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## The Big Dig

Toronto's Union Station excavation  
presents portable restroom challenge  
for K. Winter Sanitation **Page 22**



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**ON THE COVER:** Garren Calkins is celebrating 30 years in the portable sanitation business, providing service to his neighbors in rural Vermont. On the cover, he's shown with his 2012 International TerraStar service rig built out by Progress Vactruck with a 750-gallon waste/250-gallon freshwater aluminum tank and a Conde pump. (Photo by Mark Collier)

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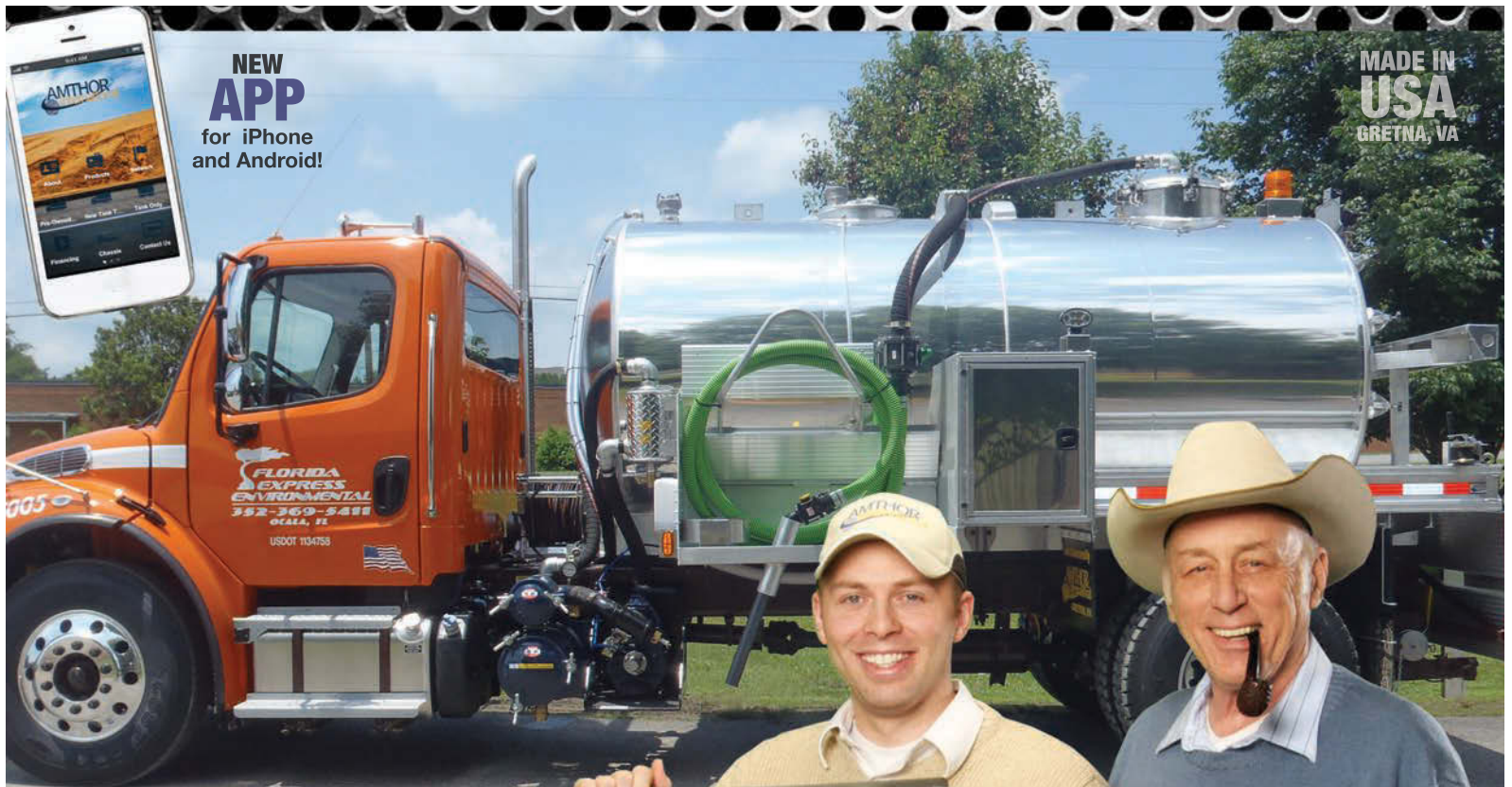
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# Autumn Leaves

## HERE ARE FIVE MISTAKES PROS SHOULDN'T REPEAT AS THE BUSY SEASON DRAWS TO A CLOSE ... AND GOALS TO SET FOR THE UPCOMING SLOW SEASON

By Jim Kneiszel

If you're like many PROs, your busy season is starting to wind down about now. The week after Labor Day signals the end of hard labor for many on your summer crews.

Construction might still be going gangbusters as builders race to complete houses and commercial work before bad weather sets in. But in many areas, special events are already starting to wane, and by the end of the month most of your big jobs will be in the books.

First there will be a sigh of relief. Then the temptation to sleep in a little later or knock off a little earlier a few days a week as the calls slow down. You want to reward yourself for your hard work this summer by kicking your feet up on the desk and hoisting a few malt beverages.

Go ahead, you deserve it. There's nothing wrong with celebrating another successful summer in the portable sanitation business. Congratulations on a job well done.

After all the high-fives around the office and the afternoon of recalling all the fun stories and misadventures of working the big summer festivals, it's time to get serious for a moment. I have a bit of advice for you. Fight that urge to throttle back at work and put your pedal to the metal again for a few months.

There are some small business dangers associated with moving from busy season to slow season, common mistakes you could make or may have made in the past this time of year as service routes – along with the days – get shorter. Here are five mistakes of complacency that can have a negative impact on the future of your business ... and tips on how to avoid them this fall.

### LETTING VEHICLE OR INVENTORY MAINTENANCE SLIDE

After a long season of running routes, your inclination might be to pull an idled truck into the garage and let it sit until you tune it up in the spring. Your rig is dirty, there's a few dings in the doors and a chip in the windshield. No harm in fixing it later, right?

Wrong. Take care of the nagging mechanical and cosmetic issues while they're fresh in your mind. You don't want to let old motor oil sit in your truck, contaminating parts and inviting moisture to linger in your engine. Change it. Make an appointment with the body shop to fix bumps and bruises and detail your rig now to avoid the rush next spring. Repair broken restrooms when they come back to the yard for the winter; you might forget or not have the time to do it next spring.

### LAYING OFF A DIFFERENCE-MAKING EMPLOYEE

It's easy to say "See you next year," to seasonal employees. They've served you well and you can't think of anything right now that they can do for you. So it's cool, right?

Wrong. If one of your part-time or seasonal workers really shined this year, consider keeping him or her on over the winter. An enthusiastic and hardworking employee can be difficult to find, so why take the chance of losing

them? Perhaps that great worker could accomplish many tasks for you over the winter. For instance, thoroughly cleaning your inventory, replacing wear parts on restrooms, organizing the shop and warehouse, making minor repairs to equipment, doing some marketing work. This person could turn into your main helper, and stick around next summer when you need them the most.

### LOSING TRACK OF YOUR BEST CUSTOMERS

Your customers love you. They're loyal and the competition won't go after their business for next summer anyway, right?

Wrong. You should assume every PRO in the surrounding counties will approach your bigger special-event customers. So it's time to develop a customer retention program right now. Call your top 10 summer customers this fall and plan a meeting where you can review the service you provided. Offer them discounts or spiffs like free additional hand-wash stations if they lock into a contract for next year's event right now. Think about holiday gifts you can present to valued customers this winter as a way to keep your business top of mind even in the slow times.

### PUTTING OFF RUNNING AN INVENTORY AND ORGANIZING CONSUMABLES

Hey, you won't need to stock the warehouse anytime soon. You might as well lock the door to the backroom, turn down the furnace and come back later, right?

Wrong. The fall is a great time to run a complete inventory of consumable items like deodorants, cleaning supplies, paper products and replacement parts for your restrooms – like door springs and latches, wall panels and sinks. Straighten the storeroom shelves, search the nooks and crannies for forgotten items, make shopping lists for the 2014 Pumper & Cleaner Environmental Expo International. You don't need to place orders now, but use the calendar in your smartphone to remind you to catch up with suppliers early next year.

### SKIPPING A MUCH-DESERVED VACATION

Ah, you finally have time to catch up with your paperwork. There's always so much to get done here and you're the only one who can do it, right?

Wrong. Some people are workaholics who can't recognize a natural lull in business that would allow them to take some time off to spend with their families. (You know who you are.) Just like you want to set aside time to meet the other goals listed above, you want to make plans to be with your wife, your husband, your kids and parents. They've missed you these past several months and they deserve your attention ... and maybe to get away somewhere nice for a long weekend or a few weeks. And then plan another relaxing visit to Indianapolis next Feb. 24-27 for the Pumper & Cleaner Expo? (I couldn't help myself to work in another promo for the big show.) ■

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## Editor's CHOICE

September 2013

## Be sure to check out the exclusive online content at [PROmonthly.com](http://PROmonthly.com)

By Jim Kneiszel

**P**ortable Restroom Operators are busy small business owners, but you still find time to page through your issue of *PRO* magazine to learn about the latest developments and products in your industry. Well, now we have a bonus for you – additional online-only content that can be accessed instantly from your computer, tablet or smartphone. Find more of the latest portable sanitation industry news – from product releases to videos and podcasts to my editor's blog – at [www.promonthly.com](http://www.promonthly.com). Here's just a sampling of the latest content you can find online:

### ROWDY CROWD OVERTURNS PORTABLE RESTROOMS

Oftentimes you have no way of identifying the vandals who tag your units or knock them over on a construction site or after a special event. But in the case of Mike Rice, of Long Beach, Calif., and his company A-Throne, the vandals were caught on tape and broadcast on the nightly news. When he saw the video of rioters pushing over his units at the site of the U.S. Open of Surfing event, Rice told writer Briana Jones he first worried about what the cleanup costs would be. "Then I became angry watching these guys try and tear up our equipment," he says. "The estimated damages were around \$2,500 including parts and repairs, scrapes and scratches, graffiti and an unscheduled middle-of-the-night pick up." Check out the *PRO* website for a link to the shocking video.

### HOW TO AVOID TANK-TRUCK ROLLOVERS

I've blogged about several vacuum truck rollovers this year, and writer Ken Wysocky adds valuable information to the issue with an online exclusive story interviewing John Conley, past president of the National Tank Truck Carriers organization. Conley recounts several rollover crashes; all of them luckily resulted in no serious injuries to drivers or others on the roadways. "Stopping cargo-tank rollovers remains one of our most unique challenges," Conley says. "I can't say there's been an increase in rollovers but they continue to occur and our goal is to eliminate them. They continue to persist despite our best efforts to combat them." Wysocky shares a popular link to a safety video that I've posted several times in the past. Show the helpful video to your drivers in a safety meeting. It could help you prevent a crash.

### FORMER PSAI EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ASSISTANT FACE MULTIPLE FELONY CHARGES

William F. Carroll, former executive director of the Portable Sanitation Association International, and a fired association assistant face multiple felony charges of embezzlement in Minnesota. Criminal complaints allege that Carroll, 66, took hundreds of fraudulent disbursements from PSAI accounts to support spending on gambling and drinking. The complaint indicates Carroll took \$32,000 in transactions at or immediately outside a casino. A payroll audit revealed more than \$350,000 had been misappropriated over three years. The fired assistant, Cynthia Rudiger, 68, received thousands of dollars in cash payments authorized by William Carroll, then concealed the payments by coding them for "insurance" or "payroll adjustment," Carroll, Rudiger and Carroll's wife, D. Millicent Carroll, the fired PSAI industry/regulatory standards director, are being sued in civil court by the trade association, which alleges the trio stole \$650,000 to \$1 million from the organization.

Check these out at [www.promonthly.com/ec/2013/september](http://www.promonthly.com/ec/2013/september)



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# Know When to Let Go

**THE YOUNGER GENERATION WAITS DECADES TO TAKE OVER, AND WHEN THEY ARE FINALLY IN CONTROL, THEY'VE LOST THE MOTIVATION TO GROW THE FAMILY BUSINESS**

**By Judy Kneiszel**

**E**ngland's Prince Charles is going to be 65 years old this fall. Poor guy. He's been waiting his entire life to take over as head of the family business. Now he's retirement age and he's still waiting.

The same scenario plays out in a lot of family businesses. A past retirement-age company president who isn't ready to step aside can prevent an aging, frustrated son or daughter waiting in the wings from advancing the company.

## **PROS AND CONS OF A LONG-SERVING CEO**

The CEO of a non-family business usually holds that position fewer than 10 years. The head of a family-owned business stays in the top job for 20 years or more. This long tenure contributes to the stability of the business, but it can also make the family-owned businesses stagnant.

A younger generation may be ready to lead, but can eventually grow frustrated and unmotivated if deprived of the opportunity. This frustration may cause the heir to the company throne to slack off or leave the company entirely, causing a rift in the family. Those who stick it out may find that by the time they get their turn to take over they are in their 50s or 60s, and have lost their youthful motivation to grow and improve the business. So they continue the status quo and the business stagnates or slumps.

## **PRIORITIES OF BUSINESS OWNERS**

Researchers at Baylor University collected data regarding the attitudes of family-business owners when it comes to retirement. They found business owners tend to think of themselves with little regard for their eventual replacement.

When deciding whether or not to retire, heads of family businesses considered: their personal health, financial and psychological well-being, wealth transfer, continuity and viability of the company, owner transfer and leadership succession - in that order. Leadership succession was the last factor they considered.

This is not what you want to hear when you are an aging second-in-command. The son or daughter of a business owner may assume dad is waiting for them to prove themselves ready, but he's really waiting for the time when he feels ready to step down. It's not about the next generation and what they've done for the company or if they are ready to assume leadership. It's about whether the owner is ready to change and let go.

## **CONSIDER THOSE OUTSIDE THE FAMILY**

A business owner who refuses to think about stepping down for a successor's sake should consider it for the company's sake. If a business owner is aging and the company does not have a succession plan, customers, suppliers, employees and anyone else with an interest in the business may become anxious about the company's stability and doubt its future. Lack

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**Researchers at Baylor University collected data regarding the attitudes of family-business owners when it comes to retirement. They found business owners tend to think of themselves with little regard for their eventual replacement.**

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of information can cause tension, possibly compromising the company's financial health and longevity. A well-communicated succession plan, however, reassures people the company is well positioned for the future.

## **START THE CONVERSATION**

No one wants to think about getting older or the possibility of a parent dying, so the topic of the future is ignored. But this hurdle has to be overcome. It has to be discussed. It is not unheard of for a tragedy to strike a family-business owner. If the subject of succession has never been broached, a business can end up in ruins due to a lack of planning and leadership.

## **CREATE A CLEAR TIMETABLE**

Discussing the topic of succession doesn't mean a company owner has to step down immediately. It's not a coup; it's a conversation. It means there is a schedule for delegating leadership to the next generation. Without set dates for specific events, employees may be perplexed by the chain of command and owners may linger long after they should have retired. Agree on a retirement date and determine when and how ownership shares will transfer.

Meet with family employees and critical non-family staff to review the succession plan, head off any problems and discuss any other related business issues. Keeping everyone informed as to who will take over the business and how the transition will work can prevent hurt feelings and confusion. Knowing the company's future is on solid ground can motivate all employees, from the heir to the throne to the newest hire.

## **DETERMINE A POST-RETIREMENT ROLE**

Some family-business owners can't imagine a smaller role for themselves. If they can no longer be the boss, they want to walk away completely. Others stay on as a consultant for a while, which can make for a smooth transition or a confusing one, depending on how it is handled. Roles must be defined, and the successor should clearly be running the show. It's good to determine a specified time to stay on as a consultant.

And the second or third generation to lead a company should learn from their succession experience so when their offspring are ready to take over, they hand over the reins at the optimum time in a smooth manner. To that end, maybe Prince William is learning something from watching Elizabeth and Charles. ■

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# READY FOR ANYTHING

BY BETTY DAGEFORDE

**T**he northeast corner of Vermont – with its farm-dotted hills, country villages, lakes and forests – is known as the Northeast Kingdom. “We’re in our own little world here,” says Garren Calkins, owner of Calkins Portable Toilets Inc. in Danville, Vt. “It’s quieter, there’s lots of mountains, dirt roads, covered bridges.”

The famed Von Trapp family settled here and still runs a guest lodge. Tourists and sports enthusiasts are also drawn to the natural resources of the region.

The attractions of the area have provided the base off of which Calkins has built up a successful portable restroom business.

Calkins got started in 1983 when he heard the Danville Fair needed more restrooms. Enlisting the help of his uncle, he offered a solution. “My uncle, retired U.S. Air Force, decided to build four wooden outhouses with 35-gallon civil defense cans as the holding tanks,” he explains. The units were finished in time for the fair and were well received. And since he had been working with his brother who owned a septic pumping business he had a truck available to do the pumping.

*(continued)*

From maple syrupin’ to mountain biking, Garren Calkins has been finding his portable sanitation niche in the rugged and beautiful Vermont woods for 30 years

## Calkins Portable Toilets, Inc. Danville, Vermont

**Owners:** Garren Calkins**Founded:** 1983**Employees:** Six, plus a pool of temps – mostly retirees**Service area:** 75-mile radius from Danville, Vt.**Specialty:** Portable sanitation**Website:** [www.calkinsportabletoilets.com](http://www.calkinsportabletoilets.com)

*Garren Calkins, owner of Calkins Portable Toilets, Inc., is ready to hop in his pickup to deliver another restroom to a customer in the beautiful Vermont countryside. (Photos by Mark Collier)*

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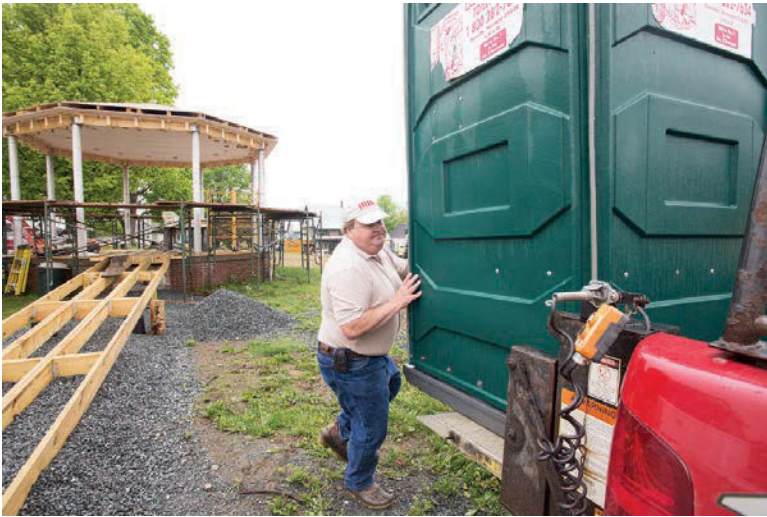
## ON THE GROW

With four units now on his hands, he sought out other events he could offer them to and soon found himself in business. He purchased nine more units, picked up some tips from PolyJohn Enterprises co-founder George Harding, and Buster Downing of G.A. Downing Company Inc. in Minot, Maine, and started knocking on doors.

Today he's got close to 700 units in a mix of brands – Satellite Industries, PolyPortables Inc., and PolyJohn Enterprises – and a variety of colors. “We try to offer everybody what they want,” he says. Construction and special event units are kept separate. He also has 12 PolyJohn hand-wash stations and 30 ADA-compliant and wheelchair-accessible units, with another 20 new ADA-compliant units from Five Peaks Technology. Units are hauled with his four 2000 to 2008 GMC and Chevy



The Calkins team includes (left to right) Bob Rotti, Brent Gadapee, Lera Gadapee, Garren Calkins, Lisa Farnsworth and Steve MacDonald.



*Garren Calkins delivers a restroom to a construction site. He often grabs the morning delivery list and sets out to meet customers and make sure they remain happy with his company's service.*

delivery trucks (all with lift gates) which carry between three and eight units, as well as a 12-unit Explorer trailer from McKee Technologies Inc. and an eight-unit carrier built from a converted snowmobile hauler.

He operates out of the same facility as an excavating business he started about the same time, Garren R. Calkins Excavating, which repairs, builds and installs septic systems. Their shared staff of six full timers is often supplemented with part-time and temporary help, mostly retirees, during busier periods.

## FOUR SEASONS

The company has work year-round but what they do changes slightly with the season. For example, as spring nears and the maple tree sap begins to flow they provide units to the sugar houses who hold sugar-on-snow parties and open houses for the public. Construction, which accounts for about 65 percent of the company's work, starts up again in late spring.

Summer brings in the backwoods campers such as Boy Scout troops and music camps and contests. The company provides portable restrooms and its own version of large-capacity backcountry hand-wash stations.

“We converted some freshwater holding tanks, put in some spigots – springloaded – so the graywater can just run on the ground,” Calkins says. Mountain biking is also becoming increasingly popular, especially with the Kingdom Trails, one of the top biking networks in the world. Besides portable restrooms, Calkins may consider offering shower trailers in the future.

“The trucks can't service them, so we swap them out real quick, thaw them out and clean them up. We put saltwater in the holding tanks and fill the urinals with rock salt. We put windshield wash in the water to do the washing, then wipe it down real quick.”

**GARREN CALKINS**

For bigger summer concert attractions, he partners with other vendors because of the large number of units required. Some of their more notable concerts over the years have included the Grateful Dead and the homegrown rock band Phish.

In autumn, they're busy with harvest festivals and fall color events for the tourists. This is also a popular time for weddings, as are spring and summer, as the region's rustic wedding barns (remodeled old barns) have made the area trendy for destination weddings. Calkins will be ordering a Black Tie Products 22-foot restroom trailer (three stalls on the women's side, one stall and three urinals on the men's) specifically to get into this market. “We're going to start off with one and gradually add as needed,” he says.

Business slows considerably in the winter, particularly construction, but winter sports do provide opportunities for work. For example, for the cross country skiers and snowshoers the company sets up units at crossroads and warming huts. At ski resorts, slope groomers with special attachments on their vehicles take the company's units up the mountain for the lift attendants and bring them back down once a week for cleaning.

## NORTHERN EXPOSURE

Winters are the most challenging for the company. Being only a few miles from the Canadian border, the season is typically long and severe. Temperatures can plunge to -30 degrees, which can cause the problem Calkins jokingly refers to as “frozen assets,” particularly when units get overused. “The trucks can't service them, so we swap them out real quick, thaw them out and clean them up,” he says.

*(continued)*

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The company uses salt to limit those problems. Their newest service vehicle – a 2012 International TerraStar built out by Amthor International with a Masport Inc. pump and an 800-gallon waste/200-gallon freshwater aluminum tank – has a third compartment for 200 gallons of saltwater brine. “We put saltwater in the holding tanks and fill the urinals with rock salt,” Calkins says. “We put windshield wash in the water to do the washing, then wipe it down real quick.” They also use products from Chempace Corporation and Walex Products Co.

*Brent Gadapee uses a loader to move units around in the company yard. Calkins carries a restroom inventory from Satellite Industries, PolyPortables Inc., PolyJohn Enterprises and Five Peaks Technology.*



The company installed side compartment tanks to carry saltwater brine on their other two vacuum trucks – a 2005 Freightliner M2 outfitted by Teamco out of Warwick, Quebec, Canada, with an 800-gallon waste/300-gallon steel tank and a Wallenstein pump from Elmira Machine Industries, and a 2012 International TerraStar built out by Progress Vactruck with a 750-gallon waste/250-gallon freshwater aluminum tank and a Conde pump.

### HAVING FUN WITH IT

Calkins is not always just a behind-the-scenes guy when it comes to regional events. In the interest of community spirit, he's had a few chances to showcase his line of work – all with a sense of humor. One year the theme for the annual Danville Fair was Open Door Community. It was meant to be a welcoming gesture, but Calkins put his own spin on it for the parade.



## An Expo Engagement

Garren Calkins, owner of Calkins Portable Toilets, Inc. in Danville, Vt., has a special fondness for one of his employees – his girlfriend, Lisa Farnsworth. Farnsworth works in the office handling accounting functions and answering phones. She converted from part-time to full-time status in June 2013 when she retired from her career as an elementary school teacher specializing in math.

Last February, Calkins and Farnsworth took some time off and enjoyed a leisurely drive down to Indianapolis to attend the Pumper & Cleaner Environmental Expo International. They figured they'd make a few purchases while they were there – a truck, maybe some portable restrooms.

But when the couple found themselves at the nearby Circle Centre Mall the first afternoon – following a few morning classes – they ended up with something Calkins claims was entirely unplanned. On the spur of the moment, they popped into the jewelry store, and before you know it they were picking out a diamond ring and a wedding band.

That night, despite the lack of a surprise element, Calkins formally proposed. The Historic Canterbury Hotel helped him out by providing champagne, flowers and strawberries. “We went to the show to buy toilets,” he laughs, “and came home with a diamond ring.”

The big day will be sometime in the spring of 2014.



*Garren Calkins and Lisa Farnsworth show off the diamond engagement ring they bought during their visit to the Pumper & Cleaner Environmental Expo earlier this year.*

“I set up a load of portable [restrooms] on my 12-place trailer,” he says. “Maybe half of them had people in them with the door open. They wore shorts but they also had long pants that they had down by their ankles.” He says it brought a lot of laughs and won them the “best comments” float award.

*Bob Rotti gets ready to pump a tank after it's returned to the company yard.*

On another occasion, one of the owners of the Thunder Road racetrack in Barre, Vt. approached him with an idea. Calkins has been sponsoring events and providing portable restrooms for the track for at least 25 years.

“About ten years ago the owner said, ‘Let’s have a porta-potty race,’” he says. There were four divisions, each with a driver and a four-man pit crew to push their entry down the straightaway. Each team built their unit in the spirit of “anything goes.” Calkins made a toilet-paper finish line, helped with flagging and passed out trophies – the Golden Throne award to the winner of the race and the Golden Plunger award for best design. The race was a big hit and is now an annual mid-season event.

### REALITY CHECK

The Northeast Kingdom may sometimes feel like it's in a 19th century time warp with its red barns, white steeples and country inns, but Calkins knows he's got to keep up with the times. Current technology trends and tough competition from an out-of-town company pushing low prices have forced him to take a hard look at some of his current practices. He's working on operating more efficiently and getting serious about Internet marketing.

“We're going to stay calm,” he says. “We're just going to work our way through it.” He's talking to customers and working out some specials with the schools, but is going to stick to his prices. “If you're in business you've got to make money,” he says. “It's service that we try to provide.”

To reduce costs, Calkins has adjusted the size of his territory. At one





*Calkins office manager Lera Gadapee organizes work orders for the week. The company is more and more turning to the Internet to attract customers, but still likes to offer old-fashioned personal attention when calls come in.*

time, he'd go nearly anywhere, but with rising fuel costs he's had to rethink that practice. "We pulled in the territory three or four years ago because the ones on the outskirts just weren't making the money," he says. Today he tries to keep it to a 75-mile radius.

To increase business, he's focusing more on the Internet, although he still has his phone book ad. He admits this is not his area of expertise so he's working with a professional to update his website, improve search placement and develop smartphone apps for his customers so they can order service from anywhere.

#### A GOOD LIVING

Despite the slower-paced way of life in the Northeast Kingdom, Calkins has been able to draw on the unique assets of the region to bring in enough work to support his business and his family for 30 years. He's especially proud he's been able to put his five kids through college.

"That was a big thing," he says. "I'm very fortunate to have been in the business." ■

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## Stealthy 'Stump' portable restroom draws a crowd

By Craig Mandli

One attention-grabbing portable sanitation product that debuted at the 2013 Pumper & Cleaner Environmental Expo may have seemed out of place. But while the original concept behind the Stump from Nature Calls wasn't as a portable restroom, that may be where the realistic tree trunk design finds a niche.

According to the company's general manager, Kurt Ludwigsen, the Stump came from an idea he came up with attending another tradeshow geared toward the outdoors market.

"I met some fellas who were making blinds at a hunting show toward the end of 2011 and saw the potential of the amazing realism of the product," says Ludwigsen. "We talked over the coming months about making units without windows and built for one person instead of two or three."

Next Ludwigsen had to answer whether a market for the product existed. That meant researching where his new restroom would be a fit. "We went into research and development, met with people in and out of the industry and collected data from some target venues like golf courses and campgrounds," says Ludwigsen. "So far our product and process has seen great success across a few different vertical markets and we believe that we can do some great things with the portable sanitation industry."

"The Pumper & Cleaner Expo was the place we had pinpointed to show off the unit," says Ludwigsen. "The reaction from the attendees was beyond our expectations. The first two days of the show, there wasn't a slow minute at the booth. We routinely had 15 to 20 folks at the booth at any time and I felt like a barker at a carnival ... 'Step right up and see the amazing tree stump!'"

The Stump has no right angles or straight lines, with realistic bark-textured surfaces. The interior of the polyurethane shell is 6 feet 10 inches tall, and the unit keeps weather and animals out and users comfortable year-round with floor-to-ceiling encapsulated insulation. It features a



*Kurt Ludwigsen, left, of Nature Calls, explains the features of The Stump restroom to a 2013 Pumper & Cleaner Environmental Expo visitor. (Jim Kneiszel photo)*

UV-stabilized hard surface, integrated rain drainage system, seamless construction, standard seat and urinal, a locking door with internal frame and a 60-gallon holding tank. The unit is about 8 feet tall and weighs 295 pounds.

"The Stump is designed to become one with its surroundings," explains Ludwigsen. "We're not designed to compete with standard restrooms, but rather complement in placement. While a row of restrooms is perfect for the parking lots of Augusta National, our unit is designed to be right there on the 15th fairway of the golf course. It's light enough to be moved in and out for events, while sturdy enough for a 10-year placement and ongoing servicing."

The Stump is created from a mold of an actual 100-year-old oak tree at their facility outside Kerrville, Texas. Because the footprint is a circle instead of a square, there is ample interior space, Ludwigsen says. "It allows us to integrate different components into the unit without the constraints of corners," says Ludwigsen.

Ludwigsen was happy with the response from the Expo crowd. "We got a considerable amount of interest from rental companies as well as private buyers, and were fortunate enough to take several orders on the show floor," says Ludwigsen. "We're going to need a larger booth next year, as we'll be bringing two units and potentially a new take on the European event urinals." **415/505-4318; [www.naturecalls.com](http://www.naturecalls.com). ■**

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# The Big Dig

Tight underground work site and a crowded staging area challenge K. Winter Sanitation as it provides portable restrooms for the Union Station excavation in Toronto

BY PETER KENTER

## THE TEAM

The father-and-son team of Ken and Roger Winter are the president and vice-president of K. Winter Sanitation Inc., a portable restroom operator in Innisfil, Ontario, Canada, about 50 miles north of Toronto. The company employs 19 people, in addition to Ken Winter and his wife Ruthann, who continue to work part time while they enjoy semi-retirement.

## COMPANY HISTORY

The company was founded as the Ken Winter Company in 1962, pursuing a broad range of business activities that included well digging, water pump repair, and portable restroom and septic service. Seeing an opportunity to rent the portable restrooms he was servicing, Ken Winter began to build his own units, and concentrated almost solely on the portable restroom business by the mid-1970s. As the units were manufactured, the company expanded its rental and service territory south to Toronto and about 80 miles to the north and west.

The company currently owns and services about

2,200 units, including 300 self-manufactured restrooms. Most of the inventory is from PolyJohn Enterprises, and about 200 units

(continued)

**THE JOB:** Union Station excavation  
**LOCATION:** Toronto, Ontario, Canada  
**THE PRO:** K. Winter Sanitation

*Construction crews outside the Union Station construction project in Toronto work on demolition and excavation. A Chantler's Environmental Services restroom is seen in the background. (Photos by Peter Kenter)*



*They finally made a portable  
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*\* I can stand up and go!*

*\* There is sooooo much more room.*

*\* This thing is far away.*

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**Right:** The small staging yard outside of Union Station provides room for only a few vehicles. The K. Winter truck must frequently move to allow other construction vehicles to pass.

**Below:** Wayne Simmonds selects clean-up supplies for work on the portable restroom units inside the Union Station excavation.



were purchased from Armal Inc. and 120 were supplied by Five Peaks Technology. K. Winter caters to a wide range of special events, but has a longstanding service relationship with the province's construction industry, which accounts for 90 percent of the PRO's business.

## MAKING CONNECTIONS

K. Winter has worked with Carillion Canada on a wide array of large construction projects in the past, including hospitals, hotels, fire halls and shopping centers. As one of the largest construction companies in the country, its name is consistently attached to showcase projects.

## THE MAIN EVENT

The City of Toronto's Union Station is the city's busiest transportation hub, serving as a terminal for train services by Via Rail and Amtrak, commuter rail operator GO Transit, and a subway station operated by the Toronto Transit Commission. Opened in 1927, the station is currently operating at capacity, with 250,000 commuters passing through its doors daily.

Preserving the historic building while increasing its capacity, Carillion Canada is currently excavating a new second level beneath the existing station floor level. The \$640 million Union Station Revitalization Project will create space for two new GO Transit concourses, and a lower-level pedestrian retail concourse.

Contractor EllisDon is simultaneously undertaking a second Union Station construction project involving platform and concourse improvements. Portable restroom service for that contract is provided by Chantler's Environmental Services Limited of Hillsburg, Ontario, and

**“We're proud to be the sanitation supplier for the Union Station project. It's not only an important historic site – I also pass through there every time I catch a Toronto Maple Leafs hockey game at the Air Canada Centre a few blocks away.”**

**ROGER WINTER**

includes units placed in extremely challenging service environments, alongside busy roadways and next to major excavations.

The historic Royal York Hotel across the street is also undergoing a facelift. At times, the massive downtown construction effort closes entire city blocks and severely restricts road traffic.

## BY THE NUMBERS

“Our contract began in 2010 with four construction portable restrooms with cold-water sinks,” says Roger Winter. “However, the project features phased construction, so we're always adjusting the scope of the contract to suit the level of construction activity and the needs of the work crews.”

Four more units were added in August 2011. At the end of the month, Carillion requested a contract upgrade, with K. Winter supplying five of its modular portable units with warm-water sink, porcelain toilet and electric heaters.

Carillion next asked for units with wheels that could fit into a standard elevator. That request was met with a series of mini rollouts offering hand sanitizers and paper towels.

“But the construction workers wanted more privacy and a place to wash their hands with soap and warm water,” says Roger Winter. “Our design team went to work to develop a modular unit on wheels with a collapsible roof that could pass through a 30-inch doorway, fit into a construction elevator and roll over most terrain, including the big dig at Union Station.”

The company delivered three of the new modular rolling units in January 2012 and now services five of them on site. Three of the units are inside the building on the site of the excavation, with two units located outside in a small staging yard. Service was initially scheduled once a week, but was gradually ramped up to five times per week.

*(continued)*





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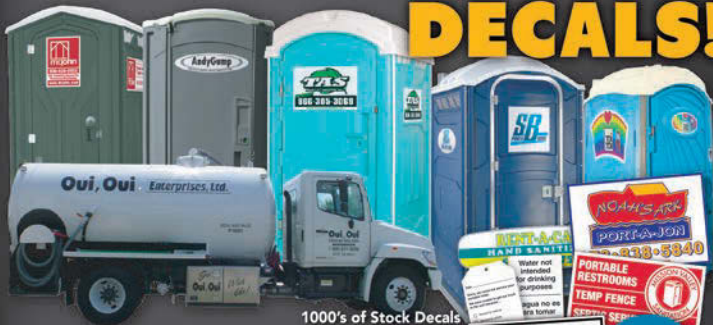
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**Left:** Technician Wayne Simmonds wipes down the interiors of construction restrooms at Toronto's Union Station.

**Below:** Working in tight quarters, Simmonds unspools the suction hose from his Vacutrux rig.



## KEEPIN' IT CLEAN

"Initially we couldn't get into the excavation site because of the low profile of the entranceway," says Roger Winter. "We started with construction workers bringing the units out by forklift to our truck. One night while I was looking at our 20 service trucks, I noticed that one we had purchased from Vacutrux Limited had a very low tank profile. We switched service trucks and our driver was able to reach the units unassisted from then on."

The service truck used on the site is a Ford F-550 with a low profile Vacutrux 600-gallon waste/400-gallon water/180-gallon steel mix tank. The vacuum pump is a Model 151 supplied by Wallenstein Pumps. A TOICO Industries water pump fills the water supply tanks.

"The biggest challenge on the Union Station site is scheduling a

**"Our design team went to work to develop a modular unit on wheels with a collapsible roof that could pass through a 30-inch doorway, fit into a construction elevator and roll over most terrain, including the big dig at Union Station."**

ROGER WINTER

convenient time to service the units," says Roger Winter. "We started by fitting the site into our normal daily route, but often there were too many trucks entering and exiting the site for our service driver to safely go in."

A switch to 3 p.m. was more predictable for both site managers and service driver, but heavy construction traffic often left the driver cooling his heels. Ultimately, the service schedule was shifted to 6 a.m., just as doors are opening and the site is ramping up for business.

Service times range from one to two hours, depending on how often the service truck needs to move aside for a never-ending parade of cranes, trucks and excavators. Dust suppression efforts inside the building are paramount, and the truck frequently finds itself in the line of fire of misting spray.

The service driver pumps out sewage, recharges the water tanks and scrubs down the units, inserting deodorant supplied by J & J Chemical.

The service truck next moves on to other construction projects in the city, including a once-per-week service stop for three PolyJohn Enterprises units, also on behalf of Carillion, at a separate construction project about 200 yards to the north. The truck then returns to home base, disposing of the waste in the K. Winter transfer station, where it's later moved by a larger tanker truck to a local sewage plant.

## A LONG-TERM COMMITMENT

K. Winter will remain on the site for at least another two years as construction progresses, with the units following crews into the second excavation.

"We're proud to be the sanitation supplier for the Union Station project," says Roger Winter. "It's not only an important historic site - I also pass through there every time I catch a Toronto Maple Leafs hockey game at the Air Canada Centre a few blocks away." ■

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# Temporary Site Services – Traffic Control, VIP/Special Events

By Craig Mandli

Site service products, padlocks, restroom, shower and specialty trailers can be great additions to your special event inventory. Here are some products for you to consider.



**CUSTOM RESTROOM TRAILER**

Custom 20-foot restroom trailers from **Ameri-Can Engineering** are designed specifically to particular needs. They feature a Flexx floor plan, and are available in either a commercial- or events-grade interior finish. The floor plan can be adapted for different numbers of mens' and womens' stalls. The middle

compartment offers two additional stalls and two additional sinks for men or women to accommodate larger crowds. The plan can be tailored for construction sites, festivals or special events without the need for additional trailers. The company will design, spec and price any floor plan at no additional charge. **574/892-5151; www.ameri-can.com.**

**LOWERING RESTROOM TRAILER**

The **Omega J-Series** restroom trailers from **AMS Global** feature a Jets Vacuumator system that liquefies waste and paper products and can pump to a sewer up to 100 yards away. They flush using a pint of water, so onboard waste tanks will hold more flushes. Frame walls are built using 1.5-inch tubular steel with durable granitized steel floors. The trailer is constructed of steel, composite fiberglass panels and aluminum. The chassis has been tested at over 16,000 pounds capacity and incorporates four 4,000-pound-lift remote-controlled jacks that reduce liability issues and achieve ADA compliance. **888/574-4222; www.amsglobal.us.**



**EASY SET-UP TRAILER**

The **EMBASSY 10-W** restroom trailer from **ART Co. (A Restroom Trailer Company)** is designed for fast and easy setup. The 10- by 6-feet, two-station unit comes equipped with foldout steps and stabilizer scissor jacks. It is available

in several exterior and interior color combinations to match existing fleet colors. Features include a 270-gallon waste tank, 74-gallon freshwater tank, a steel unibody frame, integral trailer skirting, a 2 5/16-inch trailer hitch, heavy-duty tongue jack, maple cabinetry and ducted heat and air conditioning. Options include hands-free faucets, push-button flush toilets, heat and winter packages, and simulated-hardwood vinyl flooring. **269/435-4278; www.arestroomtrailer.com.**

**SELF-CONTAINED SHOWER TRAILER**

The shower trailer from **Black Tie Products** features self-contained operation with an onboard 1,200-gallon freshwater holding tank and generator. It features an attached stair system and sinks that extend from under the trailer for convenient handling



during set-up and takedown. It is designed to promote efficient flow of a high volume of users, with two rooms each having eight individual shower stalls and private dressing areas along with six sinks, electrical outlets and mirrors attached to the outside of the trailer. It is ideal for use at high volume, multi-day events. **877/253-3533; www.restroomtraileronline.com.**



### THREE-STATION RESTROOM TRAILER

The three-station 14-foot restroom trailer from **Comforts of Home Services** features a 450-gallon waste tank that provides 1,125 to 1,350 uses between servicing. It offers three private restrooms, which can be unisex or gender specific. It comes standard with a 13,500 Btu air conditioner

and 5,600 Btu heat strip, which can keep the trailer comfortable down to 50 degrees F (optional packages are available to operate the trailer in colder climates). The standard interior package includes white FRP walls with wood trim, choices of sheet vinyl floor, pedestal sinks, RV-style foot pedal flush toilet and a utility room. **630/906-8002; www.cohsi.com.**

### MOBILE ENTERTAINMENT TRAILER

The **Mobile Entertainment Center** from **JAG Mobile Solutions** is designed for the sole purpose of entertaining and informing groups at events or worksites. It features a 92-inch HDTV viewable from the outside, weatherproof Bose sound system, Blu-ray player, mobile satellite receiver, public address system, onboard restroom and inside storage for ping pong, horseshoes and other outdoor games. It features seamless gel-coat fiberglass, a molded aero nose cone for easy towing, large cargo doors and aluminum wheels. It is ideal for tailgating, NASCAR, corporate events, worker camps and anywhere large numbers of people need entertainment or information. It can be manufactured in a wide variety of sizes and configurations. **800/815-2557; www.jagmobilesolutions.com.**



### RUST-RESISTANT ECONOMY PADLOCKS

Brass economy padlocks from **Lock America** are available keyed alike in five distinct colors to match the most common portable restrooms. They feature durable chrome-plated brass shackles and brass bodies, making them virtually rustproof. They allow an operator to prevent theft of paper products, which can be a significant long-term expense, deter

vandalism and also provide better customer service by ensuring clean units. **800/422-2866; www.laigroup.com.**



### EIGHT-STATION SINK TRAILER

The **Portable Sink Trailer** from **MONSAM Enterprises** is self-contained with amenities designed for rapid deployment, and can be customized to suit individual needs. It features 100-gallon freshwater and 150-gallon wastewater tanks, eight sink

stations with ADA faucets, optional electric- or propane-powered water heaters, water inlet/garden hose connections, soap dispensers, paper towel holders and mirrors. **800/513-8562; www.monsamsinks.com.**

### SOLAR-POWERED RESTROOM TRAILER

Solar-powered, self-contained restroom trailers from **NuConcepts** are designed for the special event market where space, capacity, electrical or water connections might be limited, such as weddings/parties, sporting events, food festivals, outdoor community events and off-site movie/television production locations. Features include solar operation, a 40-gallon freshwater tank, 65-gallon waste tank, incandescent lighting, enclosed stainless steel sink and flushing china toilet. Each restroom offers an average of 125 uses between servicing. Options include air conditioning, powered roof vents, water heaters, interior heat, power converters and winterized units. **800/334-1065; www.nuconcepts.com.**



### VEGAS-THEMED RESTROOM TRAILER

The **Vegas Model** restroom trailer from **Rich Specialty Trailers** is designed for special events and weddings. The women's side is roomy, enlarged to allow an open area in front of the stalls, and includes solid surface countertops and wall-to-wall

makeup mirrors. Its Vegas décor features curved soffits over double vanities. The exterior is available in a champagne/tan color. A suspended vanity includes a white porcelain sink with water-conserving faucets and a water-proof countertop of hand-molded solid surface cobblestone. The men's side includes a water-conserving urinal and a large, private toilet stall. It is easy to clean with rolled flooring and rubber wall baseboard trim. It is available with onboard freshwater and a winter package. **260/593-2279; www.richrestrooms.com. ■**

*Bob Carlson is author of Pumper 101: The Complete Guide to Owning and Operating a Vacuum Truck and has spent many years building and repairing trucks for the portable sanitation industry. Send questions for Carlson to truckcorner@promonthly.com.*



# Code vs. Non-Code Tanks

**THE MANUFACTURING PROCESSES DIFFER AND THE COSTS OF CONSTRUCTION VARY SIGNIFICANTLY DEPENDING ON WHICH TYPE OF VACUUM TANK YOU ORDER**

**By Bob Carlson**

**QUESTION:** What are the differences between a *code* and a *non-code* vacuum tank?

*Tad Boomer  
Atlanta, Ga.*

**ANSWER:** Very good question. There is a fundamental difference between code and non-code tanks. A code tank can be used to vacuum hazardous materials, such as chemicals and liquids deemed to be hazardous by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Trucks carrying these tanks are often found in the oil fields sucking up various oils and chemicals. Then again, the code tank can be used for the liquids and materials that a non-code tank can pick up. The code tank is built to the ASME (American Society of Mechanical Engineers) code.

The non-code vacuum tank can only be used to carry non-hazardous liquids and materials. It cannot be used to haul hazardous materials.

As you might expect, they are designed and built differently.

## NON-CODE BASICS

For a non-code tank, manufacturers can build whatever they think will work when combined with accessories and equipment specified by the customer. No outside authorities will inspect or verify how the tank was built. The manufacturer is responsible for the construction and for any warranties offered.

During construction, the manufacturer rolls a shell into a circle and attaches flanged and dished heads, then installs the primary shut-off and the openings for intake and exhaust as needed. The tank is put on skids for truck-mounting and the tank construction is essentially complete.

Overall, a non-code tank is basically anything a manufacturer feels safe building.

## CODE IS MORE COMPLEX

The code tank is a different beast from the start. First, the builder must be a certified member of the ASME organization, which requires following an expensive process. A required inspection proves the shop can build pressure and vacuum equipment and a detailed quality control manual must be furnished and approved by ASME.

Then the builder must register with an insurance company, such as Hartford or Commercial Union. They insure that the tank is built to the ASME Code. The entire process is time-consuming and costly. ASME certification costs \$12,000 to \$20,000 and lasts three years, when the process begins again.

Assuming the manufacturer is a member and gets the order to build a code tank, here is what the build process entails:

First the manufacturer secures a drawing with the design and a complete bill of materials to be used. This means documenting the entire process in a file. Then the materials are ordered and certified papers are delivered

showing the type of steel and fittings to be used for the tank. The drawing will show how welds will be performed and the beveling required on the steel where the welds will go.

The manufacturer must determine if the welds will be X-rayed. By choosing to be X-rayed, the welds must have 100 percent coverage. Another cost is incurred to hire the mobile X-ray provider. If the choice is to go with 70 percent or more coverage along the welds, the manufacturer is required to buy thicker steel. The engineer specifies the thickness of steel that will work best, both for X-rayed and non-X-rayed tanks. The non-X-rayed tank is always made of heavier materials.

**A code tank requires a lot of bureaucracy and expense, but is very safe. That doesn't mean the non-code tank is any less safe, however. That depends on the thoroughness of the manufacturing process and if the tank is used under the appropriate applications.**

Before construction begins, a registered engineer must do the math to prove the tank materials can handle the required pressure and/or vacuum. These calculations are also included in the tank file. This cost is paid by the manufacturer; bigger shops have an engineer in-house and small shops may not.

## EXPENSIVE PROCESS

At this point, the manufacturer has expended a lot of money and time and hasn't started construction. Building the code tank requires certified welders on the job. If non-certified welders do some of the work, the tank is voided and the project must start over.

The design is approved by the customer and the manufacturer can get to work on the tank. At various points during construction, the X-ray is done if needed. When the tank is complete, the insurance inspector gets involved. The inspector typically travels to the manufacturing facility, another cost paid by the builder. When the insurance agent signs off on the tank, it is deemed safe and can be insured.

Code tanks require rollover protection, usually consisting of rolled pipes in the shape of an inverted U. And they usually have vented fill caps in case the materials inside could build pressure.

A code tank requires a lot of bureaucracy and expense, but is very safe. That doesn't mean the non-code tank is any less safe, however. That depends on the thoroughness of the manufacturing process and if the tank is used under the appropriate applications. ■

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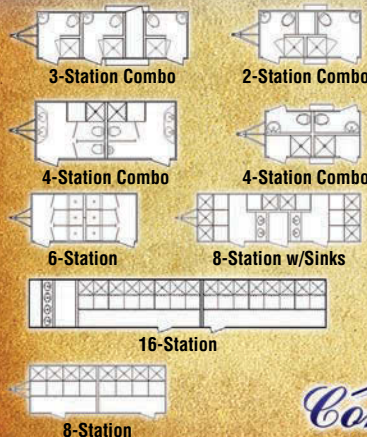
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## PRODUCT NEWS

### Subaru SGX commercial generators

SGX commercial generators from Subaru Industrial Power Products are powered by a Subaru EX overhead cam engine, made of heavy-duty steel and equipped with steel fuel tanks for longevity. The generators are CSA (Canadian Standards Association) certified. **800/277-6246; www.robina.com**.



### Navman driver behavior tracking

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### Water Cannon pressure washer pump

The Cat 67DX series pressure washer pump from Water Cannon is an enhanced version of the 4,200-psi triplex pump. Features include an adjustable unloading bypass system, chemical soap injectors, inlet adapter with stainless steel filter washer and thermal relief overheat sensor. **800/333-9274; www.watercannon.com**.



### Amthor smartphone app

The smartphone app from Amthor International enables users to access stock and pre-owned units, locate dealer and repair facilities, services, news, product trade-in forms, product line literature, and product, training and informational videos. The app is compatible with both iPhone and Android phones and can be downloaded through the Apple App Store and Android Market. **800/328-6633; www.amthorinternational.com**.

### Worksaver mini skid-steer pallet forks

Two models of pallet forks from SitePro by Worksaver, designed for mini skid-steers and compact tool carriers, feature universal mini mounts. Model MPF-900 has 1- by 3- by 31.5-inch forks mounted on a frame that is 30.5 inches wide with a rated capacity of 900 pounds. The rail-style model MPF-2000 is rated at 2,000 pounds and has Class 1 tines of 1.18 by 3 by 42 inches on a 33.25-inch wide frame. **217/324-5973; www.wssitepro.com**.



### Atlas Portable semipermanent urinal stand

The Pluto4 semipermanent urinal stand from Atlas Portable is designed for special events and lengthy periods of placement, including campsites, picnic areas and marinas. The unit can be drained into the sewer system or serviced by a portable restroom operator. Floor space is identical to most portable restrooms. **www.atlas-psi.nl**.

### Nilodor White Clove odor control

White Clover odor control from Nilodor includes Nilium water soluble deodorizer, bio-enzymatic Urine Digester and Nilotron air freshener. The 10-product White Clover line contains strains of natural bacteria, enzymes and odor counteractant, formulated to break down and digest odor-causing organic waste. Nilium deodorizer can be used alone or in conjunction with a detergent/disinfectant. The 7-ounce Nilotron refill contains 3,000 metered releases and is blended to freshen air for up to 24 hours. **800/443-4321; www.nilodor.com**.



## INDUSTRY NEWS

### Pumptec launches website

Pumptec launched a new website, [www.pumptec.com](http://www.pumptec.com), enabling users to search for pump/motor/cam specifications. ■



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