enterprises is launching the first-ever portable sanitation recycling program** in effort to 'close the loop' on the plastic portable restrooms that are manufactured throughout the industry. In a recent interview with PolyJohn's Managing Director, Mike Adams, we learned about the details of this innovative new program.

**Interviewer:** Recycling plastic has been done for a long time. Why has it taken the portable restroom industry so long to get onboard?

**Adams:** Well, it's not that we've been reluctant to get onboard – it's just that we are presented with a very different recycling challenge because of the type of plastic we use in making portable restrooms and the type of wear and exposure our plastic goes through. A plastic milk carton or a plastic bottle lives a life that is very different than a portable restroom! Plus, the plastic materials in those products are very different from the High-Density Polyethylene (HDPE) material used in portable toilets. Although PolyJohn and other plastics manufacturers have been recycling scrap HDPE generated from our own manufacturing processes for years, the challenge for PolyJohn has been finding a way to process the HDPE plastic from used restrooms.

**Interviewer:** What has made recycling used portable restrooms so challenging?

**Adams:** As you can probably guess, there are many reasons this has been a challenge! For one thing, the material from used units may contain HDPE that is up to 20 years old. During that time, the units were out in the field and subject to all sorts of weather conditions and the chemicals that are used

in the cleaning and servicing process. That can make it difficult to ensure that the quality of the material made from that recycled plastic has the same properties as products made from virgin plastic. These factors, along with the sheer logistics of moving restrooms to recycling equipment, have kept manufacturers from recycling used toilets.

**Interviewer:** So, how does PolyJohn's Recycling Program overcome these issues and help operators get their toilets recycled?

**Adams:** First off, our engineering team was able to develop a process that makes recycling the HDPE in used toilets possible. We've run a large number of tests on a variety of units without any problems. **To show operators what's possible, we're launching a pilot program out of our Whiting plant before we begin accepting units at our regional distribution centers.** Operators can find all the details about drop-off at Whiting on our website, and will receive a \$35 Recycling Rewards coupon to be used toward a new restroom or sink for each unit they bring in to be recycled.

**Interviewer:** How does PolyJohn plan to use the recycled HDPE from the used toilets?

**Adams:** Because of the length of time our restrooms last in the field, which can be anywhere from 15 to 20 years, we will not risk using the materials we take in from used restrooms to make side panels, roofs, etc. After extensive testing, however, we have discovered that with some new additives that are now available, we can easily make floor sheet and possibly even mix the recycled restroom material with virgin materials to make our large holding tanks and the like. If we can't use the recycled restroom material after it is mixed at our Whiting facility, we do feel it will be suitable for various uses outside

our industry and have some value on the open market.

**Interviewer:** It must feel good to be able to offer such a program to your customers.

**Adams:** I have to say that there very few things I have done in my thirty plus years in the sanitation industry that I have felt as proud of as this program. **It is just the right thing to do.** We believe our customers – and the rest of the industry as a whole – will feel the same.

**Interviewer:** How can folks learn more about this program?

**Adams:** Just visit our web site at [www.polyjohn.com](http://www.polyjohn.com). All the information about prepping used units and where to send them are posted on link from there.

## Why is it The Right Thing To Do Environmentally?

Recycling 1 ton of plastic saves 7.4 cubic yards of landfill space. If we recycle 125,000 units over ten years, that means we will have prevented 18,038 garbage truck loads of plastic from being put into landfills.

## And Economically?

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