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Teri and Ken Pahon of Portable Restroom Trailers LLC are pictured with one of their trailers from Rich Mobile Restrooms at a special event in North Carolina. (Photo by Ben Goff)



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# Relationship Building

## LITTLE GESTURES MEAN A LOT WHEN YOU'RE DEVELOPING LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIPS WITH SPECIAL EVENT CUSTOMERS

By Jim Kneiszel

**W**hen it comes to strengthening the special event side of your business, landing elusive plum jobs is more than half the battle. When the county fair is in town, for instance, you know every restroom contractor in a 100-mile radius is going after that contract.

These are high-value targets, the clients that can make as much for your company in a weekend as a small-but-loyal construction or municipal customer can make for you in an entire year. So you should expect to have to court special event customers as if you were planning to ask for their hand in marriage someday.

Well, OK, flowers and candy on Sweetheart's Day won't be necessary. But there are many ways you can show these desirable clients that you mean business, that you're serious about landing their festival, sporting event or concert ... and keeping it for years to come.

How do you rise above the deep line of suitors waiting at the special event planner's doorstep? By doing just a little bit more to get noticed. Nobody said building a client list was going to be easy, and the customer

out so your leads aren't getting a constant barrage of mail from you. Christmas and the year-end holidays are a great time to reach out to summertime event clients who probably aren't thinking about your service at this time. Fourth of July is another obvious choice, followed by Memorial Day and Labor Day, which means these customers are hearing from you three times at a point where they might need you most. Unlike more blatant marketing efforts, holiday cards are a "feel good" approach that hopefully will leave clients with a positive impression about your business.

### Send an article.

As you read local business journals or newspapers, Frey suggests looking for stories that would be interesting to your customers. This is a habit you might already have when it comes to friends and family. If the local paper published a story about your nephew playing in a baseball tournament, you clip it out and send it to Aunt Mildred who lives on the other side of the state. If you see a story on the value of hand-wash stations at special events in, say, *PRO* magazine, clip it out and send it to the organizers of a local art fair or auto racing venue. Or even easier yet, email them a link to the story at the *PRO* website. A reminder like this will show you're thinking of their challenges throughout the year and that you're a professional who pays attention to industry advances and trends.

### Send a gift.

Sending a client a gift for no particular reason can make the greatest impact, Frey says. I'll add that a client gift doesn't have to bust your marketing budget, but could be a simple token of appreciation that keeps your name top-of-mind for the event decision-makers. It could be some of the traditional trinkets of the trade, like a pen or a calendar embossed with your company's name and logo. Or if you really want to wow them, how about sending a gift card for lunch at a favorite local restaurant? Make the amount large enough to cover lunch for the client and a friend. This sort of gift is a softer sell of your company than a standard promotional item, and food has a way of leaving a lasting impression.

### Invite to lunch.

Speaking of lunch, Frey argues that breaking bread with a customer is a great way to deepen that relationship and could push your company over the edge when seeking a new account. Frey suggests small business owners should be having lunch with prospective refer-

## WHAT ABOUT INVITING EACH OF YOUR CURRENT REGULAR CUSTOMERS OUT FOR A MEAL ONCE OR TWICE A YEAR, AND STRATEGICALLY SPRINKLE YOUR CALENDAR WITH SEVERAL INVITES TO POTENTIAL NEW CUSTOMERS?

prepared to order 50 to 100 units at a crack for a weekend may be the toughest nut to crack. While you might be able to woo a construction client with a bag of Krispy Kremes down at the work site, you'll probably have to be more deliberate and patient when it comes to landing event work.

**David Frey**, a marketing expert who is an occasional contributor to *PRO*, is a believer in making constant contact with prospective clients. Through his website, [www.marketingbestpractices.com](http://www.marketingbestpractices.com), Frey often preaches that frequent, personal attention paid to potential and existing customers is a key to prospering in any small business. In a recent article, Frey shared his "Top Seven Ways to Stay in Touch" with customers. I'd like to mention a few of his ideas and put a portable sanitation industry spin on the tips:

### Send out greeting cards.

Frey suggests sending out greeting cards to clients for several holidays throughout the year. This is a great idea because it gives you an obvious reason to make contact and naturally spaces your contacts

ral sources at least twice a week. He makes a good point. You always break for lunch anyway, so what about inviting each of your current regular customers out for a meal once or twice a year, and strategically sprinkle your calendar with several invites to potential new customers? This is a good way to demonstrate your continued concern for loyal customers and keep tabs on where prospective customers are with contract offerings.

**Invite to an activity.**

Frey talks about inviting prospective customers to sporting events, the theater, anything of local interest. Talk to your leads and find out about their hobbies and interests. If one event planner enjoys golf, offer to include him or her in your foursome this weekend. If another likes auto racing, get a pair of tickets to the local track and invite him or her for the evening. Strike up a friendship that could lead to a profitable business relationship.

**THE BOTTOM LINE**

Cultivating good special event leads can take time, creativity and patience. You'll spend some money and almost surely you'll face a fair bit of rejection along the way. But the payoffs can be big if you land one, two or three new clients who need 50 or 100 restrooms for a weekend, and maybe even a VIP restroom trailer now and then. ■

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*Writer Judy Kneiszel has operated her own small business for 15 years and is familiar with the many rewards and challenges of business ownership. Write to her with questions, comments or topic suggestions at [thewordhouse@ameritech.net](mailto:thewordhouse@ameritech.net).*



# Rave Reviews

## DOES YOUR COMPANY GET TWO THUMBS-UP ON INTERNET REVIEW SITES?

By Judy Kneiszel

In the pre-Internet dark ages, professional critics reviewed restaurants, theater, books and movies. These reviews were primarily in newspapers, which were here today and birdcage liner tomorrow. Fast-forward to 2011. Consumers can go online and instantly read reviews of professionals from doctors to teachers. Hotels and airlines are reviewed all over the Web, and now service providers like plumbers, painters and, yes, portable restroom operators, are subject to review.

These reviews of local service businesses are not written by professional reviewers, but by everyday customers. They are sometimes available to read years after they were written. And they can be a boon or a scourge to a business, depending on what is said in them.

I've read survey results that as many as 35 percent of small businesses report having received new customers from positive online reviews. Conversely, more than 80 percent of consumers report that their purchase decisions are influenced by online reviews. It's word-of-mouth gone viral and it's not going away.

Keeping an eye on how your company is doing on review sites even has a name now. It's part of the growing field of "reputation management." Big companies will hire someone to keep tabs on their online presence and reputation. If you want to start managing your online reputation, the first step is to find out exactly where your company is showing up.

### FREE SITES

There are hundreds of different sites where a review of your company could appear, depending on where you are located. Your business might be listed on one or all of the following local customer review sites. On most of them, it is free to post and reviewers can remain anonymous.

- Yelp
- Insider Pages
- Yahoo! Local
- Google Maps
- Citysearch
- Judy's Book
- Local.com
- Superpages.com
- Switchboard.com
- Yellowpages.com
- Yellowbook.com
- DexKnows
- YellowBot
- MerchantCircle

Some sites compile reviews from other sites, so a review can appear in multiple places, increasing your company's exposure even more. If you don't think you are listed on any of these sites, just Google your business name and you might be surprised. I randomly searched a Maryland PRO and found them on YellowBot and Superpages, where they had three positive reviews, plus Citysearch, DexKnows, Yellowbook and Yellowpages. I wonder if they know they are open for reviews on all these sites?

This company has a Facebook page too, which also came up in my search. Customers can review your company on social media sites like Facebook and Twitter too, but it's less anonymous when customers comment on your business on your page. And you, as administrator of

your Facebook page, control what stays on the site. You can pull particularly nasty posts if you want.

### PAY-TO-PLAY SITES

In addition to the free sites, there are those where people pay to read the reviews and reviewers are not allowed to be anonymous. The best known of these is Angie's List.

Angie's List is a website that compiles consumer reviews of local service companies, but it is different from Yellowpages and the other free sites because it charges consumers to see reviews, which they say gives their information credibility. Annual fees vary by community, but range from \$10 to \$50. Angie's List does not charge businesses to be listed. In fact, businesses only get listed when a member submits a report on them. There are no anonymous reviews, and Angie's List has what they call a "certified data collection process" intended to prevent companies and providers from reporting on themselves or their competitors. So as a service provider, you can't request that your business be on Angie's List. And you should not be able to write phony reviews of your service to get yourself listed either.

## WHATEVER YOU DO, THINK BEFORE YOU REPLY TO A BAD REVIEW. DON'T POST SOMETHING IN ANGER THAT YOU'LL REGRET LATER. APPEARING HOSTILE WILL DRIVE AWAY EVEN MORE CUSTOMERS THAN A BAD REVIEW.

### HAVE A STRATEGY

Managing your company's online reputation doesn't have to be complicated or overly time-consuming. Adopt the following steps as your strategy:

- Find all the sites where you are listed, and check that basic information is accurate. Some sites allow you to certify the information as the business owner. Make sure your company address, phone number, website and offerings are correct so potential customers can find you.
- Read everything customers are writing about you online with an open mind.
- Communicate with your customers on these sites whenever possible.
- Use the customer feedback from online review sites to improve customer service.

Whether someone praises you or criticizes you, consider online reviews a customer service opportunity.



If you address a reviewer, either thanking them for their positive comments or offering to fix whatever it is they are complaining about, you are building goodwill by publicly working with a customer. Even a negative review can be an opportunity to build loyalty and attract new customers if you handle it right. Willingness to listen and compromise may give other people a good picture of your company. They might respect you more for earnestly trying to fix a problem.

**HANDLING A BAD REVIEW**

Whatever you do, think before you reply to a bad review. Don't post something in anger that you'll regret later. Appearing hostile will drive away even more customers than a bad review. Give some serious thought about what you could do to fix the problem or change the reviewer's mind. Then post a polite, thoughtfully worded reply.

If someone posts a scathing review anonymously, and your attempts to sooth them go ignored or are rejected, there's not much you can do other than explain your side of the story and ask the next couple of really happy customers you have to write a positive review on the same site, hopefully boosting your grade or rating and giving some balance to the reviews.

Always provide impeccable customer service, and bad online reviews will be a rarity. If it happens, address it, but don't lose too much sleep over it. After all, bad reviews can be overcome. Academy Award-winning actress Sandra Bullock, for example, says one of her first reviews called her "as interesting as a bus ride." She seems to have gotten past it. ■

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# SHOP TILL YOU DROP

Tennessee PRO got in on the ground floor to serve the 127 Corridor Sale, billed as the world's longest yard sale

By Betty Dageforde



## ON LOCATION

**THE PRO:** Tommy's Port-A-Toilet

**THE JOB:** U.S. 127 Corridor Sale

**LOCATION:** Crossville, Tenn.

### THE TEAM

Tommy and Sandra Breeding operate Tommy's Port-A-Toilet out of their home in Crossville, Tenn. Tommy works with two route drivers in the field while Sandra manages the office with help from secretary Brandy Lucky. Inventory is stored on their 11-acre property but for convenience

they also keep a few units scattered around various towns in the area, contracting with local property owners.

### COMPANY HISTORY

As a machine operator at a Connecticut textile factory in the 1970s, Tommy Breeding got to talking to the gentleman who came around with the trash truck. The man operated several businesses, one of which handled portable restrooms. "The guy told me, 'If you ever have a chance to get into that business, get in it,'" Breeding says.

In 1981, he did just that. Breeding was in Tennessee running an automotive shop when the state told him he needed to have a portable restroom on site. Remembering the old man's words, it sparked an idea. At the time, portable restrooms were a hard thing to find in his area. "I didn't even know where to get one," he says. A friend eventually helped him find a contact for a restroom.

Today Breeding has 500 units and serves a 90-mile radius. He also does some septic work, but portable restrooms account for 95 percent of his business, of which 20 percent is special events. He keeps 50 units separate from the construction inventory to be used solely for weddings, tent revivals, cattle auctions and festivals.

### MAKING CONNECTIONS

When the Jamestown, Tenn., Chamber of Commerce came up with the idea of the 127 Corridor Sale 24 years ago, Breeding provided units for a couple of his aunts and a niece. The following year the Chamber invited Breeding to speak to their organization. He talked about why portable restrooms should be provided for the event. "I explained that not only does it help the travelers, but it gives the vendors a place to go, and it's the right thing to do," he says. "It's good for business because wherever they set them up, that's where the people would be. Otherwise they won't shop, they'll just leave." He made a good case, and has been providing restrooms for portions of the route ever since.

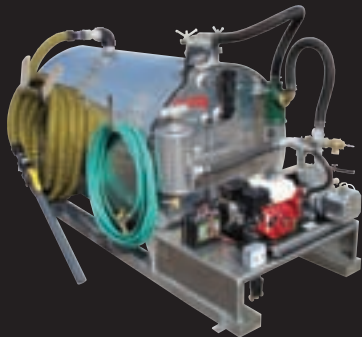
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The Tommy's crew (from left) Michael McGuire, Wayne Rose and Tommy Breeding deliver restrooms to a 127 Sale customer. (Photos by Heather Mullinix)

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**Tommy Breeding**



Above (from left), Wayne Rose, Tommy Breeding and Michael McGuire load restrooms for delivery at the company yard. At right, Breeding and Rose restock paper products and hand sanitizer along the service route.



For the 2010 event, he contracted with about 50 individual property owners between Jamestown, 35 miles to the north, and Pikeville, 30 miles to the south, who set up vending areas on their properties. Some of his customers even made a little money on the deal, as they put out coffee cans with “Donations Welcome” signs.

### THE MAIN EVENT

The 127 Corridor Sale is billed as the world’s longest yard sale. In all, the route is 675 miles long, covers five states from Hudson, Mich., to

Gadsden, Ala., and has over 4,000 vendors, all along Highway 127. It began in 1987 as an effort to lure people off the Interstate highways and show them that the back roads had much to offer in the way of scenery, culture and attractions. Vendors include homeowners as well as professionals who contract with local farmers to rent space in their fields. Headquarters for the 2010 event, Aug. 5-8, was the Fentress Chamber of Commerce in Jamestown.

### BY THE NUMBERS

Tommy’s placed 75 units in roughly 50 locations, mostly farm fields-turned-vending areas. The company’s inventory includes PolyPortables Inc. Integras and PolyJohn Enterprises PJN3s. There’s a variety of colors, but most units are turquoise or mint green.

He also provided four Super Twin hand-wash stations from PolyPortables Inc. “I do push them where you have a lot more food vendors,” Breeding says.

With transport trailers attached to service vehicles, the units were delivered starting a week before the event for use by vendors setting up booths. Similarly, units were left out several days after the sale as vendors took time to vacate their sites.

### KEEPIN’ IT CLEAN

Starting the day of the sale, units were cleaned every night. The company used two vacuum trucks, a 1995 Ford F-450 and a 2000 F-550, outfitted by Best Enterprises Inc. with 650-gallon waste/300-gallon freshwater stainless steel tanks and National Vacuum Equipment Inc. pumps. One truck headed north, the other south. The process took about four hours starting at 5:30 p.m. They began from the far end of the route first and worked their way back, which gave drivers the opportunity to note problem areas along the way before they swung around and started

*(continued)*



Breeding, left, discusses duties along the 127 Sale route with McGuire and Rose.



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Above, Sandra Breeding (left) and secretary Brandy Lucky discuss dispatching during the huge rummage sale. At left, Tommy Breeding (left) hooks up an RV waste outlet while Wayne Rose pumps.

servicing. If they saw something that concerned them on the way out, such as inaccessibility, they'd contact the customer to get the issue resolved before they returned to refresh units.

Breeding found a creative way to stock units with paper during the day without actually being there. He enlisted the help of a vendor stationed near the restrooms. "At night we'd tie four or five rolls of toilet paper together and toss it into their campsite," he says. "They're happy to do it. The ladies especially appreciate it."

Cleanliness is a matter of pride for Breeding. "I don't want anything out there but the very best. We are not a pump-and-dump. I want to know that if my name is on it, any woman or child would be comfortable to use it," he says.

## DON'T MISS THE 2011 SALE

The 2011 U.S. 127 Corridor Sale is set for Aug. 4-7 and covers a 675-mile stretch between Gadsden, Ala., and Hudson, Mich. For more information, including videos, maps and vendor information, go to the 127 Corridor website, [www.127sale.com](http://www.127sale.com).

Rose gets ready to pump a unit while Breeding follows behind to scrub it clean.



### WIN-WIN

Although a lot of companies have entered his local market since 1981, Breeding avoids the price wars and tries to compete on service. For the 127 Corridor Sale, most customers represent repeat business, and he always picks up a few new ones each year.

"I try to be reasonable and rent more of them than to try to get a high price and not do as many," he says. "This way I'm sure everybody has a place to go, and it's pretty well feasible to do it." The customers are satisfied, the end-users are happy, and the company makes money. ■

### MORE INFO

**Best Enterprises**  
800/288-2378  
[www.bestenterprises.net](http://www.bestenterprises.net)  
(See ad page 23)

**PolyJohn Enterprises**  
800/292-1305  
[www.polyjohn.com](http://www.polyjohn.com)  
(See ad page 39)

**National Vacuum Equipment Inc. (NVE)**  
800/253-5500  
[www.natvac.com](http://www.natvac.com)

**PolyPortables Inc.**  
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By Ed Wodalski

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## Comforts of Home Services Inc.

The 6- by 8-foot **single ADA trailer** from **Comforts of Home Services Inc.** features a folding ramp off the rear of the trailer and axle that allows wheels to be removed and the unit mechanically lowered for easier access. Other features include 300-gallon waste tank, air conditioning and heat. The trailer can be hauled by a light truck or SUV and sets up by one person in 15 minutes or less. **847/856-8002; www.cohsi.com.**

## Alpha Mobile Solutions



The 24-foot **Alpha Ten** restroom trailer from **Alpha Mobile Solutions** features a women's room with four individual stalls, hands-free porcelain commodes, two stainless steel sinks, automatic shutoff faucets, L-shaped cabinet with solid-surface countertops and two mirrors. The men's side has three urinals with privacy dividers, three stalls, and long cabinet with two stainless steel sinks. Other features include a window in each door and fluorescent light fixtures. An entry and exit door in each room ensure even traffic flow. The exterior has a full-platform landing with handrails on each side. The trailer has air conditioning and heat, 650-gallon waste and 110-gallon freshwater tanks, water heater, 3-inch waste connection, soap dispensers, tissue holders, paper towel dispensers, LED porch lights, diamond-plate rock guard, waste tank monitor, scissor stabilizer jacks and electric brakes. **877/789-1213; www.alphamobilesolutions.com.**

## Ameri-Can Engineering

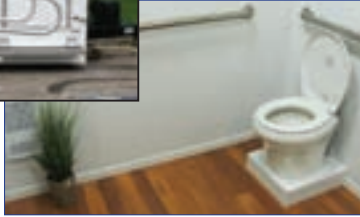


The **Nantucket luxury-grade** restroom trailer from **Ameri-Can Engineering** features a graphic-wrap exterior and themed interior décor. Each toilet area is a finished suite with six-panel doors, matching trim and bead-board paneling. Other features include custom cabinetry, color-coordinated Corian countertops and flushing, water-saving toilets. The burlap-style Beauflor vinyl flooring provides commercial-grade serviceability with designer looks. The unibody, steel-frame trailer has an integral waste tank (875 gallons standard), air conditioning, iPod dock sound system, upgraded lighting package, framed mirrors and brushed nickel hardware. A range of floor plans is available. Other options include heat and cold-weather packages, baby-changing station, trailer skirts, freshwater tri-filter system (1,000-gallon waste/300-gallon freshwater), hands-free faucets and rollup or rollout porch steps. **574/892-5151; www.ameri-can.com.**

## JAG Mobile Solutions



The 18-foot **Cottage Series** three-station ADA restroom trailer from **JAG Mobile Solutions** features a men's room, ladies' room and unisex ADA room with white vinyl wainscoting, chair rail, crown molding and linen-textured walls. The men's and women's restrooms have Corian countertops. The unit has a lowering solid axle for ease of use. Other features include non-macerating toilet, 425-gallon waste and 200-gallon freshwater tanks, one-person deployable ramps, 12-volt lighting, powered vents, "Occupied" lights over doors, porch lights, white china toilets, wood-grain flooring, mechanical and storage room, Gel-Coat exterior and chrome wheels. Options include aluminum wheels, granite countertops, hands-free faucets, laser-cut gender signs, heat, air conditioning, water heater, CD player, DVD player, interior or exterior TVs and solar package. **800/815-2557; www.jagmobilesolutions.com.**

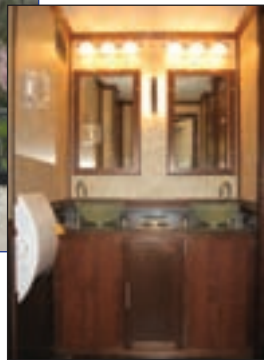


## A Restroom Trailer Company LLC



The 20-foot restroom trailer from **A Restroom Trailer Company LLC** has a 752-gallon waste tank with sight gauge, unibody steel frame, rollout steps, lockable exterior storage compartment boxes, insulated walls and ceiling, hot water, 15,000-Btu air conditioning unit, heat strip, 20-amp electrical circuits, one skylight per side and temporary backup battery power. Other features include custom maple cabinetry and trim, six-panel interior doors, wood-grain linoleum, Corian countertops, chrome metered faucets, city water hookup, china foot-flush toilets and waterless urinals. Options include hydraulic leveling system, interior pocket doors, hands-free faucets, soap dispenser, HVAC remote air sensor kit and vinyl plank flooring. **269/435-4278; www.arestroomtrailer.com.**

## Rich Restroom Trailers



The **CT817**, six-station luxury restroom station from **Rich Restroom Trailers** features a dent-proof Gel-Coat fiberglass exterior, 12-inch powder coated frame, LED lights inside and out and décor glass vessel sinks. The unit measures 17 feet long, 8 feet wide and 11 feet, 4 inches tall. It has a 790-gallon holding tank and optional 200-gallon freshwater tank. Other features include stainless steel sinks, self-closing metered faucets, waterless urinals and shutoff valves at each stool. Options include winter package, paper towel dispenser, water heater and wall heaters. Trailers are available in 2-, 3-, 8- and 10-station floor plans. Custom floor plans are available. **260/593-2279; www.richrestrooms.com.**

## McKee Technologies Inc.



The 26-foot **Explorer V** (five-unit) **Comfort Station** from **McKee Technologies Inc.** has a three-stall women's restroom with hands-free flush toilets and two-stall men's room with three divided urinals and separate walk-in utility room. Both restrooms include stainless steel sinks, fiberglass-reinforced plastic interior wall panels, metal floors, 480-gallon waste and 310-gallon freshwater tanks. All sizes of trailers have a continuously welded, steel outer shell, high-efficiency insulation and climate-control heating and air conditioning. **866/457-5425; www.explorertrailers.com. ■**

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# Going MOBILE

## PROS TERI AND KEN PAHON MOVE THEIR UPSCALE RESTROOM TRAILER BUSINESS FROM OHIO TO NORTH CAROLINA AND MARKET THEIR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES NATIONWIDE

By Betty Dageforde

Ken and Teri Pahon (right) with employee Jacob Pilkerton showing two of their six restroom trailers on location in Lake Wylie, S.C. At left is a Wells Cargo unit that has served President Barack Obama. At right is a trailer from Rich Specialty Trailers. (Photos by Ben Goff)

**T**eri and Ken Pahon have operated a number of businesses over the years, most recently a trucking company and a retail swimming pool store. Those companies were heavily dependent on the local economy – mostly steel and automotive – and when the recession hit a few years ago, they knew they needed to get into something that had a broader reach.

One idea in the back of their minds was portable restroom trailers after having seen one at a horse show. That idea congealed for them after

they attended the Pumper & Cleaner Environmental Expo in 2007. “We talked to so many great people there, so many family-owned businesses that had grown up over the years,” Teri Pahon says. “We really liked the way everybody worked together. There’s a lot of sharing of information, whether they could be considered competitors or not.”

Convinced that restroom trailers had great growth potential, they took the plunge and bought a Comfort Elite III and a Comfort Elite ADA-Compliant trailer from

Wells Cargo COG, and started a new company, Portable Restroom Trailers LLC.

Pahon says they didn’t have to wait long to get their first job. “We just had the trailer lettered up and were bringing it back to our yard. We stopped to get something to eat and a patron of the restaurant came over and said they were having a wedding in three weeks and that this looked exactly like what they needed.” Judging from the wedding photos, the trailer was the hit of the party, she says.

Later that summer they bought their third trailer, a Porta Lisa from JAG Mobile Solutions Inc. and over the next couple years grew their territory

by changing locations, marketing online, and creating a networking-driven model of doing business. By January 2009, they were able to close their other companies.

Ken Pahon takes care of accounting, oversees the office, and manages delivery logistics. Teri Pahon handles sales, marketing, coordination with vendors, and networking.

### CHANGES IN LATITUDE, CHANGES IN ATTITUDE

At the end of 2010, after having lived in Ohio all their lives, the Pahons moved to Belmont, N.C., outside of Charlotte. They were attracted to the location, the weather, and the fact that it’s a growing area.

Employee Arlene Griffis still maintains an office in Poland, Ohio, and a storage yard in nearby North Lima.

*(continued)*



Ken Pahon backs a restroom trailer into place at a charity event for the Shriners Hospital in South Carolina.

### Portable Restroom Trailers LLC Belmont, N.C.

Owners: Teri and Ken Pahon  
Year founded: 2007

Employees: 3

Specialty: Portable restroom trailers

Website: [www.portablerestroomtrailers.com](http://www.portablerestroomtrailers.com)



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**Teri Pahon**

The company has done business in numerous states in the Midwest and eastern part of the country. The new location helps extend their reach into the South. The Pahons even booked an event in Las Vegas at a hotel on the Strip after the event coordinator found them online.

### **CYBER MARKETING**

“Our business is basically all done online,” Pahon says. That was a decision they made from the beginning. The Pahons originally worked with a small website developer, then hooked up with a larger company that provides a full range of Web development and business services. The move greatly improved the visibility of their site and gave them better search engine optimization results, commonly referred to as SEO.

They are now revamping the website, which will extend their line of education-based content and videos for companies and event planners.

“We’re trying to make it easier for the public,” Pahon says. “When you say ‘trailers,’ most people nod

their head like they know, but when they see a photo they are just amazed and get very excited.” The videos show details of the trailers and give event planners ideas on what they can offer, how they can solve problems they might be running into, or how they can grow their business. “If the facilities aren’t correct, you’ll never get your event to grow,” Pahon says.

### **TWITTER, BLOG, CHAT**

The Pahons attended several business conferences last winter and came away convinced that social media is becoming a critical marketing fact-of-life. Pahon says you can’t necessarily prove increased sales from it just yet, but the growth in that area is explosive and they want to be a part of it from the beginning. “People just expect it nowadays.

It’s becoming a major part of our lives,” she says.

Their new website will be interactive, with a live chat feature. Clicking on a chat icon immediately connects the viewer to a company representative for an instant messaging conversation. These representatives, working out of their homes, are individuals the Pahons have employed in the past

to staff trade show booths and fairs, so they are very familiar with the company and its products. In the beginning they will be available 12 hours a day, and paid a flat monthly fee for monitoring the site.

The Pahons also are working with a social media marketing company to set up and maintain Facebook, Twitter and blogging accounts. Costs and details about

*(continued)*



One of the Pahon’s restroom trailers is set up at a charity dinner auction and golf outing serving about 400 people.



Technician Jacob Pilkerton (left) and Ken Pahon (right) level a trailer on uneven terrain at an event location.





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## Providing Celebrity Service

The combination of an upscale restroom alternative and online marketing exposure has brought Teri and Ken Pahon of Portable Restroom Trailers LLC to some interesting events.

None more so than when they got a call to provide a unit for President Obama, which really kicked the excitement level up a notch. They provided a Comfort Elite III for the President's visit to Youngstown, Ohio, in May 2010 when he addressed the local steel mill workers, congratulating them on their successful efforts to grow their company during the recession.

Entertainment company 20th Century Fox needed a trailer for Denzel Washington and cast for five months during the filming of *Unstoppable* in Ohio and Pennsylvania. The company supplied the smaller Porta-Lisa trailer because they needed a unit that could get close to the filming.

And when Andrews Air Force base, home of Air Force One, needed to provide facilities for dignitaries during a six-month remodeling of their golf course in the fall of 2010, the company brought in its larger Royal 7.

One of the more amusing situations was an outdoor Christmas party held at the home of an Iowa corporate CEO who was determined to hold the black-tie affair in his front yard despite freezing temperatures and a recent ice storm. He spent thousands of dollars attempting to heat the tent. But the warmest spot was inside the Comfort Elite III.

"Everyone ran to the restroom trailer," Teri Pahon says. "It was somewhat like, how many clowns can you get into the car. This was how many black-tie guests could you get into a Comfort Elite."

**At top left is the interior of the company's Rich Specialty Trailers unit. At left, Teri Pahon prepares the unit for users at a special event.**

Nashville, and we'll be the attendants every time because we get to sit out under the stars, next to the river and enjoy the entertainment," Pahon says. But they often contract with drivers to deliver and set them up. The drivers use their own vehicles.

The company does not have a vacuum truck, so it hires local companies to provide pumping services, as well as supplemental portable restrooms if the event calls for it, or an on-site attendant. Pahon usually gets her contacts from referrals or from Portable Sanitation Association International members. "But if nothing else, I'll go to (the phone book advertising website) and see who's in the area, and talk to a couple of different companies. We always find someone who's looking to partner up and has been around a while."

Networking works both ways. If a portable restroom company needs trailers for an event, they sometimes lease them from the Pahons rather than invest in a new trailer themselves or turn down the work.

By working with other compa-



who does what are still being ironed out. But in the beginning, Pahon plans to come up with the content – anything from what's new with the company to relevant news stories for caterers or something of interest to event planners – and then rely on the marketing company to put it in a concise, professional, easy-to-read format, and post it on the appropriate social media.

"This will be a major part of our marketing," Pahon says. "Sometimes it's easier to catch people on social media. And we can also see what's going on with them a little bit easier, and develop that conversation of how things are going and how we can make it better. We want contacting us to be barrier-free."

### A PARTNERING MODEL

The company's inventory today includes three Comfort Elite IIIs, including one ADA-compliant unit, each with three self-contained restrooms and a 430-gallon holding tank, as well as a Royal 6 from Rich Specialty Trailers that has three women's rooms, one men's and two urinals. The star of the fleet is the Royal 7, one stool larger, that features a fireplace in the women's room, which Pahon says has provided a "wow factor" with customers.

"This has transformed a lot of our business. We've been able to provide very beautiful, upscale facilities for everything from weddings to public events," Pahon says of the upscale trailers. If an event is particularly elegant,

they'll add designer features such as Berber carpet, baskets with complimentary soaps, lotions and hairspray, flowers, potpourri, and LED candles.

The company also has one four-stall shower/restroom combo trailer from Ameri-Can Engineering.

The company gets more requests than they can handle with this limited inventory, which is how they got the idea to sublease units from other sources, as needed. In fact, more than half their business is now done this way.

The Pahons own two trucks, a Ford F-350 pickup, and a Ford Excursion. They occasionally deliver trailers themselves, particularly for events they enjoy going to. "There's a fundraiser in Louisville featuring top bands from



The company adds distinctive signage to its fleet of trailers for a professional appearance. Ken Pahon and Jacob Pilkerton ready a unit for an event.

panies this way, the company essentially has an unlimited service territory. It's been a game changer, Pahon says. "And it's made for some great relationships. We've met so many incredible companies around the country by doing this."

#### GIVING BACK

The Pahons also like to develop relationships and get involved in their community. One way they do this is by providing trailers at charitable events without charge. "We're

really trying to give back as much as possible because we've been so blessed over the years. If a trailer's not already booked and we have something available and it's truly a charity event, that's what we're looking to do," Pahon says.

They also enjoy helping others who are considering getting into the business. "We've been asked often to talk to new people coming in, to relay our experiences, and what we feel about the business and possibilities, the growth."

**"WE'RE REALLY TRYING TO GIVE BACK AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE BECAUSE WE'VE BEEN SO BLESSED OVER THE YEARS. IF A TRAILER'S NOT ALREADY BOOKED AND WE HAVE SOMETHING AVAILABLE AND IT'S TRULY A CHARITY EVENT, THAT'S WHAT WE'RE LOOKING TO DO."**

**Teri Pahon**

Pahon believes there is plenty of business for everyone, so she is not threatened by the possible competitive nature of the relationship. "There are so many avenues. Someone can concentrate on an area that may not be provided for."

ships that we've been able to have with everyone from the manufacturers, all the way down to very small companies. Everybody works together. I don't think a lot of companies realize how lucky they are to be in an industry that still has those values." ■

#### LOVES THE INDUSTRY

The Pahons couldn't be happier about getting into the business.

"I just think this is an incredible industry," Pahon says. "I really like the friendliness, the family, the relation-

#### MORE INFO

**Ameri-Can Engineering**  
574/892-5151  
www.ameri-can.com

**Rich Specialty Trailers**  
260/593-2279  
www.richrestrooms.com

**JAG Mobile Solutions Inc.**  
800/815-2557  
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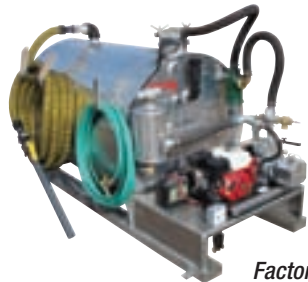
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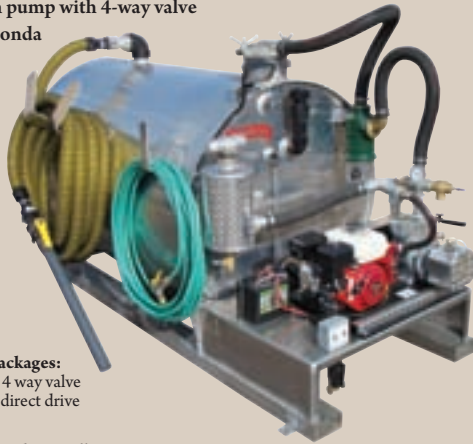
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## INDUSTRY NEWS

### Safe-T-Fresh Hires Sales Representative

Sara Brownlee has joined the Safe-T-Fresh national sales team and will be working in the northeastern region of the United States and eastern provinces of Canada. She has three years experience selling restroom deodorizers.



Sara Brownlee

### Nilodor Promotes Harmon to Inside Sales Manager

Rachel Harmon was promoted to Inside Sales Manager for Nilodor Inc. She will oversee all bids and sales leads, support distributor partners, and train and motivate the customer service team. ■

## PRODUCT NEWS

### Nilodor Introduces superSocks Deodorizer

Odor-fighting superSocks from Nilodor Inc. eliminate odors for up to 60 days. An alternative to para block, the corncob sock is saturated with Nilodor concentrated deodorizer. Each sock deodorizes an area up to 650 square feet. Fragrances include original, cherry and citrus. **800/443-4321; [www.nilodor.com](http://www.nilodor.com).**



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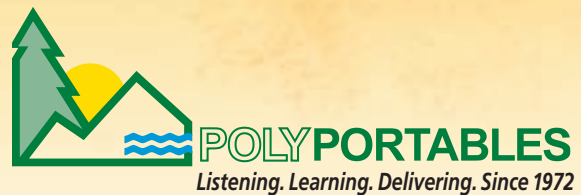
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# The Future of Hybrid Service Vehicles

**WHILE FUEL PRICES YO-YO AND CAUSE CONSTERNATION AMONG CONTRACTORS, THE MARCH TOWARD 'GREEN' WORK TRUCKS CREEPS ALONG AT A SLOW PACE**

By Ken Wysocky

**W**hen manufacturers decide to ramp up production of hybrid vacuum trucks, you just might see Tim Kettler, president of Action Septic Service Inc. in Warsaw, Ohio, at the front of the line to become an alternative-power pioneer.

"I absolutely would consider buying one," Kettler says. "Personally, I'd be willing to pay more for a hybrid vehicle. It's a quality-of-life issue ... It's what we need to do to protect the environment. Sure, it's an expensive investment, but what better way to demonstrate our commitment as an industry to not just clean-water issues, but to the larger issue of environmental stewardship?"

**"IT'S AN EXPENSIVE INVESTMENT, BUT WHAT BETTER WAY TO DEMONSTRATE OUR COMMITMENT AS AN INDUSTRY TO NOT JUST CLEAN-WATER ISSUES, BUT TO THE LARGER ISSUE OF ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP?"**

**Tim Kettler**

On the other hand, Kettler concedes that the significantly higher price of hybrids compared to conventional vehicles would deter many smaller contractors. "It would require a real financial commitment," he says. "It definitely would be a challenge. You're going to need a larger motivation than just saving a few gallons of gasoline right now."

In a nutshell, Kettler's comments sum up the fundamental issues many pumpers will face in the coming years as they ponder the merits of going hybrid. The decision will require consideration of a host of factors aside from just the higher cost or being eco-friendly, including whether or not their service area is urban or rural, where up-and-down fuel prices will settle, regional air quality and customer demand for "green" service providers.

A few industries in the United States and abroad already are dabbling in medium- and heavy-duty hybrid trucks (among the more

common are dump, garbage, utility and delivery trucks). These hybrids combine diesel engines with electric motors and can provide up to 50 percent better fuel economy than conventional vehicles.

That's no small benefit in times like these when diesel prices hit record highs. But the high prices seem to come in waves, then wane somewhat, leaving most contractors content to stay on the sidelines, refusing to enter the hybrid game. Or businesses might decide to start out small by buying hybrid pickup trucks and service vans to see how they work out, without as extensive a capital investment.

## **NUMBERS TELL A STORY**

Sales of hybrid trucks remain sparse. A study compiled by the Center on Globalization Governance & Competitiveness, a group affiliated with Duke University, projected production of commercial hybrid trucks at 4,900 units in 2010, most for corporations that own large fleets.

A report from marketing research firm Frost & Sullivan estimates that 220,000 hybrid trucks will be sold in Europe and North America by 2016. That's a 76 percent compound annual growth rate – but still negligible compared to the 4 million trucks the firm expects to be produced in total that year.

High prices are the biggest obstacle to hybrids. Truck producers can't decrease prices much until volume dramatically increases. Not even federal tax credits of up to \$12,000 for some hybrid truck models were enough to offset the price premium.

A hybrid aerial bucket truck like this one from Kenworth costs about \$260,000, compared to about \$200,000 for a conventional model. Contractors need to consider whether the extra cost can be offset by fuel savings over the long haul.



Rich Piellisch, editor of *Fleets & Fuels* magazine, sums up the quandary by pointing out that a utility company or contractor might pay about \$260,000 for a hybrid aerial bucket truck, compared to about \$200,000 for a conventional model.

"That's a big premium, so to make up the price differential, you'd better be driving a lot of miles or doing a lot of idling," he says, noting that a hybrid's batteries can power truck accessories, such as aerial lifts, instead of an idling diesel engine. "Or you'd better be banking on diesel fuel prices going up to \$5 a gallon."

While fuel prices have spiked this spring and summer, Piellisch says companies are getting used to the swings and that has taken away the knee-jerk reaction of wanting to buy into hybrid technology.

"These vehicles are usually bought for long-term usage. Duty lives of 10 or 12 years are not uncommon," he says. "Is hybrid technology more attractive now than when you have \$2.50 diesel? Yes. The expectation seems to be that prices will go up, but we had that expectation before and saw them go down."

## **REDUCING IDLING TIME**

The most common electric hybrid truck technology relies on an electric motor and a diesel-powered engine. Either power source or both can provide power at a given time.

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**“WE’RE ALWAYS INTERESTED IN SOMETHING THAT IMPROVES THE ENVIRONMENT. ON ONE HAND, WE HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT. BUT ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE’S THE FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY. IT’S A FINE LINE.”**

**John Eldredge**

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On many models, controls monitor driving conditions and automatically choose the ideal power mode, which is shown on a dashboard display.

These hybrids capture energy expended during braking and store it in lithium ion batteries, which can then either help with acceleration or operate truck accessories, such as cranes and lifts. As a result, hybrids that rely on so-called regenerative braking are best suited for urban, stop-and-go driving conditions, not high-speed, long-distance rural driving, experts say.

In Kenworth hybrid commercial trucks, the stored electrical energy can power truck accessories for up to 40 minutes with the engine turned off, which saves fuel and reduces engine wear-and-tear. When the batteries run out, the engine turns on automatically and recharges them with just five minutes of idling, says Judy McTigue, marketing manager for medium-duty trucks at Kenworth Truck Co.

“This could be a very good application for vacuum trucks,” McTigue says. “If you’re in pumping mode, and all you need is power from the PTO, it’s a great application for those vehicles.”

In such cases, the hybrid’s gas mileage is almost incidental compared to the value of dramatically reduced idling, Piellisch says, which underscores how complicated it is to determine the economic feasibility of going hybrid.

“Nothing is ever clear cut,” he notes. “In this case, you save a lot of money, even though you’re not driving a lot of miles ... powering the truck’s equipment (with electricity) is more important than moving the truck itself. It’s always a question of what’s appropriate for the truck’s duty cycle.”

Tony Vasquez, streets and drainage manager for Bexar County, which surrounds San Antonio, Texas, agrees.

“You have to fit the right vehicle to the right application,” he notes. “We’re currently working with a vendor to produce a hybrid street sweeper. They travel at three to five miles per hour, which is a perfect application for a hybrid vehicle. Since we’re in an urban area, there’s a lot of stop-and-go driving, and that’s where the payoff is for hybrids.”

“The maximum benefit comes at lower speeds,” McTigue adds. “When I talk to someone about buying a hybrid truck, the first

thing I ask is what a typical day of driving is like for them.”

### **PAYBACK STILL UNCERTAIN**

Hybrids also become more economically justifiable in areas with air quality issues. A good example is Bexar County, where county officials – facing designation as an air-quality non-attainment area – approved an energy policy in 2007 aimed at conserving energy and promoting environmental responsibility.

That move led to the purchase of three 2009 Kenworth T370 diesel-electric hybrid dump trucks. The county uses the single-axle trucks, featuring 6- to 8-cubic-yard beds, to deliver material such as asphalt and dirt. They also can pull a trailer that holds small equipment, Vasquez says.

At the time, rising fuel prices also made the hybrid trucks more attractive. “The hybrids cost about \$128,000 each, which is 25 percent more than conventional trucks,” he says. “We expect about an eight- to 10-year payback period, largely based on fuel prices.” When fuel prices dropped off \$4 highs two years ago, the payback didn’t look so good. But now that diesel is hovering around the \$4 mark, the hybrid truck purchases are looking a little wiser.

“In reality, if you make a decision based just on a cost basis, it might not make as much sense,” Vasquez says, referring to the unknown of long-term fuel prices. “But if you take into account air emissions and the county’s environmental goals, then it comes into play.”

The county’s older conventional dump trucks achieved about six mpg, compared to an average of nine mpg for the three hybrids. As a bonus, the hybrid trucks’ crew cabs hold up to five people, as opposed to only two. “Now we can transport more people to jobsites with fewer vehicles, which also saves fuel,” Vasquez says.

In areas with air-emissions restrictions, contractors with hybrids can obtain work that competitors with conventional vehicles can’t. In addition, some government jobs may even require low-emission vehicles. “If you work in a non-attainment area, hybrids can open up work for your fleet, which gives you an edge in obtaining business,” McTigue says. “In addition, hybrids can provide an advantage in areas with noise-abatement laws. They’re so quiet that at 10 p.m., nobody even realizes your truck is there.”

### **GOING GREEN?**

Some contractors find value in marketing their companies as “green” entities that care about environmental stewardship. For them,



This Kenworth T370 bucket truck is an early example of a hybrid-powered work truck. Hybrid technologies show promise for vacuum work trucks as fuel prices rise. (Photo courtesy of Kenworth)

large and visible hybrid trucks tangibly project that image.

“It’s very difficult to put a value on a ‘green’ image, but some of our customers develop marketing programs around it, McTigue says. “They put hybrid diesel decals on the doors of their trucks ... they’re very proud of the trucks. We’ve seen everything from full vinyl wraps around box trucks to banners on bumpers. There’s a lot of creative ‘logoing’ going on.”

Nonetheless, without clear-cut financial or marketing advantages, it appears many contractors – such as John Eldredge, general manager of Eldredge Equipment Services, a large waste-hauling firm in West Chester, Pa. – will remain conflicted, standing on the hybrid sidelines. Or they may opt to experiment with smaller investments in hybrid pickup trucks and service vans.

“We’re always interested in something that improves the environment,” Eldredge says. “On one hand, we have a responsibility to improve the environment. But on the other hand, there’s the financial feasibility. It’s a fine line.”

But in the long run, industry observers like Piellisch believe it’s a question of when, not if, hybrids become more common. Fuel price hikes like we’ve seen this spring and summer

This Kenworth-based dump truck is part of the fleet for Bexar County, Texas. The truck helps the county meet air quality restrictions.



are part of a pattern of laddering, Piellisch explains, where prices rise, then settle back down, but where they settle is still higher than the price before the spikes.

**BECOMING FAMILIAR**

Beyond the fuel price swings, Piellisch sees truck manufacturers keying on paybacks not based on receiving government subsidies to prove hybrid technology makes sense.

More and more manufacturers are promoting that the technology will pay for itself without government incentives,” he says. “It’s changed in the last six months, and they want to make their case without having to fall back on the government.”

Adds McTigue: “People are more comfortable with the technology ... they see it’s not crazy, weirdo, science fiction stuff. Hybrids are here to stay.” ■



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**New Jersey VIP Restroom/Portable Toilet Business For Sale.** Servicing Metro Philadelphia and Southwest New Jersey with VIP restroom trailers and portables. Many late model assets including 2 nice service trucks, 1 back-up service truck, pick-up truck, 4 VIP restroom trailers, nearly 300 restrooms, sinks, holding tanks, slide-in unit, 2 forklifts, and more. Assets worth over \$300,000 - priced to sell at \$399,000. Email jeffb@colepublishing.com or call 800-257-7222 and ask for Jeff Bruss for more details. **A B2 Business Brokerage Listing - www.BTwo.biz.** (TBM)

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Looking to purchase a small portable restroom company in either the DELAWARE, MARYLAND, PHILADELPHIA areas, or around the SOUTHWEST COAST of FLORIDA (Lee, Collier County). If interested, please call Don at 732-496-1658 or email vansant@aol.com. (P08)

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## PORTABLE RESTROOMS

Used portable toilets for sale in Tennessee and Alabama. 931-320-2255. (P07)

Toilets and handwash stations for sale. Used less than 6 months. Some never used. \$300 for used. 228-343-2001 MS. (T09)

500 White Olympic Fiberglass Portable Toilets. Standards - \$75.00 ea. Handicaps - \$250.00 ea. Older construction grade units. Quantity discounts available. Located in New Mexico. 505-345-3965. (P07)

Construction Toilets For Sale: Beige and/or blue, rentable condition, hand dispensers in all! \$150 each. NY/CT line. 203-948-8869. (P07)

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20 Satellite Tufways, blue, some excellent condition, \$250; some need roofs, \$150. Two blue Freedom handicap units, \$900 each. Discount if you take all. 575-443-3805 NM. (P07)

We buy used portable toilet equipment, toilets, handicaps, handwash stations, tanks & trucks. Contact Manuel @ 305-970-9837 or email proequip1@yahoo.com. (P07)

148 Aqua PolyJohn portable restrooms for sale. 110 with wooden pallet, 38 with plastic, all GREAT CONDITION. Located in Colorado Springs, CO. \$100 each for wood; \$200 each for plastic. Call Tom or Phil 719-633-8709. (P08)

For Sale: Used fiberglass portable toilets, 1 to 100. \$10.00 each. Call 570-388-6352, Northeast PA. (P07)

For Sale: Satellite Teal Maxim 3000s- \$375, Satellite Teal Maxim 2000s- \$175, Satellite Forest Green Tuffway Units- \$175. All units are functional and ready to use. Delivery available. 330-763-3706 OH. (P07)

Construction units for sale. Satellite, PolyJohn, Five Peaks. Delivery possible in Northeast. \$125 to \$175. Units located in Wells, ME. 207-646-2180. (P09)

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(7) 2008 PolyJohn PJ3 sinks (inside unit). Will fit any brand. Includes paper towel and soap dispensers. \$100 each or discount if take all. www.poopyspotties.com; PH 810-265-9026 MI. (T07)

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GE Modular Restroom Trailers For Sale. 2 units. Both units have no holding tanks and will need to be restored on the inside. Asking \$7,500 each OBO. Al Brown 319-378-8900 IA. (PT07)

For Sale: 2008 24-unit trailer, WEE Engineer Inc. Model #510002. \$7,500. Location: NJ. Contact Steve, email sbisbee@russellreid.com or call 732-692-6888. (PT08)

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**PORTABLE RESTROOM TRUCKS**

1998 Ford F800, 5.9L Cummins diesel, manual transmission, Masport XL4 pump, tank is 1000/400 and in good condition. Setup for portable restroom route. \$10,000. Tel 478-956-1525 GA, or www.aokportables.com. (T07)



**2006 Freightliner M2:** Mercedes 250 hp engine, Allison 3000 auto trans., Dyno-Vac tank, 1200 waste/500 fresh, Masport HXL75V pump, DC10 water pump, 197K. In good shape.....\$50,000  
**330-763-3706 OH** P07

2001 Ford F-350, 4-wheel-drive, Imperial aluminum slide-in unit, 300 waste/150 fresh, 72" toolbox, new 8 hp Honda engine & gearbox in December 2010. Hitch-mounted toilet carrier. 165,000 miles. \$9,000. 765-744-8789 IN. (PT07)



**2005 Chevy Isuzu Pump Truck (#8):** 700 gallon tank, 200,000 miles, 8-ton GVW.....Asking \$9,950  
**563-556-2434, Dubuque, IA**  
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1993 Chevy 3,500 HD diesel with manual trans. New PTO with hydraulic pump, hydraulic driven AC4 air pump, hydraulic lift toilet rack, 3 compartment steel tank, 300 gal. water, 110 gal. anti-freeze, 500 gal. waste. Unit price \$6,500. Call Mike 217-549-5839 IL. (T07)



**2004 International DT-466:** 135,000 miles, 33,000 GVW, new 2500 gallon tank.....\$49,000  
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2005 GMC 5500 4x4 Pumper. 800/300 Crescent tank setup. Carries 8 toilets. Excellent shape. Only 129k miles. \$35K OBO. Vince 775-887-5646 NV. (T07)

**PORTABLE RESTROOM TRUCKS**

2008 F-750 Ford with Satellite tank, 1100 waste/500 fresh. 76,977 miles. Very clean. Nice truck. \$50,000. 573-473-4093 MO.(P07)

2003 Keith Huber 1,100 US gallon waste, 400 US gallon water, 2-compartment, carbon steel vacuum tank. (Stock #6499C) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)



**1997 Chev 3500:** 250/100 gallon, Masport, 95K miles. Includes pressure washer and RV attachment.....\$8,500  
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2005 International 850 Tugger by Keith Huber unit, 230,719 miles, 10,000 miles on new motor, new paint, new Masport pump. \$25,000. 573-473-4093 MO. (P07)

2005 - F350 XLT, 6.0 diesel, auto, 500/225 tank, Masport M-2 pump, galvanized troughs, hauls two toilets, 172,000 miles. Price \$19,000. Call 989-379-3054 Mi. (P08)

2004 International DT466, 110,000 miles, auto., new 2000 gal. aluminum dual station tank, 1500 waste/500 water, Jurop pump. In production. **www.pumpertrucksales.com.** Call Mike @ 303-478-4796 or JR. @ 720-253-8014, CO. (P07)

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**WANTED**

**WANTED:** Best stainless steel 400/200 slide-in unit. 218-820-3693 MN. (PT07)

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Bob Carlson is owner of Glendale Welding in Glendale, Ariz. His company has been building and repairing portable sanitation trucks for 40 years. Send questions for Carlson to truckcorner@promonthly.com.



# Pump Location Factors

**CONSIDER THE CHASSIS DESIGN AND YOUR PERSONAL WORK PREFERENCES WHEN CHOOSING WHERE TO PLACE THE PUMP ON YOUR NEXT SERVICE VEHICLE**

By Bob Carlson

**QUESTION:**

Which side of the truck is the best to locate the vacuum pump? I've seen trucks where the pump is on one side or the other. Is there any advantage either way?

Martin Reddinger  
Oklahoma City, Okla.

**ANSWER:**

The location of the vacuum pump on a chassis is determined by one of two things:

- The truck chassis has parts or accessories in the way, so there is little or no choice about where the pump can be placed. Sometimes fuel tanks are in the way or other parts that make mounting the pump on one side impossible.
- Some owner/operators insist on having the pump on one side or the other because they work primarily from that side and want to monitor equipment operation. Most prefer the pump on the driver's side because it is quickly accessible when the driver steps out of the truck. It's easy to check the pressure/vacuum gauge to see how well vacuum is increasing and finish the job efficiently and profitably.

**IF YOU ARE HAVING A NEW TRUCK BUILT AND IT WILL MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE IN HOW YOU OPERATE THE TRUCK, ASK THE BUILDER TO PUT THE PUMP WHERE IT WILL HELP YOU THE MOST.**

On the other hand, there are owner/operators who prefer the pump on the passenger side because they pull up to a jobsite and the restrooms are on that side. This makes it easy for the driver to pull up to

the side of the units, walk around the truck to the passenger side, grab the hose and begin pumping.

One other note: Just because items are in the way on one side or the other doesn't mean the owner/operator has no say in the matter. Obstacles including fuel tanks, for example, can be moved. If you are having a new truck built and it will make a big difference in how you operate the truck, ask the builder to put the pump where it will help you the most.

It will cost more money to move things around. But in the long run, if the equipment is where you want it, you'll operate the way you want to. One caution: Make sure that having components moved around on the chassis won't void the manufacturer's warranty. Some truck manufacturers don't want to warranty work done by others when it comes to the construction of their chassis.

If your routes require you to work from both sides of the truck, consider putting a vacuum hose on each side of the truck. This will eliminate dragging the hose around to hard-to-reach locations and it will speed up the day's work considerably. Again, it will cost more to have the dual hoses. With two hoses, you can usually locate the pump on the driver's side for easy access and monitoring.

Overall, every owner/operator has preferences about working on a truck and getting the best use out of the pump. Equipment location can make a difference to some, and for others it is less important.

## Women in the driver's seat?

**QUESTION:**

Maybe it's the economy, maybe it's just the natural course of things, but what do you think about hiring women as drivers and pumpers?

Nick Sanchez  
Albuquerque, N.M.

**ANSWER:**

Women are doctors and lawyers. College presidents and professors are women. Why not women working as portable restroom operators? Like anything else, the basic question in hiring always comes into play. Are they qualified to do the job? Do they have the knowledge and skills to drive the truck? Do they have the stamina to drag heavy hoses around day after day for eight hours? Do they have the people skills you would expect from any driver?

If those questions are answered with a "yes," then go for it. ■



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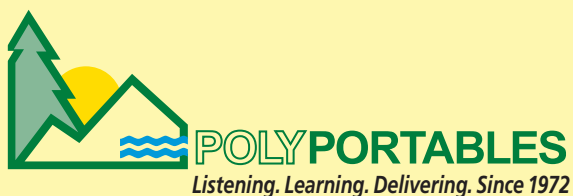
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