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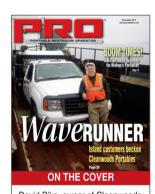
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David Pike, owner of Cleanwoods Portable Toilets, takes a barge across Penobscot Bay, Maine, to service a restroom unit on an island construction site. (Photo by Amy A. Wilton)

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- PROfile: Indy PRO welcomes you for the Pumper & Cleaner Expo
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FROM the EDITOR December 2011

Contact us: PRO strives to serve the portable restroom industry with interesting and helpful stories. We welcome your comments, questions and column suggestions and promise a prompt reply to all reader contacts. Call 800/257-7222; fax 715/546-3786; email PRO editor Jim Kneiszel at editor@promonthly.com.



Enough Already

I'M TIRED OF HEARING THE NEGATIVE HEADLINES. HERE ARE MY WISHES FOR AN IMPROVED OUTLOOK FOR PORTABLE SANITATION PROVIDERS IN 2012.

By Jim Kneiszel

he last few years have presented plenty of challenges for small businesses. Service companies like yours – which make up the backbone of the U.S. economy – have been threatened by the type of fiscal calamity most of us haven't seen in our lifetimes.

For a sobering picture, take a look at your recent retirement account statements, if you dare. Most of us have lost significant ground since the market instability began late in 2008. Portable sanitation orders remain slow in some areas, and chances are you've had to run leaner in your business as a result of the economic malaise.

Still, I see reasons for hope. And I'd rather spend my time looking forward rather than nervously peering in the rear-view mirror.

Many PROs I call are busy, responding to calls for special events, disaster relief and new customers in niches that seem to be growing – commercial development in some regions, infrastructure jobs like road and bridge building, and small-scale parties and weddings. When I call on PROs any given day, I am usually catching them in the truck, running between jobs, or at the very start or end of a busy workday. I'm not finding them in the office, waiting for their next customer to call.

hoarding so much cash. Reports are that while many companies are maintaining profits and running more efficiently than ever, they just aren't putting their money to work. Billions of dollars are being salted away as companies look for a sign that it's time to get moving. If corporations would spend a fraction of what is being kept on the sidelines, construction would ramp up and more portable restrooms would be put to work.

Better availability of capital

There is a lot of money in safe havens right now, earning a pittance in interest. So why are banks being so stingy in loaning to small businesses that have proven to be good risks in the past? It seems like the tightening of the reins we're seeing is an over-reaction from financial institutions snakebitten by their own foolish lending practices over the past decade. Why should a bank penalize a reliable PRO who wants to upgrade his vacuum truck because the lending institution made so many bad loans in the past? The banks might discover that failing to make solid business loans now turns out to be as bad a decision as giving loans to any warm body that walked in the door in the early 2000s.

GOOD WISHES

While I know some contractors are still suffering with too much inventory in their yards, or an extra truck sitting idle, I am also encountering PROs who are using all of their equipment, keeping their crews on the road, and just hoping for a little more work, which would push them to replace an aging service vehicle or take on another service technician. They're looking for the boost that signals a full-fledged economic recovery.

I'm encouraged by some of the daily reports I get from contractors. But I also know that it'll take more than the anecdotal evidence I gather to right the ship. As we close the books on 2011 and head into 2012, this is what I wish for in the upcoming year:

Renewed optimism

Turn on the news and it seems like you hear only the bad economic news. The market plunges make bigger headlines than the market upturns. Every time an unemployment number is up or a durable goods order is down, you're sure to hear about it. But oddly, when I go to the shopping mall or a big box retailer, the parking lots are full and the checkout line is surprisingly long. Commerce continues despite the doom and gloom. Attitude is everything, and I think the outlook for portable sanitation in 2012 will be a lot better if we all start accentuating the positive.

Loosening of corporate purse strings

I can't remember another time when major corporations have been

IF THERE HAS BEEN ONE BENEFIT OF THE FINANCIAL DOWNTURN AND RISING FUEL COSTS, IT'S THAT PROS ARE LOOKING FOR EVERY POSSIBLE TECHNOLOGICAL HEDGE TO PRESERVE REVENUE AND COMPETE IN A CROWDED MARKETPLACE.

An upturn in construction work

Business can only ignore a crumbling infrastructure for so long. And at some point the demand for housing stock will catch up with the glut of foreclosed homes on the market. A rebound in commercial and residential construction is inevitable because remodeling, modernization and expansion have been put off for too long. I believe it's already started in some desirable markets. Let's hope a full-fledged turnaround takes root in 2012, putting more of the U.S. portable restroom inventory to work.

Realized potential of communications technology

Every day I see at least one vastly improved website for a portable sanitation company. And if there has been one benefit of the financial downturn and rising fuel costs, it's that PROs are looking for every possible technological hedge to preserve revenue and compete in a crowded marketplace. Since the market slump began, the number of contractors using the Internet and social media to get their message out has grown incredibly.

As fuel prices rose toward \$4 per gallon, PROs sought ways to run routes more efficiently. Using GPS and routing software is becoming more the rule than the exception. I hope more PROs embrace any and all technology advances to increase profits and communicate with customers.

Health and happiness

How many times have you heard it said, "Without your health, you have nothing?" It's absolutely true. I wish you and your families the best in health and happiness over the upcoming year.

There's a lot of talk about a broken healthcare system, and I don't want to enter into that debate here. But despite all the negativity, we are still in the golden age of medicine, a time when more people are surviving cancer and living longer and more productive lives. We have a better understanding of eating healthier and exercising. Most of us can find a healthy balance of work and home life and achieve greater happiness than ever before.

KEEP ON THE SUNNY SIDE

If we make even modest gains in some of these areas over the next year, the outlook will be a lot rosier when 2012 draws to a close. Here's hoping for the best! ■







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.



Keep in Touch

FOLLOWING UP WITH POTENTIAL AND ESTABLISHED CUSTOMERS IS AN EFFECTIVE WAY TO BUILD BUSINESS

By Judy Kneiszel

magine you've met a potential new customer at a networking event and exchanged business cards. Or your crew has just picked up the last of the portable restrooms your company rented out for a huge special event. What do you do next?

If you are great at customer service, in both of these scenarios your next move is to follow up. A thoughtfully worded follow-up note will leave a positive impression about you and your company with both existing and prospective customers. It's a simple thing to do, but amazingly, many business owners neglect to do it.

FOLLOW UP TO GAIN CUSTOMERS

Sometimes it's the little things that give one company the competitive edge over another when it comes to making the sale. Here's an example: You are considering buying a pickup truck from two different dealerships and the trucks are roughly the same make, model year, size and price. The salesperson from Dealership A sends you a friendly follow-up email thanking you for taking the time to visit his business and reminding you of some of the truck's features you seemed particularly interested in. On the other hand, the salesperson from Dealership B never contacts you again. You may be more likely to buy from Dealership A. You deduce that if you get quick, friendly service before you buy, that professionalism may carry over into all your dealings with this business. When

it comes to Dealership B, you get the feeling you aren't a

The same is true for your business. If someone showed enough interest in your business to have a conversation with you about it and take your business card, show enough interest in them by following up with an email or a mailed note of thanks including a business card. Even a quick phone call will do if there is something you regret not discussing with them, or if you came up with the answer to a question you couldn't give them in person. Any form of follow-up communication keeps you and your business in the mind of the potential customer.

Send the follow-up note or email no later than two days after your face-to-face meeting. This way you are still fresh in the potential customer's thoughts. State the purpose of your note clearly, simply expressing gratitude to them for taking the time to talk with you. You can review some of the points you discussed, but keep it brief. Sum up by thanking them again and inviting them to contact you if they would like more information. Make your message pleasant and sincere. Include enough detail so they are sure to remember who you are, but don't go on and on. Personalize it so it doesn't appear to be a form letter that you copy and send to everyone. If you really thought you were dealing with a hot prospect but don't get a response to your follow-up, you might want to reach out again in a couple

of weeks. But don't be a pest. You can't expect to get a response to every piece of correspondence you send out.

FOLLOW UP TO KEEP CUSTOMERS

Following up after your company has provided service to a client is simply an extension of good customer service. Aside from being a gesture of goodwill, it is an effective way to find out if anything about your service made the customer unhappy. Not all customers will take the time to call and complain, but if you call them and ask how satisfied they were with your service, they're likely to be truthful. Immediate follow-up can help you nip a problem in the bud before a customer has time to badmouth your company for a mistake you weren't even aware of. Getting customer feedback through follow-up shows you where mistakes are being made and helps you avoid them in the future.

Following up with customers helps them get to know you better too, and people like to do business with people they know. When you follow up, customers will feel like they are really important to you. Follow-up helps build long-term relationships with customers, which means a greater return on the initial investment of time and money you put into landing them as customers in the first place.

PEOPLE LIKE TO DO BUSINESS WITH PEOPLE THEY KNOW. WHEN YOU FOLLOW UP, CUSTOMERS WILL FEEL LIKE THEY ARE REALLY IMPORTANT TO YOU. FOLLOW-UP HELPS BUILD LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIPS WITH CUSTOMERS.

AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

Follow-up doesn't just provide vague benefits in goodwill for your business. It can be used to target customers with specific, tangible, business-building invitations. For example, I recently hired a carpet-cleaning company to clean an office. It was the first time I had used this contractor and within two weeks I received a follow-up thank-you card in the mail. This mailing also invited me to join their preferred customers club, which would reward me with a discount if I agreed to contract with them for regularly scheduled carpet cleaning.

Follow-up is not complicated or time consuming. It's simply displaying good manners in business, in a systematic way. Regularly following up by formally saying "please" and "thank you" to customers may provide a noticeable sales boost for your company. As a bonus, if the authors of the many popular self-help books promoting a spirit of gratitude know anything, follow-up will make you feel good too. ■

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The museum's collection includes works by Winslow Homer, George Bellows, LeRoy Neiman and Ogden Pleissner. Sports legends represented include Johnny Unitas, Joe Louis, Michael Jordan and Bob Cousy. The museum also includes a few paintings created by celebrities, such as Muhammad Ali.

The collection is exhibited in the public spaces of University Place Conference Center & Hotel on the downtown campus of Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. Visit www.namos. iupui.edu.

FINER THINGS

For those who enjoy wine, fine food, and maybe a celebrity sighting, it's worth a visit to **Tastings**, A Wine Experience, four blocks from the Convention Center at 50 W. Washington St. Voted the best wine bar in Indianapolis, Tastings has a unique bar and bistro concept where guests can try more than 100 wines from around the world by the taste, glass or bottle. The menu includes artisan cheese plates, flatbread pizzas, gourmet sandwiches and salads, bistro plates and fine desserts. Visit www.awineex perience.com.

SHOPPING

One of Indianapolis' six cultural districts, the five-block Mass Ave Arts District is filled with theaters, restaurants, art galleries and, most of all, eclectic independent boutiques. Unique finds await on each block, from Stout's Shoes (the nation's oldest shoe store, established in 1886), to Silver In The City/At Home In The City (offering silver jewelry and unique gift items), to The Best Chocolate In Town. The district is on the angled area of downtown, a two-minute cab ride from the

Convention Center at 339 Massachusetts Ave. Visit www.discover massave.com.

DINING

Harry & Izzy's, downtown at 153 S. Illinois St., one block from the Convention Center, is a

sister establishment of the Indianapolis legend St. Elmo Steak House. Diners will enjoy an upscale steak and seafood grill menu and sophisticated, casual atmosphere. A lively bar is the focal point, and the interior balcony and tucked-away dining rooms provide cozy settings. Specialties include hot shrimp cocktail. Entree prices range from \$24 to \$40. Visit www.harryandizzys.com.

ARTS/ENTERTAINMENT

The Indianapolis Museum of Art, one of the nation's largest and oldest general art museums, has a collection of more than 50,000 works from a variety of cultures and periods in history. It also provides national and international traveling exhibitions. The 152-acre grounds include the Virginia B. Fairbanks Art & Nature Park, an urban oasis with 100 acres of woodlands, wetlands, a lake and meadows. Admission is free. The museum is located at 4000 Michigan Rd., 10 minutes from the Convention Center. Visit www.imamuseum.org.





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NATURAL GAS RIGS

By Ken Wysocky

n fall 2005, hardware store and gas station owner Steve Bishop bought a small portable restroom operation, looking to supplement his existing businesses in Ulster, Pa., with a steady new revenue stream. What he got instead was a small business tsunami.

That's what happens when a town suddenly finds itself amid a feverish business boom, courtesy of one of the largest naturalgas plays in the history of the United States, the Marcellus Shale formation, which covers a broad swath of Pennsylvania, West Virginia and New York. Bishop's restroom business, Bishop's Full-Time Portables, is one of many companies benefitting as well as struggling to keep pace with the economic boom.

"We had about 150 restrooms and no restroom trailers when all this started, and just two small service trucks," says Bishop, who also owns Bishop's True Value Plus Mini Mart. "Now we have about 650 restrooms, 24 restroom trailers and 15 service trucks.

"At times, it's hard to keep up," he continues. "I look out in the yard and see a load (of restrooms) come in and six days later, we might have just six left ... you think you're caught up, and then something happens and you're right back behind again. But that's business. It's all a great opportunity."

Much of the company's restroom inventory supports crews at construction sites for drilling pads and pipelines. The rest stands at construction sites for things such as motels, mini-marts, restaurants and bars in jobs associated with the gas play, Bishop says.

THERE'S MONEY UNDERGROUND

Local residents have known for years that natural-gas reserves lie thousands of feet below their town. But it wasn't economically feasible to tap those reserves until horizontal-drilling technology came along, Bishop explains.

Up until then, Bishop sought nothing more than an add-on business to complement the (continued)



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Steve Bishop with his son Jeff

Bishop's Full-Time Portables based in Ulster, Pa.

and daughter Stephanie of

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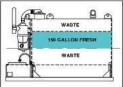
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Steve Bishop

hardware store and gas station, which he says were "just kind of chugging away." He found just what he wanted in the form of a small, local portable restroom business.

"The guy who owned it sort of outgrew himself," Bishop says. "He didn't want to hire any employees, but had more work than he could handle alone. It was a turnkey operation, and we took it over in October of 2005, which gave us the winter months to get a feel for how it worked, and gear up for the following spring."

Bishop started out with a modest marketing campaign that included advertising in a local newspaper and putting more visible lettering on the trucks. Between that and word-of-mouth referrals, he says sales revenue almost doubled during the first year of operation.

But that early growth was nothing compared to the deluge that started in June 2008, when the first drilling rig appeared in the area. Suddenly there were 20 rigs - and that was from just one drilling company.

"Now there are more companies drilling in the area," Bishop says. "Nobody really had any idea about the size and impact this would have on our area. When it first started, some of our county commissioners went to a town in Texas to gauge the impact. They came back and said it's going to be a lot different from what we've known, and told us to get prepared ... especially in terms of an influx of people and traffic from water trucks carrying water in and out for fracking. Some guys who had two (water) trucks now might have 20 or 30 to haul freshwater in and frac water away to treatment centers."

How does a small businessman handle this kind of fast, unexpected growth? For Bishop, the answer is four words: business line of credit. He

says he was fortunate because he doesn't believe in carrying a lot of debt, so he had sufficient equity built up in his business to borrow money for the influx of unplanned capital expenditures.

"I prefer to have as little debt as possible," he says. "I never planned on making those expenditures, but I was fortunate enough to get the call, and my low debt allowed me to obtain loans. It could've just as well been a restroom company other than me. I was in the right place at the right time and our nearest competitor is about 20 miles away. I was able to make some (equipment purchases) out of cash flow and financed the rest."

EQUIPMENT AT THE READY

Today, Bishop's roster of equipment includes 650 restrooms, mostly from Satellite Industries Inc.; twenty 10-foot restroom trailers manufactured by Rich Mobile Restrooms and Black Tie Manufacturing (each trailer features heat, air conditioning, two toilets, two sinks with automatic shut-off valves and two waterless urinals); and 500 250-gallon plastic holding tanks made by PolyPortables Inc.

To pump sewage from holding tanks at temporary rig worker housing facilities, Bishop's relies on a 2000 International 8100 with a 2,500-gallon steel tank, a 2006 International



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Steve Bishop

4400 with a 2,500-gallon steel tank and a 2010 Peterbilt 340 with a 3,600-gallon steel tank, all built by Pik Rite Inc.

To service restrooms, the company owns the following trucks built by Crescent Tank Mfg. with steel tanks: a 2006 GMC 4500 with a 650-gallon waste/300-gallon freshwater tank; a 2006 Chevrolet 6500 with a 950-gallon waste/500-gallon freshwater tank; a 2008 Isuzu NRR with an 850-gallon waste/350-gallon freshwater tank; a 2009 GMC 5500 with an 850-gallon waste/350-gallon freshwater tank; and a 2011 Ford F-550 with an 850-gallon waste/350-gallon freshwater tank. The company also owns another 2011 F-550, equipped with a 650-gallon waste/350-gallon freshwater steel tank, built by Satellite Industries.

"I like the flat tanks from Crescent because you can actually put six restrooms on top by using a lift gate," Bishop says. "That comes in handy if we get a call from a site where a company is finished fracking and they ask us to leave two restrooms there, but take away, say, four others and deliver them eight or nine miles down the road to the next site.

"Without the flat tanks, we'd have to make two trips, or drag a trailer around, which isn't very practical because there's not a lot of space at the drilling sites because of all the trucks, people and equipment," he adds. "It's a huge advantage for my business. I can send those trucks out and carry 12 holding tanks, too."

CHANGE IS GOOD

The business spurt forced Bishop to erect a 60- by 80-foot pole building for a garage and shop facility. He says keeping trucks indoors reduces wear and tear during winter because they won't start out frozen on winter mornings. "We're also working on getting a full-time mechanic on board," he says. "Right now, we lean on local repair shops, but sometimes you can't get work done when you need it. Having someone on board would help minimize downtime."

Bishop's currently works with three drilling companies and services about 24 drilling-rig sites twice a week. All three contacted Bishop through a word-ofmouth referral from a local excavator who built drilling pads for the companies. Interestingly, the drilling companies are responsible for cleaning the restroom trailer interiors, while Bishop's crews service the restrooms and holding tanks. The length of time the restrooms.

trailers and holding tanks stay at each site varies, depending on how many wells crews drill at each pad.

"We set up anywhere from 15 to 24 holding tanks per rig. The rigs run 24/7 and crews there use portable temporary housing," Bishop explains. The holding tanks are hooked up to the mobile trailer homes, which the drilling companies rent from another contractor.

The dramatic increase in business is prompting Bishop to consider embracing new technology, such as routing software that includes Global Positioning System capability and software that monitors equipment maintenance schedules.

"We need to achieve more density on service routes, both for the gas fields and the monthly rentals," Bishop says. "There are times when I find we have trucks following each other around, plus it's hard to get new drivers familiar with all the locations. It used to be



Technician Jason Brown connects the vacuum hose to a restroom trailer before pumping the tank.





Above left, technician Bill Wilkinson returns a vacuum hose to his service truck before moving to the next servicing location. At right, Harry Marbaker eases his service rig into the yard to pick up several units for delivery. The Isuzu truck with a flat tank is one of several the company owns from Crescent Tank Mfg.





A natural-gas boom in Pennsylvania has been good for the bottom line at Bishop's Full-Time Portables in Ulster, Pa. It's also created a host of challenges—especially retaining qualified employees.

Finding workers hasn't been much of an issue, says owner Steve Bishop. Keeping them is another story. Part of the challenge stems from employment culture shock as the local workforce acclimates to the demanding hours – sometimes 70 or more a week – required by an industry that works around the clock.

"Sometimes it's hard to keep them on because they have to work seven days a week, with rotating weekends," says Bishop, who so far has hired 12 new employees to handle the additional workload. "At the start (of the boom), a lot of people who weren't working were still drawing unemployment and didn't want to work. Now it's a little tougher because of competition from other jobs."

To attract and retain employees, the company pays time-and-a-half for overtime. It also pays locally competitive wages of approximately \$15 an hour – up from \$10 to \$12 before the gas work started. Bishop says he's also looking into offering health insurance, which becomes more economically feasible the more employees he has.

"Bigger service companies – everything from businesses that put up lighting towers to piping and wellhead companies – keep coming in with medical benefits, so we've got to keep up or they'll steal away employees," he says. "I have a cash bonus plan, too. Every quarter, I try to (give bonuses to) employees who go over and beyond the normal routine. There's no set amount – the more you impress me, the more you get."

Family plays an important role in keeping the business running smoothly. Bishop's daughter, Stephanie, handles administrative office duties, helps coordinate restroom service and deliveries. In addition, Bishop's wife, Teri, works part time in the office, while their son, Jeff, schedules service for the drilling rigs.

"It would be a lot harder to do this without family," Bishop says.



Left to right, Jeff Bishop, Stephanie Bishop-Thetga and Steve Bishop are shown at their office in the True Value Plus mini mart the family owns in Ulster, Pa.

simple because I knew where drivers were if we needed something addressed. Routing software will allow us to service sites quicker through increased efficiency."

LOOKING AHEAD

It looks like busy times ahead for Bishop, who estimates the bulk of the drilling-rig service work will go on for the next 10 years or so. "A lot of it depends on how much land each company leases, and whether the price of natural gas stays high enough to warrant continued drilling," he explains. "Who knows – business may double or triple next year. Maybe there's potential for that, maybe not. It's hard to know."

Does Bishop ever worry about overextending his business with investments in equipment that might suddenly become idle? "Yes, I worry about buying all this equipment," he says. "But it's all about taking risks. Nothing is guaranteed, but when the opportunity is here, you take advantage of it while you can.

"We're fortunate to be busy," he adds. "In a lot of places around the country, it's not. Even 100 miles away from here, you don't see all the hustle and bustle you see around here."

MORE INFO

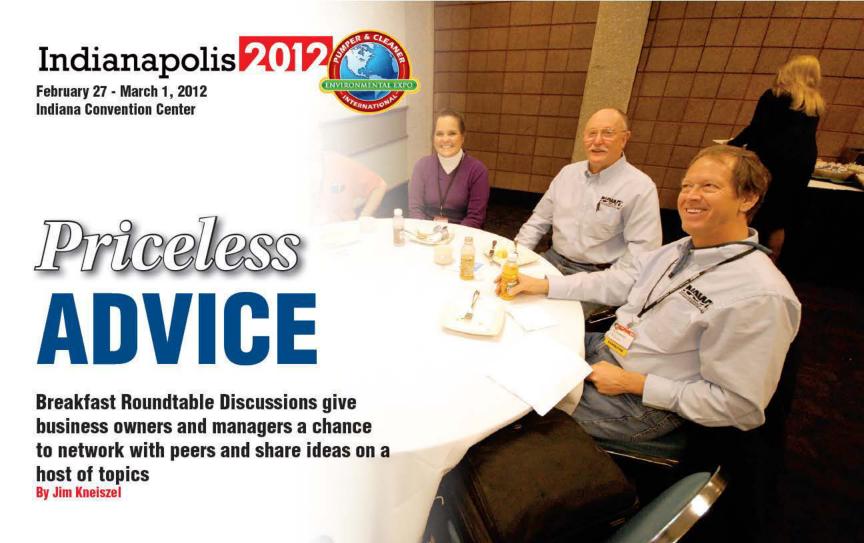
Black Tie Manufacturing 877/253-3533 www.blacktiemanufacturing.

Crescent Tank Mfg. 585/657-4104 www.crescent-tank.com

PolyPortables Inc. 800/241-7951 www.polyportables.com (See ad page 15) Pik Rite Inc. 800/326-9763 www.pikrite.com

Rich Mobile Restrooms 260/593-2279 www.richrestrooms.com

Satellite Industries Inc. 800/328-3332 www.satelliteindustries.com (See ad pages 9, 20, 21)



or Kenney Lee, there's no better way to get a business boost than to network with fellow attendees at the Pumper & Cleaner Environmental Expo International. And his favorite way to hook up with industry peers is the Expo's Breakfast Roundtable Discussion.

You'll be sure to find Lee, owner of Metro Septic in Cartersville, Ga., at the restaurant area of the Indiana Convention Center on Thursday, March 1, 2012, as he intently listens to the advice of other industry professionals. Lee says the small group sessions are a great way to test new ideas for his business. Running from 8 to 10 a.m., the roundtable discussions will feature topics of interest to a variety of Pumper & Cleaner Expo attendees.

"To sit at a table and talk with guys who've been doing this work for 40 or 50 years, and with their sons who have been working 20 to 30 years, you can't really put a price on that. It's priceless," Lee says. "In the future, my company will be a better and stronger company from what I learn at these roundtable discussions."

FREE TO SHARE

The roundtable discussions are indispensible because they link contractors from across the country to share best business practices and industry-specific technologies, Lee explains. Because Lee and his breakfast tablemates aren't direct competitors, there is a free flow of information and advice that proves invaluable.

For example, Lee went into the 2011 Expo Roundtable Discussions with a plan to start processing the septage he collects. Talking to contractors who had set up their own dewatering facilities, Lee was steered toward a system that ended up costing a fraction of what he was expecting to pay. He also

collected business cards from several other business owners who offered follow-up help in putting the system together.

"I could have spent thousands of dollars to figure out how to make the processing work. But you don't have to spend thousands of dollars when somebody tells you how to do it for free," Lee says. "I could sit down with somebody who was in my shoes and told me the best way to do it."

Keith Kirkman, of Kirkman's Plumbing & Eel Service, Inc., Greenville, Ohio, says the informal setting is what makes the roundtable discussions so successful. Participants feel freer to chime in with their opinions than they do in larger group seminars. Contractors are able to bring up any topic that interests them.

"TO ME, PEOPLE WHO GO TO THE EXPO ARE THE LEADERS OF THE INDUSTRY. THEY RECOG-NIZE HOW MUCH THE EXPO HELPS THEM AND THAT'S WHO'S AT THESE ROUNDTABLES."

Keith Kirkman

"They aren't afraid to stand up and say something that they might not say to a full room," Kirkman says. And when folks at the Expo talk, Kirkman says he's going to listen.

"To me, people who go to the Expo are the leaders of the industry," Kirkman says. "They recognize how much the Expo helps them and that's who's at these roundtables."

Leading up to the Expo, organizers will gather topics of interest to roundtable participants. These may run the gamut from marketing through websites to use of a variety of technologies across the wastewater industry. Tables will be organized by topic and attendees will be able to rotate from one table to another to take part in a variety of discussions. Each discussion will be moderated by a table leader who will take notes and summarize the comments at the end of the roundtable.

PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE

Jim Anderson, the education coordinator for the National Association of Wastewater Transporters, moderated a roundtable discussion on customer service in 2011. He was impressed with the free exchange of ideas and thought the participants walked away with a lot of practical knowledge about what works and what doesn't.

Anderson said the give-and-take was significant compared to the feedback he gets as an instructor in more formal education settings.

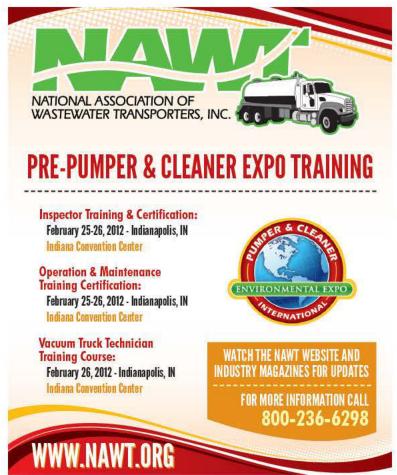
"If you think about Education Day, there's 150 to 300 people in a session. To stand up in the middle of that and share is very difficult for most people," Anderson says. "But when you're sitting over breakfast, you just talk about those things that are important. It's really a good way to talk to the folks who are struggling with the same questions and challenges you are and hearing how they're dealing with them."

Like every year, Lee is going to walk the Expo exhibit floor and marvel at the latest trucks and greatest technology the industry has to offer. He'll attend Expo Education Day and learn as much as he can to improve his business. And you can bet the young business owner will be at the breakfast roundtable discussions, bright and early.

"I hope to be one of those guys in 20 years sharing my advice," Lee says. "I'd like to be able to tell them how I built an empire from what I've learned here."







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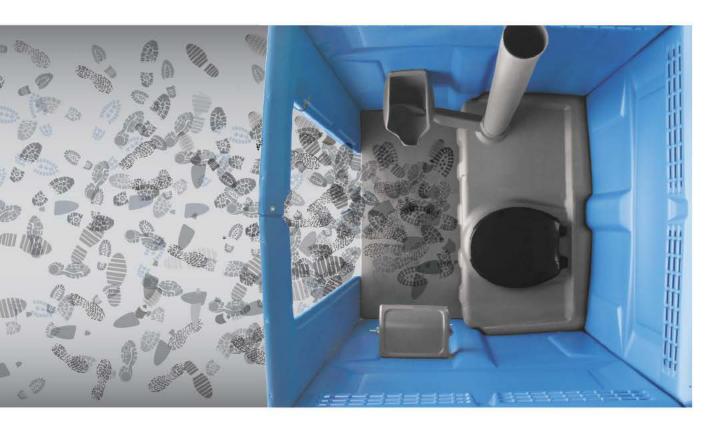


molded in vent screens



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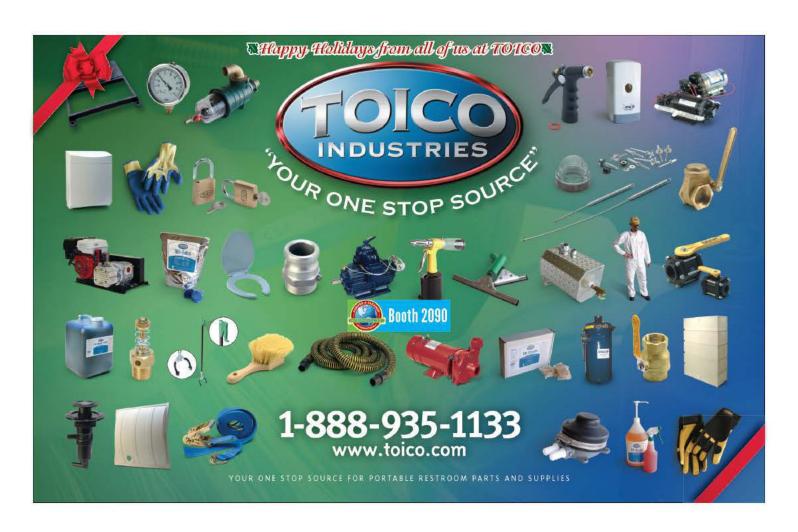
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office technology roundup

TIME-SAVING TECHNOLOGY

Computer software takes the guesswork out of service stops, deliveries, inventory and vehicle maintenance, while streamlining customer billing

By Ed Wodalski

oday's paperless office technology takes the guesswork out of restroom delivery and service stops, optimizing routes and increasing employee efficiency. Real-time work orders and service maps maximize route efficiency, eliminating missed or canceled stops. On-site billing and electronic customer receipts ensure prompt payment and time-consuming reminders. Here is a sampling of the latest office technology software.

CLEAR COMPUTING INC.

Total Activity Control software from **Clear Computing Inc.** provides a variety of tools for the paperless office. Billing, regular or special event invoices can be sent to customers via email or fax, while receivables can be managed along with integrated credit card processing. The program allows work orders or service routes to be emailed to drivers, who can open detailed work

assignments with attached maps in mobile devices, then write notes or capture a customer's signature and electronically return completed orders to the office. A GPS-Relay iPhone app enables drivers to update the office with their status, location and timestamp. Customer lists also can be accessed from TAC and used to create proposals that can be converted to



work orders and invoices. 888/332-5327; www.clearcomputing.com.

EZTRAKR SYSTEMS INC.

PulseStar and iButton technology from EZTrakR Systems Inc. provides positive service validation, eliminating the need for service stickers. The bundled software system records services, tracks employee productivity and route service stops, provides an automated timecard and updates inventory. The system also provides one-touch billing and QuickBooks integration, along with missed service reports.



The iButton records delivery, pickup or service date and time. Data is captured with each vibrated touch of the weather- and dust-resistant reader that automatically updates customer accounts with each download. **866/529-1938**; www.eztrakr.com.

MY SERVICE DEPOT

Smart Service software from My Service Depot is fully integrated with QuickBooks accounting software (2008 and newer) and designed for companies with field service employees. Program features assist with routing, scheduling, dispatching, mapping, CRM and mobile



data collection. Other features include iPhone and iPad mobile solution for field employees that does not require constant Internet connection, drop-and-drag scheduling screen, Smart Find routing to ensure quick and efficient service scheduling, marketing campaigns for increased sales, estimates, customer notes and correspondence to track full account history. The program also includes a standard and custom report tool, mapping and GPS on mobile workforce screen. A mobile version for laptops is available. 888/518-0818; www.myservicedepot.com.

OPERASOFT

Designed with Microsoft Dynamics CRM technology, waste management software from Operasoft handles service requests, provides real-time dispatching, GPS tracking, supplier/contract management and invoicing. The MODIS terminal with optional onboard



touch screen provides drivers/operators with job lists and comments/instructions that pop up per location. The system requires no on-site installation. Dispatchers can track real-time progress, view work completed and open/closed service calls on Google Earth. A portable printer for receipts is available. The modular system can import information from various databases, including GPS coordinates and photos, tracking maintenance due, both performed and pending. Preventive fleet management is accomplished through vehicle repair orders and end-of-day inspections. 888/986-7372; www.operasoft.ca.

RITAM TECHNOLOGIES LP

Summit Rental Profit Builder software from Ritam Technologies LP directly emails invoices to

customers and provides automatic credit card processing and bank deposits with a few keystrokes. The system offers more than 30 ways to bill a jobsite or event. Built-in tools



allow for old-style route cards, modern route sheets and mapping optimization of stops. Color-coded graphic routes enable managers to see where overlap or inefficiencies exist. Routes are automatically adjusted for quickest driving time to each site. The program also applies five different cost factors to routes, showing net profit for each, tuning costs for each driver and truck and alerting management when additional attention is required. **800/662-8471; www.ritam.com**.

ROADNET TECHNOLOGIES INC.

The Geotuning productivityenhancing tool from Roadnet
Technologies Inc. is designed to improve the accuracy of location information for transportation fleet owners. The system is a combination of processes that capture large pools of street addresses, geocodes them, and systematically



refines the geocodes using both automatic and manual methodology. Features include a next-generation geocoder that identifies where the product is scheduled to be delivered or service performed. An analyzer tool scans for canceled and completed stops, while a third component enables the user to review stops relative to locations and GPS pings to fine-time the arrival/departure radius. 410/847-1900; www.roadnet.com.

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VMSOFT PRODUCTS

The SAFE Program from VMSoft Products enables users to organize routes, service schedules, invoice customers, create work orders and contracts as well as record inspections and vehicle maintenance. The program tracks expenses,

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customer inventory, rentals and monitors alarms.

Users can email documents (invoices, contracts, work orders) using Outlook or Windows Live Mail and create an online map of customers viewable from a smartphone or laptop. The program also allows personalized reminders and follow-up emails to be sent to customers. **800/604-7351; www.**

thesafeprogram.com.



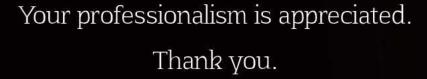


Thank You.

"When was a young man, I knew it all, or so I thought.

Today things are different. People are different.

The world changes, but the earth shouldn't."





For the True Professionals



TAURUE RUNNER

CLEANWOODS PORTABLE
TOILETS DELIVERS THE GOODS
TO ISLAND CUSTOMERS AND
ALONG MAINE'S CRAGGY
COASTLINE

By Betty Dageforde

THE TEAM

Cleanwoods Portable Toilets has two sites – one in Hope, Maine, and the other on the island of Islesboro. David and Peggy Pike, who started renting portable restrooms in 1998, own both properties. Peggy handles the billing and accounting, David delivers and services units with help from employee Todd Bowman. The Pikes have two parttime employees who serve a 40-mile radius on the mainland and nearby islands.

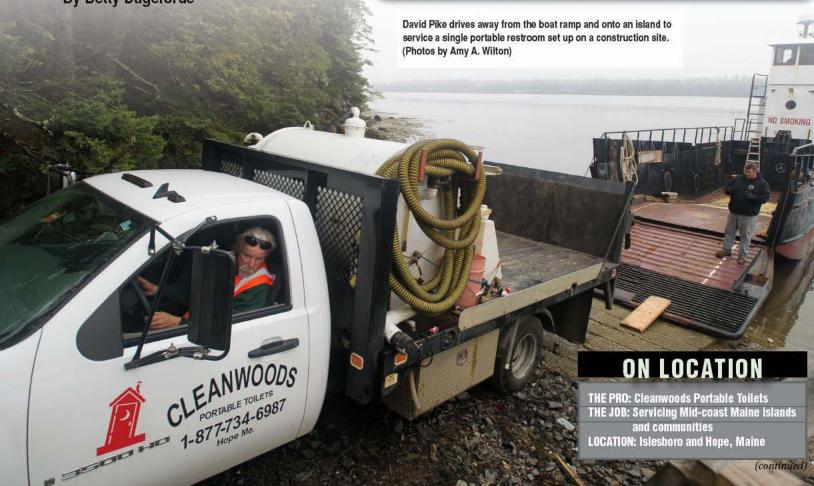
COMPANY HISTORY

Like many Maine residents,
David Pike had many jobs –
construction, caretaker and
bartender – when a local caterer
complained about the service
she was receiving and encouraged
Pike to invest in portable restrooms for events on Islesboro.
He bought a couple units at a

time, since that was all his trailer could haul. Between events and construction companies he was renting them out as fast as he could bring them home. By 2003, Pike was in the business full time, and the couple purchased a second property in Hope to have a home/office/warehouse on the mainland.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Initially, Pike thought he would only provide service to the island where he lived, which saved customers the cost of transporting units by ferry. But his contractor customers worked on the mainland too, and they asked him to provide restrooms. At first, Pike had 15 units on the mainland that he cleaned once a week. He realized there was demand for a company that provided good service and paid attention to details.









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When a competitor offered to sell his business, Pike was interested. When the competitor sold to someone else, Pike decided to plunge into the business full time. In 2003, he purchased 60 unassembled PolyJohn Enterprises units. He visited construction contractors and Chambers of Commerce and knocked on doors. He'd put a couple restrooms together and almost immediately set them up.

When contractors want Pike to provide units for jobsites on smaller islands, they help line up rides on transporter barges. Since it costs \$400 per hour to run the barges, Pike schedules delivery and servicing when other supplies are being delivered. The barges hold up to three dump trucks and two 1-ton trucks.

On larger islands, such as Islesboro, he uses regularly scheduled ferries.

THE 'MAINE' EVENT

About 80 percent of Pike's business is setting up units on construction sites on the peninsulas and islands. The easy part of island work is the barge ride. In some cases, when there is a lot of snow or the access roads are steep, rocky, seaweed- and driftwood-littered beaches, Pike - and other truckers - need to be pulled with skidders to get on the island.

"You have to wait in line to get pulled up, and I think, 'All this trouble to clean three toilets," Pike says.

One delivery required him to load and transport a restroom on a John Deere Gator, because there were no roads on the private island. He set the restroom up next to a stone guesthouse and prepped it with chemicals and saltwater from the ocean. When he returned to pick it up, the island caretaker informed him that Bill Gates was the guest.

Pike's customers include celebrities such as Kirstie Alley and wealthy clients who hire popular bands for party entertainment. Pike uses his carpentry skills to build two-sided lattice fences to hide his high-end flushing portable units with sinks. Customers cover the lattice with lights, balloons and other decorations.

Pike also utilizes his bartending experience to help customers plan for events. He asks many questions about wedding guests, for example. "One unit may be enough for 75 people for three or four hours," Pike says. "But if there's a lot of drinking for five or six hours, one unit is not going to work." Experience also has taught him to talk to the mother of the bride - not the groom - about where to set up the units in the most discreet places.

BY THE NUMBERS

In addition to the PolyJohn units he assembled, Pike has some Five Peaks Technology and PolyPortables Inc. units, making up an inventory of 180 units.

Eight of the PolyJohn units have flush toilets and sinks. Units earmarked for weddings purposely don't have any Cleanwoods labeling for a more sophisticated look. Other specialty units are two PolyPortables Boudoir models, six PolyJohn Comfort Inn wheelchair accessible units, one PolyPortables wheelchair accessible unit and four PolyJohn PJN3 units retrofitted with crane lifts that can be moved from shore to boat or barge.

During the summer, he services units with a 1997 Isuzu Tugger from and a 2002 Mitsubishi Tugger from Keith Huber Inc., both with

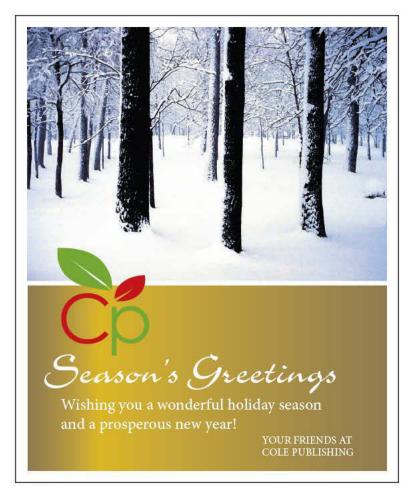
550-gallon waste/300-gallon freshwater steel tanks. During winter or when access roads are rough, he uses his 2007 4WD 1-ton flatbed GMC with a 300-gallon waste/100-gallon freshwater steel tank built by Slurry Liquidator Corp.

THE ISLAND EXPERIENCE

As a California native, Pike finds Maine's winters his greatest challenge. He's been in Maine long enough to adapt, however. One of his biggest events is providing and servicing restrooms for the U.S. National Toboggan Championships in Camden, which attracts thousands of people. He deals with all the cold



(continued









weather challenges during the three-day event in February.

Pike's regular routes take him to many mainland communities and up to seven islands. On the mainland, he prefers to service units at construction sites on Sundays when there are no workers or vehicles in the way.





Depending on barges makes it tricky to schedule servicing for units on the islands. "If it's windy the barges won't run," he says. He adds extra water to island units in case he can't get back for a couple of weeks due to the weather.

Though outhouses seem like a more practical option in some cases, Pike's customers

are willing to pay for his portable restrooms and service. That includes his barge time, which can range from 30 minutes to a fivehour round trip for islands nine miles out.

MAINE HUMOR

Peggy Pike named the business "Cleanwoods" even before they started it. As an employee for Islesboro, she was aware of complaints that people building new homes didn't have toilets and were going in the woods. The Pikes' business takes care of that problem.

Pike notes he took a lot of ribbing when he mixed drinks as a bartender and provided restrooms.

"People used to tell me that, 'You're giving it to us and taking it from us,'" he says. But he got the last laugh. Instead of three jobs, he runs one successful business that put his kids through college and allows the couple to take winter vacations in "warm places."

"I love what I do," Pike says. "This is a great job." \blacksquare



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February 27th - March 1st, 2012

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Education Day

Monday, February 27th

77	ր Դր	
	8 a.m.	

Southern Sections Collection Systems Committee

Rust into Gold

9:30 a.m. Maintaining Collection System Easements

11 a.m. Sanitary Sewer Overflows: What To Do When It Is Flowing Down the Street

1:30 p.m. Finding Success and Growth in the Pipeline Cleaning Business

Evaluating and Optimizing the Efficiency of a Combination Truck

4:30 p.m. **CCTV** Inspection Essentials

3 p.m.

National Association of Wastewater Transporters

8 a.m. What I Need to Know About Trucking Safety

9:30 a.m. Setting the Dose, Establishing the Pump Delivery Rate & Relative Control Sensor Adjustment

11 a.m. Certification and Septic System Inspections

1:30 p.m. Is There Value in Processing My Own Sludge?

3 p.m. Maintenance Frequency Standards and Requirements

4:30 p.m. Working with Small Communities: System Management

NASSCO

National Association of Sewer Service Companies

8 a.m. Sewer Ops and CMOM - Leveraging the CMOM Process for Operational Benefit

9:30 a.m. Larry Keist - Developments in Water Main Linings

11 a.m. Culvert Rehabilitation: Have It Your Way

1:30 p.m. Manhole Lining: The Secret to a Successful Installation

3 p.m. Inspection of Pipelines Under Full Flow Conditions

4:30 p.m. Sewer and Industrial Equipment Rental - What are the Options?

WaterJet Technology Association

8 a.m. Accessorizing Your Vacuum Unit

9:30 a.m. Good Craftsmen Have Heavy Toolboxes

11 a.m. Waterjet Technology: Applications and Equipment

Portable Sanitation Association International

1:30 p.m. Cost Analysis: Delivery, Removal, Moves and Tip-Overs - Part 1

Cost Analysis: Delivery, Removal, Moves and Tip-Overs - Part 2

DETAILED SESSION INFORMATION AVAILABLE AT:

WWW.PUMPERSHOW.COM

8 a.m.

National Onsite Wastewater Recycling Association

Aerobic or Angerobic - Which One Is Better?

9:30 a.m. Mound Systems - Not Just for Wisconsin!

11 g.m. Dead Bacteria - How Overuse of Cleaners and Household Products KILL

1:30 p.m. Onsite Electrical

3 p.m. Managing Commercial Wastewater Treatments

4:30 p.m. Choosing the Right Float to Control Your Pump

National Environmental Health Association

8 a.m. Promoting Competence: What's in It for Me?

9:30 a.m. Septic Tank Science

11 a.m. Advanced Treatment - What Does That Mean?

1:30 p.m. Successfully Dosing Pipe Networks

Pump Replacement 3 p.m.

4:30 p.m. The State of the Industry: The Forecast, The Strategy, The Tools

General Business - Scott Hunter

8 a.m. Keeping Employees and Customers Happy - Part 1

9:30 a.m. Keeping Employees and Customers Happy - Part 2

11 a.m. Keeping Employees and Customers Happy - Part 3

3 p.m. How to be Successful and Profitable in Any Economy - Part 1

4:30 p.m. How to be Successful and Profitable in Any Economy - Part 2

in Association with NOWRA

Social Media: Friend or Foe?

Taking it to the Web, Infinity and Beyond!





Indianapolis 2012

Tuesday Sessions

February 28, 2012

MUNICIPAL TRACK

Inspecting and Locating Laterals

Edward A. "Digger" Diggs - CUES, Inc.

9:30 a.m.

Get Quality Results From Your Inspection Management Program!

Rod Thornhill, Cari Criss - Infrastructure Technologies

11 a.m.

Using Chemical Grouts to Protect Mainlines, Laterals, Manholes and Lift Stations Daniel Magill - Avanti International

SEWER AND DRAIN TRACK

Contractors Need to Improve Jetting Sales Nick Woodhead, Ken Bryson - US Jetting

9:30 a.m.

Lift Station Backup Pumping

Majid Tavakoli – Thompson Pump

11 a.m.

Optical Advancements Improve Range and Clarity of Pipeline Zoom Inspection Richard Lindner - Envirosight

BUSINESS TRACK

Market Like the Green Bay Packers

Jerard Nighorn – Lenzyme, Inc.

9:30 a.m.

Training is the Key to Unclogging a Messy Business

William Raymond - Nexstar Network

11 a.m.

How to Make Profits That Drop Straight to the Bottom Line

Jenny Alday - One Biotechnology

PORTABLE RESTROOM

How Your Portable Toilet Company Can Save Money By Saying "No" Joel Smith - Clear Computing

9:30 a.m.

New Emission Standards for Service Trucks

John Olson - Satellite Industries

II a.m.

New Portable Restroom Products David Roncadori - J&J Chemical Co.

IOUID WASTE TRACK

What You Should Know About ATUs and How to Evaluate and Service Them Doug Dent - Ecological Labs

9:30 a.m.

From the Kitchen to the Grease Trap to the Landfill

Dennis Brunetti - FloTrend

The Evolution of Effluent Filters

Theo Terry - Bear Onsite

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ADVANCED INSTALLER COURSE

8 HOURS • ROOM 130-132

Jim Anderson and Dave Gustafson

Wednesday Sessions

February 29, 2012

PIPE RELINING TRACK

Advances in Monitoring Technology Help Ensure Proper Liner Cure

Jake Wells - Pipeline Renewal Technologies

9:30 a.m.

UV Cured Fiberglass Pressure Liner Richard Montemarano - LightStream

11 a.m.

New Braunfels Utilities Performs Manhole-to-Manhole Lining in-House Travis Bohm - Perma-Liner Industries

TRACK INSTALLER

Installation and Operation of Float Switches

Brett Wilfong - SJE-Rhombus

9:30 a.m.

STEPping Up Dennis Hallahan P.E. - Infiltrator Systems

BUSINESS TRACK

Septic, Sewer & Portable Business Valuation Basics

Jeff Bruss - COLE Publishing

9:30 a.m.

Inexpensive Marketing, Promotion & Advertising Ideas for Septic, Sewer & Portable Companies

Jeff Bruss - COLE Publishing

11 a.m.

Making the Most of Mobile Marketing

Jeff Bruss - COLE Publishina

Vacuum Equipment in the Marcellus Shale Region

Mark Nixon - MORO USA

9:30 a.m.

How to Vacuum More Efficiently with a Positive Displacement Blower

Jeff Peterson – Hibon, Inc., a division of Ingersoll Rand

Why Choose Hydroexcavation? Opportunities in the Oil and Gas Exploration Industry Neil McLean - Hydro Excavation Consulting Unlimited

INDUSTRY SAFET

Cross Bores, Deadly but Preventable - Your Actions Can Save Your Life Mark Bruce - Can Clay

9:30 a.m.

Is the Air in Your Manhole or Confined Space Safe to Breathe?

Ed Fitzgerald - Jack Doheny Companies

OSHA: Introduction to Soil Analysis

DETAILED SESSION INFORMATION AVAILABLE AT:

WWW.PUMPERSHOW.COM

PRODUCT NEWS

Gamajet Introduces Intrepid Rinsing Machine

The Intrepid tank rinsing machine from Gamajet Cleaning Systems is designed for fast and thorough cleaning without using chemicals, and using 80 percent less water than a standard spray ball at the same pressure. The rinsing machine features a direct-drive design that requires no gear reduction, applying a concentrated stream in a 360-degree pattern. Average operating conditions are between 10-80 psi and 5-20 gpm. 877/426-2538; www.gamajet.com.



Patriot Offers Solar-Powered Generators

The 5,000-watt 3000 Series, three-solar-panel trailer generator from Patriot Solar Group combines the utility of a mobile trailer with the benefits of solar power. The lightweight, towable trailer provides power anywhere, day or night. Measuring 116 inches by 37 inches by 62 inches, the trailer delivers up to 120





INDUSTRY NEWS

PRO Was Among Victims in Reno Air Races Crash

Sharon Olthea Stewart, an event worker for Reno-based Sani-Hut Co. Inc., was among 12 people killed in a crash at the National Championship Air Races in Reno. Stewart, 47, was cleaning in a VIP box area Sept. 23 when a plane flying in the aerial races went out of control and crashed into the nearby airport tarmac, according to news accounts.

Pilot Jimmy Leeward, 74, of Ocala, Fla., apparently lost control of his World War II-era P-51 Mustang. It nosedived into the tarmac in front of the grandstands, sending shrapnel into the crowd. The victims included the pilot, Stewart and spectators in the VIP section.

Stewart leaves behind a partner of 35 years, Jose Luis "Joe" Cacheux-Ojeda, and four grown children.

United Site Services Acquires Black Tie Companies

Westborough, Mass.-based portable sanitation provider United Site Services has acquired the assets of Black Tie Companies. According to USS, the assets were purchased from three companies including Black Tie Event Services, Black Tie Manufacturing and Black Tie Sanitation Service.

USS announced it would continue to operate the Black Tie trailer fleet nationwide working with other portable restroom operators. USS will continue to manufacture restroom trailers for the sanitation industry and its own use. The company has arranged to sell Black Tie Sanitation Service to Gary, Ind., company Service Sanitation Inc.

Werts Welding & Tank Adds to Sales Team







Andy Ricci

Josh Rule

Mike Evans

Mike Evans, Andrew Ricci and Josh Rule joined the outside sales team at Werts Welding & Tank Service Inc. Evans will be responsible for several Midwestern states. Ricci is based at the company's Des Moines branch, responsible for Northwestern and Western states. Rule is based out of the Atlanta branch serving the Southeast.



BUSINESSES

Restroom Trailer Rental Company for sale in Upstate South Carolina. Established in 2004. Asking \$29,000. Call 864-787-6989. (T12)

Portable Toilet & Roll Off Business for sale in beautiful, and still growing, North Carolina! The business has been holding steady the last couple years. We have over 600 toilets with a little more than half out in field at any time. Also have 75+ containers and roll off truck with +/-60 in field at any time. Combined revenue exceeds \$550k. Perfect family business and NC is a great place to live. Eight vehicles included. Priced at \$700k which includes \$50k in AR. Email Paul at plam@nc.rr. com. (T12)

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

USED COOKING OIL RECYCLING. Now is the time to enter into the lucrative used cooking oil recycling industry. A must for anyone in the pumping or bio-diesel business. Prices are at an all-time high and fuel credits are in place. Call for consulting services or to order our non-technical, easy to read manual on how to recycle used cooking oil. Visit WWW. GREASERECYCLING.COM or call 321-202-6688 (P12)

ON-SITE TREATMENT SYSTEM RESELL-ERS WANTED. Tired of referring customers to someone else because you aren't equipped to solve their problems? Does \$4,800.00+ per repair order with high margins interest you? We offer an alternative solution because it's not a matter of **IF** your customer's septic system will fail, it is a matter of **WHEN** it will fail. To learn about our aerobic recovery units, call David at David J. Burnie Management Inc., 1-866-980-1440. 30 years experience with on-site septic systems. New England and other states available. (P12)

COMPUTER SOFTWARE

SOFTWARE FOR YOUR INDUSTRY! Easy to use; Affordable; Powerful. Online demos or call for guided tour. 30-YEAR ANNIVER-SARY SPECIALS! THIS MONTH: 30% OFF Fleet Maintenance Software. Expires 12/31/2011. Ritam Technologies, LP 800-662-8471 or 208-629-4462 - www.ritam.com (T12)

DEWATERING

16 yd. dewatering box, works fine, has had some modifications, can be unloaded from back by bobcat. Has \$1,500 lid that works great. Paid over 20 k for it. \$8,000 OBO. 520-744-9282. (P12)

DEWATERING



PORTABLE RESTROOMS

42 PolyPortable construction grade units for sale located in North Central Georgia. \$125 each. Will listen to offers. 706-889-0558.(P12)

For Sale: 36 PolyJohn PJ3's, 7 Sink Stations, 9 Flushable Units, Trailer-holds 6 units, 300 Waste Tank, 150 Fresh, 1 comforts of home, 2 room trailer, call Gretchen@ 810-265-9026 MI. (T12)

PORTABLE RESTROOM TRAILERS

For Sale: A beautiful JAG Fantastic restroom trailer. 27 feet long, black pedestal sinks, 4 stalls in the womens side and 2 stalls and 3 urinals in the mens. We bought this in 2007 and have used it very little. It is a beautiful unit and is the hit of any party. Asking \$25,000. 208-313-3201, ID. (P01)

2000-2007 restroom trailers, Wells Cargo Units, 1x UltraLav ADA +2, \$24,900 and 1x Comfort Elite (3 unit) \$15,900. NuConcept 4 unit \$23,900 and 2 unit \$14,900. Used in the entertainment industry with extremely light use, excellent condition. Burbank, CA. 949-673-1999. CA. (P12)

PORTABLE RESTROOM TRUCKS

2002 Int. 4300, \$27,500; 2001 Int. 4700, \$27,500; 2000 Int. 4700, \$20,500; 1995 Rolloff, \$19,500. 200 restrooms, \$125 - \$300 each. Call 256-757-9900 or visit www.pbsos. com for more info and pictures. (PBM)

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

Northern Nevada PRO seeking highly qualified assistant operations manager. Good pay, benefits and paid time off. Call Vince at 775-721-8484. (T01)



CALL 1-800-994-7990 to advertise in *PRO Marketplace*





Dear Santa

A PRO WANTS SUGGESTIONS FOR VACUUM TRUCK ACCESSORIES HE CAN WRAP UP AND PUT UNDER THE CHRISTMAS TREE

By Bob Carlson

QUESTION:

It's going to be Christmas soon (seems like it's always close to Christmas) and my wife was asking me what I would like for my truck. I know that might sound strange, but I like my truck and I take care of it. That's how we pay for Christmas. Anyway, what accessories would you recommend I add this year?

Graham Starkey Ames, Iowa

ANSWER:

Four items come to mind as typically standard features on vacuum trucks. They are all beneficial and some depend on your wants more than your needs. But then, it's Christmas, right? Here they are:

Rear-View TV Camera with Cab Monitor

I have always been impressed with drivers who have to back up pump trucks without being able to see behind them. I don't know how many accidents occur or how much damage is done by trucks backing up (Yes, there's a backup alarm, but that won't save a tired bicycle lying in the path of a retreating truck), but a monitor in the cab takes the worry out of being close. There are varying types of monitors on the market and, like anything else, the more you spend, the better the equipment. From black and white to color and from low definition to high definition, how well do you need to see the real estate behind the truck? It's a nice extra if you can afford it.

Electronic Sight Gauge

Although there is no real "sight" gauge, the electronic gauge is installed inside the tank and electronically signals to the cab precisely how much liquid is in the tank. A digital meter in the cab displays the volume in gallons. During installation, it will need to be calibrated to the right diameter and length of the tank. You also can have a digital readout on the exterior of the truck so you can track tank levels while loading. Electronic gauges are somewhat pricey but they're nice. It's a bit more than a stocking stuffer.



Exterior control panel

Having your switches outside the cab to control your pump and PTO can be a nice luxury, and possibly a great thing to have in emergencies. The on-off switches can be located under the trays or in a place that is easily accessible to the operator without going back to the cab. It simply needs to be located in a place that will remain dry and protected from road slop. Starting the system from the cab can be a waste of time, gas and money. Having exterior controls allows the operator to run when ready and quickly shut down machinery in case a strange noise is heard or something goes wrong. This doesn't discount the cab controls. It allows operations to be controlled from inside or outside the cab.

Flashing yellow beacons

Some states require flashing beacons, and in others they are considered an optional accessory. They offer an extra safety factor so passing motorists are aware your truck is stopped and at work. The feature shows you care about safety. In today's world of texters and talkers, you can't be too safe in alerting people you're working on a jobsite. Many PROs have to pull over on the road to pump restrooms, and for passing drivers, the beacons can make a difference.

In the litigious world we live in, not having beacons may make the difference between winning and losing. So, if your state doesn't require beacons, they become a thoughtful accessory: one on top of the tank in the rear or another on top the tank at the front. Some PROs even locate them on the cab.

IT'S GOOD FOR BUSINESS

These accessories make a nice wish list for any PRO. Proper care and maintenance of your truck will be noticed by customers and competitors. Good appearance and efficient, safe operation can make a big difference in your bottom line. Yes, these things, if not provided by Santa, will cost money, but hopefully the return will be bigger than the investment.



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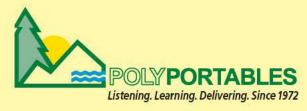
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