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## CALL OF DUTY

Missouri police officer Gregory Haug moonlights by providing VIP restrooms for events and farm weddings

Page 26

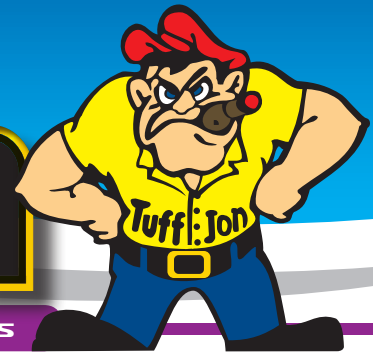
## A Sunny Outlook

New equipment, fresh marketing help renew an established Florida restroom provider **Page 16**



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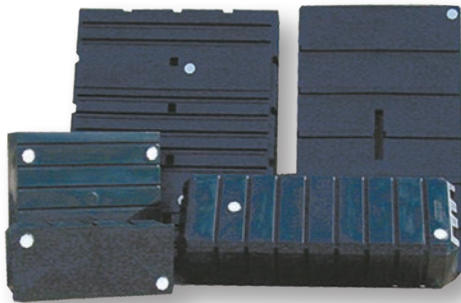
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8

### From the Editor:

#### 3 Ways to Stop Complaints and Solve Problems

Issues with your business neighbors or the general public are inevitable. Follow these tips to keep problems to a minimum during the upcoming busy season. - Jim Kneiszel

10

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14

### Back at the Office: 6 Ideas to Steal From Amazon

The e-commerce behemoth has changed the business landscape, and copying a page or two from its playbook could give your company a boost. - Judy Kneiszel

16

### PROfile: A Sunny Outlook

New equipment and a fresh marketing plan contribute to the renaissance of an established Florida restroom provider. - Ken Wysocky

22

### 2017 Deodorizer Directory

26

### COVER STORY



#### Take 5: Call of Duty

Missouri police officer Gregory Haug moonlights by providing VIP restroom service for farm weddings and other events. - Betty Dageforde

**ON THE COVER:** Police officer Gregory Haug started a restroom trailer business serving outdoor weddings and upscale parties in the St. Louis area. He is shown with one of two Satellite Suites trailers he delivers to customers, mostly for weekend service. (Photo by Denny Medley)

34

### PRO Business: How to Take on the Big Boys and Win

Portable restroom operators often face a crowded marketplace including a huge competitor. Follow these steps to compete successfully. - Dr. Kevin Coughlin

38

### In the Garage:

#### It's Not Just a Place You Toss Your Wrenches Anymore

The latest pickup toolboxes are engineered to offer the busy contractor improved functionality and a stylish truck accessory. - Peter Kenter

42

### Product Focus/Case Study: Odor Control

- Craig Mandli

### COMING NEXT MONTH — June 2017

- **PROfile:** Lone Star PRO adds containers
- **Take 5:** Just starting out in portable sanitation





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













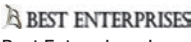












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## ADVERTISERS

in this issue

May 2017

COMPANY	PAGE	COMPANY	PAGE	COMPANY	PAGE	COMPANY	PAGE	COMPANY	PAGE	COMPANY	PAGE
<b>A</b>		<b>C</b>		<b>J</b>		<b>N</b>		<b>P</b>		<b>S</b>	
											
Allied Graphics, Inc. ....	36	CPACEX .....	31	J & J Chemical Co. ....	27	National Vacuum Equipment, Inc. ....	11	Pro-Trainer Inc. ....	21	Spin Products, Inc. ....	39
Armal, Inc. ....	11										
		Deal Assoc. ....	39	J. C. Gury Company, Inc. ..	9	NuConcepts .....	41	Robinson Vacuum Tanks	41	T.S.F. Company, Inc. ....	2
Armstrong Equipment, Inc. ....	17	<b>F</b>		<b>K</b>							
<b>B</b>		Fatboy Outdoors .....	46	KeeVac Industries, Inc. ....	6						
				<b>L</b>						VARco .....	24, 25
Best Enterprises, Inc. ....	29	FIVE PEAKS		Liberty Financial Group, Inc. ....	36	PolyJohn Enterprises, Inc. 47				VIP BEST 1 .....	37
Bionetix International ....	31	Five Peaks .....	7, 17							<b>W</b>	
<b>C</b>		FlowMark Vacuum Trucks .....	19	Liquid Waste Industries, Inc. ....	36	Portable Sanitation Association International .....	43				
				LunarGlo .....	31						
Century Paper Products..	41	Fruitland Manufacturing	15	<b>M</b>							
Classifieds .....	45	<b>I</b>		Marketplace.....	45						
		Imperial Industries, Inc. ..	35	• Drop Zone							
Comforts of Home Services, Inc. ....	17			• Johnny Mover Trailer Sales							



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# 3 Ways to Stop Complaints and Solve Problems

**ISSUES WITH YOUR BUSINESS NEIGHBORS OR THE GENERAL PUBLIC ARE INEVITABLE. FOLLOW THESE TIPS TO KEEP PROBLEMS TO A MINIMUM DURING THE UPCOMING BUSY SEASON.**

By Jim Kneiszel

Lately I've been hearing instances of PROs running afoul of the local regulations or facing complaints from neighboring property owners who don't like certain aspects of their business operation. Often the latter can't be helped. Even if your company is working within proper business zoning rules, some folks will never be happy living or working anywhere near — or even occasionally driving past — a portable sanitation business.

A restroom contractor I talked to recently — who will go nameless because I didn't ask him to go on the record — said he wanted to store more restrooms on a property he owns in a fringe industrial area. Environmental officials were holding up his expansion, claiming that adding gravel to build a short driveway onto the property was considered encroaching a wetland. He sees this as a minor environmental issue but a serious impediment to his ability to grow the business on his own property. How could he get his project completed without raising the ire of environmentalists?

And a company in Whitefish, Montana — North Valley Portables — was recently facing angry neighbors who sought to squash a conditional-use permit request that would allow the company to continue to store its 360 restrooms on a rural property as it has done for a number of years. According to a news account, county officials said the company was using the property before zoning existed, so they could legally continue to do so. They also reported there are no adverse impacts to neighbors if the business expands. What is the PRO company supposed to do to satisfy the neighbors?

## GOOD DEEDS

Unfortunately, no good deed goes unpunished. These companies and yours provide an important service by properly disposing of human waste. By clearing waste efficiently and safely from construction sites and special events, PROs prevent the spread of pathogens in the community. They give users a respectful way to relieve themselves on remote work sites, at large outdoor concerts, and along the route of their favorite local running event. And they perform what many consider an unpleasant task with a positive customer service attitude and a smile on their faces.

Their reward is the invariable "not in my backyard" response. Portable restroom operators should be on the job, but neither seen or heard — or smelled — by the rest of us. I'd like to think the general public, and your next-door neighbors, would grow to appreciate what you do for the comfort and convenience of people and show a little more understanding. But that sometimes seems like an unrealistic expectation.

As we head into the busy season and your crews and trucks are deployed to handle the heavy workload, PROs can effectively blunt some of this criticism. Here are a few ideas:

**If someone is mad and approaches you with a complaint, think like a bullfighter. ... Allow them to vent and charge at you, letting them get their anger out while you wave a red cape as their words pass by you. ... They will grow tired of yelling and you can then have a reasonable conversation.**

## Limit odors as much as possible.

You can make a number of equipment changes so people don't get their noses out of joint when you show up with the vacuum truck. First, try to make service runs at times when the fewest number of people will be around. How about early mornings on the construction site, when it's still dark? Or do your special event service work after midnight when the gates are closed for the evening. In case anyone is around when you fire up the vacuum pump, consider adding a vacuum pump exhaust filter to add a masking fragrance to cover foul odors. And if the weather turns hot, you can move up to an industrial strength deodorant tab or liquid for restroom holding tanks. When you take units out of service and return them to the shop, don't let them sit uncleared in your yard. Thoroughly wash them as soon as possible to reduce residual odors your neighbors could complain about.

## Fences and screens make good neighbors.

As much as possible, it makes sense to store your inventory of restrooms out of sight of drivers passing your yard. But several hundred or a thousand units can be difficult to hide. And if your chosen color scheme is purple and yellow to match, for instance, the colors of the Minnesota Vikings, it's not such an easy task to have them blend into their surroundings. If you're in a high-traffic area and you hear complaints like North Valley Portables mentioned above, it's a good time to remember the old saying, "fences make good neighbors."

If local zoning allows, consider adding a fence that not only secures your units, but screens them from view. Choose an area for yard storage and build the fence as high as necessary to keep the units out of the line of sight. This shows you're making a good faith effort to satisfy concerned neighbors. For job sites with discriminating users — for example, on golf courses or upscale outdoor venues — you may want to stock tasteful screens to corral your restrooms from view. If the customer finds your restroom color choices garish, screens should take care of the concern. Screening provides additional privacy for users and shields passers-by from seeing users coming and going.





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## Get out in front of potential complaints.

I once had a boss who told me workplace problems didn't bother him as much as being surprised by them. He was trying to explain the importance of quickly and directly addressing mistakes or issues on the job with both a manager and person who's complaining, rather than letting them fester and become bigger than they needed to be. If someone complains about looking at your units, hearing your trucks idling or something else going on in your yard, listen and try to come up with a reasonable solution. Can you move the units to another part of the yard? Is it possible to change the time of day you clean and maintain your trucks? Can you diplomatically explain that all of the work you do is allowed under local zoning? Knowing what you do for a living can result in complaints down the road, it's a good idea to build a positive relationship with neighbors and the community before any issues arise. For example, if you contribute free restrooms to a neighboring company's favorite local civic or charity event, they're going to cut you some slack when you have peak traffic or a few odors are carried next door.

## ONE MORE THING

That same boss who told me he didn't like surprises shared another effective technique to deal with people that I remember and follow 20 years later: If someone is mad and approaches you with a complaint, think like a bullfighter. Do not face them head-on and argue with them. Rather, allow them to vent and charge at you, letting them get their anger out while you wave a red cape as their words pass by you. Soon enough they will grow tired of yelling and you can then have a reasonable conversation about their problems with them. ■

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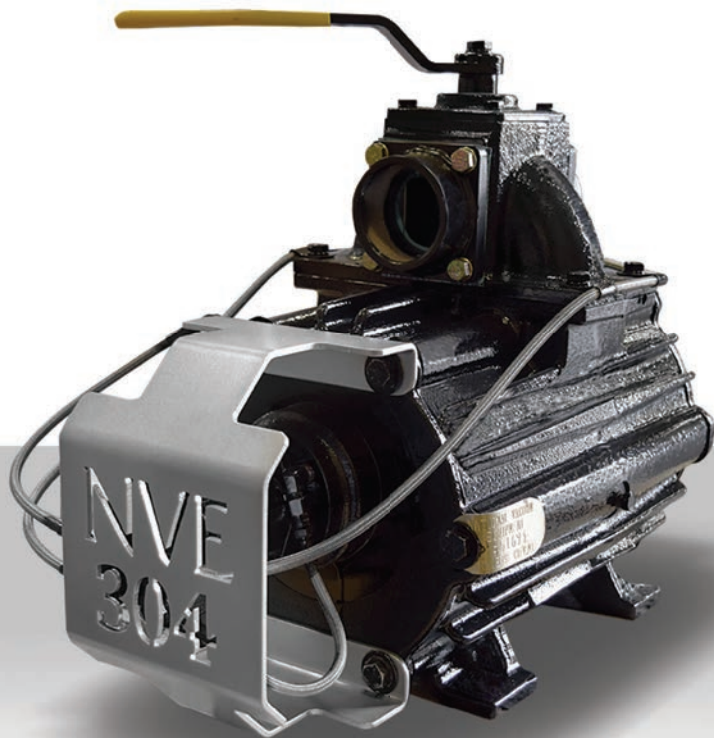
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# 6 Ideas to Steal From Amazon

**THE E-COMMERCE BEHEMOTH HAS CHANGED THE BUSINESS LANDSCAPE, AND COPYING A PAGE OR TWO FROM ITS PLAYBOOK COULD GIVE YOUR COMPANY A BOOST**

**By Judy Kneiszel**

**T**wenty years ago this month, on May 15, 1997, Amazon went public. While only a fortunate few got in on that initial public offering, Amazon's subsequent growth brought change to the masses far more significant than free two-day shipping and yet another video streaming option.

As a portable restroom operator, you may think those changes are limited to the modern-day miracle of having parts for your equipment delivered right to your door with the simple click of a mouse. But Amazon has changed not only how America shops, but how business in general is conducted. It has revolutionized the customer experience. Ignore Amazon's innovations and you risk being left behind. Even service businesses like portable restroom rental companies can benefit from being a little more like Amazon. Here's how:

**1. Don't be afraid to change.** Amazon started out as an online bookseller.

If its founder Jeff Bezos had been resistant to change, he wouldn't have a net worth of more than \$70 billion today. Selling books was never his long-range plan. Books were a foot in the door and a way to gain consumers' trust. If you've got the trust of your portable restroom customers, maybe it's time to add a new service line like restroom trailers, fencing, trash containers or shower trailers.

**2. Seek feedback.** Before Amazon, people didn't review every single purchase they made from a roll of toilet paper to a big-screen television.

Today, buying decisions are frequently based on the number of stars a product has been awarded by previous purchasers. Bezos has said, "If you do build a great experience, customers tell each other about that. Word-of-mouth is very powerful." So don't be afraid to ask your clients to go online and fill out a survey about their experience with your company or provide a testimonial for your website or marketing materials. Use any negative feedback to improve your service.

**3. Think like a customer.** Amazon doesn't care what Wal-Mart is doing so much as what their own Amazon customers are doing.

Try to think like your customers and give them what they want to build loyalty. Amazon has done this by going beyond basic retail sales and offering streaming services, digital downloads and its own hardware, like the Kindle e-reader, because of a perceived need of its own customers. You can do the same. Don't make decisions based on what the competition is doing. Rather, offer new products or additional services you perceive your unique customers want.

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**Don't make decisions based on what the competition is doing. Rather, offer new products or additional services you perceive your unique customers want.**

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**4. Speed it up.** Changing attitudes in retail mean shortened lead-time for every business.

Thanks to consumers adapting to one-click ordering, 24/7 customer service online chats and next-day shipping, you don't have days to return a phone call, you have minutes before a potential customer calls the next portable restroom provider on their list. In some ways speed can work in your favor, however. Rather than going back to the office, writing up an invoice and mailing it to the customer and then waiting for the check in the mail, payment can be instant and on site with devices like portable credit card readers. And this is how today's customer is accustomed to doing business, so you don't risk offending anyone by not offering an instant payment option.

**5. Strive for maximum efficiency.** Speed can be achieved through efficiency.

Amazon is always studying logistics in order to make delivery faster and more cost-efficient. You're in the delivery game too, even if your "packages" are all the same size and delivery area somewhat geographically limited. Frequently re-examine your service routes to make them as efficient as possible. Fewer miles wasted means higher profitability, whether you're an Amazon employee or a PRO.

**6. Beef up branding.** Unless someone is very new to this planet, they will recognize the Amazon logo and at least have some sense of Amazon's stated brand promise to offer, "Earth's biggest selection," and be "the Earth's most customer-centric company."

Strong branding goes a long way toward building up a company. Make sure your brand goes beyond simply a logo to encompass a mission and goals.

Thanks to Amazon, window shopping has all but been replaced by shopping via a browser window and the phrase "allow six to eight weeks for delivery" has become antiquated. Amazon has been at the forefront of the changes in how we do business and those who lead the way always have something to teach the rest of us. While you may not strive to be the Earth's biggest portable restroom rental company, becoming more customer-centric is likely to be a profitable endeavor in the long run. ■





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# A SUNNY OUTLOOK

*JW Craft owners, from left, John Nebus, Jennifer Corrigan and Jerry Craft are shown at a construction site with one of four new Hino service trucks. The Hino fleet came from three truck builders: Satellite Industries, Engine & Accessory and Hol-Mac Corp.; and run either Masport or Fruitland Manufacturing pumps. (Photos by Kelli Krebs)*

**New equipment and a fresh marketing plan contribute to the renaissance of an established Florida restroom provider** **BY KEN WYSOCKY**

## JW Craft Portable Restrooms Inc. Naples, Florida

**Owners:** Jennifer Corrigan, Jerry Craft and John Nebus

**Founded:** 1986

**Employees:** 15

**Services:** Portable restroom and restroom trailer rentals and service

**Service area:** Southern Florida

**Affiliation:** Portable Sanitation Association International

**Website:** [www.jwcrafft.com](http://www.jwcrafft.com)



In some respects, established businesses are similar to older cars in good condition: They periodically need a thorough overhaul to ensure they're running at optimal performance. A good example is JW Craft Portable Restrooms in Naples, Florida, a 31-year-old company that hired an industry veteran to take a peek under the hood and suggest some updates that could rev up sales and profits.

Jennifer Corrigan joined the company in 2015 as a vice president and co-owner with partners Jerry Craft and John Nebus. Her mission: Use more than a decade of experience at another southern Florida portable restroom provider to rebrand and rejuvenate JW Craft, which had earned a solid business reputation since Craft's father, Jack, founded the business in 1986.

Some of the changes Corrigan initiated have made a more obvious visual splash, such as four new Hino service trucks, a revamped company logo and an informative website. Others are more subtle, such as requiring uniforms for route drivers and putting company decals on all four sides of restrooms instead of just one. But overall, one thing is clear: Corrigan — who serves on

(continued)





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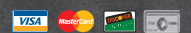
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**Left:** Technician Kenneth Paul pulls the suction hose and pours a bucket of freshwater to prepare for a service job on a construction site.

**Below:** JW Craft owners Jerry Craft and John Nebus help technician Kenneth Paul move a PolyJohn PJN3 restroom on a construction site.

the board of directors for Portable Sanitation Association International — is a staunch proponent of professionalism and raising industry standards.

“Our industry is not respected because of what we handle and haul,” she says. “So I feel that if we go out on a construction site, for example, and have a uniformed, well-groomed employee driving a very nice-looking new truck, it helps our image in the industry. I’m very big on that.”

At JW Craft, that emphasis on professionalism extends to everything from employee training to prescribed restroom cleaning procedures, to refusing to decrease rates for customers who request discounts in order to win their business. For training, new hires ride with an experienced lead driver and also receive instruction through a PSAI course. They follow a strict cleaning regimen that’s posted on the company’s website, so even customers know what to expect.

As for decreasing rates for customers, Corrigan politely declines to play the how-low-can-you-go game. Cutting rates to earn market share only promotes price wars and devalues the service provided by professional portable sanitation contractors, and both of those harm the industry overall, she says.

## SPECIAL EVENTS BACKGROUND

Corrigan, 43, began her career as an event consultant in 2000. She eventually entered the portable restroom industry because of relationships she developed with vendors, particularly a portable sanitation provider. The restroom company hired her as a sales representative, and she eventually worked

“Driving a beat-up old truck and delivering old restrooms won’t cut it,” she says. “Even in the construction market, customers figure that if you have clean restrooms and clean trucks, you’ll probably keep restrooms clean, too.”

**JENNIFER CORRIGAN**



her way up to vice president. As her experience grew working for a few different companies, Corrigan was eventually brought on as a partner at JW Craft.

Craft says Corrigan was tasked with establishing a sales and marketing arm that would raise the company’s profile and effectively give it a facelift. “We were kind of old-fashioned and didn’t have a website or do any other kinds of marketing,” he says. “We earned business through word-of-mouth referrals — never had to really go out and look for work.”

But the deep economic downturn that hit hard in 2009 changed all that. Craft says that as construction work declined in southwest Florida, the company at its low point was renting/servicing only 300 or 400 restrooms, down from a high of 3,000. Moreover, restroom rental rates declined to 1997 levels.

But thanks to increased marketing efforts during the last several years, business has stabilized and even increased, which made it easier to raise prices to their former levels. “Jennifer is very good at that,” he says, pointing to her marketing and sales skills. “All in all, it’s been a good merger. I’m very happy with the direction we’re going.”

(continued)





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“Jerry and John knew the company needed a facelift and weren’t sure how to do it,” Corrigan says. “So they brought me on board. They’ve been wonderful to work with — very supportive.”

Corrigan also credits her hardworking team: Melanie Sandy, office manager; Amber Auckerman, customer service rep; Diana Malloy, sales manager; Thomas Dragovich, mechanic and shop supervisor; Mike Mansfield, operations manager; Lloyd Puente, operations supervisor; Dario Martinez, event supervisor and new-driver trainer; Alberto Guerrero, lead technician; Burchell Simmonds, pickup and delivery driver; and Kenneth Paul, Rodney Williams, Leon Perry and A.J. Rojas, service technicians.

“Every role in our company is important, she says. “I can purchase new equipment, rebrand, sell and grow our company, but none of it matters without the hard work and dedication of our team.”

## EQUIPMENT MATTERS

Four new Hino service trucks from Satellite Industries, Engine & Accessory and Hol-Mac Corp. represent one of the most visible upgrades at JW Craft. The rigs joined an existing fleet of eight service trucks either fabricated by Engine & Accessory or put together in-house and equipped with Masport or Fruitland Manufacturing pumps. Tanks for all trucks range in size from 1,100 gallons waste/400 gallons freshwater to 1,500 gallons waste/500 gallons freshwater.

The company also owns about 3,500 restrooms (made by PolyJohn Enterprises, PolyPortables and Satellite Industries); seven restrooms trailers from Ameri-Can and JAG Mobile Solutions; 15 hand-wash stations made by PolyPortables, PolyJohn and Satellite; approximately 100 holding tanks made by PolyJohn; and roughly 95 high-rise restrooms. The company also uses eco-friendly cleaning and deodorizing products made by J&J Chemical and Walex Products.

## BETTER BRANDING

Corrigan also had the company logo redesigned and had a separate logo developed just for the special-events end of the business. “I wanted a fresh look,” she says. “I’m a visual person myself ... and I want people to look at the palm tree on the decals and recognize right away that it’s JW Craft.

“It takes time to build up brand recognition,” she adds, noting the logo changes occurred nearly two years ago. “But sales have increased in all areas.” Corrigan also credits sales manager Diana Malloy, who’s helping her prospect for new clients.

To attract special-events business, Corrigan says she targets event coordinators and wedding planners and uses social media platforms such as Pinterest and Instagram. A key tool in her marketing arsenal: photos of restrooms, restroom trailers and the new trucks. That’s important because the area’s high-end clientele wants to see what they’re getting before signing a contract.

“Driving a beat-up old truck and delivering old restrooms won’t cut it,”



*Kenneth Paul finishes up a unit service by recharging the holding tank with freshwater. The company uses deodorizing products from J&J Chemical and Walex Products.*



*Above: A row of JW Craft Satellite Global restrooms is prepped and ready to serve a crowd at a local Greek Festival in Fort Myers, Florida.*

she says. “Even in the construction market, customers figure that if you have clean restrooms and clean trucks, you’ll probably keep restrooms clean, too — and that you’re probably legit and have insurance.”

If JW Craft is hired to handle a special event, Corrigan sends the customer photos of the equipment they’re going to receive. And if all of the company’s restroom trailers are already booked, she leases trailers from

## Why join PSAI?

Going to business school is an expensive and time-consuming proposition. Jennifer Corrigan suggests a great alternative for portable restroom operators: Become a member of Portable Sanitation Association International.

PSAI’s goal is to educate operators, whether they’re industry newbies, long-time veterans or somewhere in between. The group offers a host of resources that teach members how to operate a successful portable restroom business, whether it’s via the PSIA website, classes and seminars held at industry events and trade shows, or networking opportunities and peer consultations. It also provides sets of industry standards, she notes.

“I want everyone in this business to succeed and PSIA provides the tools to do so,” says Corrigan, co-owner of JW Craft Portable Restrooms in Naples, Florida. She started attending PSIA conventions years ago, then got involved with various committees and now sits on the organization’s board of directors. “I even want my competitors involved in PSIA. ... If everyone would learn their costs of doing business (and set prices accordingly), they’d be less likely to get involved in price wars.

“I’m really big on having allies in this industry instead of enemies, and PSIA helps foster those relationships,” she adds. In addition, networking with operators from other parts of the country is valuable because they’re more willing to share information than direct competitors might.

Corrigan says roundtable discussions at PSIA-sponsored events have yielded tips that helped her improve operating efficiency and profitability. In one instance, a supplier suggested that she print out the names of all customers that are more than 90 days delinquent on payments. “Then he told me to fire those customers — pick up their units and rent them to paying customers instead,” she says. “That was a good piece of advice that I’ve passed on to others.”

reputable competitors. "I disclose that up front," she says. "We don't want to mislead our customers."

Corrigan also helps preserve the company's professional image by insisting that special-event customers rent enough restrooms and trailers to handle the expected attendance. Why? Users will see the JW Craft decals on the restrooms and blame them for the unsanitary conditions that usually arise when restrooms get overwhelmed. "There's a lot of power in word-of-mouth," she says.

## QUALITY COUNTS

To boost customer loyalty and underscore the company's willingness to be held accountable, Corrigan also instituted a money-back guarantee. "If something happens and it's our fault, we'll own it," she says. "Customers can call or email us 24/7, so there's no reason why they can't reach us and give us a chance to fix whatever went wrong. I think we've given customers their money back maybe once or twice."

Communication with customers is critical to minimizing problems. For example, if a route driver cannot access a job site, they must call the office immediately so someone from JW Craft can call the customer right away and explain the situation. Otherwise it might look like the route driver didn't show up, she notes.

"You have to be proactive, not reactive, otherwise it's always your fault," she says. "For instance, if a customer says there's no hand sanitizer in some restrooms, it could be that people are stealing it or ripping the dispensers completely out of the units. You have to communicate that right away so it doesn't completely fall on us."

Corrigan also spearheaded efforts to develop a company website that provides detailed information as well as a visual portrait of all the company's equipment and services. To give customers as much information as possible, the website offers a list of frequently asked questions as well as photos that cover nearly every aspect of the company, from equipment including restroom trailers and special-event restrooms with flush toilets to ancillary products and services such as temporary fencing and RV/boat waste-tank pumping.

The website also offers a PSAI-developed planning guide to help special-event coordinators determine how many restrooms they need to handle various crowd sizes, as well as the company's restroom-cleaning protocols. It even tells customers what to do with their restrooms in the event of a weather situation that not many portable restroom contractors need to worry about: hurricanes.

Overall, Corrigan is excited about the company's prospects and says she loves its family atmosphere. "A lot of our drivers have been here forever," she says. "Low turnover is a great thing. It speaks volumes about your owners and management when people stay for a long time."

Corrigan also seems to relish the challenge of raising the level of professionalism industry-wide. "When I first got into the industry, I only stuck with it because the owners were so good to me," she says. "Now it's my passion." ■

"If something happens and it's our fault, we'll own it," she says. "Customers can call or email us 24/7, so there's no reason why they can't reach us and give us a chance to fix whatever went wrong."

JENNIFER CORRIGAN

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Gregory Haug had his restroom trailers wrapped in eye-catching floral patterns. He named the trailers Rose and Daisy and has a detailed page on his website, [www.posheventcottages.com](http://www.posheventcottages.com), dedicated to each unit. (Photos by Denny Medley)

## Missouri police officer Gregory Haug moonlights by providing VIP restroom service for farm weddings and other events

By Betty Dageforde

**G**regory Haug is a 13-year veteran of the Shrewsbury Police Department in suburban St. Louis. Up until 2014, he knew nothing about the portable sanitation industry and never imagined getting involved in it, but after some bad experiences at events and a conversation with a friend, one thing led to another and he soon had a side business on his hands.

The triggering concern was Haug's perception that having a low-end portable restroom at a high-end event was a bit of a disconnect. When he mentioned this to a friend, the friend told him about the luxury restroom trailers he often saw during work-related travel. That got Haug's attention, so he did a little research and determined that his area was underserved. He then visited a couple vendors, one of whom recommended he go to the Water & Wastewater Equipment, Treatment & Transport Show. He went to the show and came away with a lot of information, two 10- by 15-foot trailers from Satellite Suites, and a new business, Posh Event Cottages.

Haug is not planning on giving up his day job anytime soon, but in about 10 years he'll be eligible for retirement from the police force and sees this as a post-retirement career.

*Take 5 ...  
with Gregory Haug*

# Call of Duty

**EXPLORE FIVE ISSUES THAT AFFECT GREGORY'S PORTABLE SANITATION BUSINESS:**



Haug hooks up a unit for transport. His hauler is a 2015 Chevrolet Silverado 1500. He contracts with pumpers to empty the units after an event.

## 1 KEEP IT SIMPLE

Meshing his two occupations into his schedule has not been a problem, Haug says. Trailers are used almost exclusively on weekends, so the drill is to drop them off on Friday and pick them up on Monday, and there's usually flexibility in the timing. If he needs to, he can trade days off with someone at the police force.

He runs the business with minimum effort and expense. He has no employees, no office, one truck and an inventory of two units. He contracts for everything else as needed. He operates the business out of his home in Webster Groves, Missouri, and stores the units on a nearby rented lot. He hauls the trailers using his 2015 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 and maintains an account with Enterprise Truck Rental for those times he needs an additional vehicle. He also contracts with a licensed waste disposal firm to pump out the trailers after events.

When he needs more labor he has a ready supply of police buddies to help him out. "I've trained three of them how to make deliveries, interact with customers, and everything they need to know about setting up and removing a trailer," he says.

*(continued)*



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Setting up the unit, Haug lowers a step for easy entry.

## 2 FOCUS ON WEDDINGS

Haug initially targeted special events and backyard parties, but once he got linked into the wedding industry his business really took off. He had never heard of farm weddings, but quickly got up to speed on this unique and growing industry. "That seems to be my niche now," he says. "I'd say 60 to 70 percent of my business is farm weddings." The venues run the gamut from manicured estates to quaintly rustic properties down gravel roads. If hookups are unavailable, he brings 200 gallons of water and a liquid propane gas generator.

The trailers are a perfect size for weddings. Each is big enough to service up to 150 people and small enough to be easily maneuvered in backyard spaces. Each unit has two stations — one for men, one for women — a speaker system, adjustable air conditioning and heating, hardwood floors, porcelain flush toilets and stainless steel sinks. Haug also furnishes them with fresh-cut flowers.

The trailers are also used at other high-end events. And for a cause that's dear to his heart, Haug was happy to provide them at a deeply discounted rate at a fundraiser for the Greater St. Louis Honor Flight. "They fly World War II veterans to Washington to see their memorial," he says.

## 4 TELL THEM EVERYTHING

Haug takes full advantage of social media and online marketing tools to get the word out. He posts regularly to Twitter and Facebook, and has created a number of informational YouTube videos in which he shows off the units and personally explains his services. And nobody has to wonder about cost. "I like to be up-front and transparent and let people know my pricing," he says.

Haug thinks it's important people know he's a local guy, not a national firm headquartered somewhere else that shows up on a Google search. He also thinks it's important to show people what the trailers look like, inside and out. He has posted some videos of the units, but is in the process of hiring an interactive video company to get a better result, something similar to what a Realtor would use to demo a home for sale. "It gives you the view of what it would look like if you were standing inside the trailer and spun around," he says.

Other marketing efforts include going to happy hours with wedding planners, joining the International Special Events Society and meeting with different vendors in the event business.

## 3 MAKE A STATEMENT

Haug is so confident his trailers will perfectly complement a lavish event that instead of making them as unobtrusive as possible, he's covered them in giant flowers that can't be missed — one in orange, yellow and red daisies and the other in red roses.

"It's a play on wedding flowers, being daisies and roses," Haug says. "And it's a way to let people remember me — I'm the guy with roses on the trailer." He worked with a graphics design company specializing in vehicle vinyl wrapping.

As a way to differentiate his units, Haug markets them as cottages rather than trailers. "It's a fancier name for a trailer," he says. "I'm trying to let my customers know that there's something different about these. They're not just trailers."

**"It's a play on wedding flowers, being daisies and roses ... and it's a way to let people remember me — I'm the guy with roses on the trailer."**

**GREGORY HAUG**



A super-wide-angle photo shows the complete interior of the men's side of the Satellite Suites trailer, which has both a stool and a urinal.

*(continued)*



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The back of Haug's Satellite Suites trailers feature photos of what the interior looks like, a nice marketing feature for potential customers who might be following him down the road.

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## 5 LISTEN TO FEEDBACK

Haug wants communication to be a two-way street. The videos he created were in direct response to customer questions. He has also extended his service territory out to 200 miles.

When customers started asking for an on-site attendant, he began offering a concierge service and now does so at about half his events. If he's not available, one of his trained fellow officers fills in. He checks supplies and makes sure everything is clean and working properly, but says his presence is really more of an assurance to the client. He typically wears khakis and a polo shirt, but will accommodate anything the host wants. "If I have to buy a different suit or whatever, I will," he says.

One of the most pressing customer requests

**"I'm trying to let my customers know that there's something different about these. They're not just trailers."**

**GREGORY HAUG**

### MORE INFO

Satellite Suites  
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has been for handicap accessibility, and in 2017 he plans to add a handicap unit to the inventory. "That's what my customers are asking for and I want to make sure I can offer that," Haug says. ■

*"Take 5" is a feature in which one PRO or industry leader shares unique business challenges with the entire portable sanitation community. It's a chance for service providers to meet over the back fence – and across the country – to learn more about each other and promote industry excellence. If you know a PRO who would be an interesting subject for "Take 5," send their contact information to editor@promonthly.com.*



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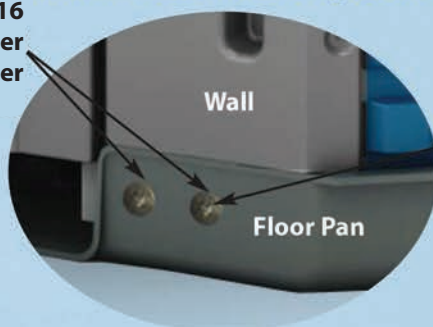
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# How to Take on the Big Boys and Win

**PORTABLE RESTROOM OPERATORS OFTEN FACE A CROWDED MARKETPLACE INCLUDING A HUGE COMPETITOR. FOLLOW THESE STEPS TO COMPETE SUCCESSFULLY.**

**By Dr. Kevin Coughlin**

**M**ost people are aware that the economic engine in the U.S. is small business. In fact, most would agree that small businesses are the foundation of the economy.

Very little provides more satisfaction than building and running a successful small business, but many business owners make a fatal mistake at the outset: They don't understand what their customers really want. To put your best foot forward as a small-business owner, you must create a dialogue with customers and ensure they understand you're looking out for their wants and needs.

But building a customer-driven small business can be a bit different when competing with a much larger competitor. How do you fight a company or business that has an almost unlimited supply of money and expertise? In all truth, it can be extremely difficult and takes a lot of effort, but it can be done and is being done all across the country. Your customers want to feel connected, they want to feel special, and they don't want to be just a number or another transaction.

Your customers are all looking for products and services they believe in, like and trust. That is the winning combination in competition, and you and your team will be on the way to successfully competing with larger regional and national portable sanitation providers by making the experience SPECIAL for your customers. Here's how to get started:

## **S - Superior service**

First and foremost, put yourself in your customer's shoes. Experiment with every interaction between your company and the customer. A great starting point is to assess the quality of phone etiquette and your employees' ability to address your customers' questions. Ensure you are receiving good feedback that is timely and accurate. Evaluate your website and email responses. Take an honest look at your products and services to make sure they are the best they can be.

## **P - Products**

Evaluate your restroom inventory, truck fleet and service to see how they stand up against the competition. Take a hard look at the processes and procedures you can implement to make products and or services more appealing and cost-effective.

## **E - Education**

This means training, training and more training with everyone on your team, and perhaps most importantly, training for yourself. Many times as business owner you are the last to recognize you may need and benefit from training more than anyone else. Success starts at the top, and without positive business training, you and your company will suffer.

## **C - Consistency**

Constantly evaluate and re-evaluate your processes and procedures to make sure they are simple, repeatable and trainable. Delivering consistent

service is paramount to long-term success. Anyone can do something well once or twice, but when you can do it consistently, you know your company is running well.

## **I - Ideal customer experience**

Frequently review your customer accounts to see if they are coming back to you again and again. If the pattern of repeat business is lacking, it's imperative that you ascertain why.

## **A - Approachable**

Do your employees and customers have access to you? If not, why? Determine how to create an environment that allows information to reach leadership so team members and customers know their concerns will be addressed and not overlooked.

## **L - Lighthearted**

When it stops being fun for you, your team or your customers, you have started your company in a downward direction and action must be taken to change that culture. When your customers and team members have an enjoyable experience there is no better marketing plan available.

## **MOVING FORWARD**

Most business owners want and dream to become larger. The reasons are many, but the main reasons are that success is equated many times with more or bigger. However, more doesn't always mean better, it simply means more.

If your desire is to make your company or business larger, be careful what you wish for. The vast majority of small-business entrepreneurs like the risks, controls and challenges of building a business more than the end result. As has been stated many times, it is the journey more than the destination that brings real satisfaction.

For those who are wise enough to realize this, you must understand that all the things that can make the large companies great are also the things that can be seen as negatives. This knowledge provides business owners an opportunity to compete and win over customers that eventually gets overlooked by the huge service providers.

In the end, all business owners are unique, but most entrepreneurs have common traits. They are competitive, they like the action and want to win. They are motivated and work hard, have a desire to succeed, and willingly make sacrifices to accomplish their goals.

Whatever your aspirations, stick with them. Find out what motivates you and what you really love about your business. Then pursue that passion and you will receive much more than financial reward. You will have the satisfaction of reaching your goals. ■

*Dr. Kevin Coughlin is a dentist, author and small-business speaker. For more information, go to [www.Ascent-Dental-Solutions.com](http://www.Ascent-Dental-Solutions.com).*



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# It's Not Just a Place You Toss Your Wrenches Anymore

**THE LATEST PICKUP TOOLBOXES ARE ENGINEERED TO OFFER THE BUSY CONTRACTOR IMPROVED FUNCTIONALITY AND A STYLISH TRUCK ACCESSORY**

By Peter Kenter

**T**oolboxes used to be made of wood or steel and tossed into the back of a pickup truck, where they'd be strapped down to prevent sliding into the back of the cab at every red light and stop sign. Far from weather-proof, they'd rust and age over a few short years. A new generation of customized, rust-free aluminum pickup toolboxes has taken over, and while there's currently no revolution in their design, they continue to evolve to meet the needs of installers and other contractors.

While new toolboxes are far more functional and specialized than their primitive ancestors, truck owners have also become much more concerned about appearance, looking for boxes that complement their trucks and present a professional image, says Alex Golin, owner of Auto Truck Depot in Calgary, Alberta. They provide a wide range of truck accessories, from toolboxes to racks, bed covers, running boards, brake controllers, hitches and towing accessories through a retail store and online.

"We've come a long way from tool chests and work boxes," he says. "The next evolution was crossover toolboxes that sit over your bed rails, but still open up with one hinged flap. Next came the gull-wing style that you could open from either end. Finally, we saw the manufacturers combining toolboxes and auxiliary fuel tanks together in the mid-1980s."



**Above:** A gull-wing hatch design offers convenient access from both sides of the truck. A single-lid crossover design allows bigger tools to be stowed in the box. (Photos courtesy of Highway Products)

**Right:** A sturdy diamond plate design offers durability and good looks. emergency warning light with amber clear lens.



## CHOOSE THE RIGHT STYLE

Regardless of style, the boxes are now largely made of diamond plate metal.

"Aluminum has become the most popular material for toolboxes," says Golin. "The metal is lightweight and it doesn't rust when constantly exposed to the elements. However, we still see some buyers on a budget choosing black or white steel."

Installers should be careful to choose a toolbox with an efficient design that meets their needs.

"The single-lid crossover design is still our most popular style," says Golin. "Although you can conveniently reach into the gull-wing from both sides of the box, the design of the center hinge limits the size of tools you can easily store in it. The single lid allows you to store tools that measure the full length of the box."

Toolbox width remains relatively constant at about 21 inches. What is changing is the depth of the toolboxes.

"Deep-profile toolboxes go down about 19 inches and almost rest on the bed," says Golin. "We're now seeing low-profile boxes that only go down about 12 inches and still provide access underneath the toolbox, so you can carry lengths of pipe or full sheets of plywood."

If truck beds use tonneau covers or a fifth-wheel hitch, toolboxes must also be appropriately sized to fit.

## TOOLS & FUEL

The three most popular sizes for larger auxiliary fuel tanks combined with toolboxes are: 43 to 50 gallons, 75 to 80 gallons and 92 to 100 gallons. However, each successive increase in capacity widens the toolbox base.

"The largest fuel tanks are 60 inches wide and you can only fit those models on trucks with beds 8 feet and longer that have a wheel-well base located further back," says Golin.

Tanks come bare bones with fuel caps, but optional accessories allow contractors to do anything from pump fuel using a hand crank to using an electric pump, or flipping a switch that feeds fuel directly into the fill spout of the main fuel tank via gravity.

While auxiliary tanks have primarily been designed to carry extra diesel fuel, Golin says that some manufacturers are now supplying gasoline tanks, offering double-walled designs to meet safety standards. "Not every-

(continued)



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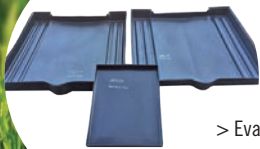
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body drives a diesel and many contractors need to fuel gasoline-powered equipment on their job sites," he says. "We're now offering them and I think that a gasoline option on combo tanks will be an emerging trend."

**Color-matched toolboxes lend work pickups a cleaner, more professional look.**

**"The single-lid crossover design is still our most popular style. Although you can conveniently reach into the gull-wing from both sides of the box, the design of the center hinge limits the size of tools you can easily store in it."**

**Alex Golin**

"When you've got no chrome on your vehicle, the last thing you want to do is to draw attention to this nice, bright shiny toolbox that looks nothing like the rest of your truck," he says. "I've had one customer who is a contractor waiting six weeks to have a toolbox custom-painted in black, when an exposed aluminum model could have been delivered inside of a week — and the black box will be kept under a tonneau cover so you'll only see it when he's towing."

But even shiny black designs are beginning to fall out of favor for powder-coated matte black. "I was just talking to one of the manufacturers of tool/fuel combo boxes and they've completely switched their production line from shiny black to matte black," Golin says.

Maintaining the toolboxes is simply a matter of washing them along with the truck.

"Even aluminum, when it isn't washed, will see the dirt oxidizing the finish and turning it from shiny to dull," says Golin. ■

Proper toolbox mounting is critical — especially for fuel/tool combos. "An 8-foot truck bed isn't actually rigid," Golin says. "It's meant to twist. When you have a big toolbox combo unit bolted onto the bed and you're driving over bumpy terrain and your truck bed twists, it's going to cause the seals and the welds on the auxiliary tank to break. You can mount the combo box onto pressure-treated plywood and rubber on top of that to absorb the twisting motion so it won't impact the welds and seams."

Most toolboxes are impervious to thieves — it would require outsized effort to steal the tools inside. However, extra security is now available via a recessed padlock. "The locks are surrounded by an enclosure so you can't use cutting tools to access the padlock," says Golin.

#### **COLOR TRENDS**

He notes that contractors have become more concerned about how equipment impacts their company image in recent years, shifting their preference from exposed aluminum to aluminum painted in glossy black to match a preference for black pickup trucks.

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## Odor Control

By Craig Mandli

### ARMAL SCENT BOX

The **Scent Box** from **Armal** incorporates a fragrance — vanilla balm, rose sensations, apple blossom, pine-wood trail or strawberry field — into the wall panels of the restroom during the manufacturing process, ensuring a pleasant scent inside. It has heavy-duty, spring-coil doors with a wind-resistant device to ensure closure when unlocked, and overlapping wall assembly for greater safety. Options include a recirculating kit with filter and freshwater flush that works in combination with the pump kit. **866/873-7796; www.armal.biz.**



### BIONETIX INTERNATIONAL PORTA-TREAT

**Porta-Treat** from **Bionetix International** is a quick-acting treatment that deodorizes portable restrooms and holding tanks, leaving only a fresh fragrance. It contains natural and safe bacteria that produce specific extracellular fast-acting enzymes to attack waste and its byproducts at the molecular level, degrading organic wastes. It digests odor-causing compounds and targets large waste particles that settle at the bottom of tanks. Throwing in a water-soluble pouch after emptying and cleaning the retention tank makes it easier for PROs to

keep the tank fresh by reducing substances such as cellulose in restroom paper into odorless carbon dioxide and water. The non-formaldehyde formula is safe, with no adverse effects on waste or sewage treatment plants. Pouches with exact dosage are easy to store and use with no measuring, waste or mess. **514/457-2914; www.bionetix-international.com.**



### CPACEX ULTRA POWRPAKS

**Ultra PowrPaks** for portable restrooms and holding tanks from **CPACEX** offer odor control and fragrance for up to seven days in extreme conditions. The additional effervescence ensures the packets will dissolve quickly and disperse evenly throughout the holding tank. They are available in five sizes to fit specific applications and climates. Use Ultra Lite in special event units or Ultra 4X in construction units, or choose the strength that works best for the application. They are biodegradable and all formulations contain nonstaining blue dye. **419/450-6208; www.cpacex.com.**



### DEL VEL CHEM CO. ODOR INTERCEPTOR

Biodegradable **Odor Interceptor** from **Del Vel Chem Co.** is used to neutralize and absorb odors from a variety of sources. It lasts 45 to 60 days depending on the degree of odor. The product shrinks as it absorbs odors. The heavier the odor, the faster it is used. It will shrink to about 12 percent of its initial size before it should be replaced. Once odors are under control, it will shrink at a slower rate. It is available in 1/2-, 4- and 35-pound containers. **800/699-9903; www.delvel.com.**



### FIVE PEAKS GLACIER BAY DROP-N-GO PACKETS

**Glacier Bay Drop-N-Go Packets** from **Five Peaks** provide the same effective odor control, fragrance and deep blue color mask as liquid deodorant, with the convenience and easy inventory control of premeasured, ready-to-use pouches. A premeasured quantity of powder is packed in a water-soluble pouch, preventing waste and contact with product. Just drop a single packet into the holding tank and add water. They are packaged in a stand-up, sealable gusset bag, which reduces the risk of exposing the packets to moisture. They are available in three strengths — ultimate, everyday and event. **866/293-1502; www.fivepeaks.net.**



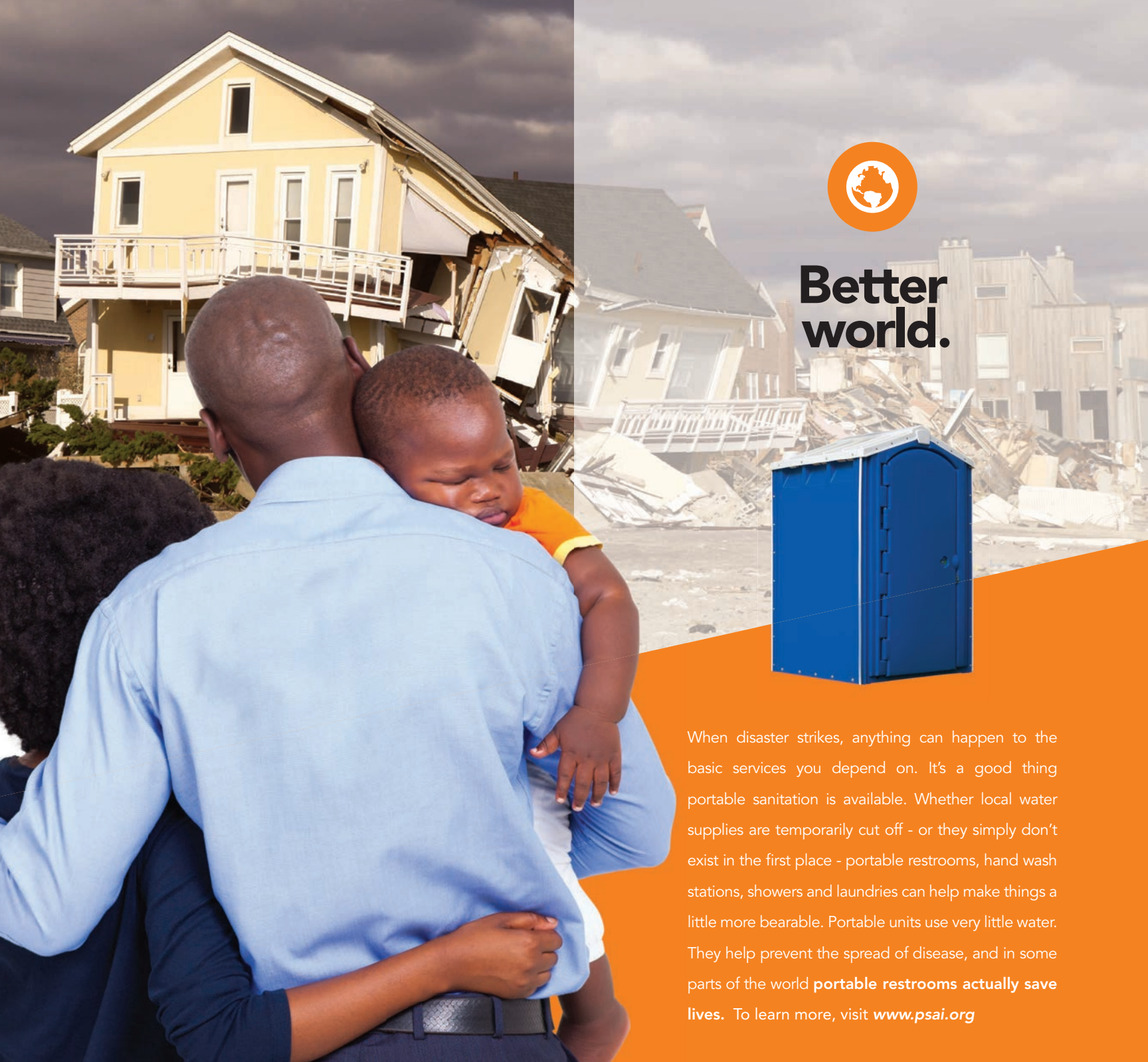
### GREEN WAY PRODUCTS BY POLYPORTABLES SUPER TUBES

**Super Tubes** portion-controlled deodorizer from **Green Way Products by Polyportables** have a built-in dosing scale to minimize waste. The scale allows the technician to quickly and easily measure the perfect amount of product for any job. Simply flip the cap to the up position, point the bottle into the holding tank or bucket and squeeze. With the measurement system built into the bottle, there's no guesswork and no waste. There is no lost inventory due to water damage or accidental activation. Activation is immediate regardless of brine solution or cold weather application. The easy-to-carry 1-liter bottle provides convenient dosing for every application. **800/241-7951; www.polyportables.com.**



(continued)





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## IMPERIAL INDUSTRIES MAJESTIK RE-CHARGE 6000

**Majestik Re-Charge 6000** portable restroom deodorizer from **Imperial Industries** is designed to destroy waste odors and leave a pleasant fragrance. It is super-concentrated and eco-friendly, according to the manufacturer, containing no formaldehyde or heavy metals. It is available in 1-gallon containers and 55-gallon drums. Scents include cherry and spice. **800/558-2945; www.imperialind.com.**



## SURCO PORTABLE SANITATION PRODUCTS FRESH STRAPS

**Fresh Straps** self-locking portable restroom air fresheners from **Surco Portable Sanitation Products** are waterproof air freshener straps that cinch to the portable restroom vent pipe. The self-locking feature deters theft, and they last up to 60 days. They are available in Xtreme fresh, lavender and berry cherry fragrances. They are packed 72 individually wrapped straps per case. **412/789-8683; www.surco.com.**



## J&J CHEMICAL CO. PROPAXX ELITE

**ProPaxx Elite** from **J&J Chemical Co.** are long-lasting, odor-eliminating packets that are fast dissolving, water soluble, self mixing, nonstaining and provide deep blue color. They are formulated with multiple odor-control components designed to engage when needed most. The time-released fragrances help keep portable restrooms smelling fresh longer while helping to clean the holding tank, providing around-the-clock protection. They are available in a variety of sizes and exclusive fragrances, including new Coconilla. **800/345-3303; www.jjchem.com.**



## WALEX PORTA-PAK MAX

Super-concentrated **Porta-Pak MAX** holding tank deodorizer from **Walex** contains 50 percent more color and odor control, and double the fragrance of regular Porta-Paks. It is available in mint and lavender fragrances, is quick to dissolve, requires no skin contact when handling, and is safe and easy to use. It is packaged in resealable bags for easy transport and distribution. **800/338-3155; www.walex.com. ■**

## POLYJOHN ENTERPRISES COOPER'S OWN LILY TABS

**Cooper's Own Lily Tabs** deodorizers from **PolyJohn Enterprises** come in 60-gram tablets at 180 per case, and work as an alternative to traditional liquid deodorizers. If a smaller smell solution is needed, 40-gram Lily Tabs come 264 per case. They are an environmentally friendly option for effective odor maintenance, and are designed to help customers control usage and service costs. **800/292-1305; www.polyjohn.com.**



## SAFE-T-FRESH STF

**STF** restroom deodorizer from **Safe-T-Fresh** has reformulated fragrance formulas that change odor molecules, not simply mask them. The result is a more permanent solution to odor control between service calls, according to the maker. New fragrances include lavender, cherry blossom, cherry, bubblegum, ocean mist, hot cinnamon, spice, mountain breeze, mulberry, lemon and spring valley. **877/764-7297; www.safetfresh.com.**

## CASE STUDY

### Cleaner invented to eliminate barnyard odors

**PROBLEM:** The Recreational Vehicle Industry Association Trade Show annually meets at the Kentucky Exposition Center in Louisville, immediately after the North American International Livestock Exposition Show. Barnyard odors and the noses of prospective RV buyers don't mix. It is also the site of an annual RVIA board meeting, where members complained about residual animal odors left in the exhibit space.

**SOLUTION:** **Thetford Corp.** was approached to help with remediating odors. The resulting product needed to immediately eliminate animal waste odors and prevent them from returning for at least seven days, be safe to use around livestock and people, be noncorrosive and nondamaging to concrete flooring, and be safe for use in a Tennant automatic floor-scrubbing machine. In 2015, Thetford's in-house chemistry staff formulated **PROfresh Washdown Cleaner & Active Deodorizer** that solved the issue.



**RESULT:** Subsequent RVIA Trade Show attendees were pleasantly surprised at the absence of animal odors. The product cleans and degrades odor-causing organic waste and eliminates odors at their source. It's specially formulated for use on portable restroom interior and exterior surfaces, hard-surface floors, and in and around trash containers. **800/543-1219; www.thetford.com.**



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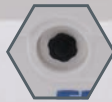
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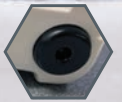
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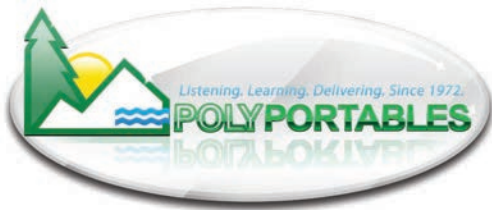
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