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Moving from driver to owner offers many challenges to New Hampshire's Dan Smart

WORKING SMART

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Batter Up!

Timing is everything when Blu-John services Atlanta Braves games at new SunTrust Park [Page 26](#)

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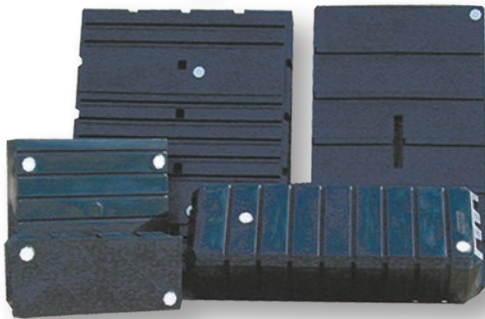
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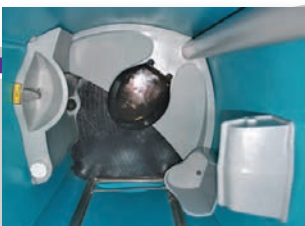


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Moving up from technician and driver to company owner offers many challenges to New Hampshire's Dan Smart.
- Sharon Verbeten

ON THE COVER: After working for Pete's Toilet Rentals for many years, Dan Smart bought the business earlier this year and is now learning the ropes as an owner. Smart is shown with a group of PolyJohn Enterprises restrooms in the company yard. (Photo by Oliver Parini)

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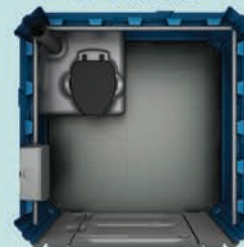
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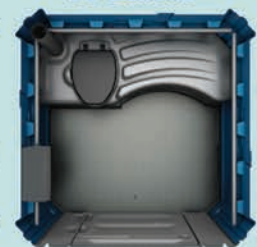
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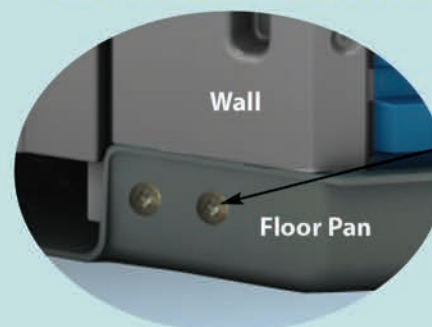
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Spread the Good News of Portable Sanitation

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF AN OPPORTUNITY WHEN A REPORTER CALLS TO LEARN ABOUT HOW YOU PROVIDE RESTROOM SERVICES

By Jim Kneiszel

I just got off the phone with a writer at a Chicago newspaper who wanted to talk about the portable sanitation industry. It was a table-turning experience, as I was a newspaper reporter and editor for many years before working for wastewater trade publications.

The writer emailed me earlier today and asked if I would talk to him about PROs. At first I was uncomfortable with the idea. Why would I take time out of my busy day to talk to a reporter? How would this be a benefit to me? What if I said something stupid and it was printed for everyone to see?

Part of my apprehension was nervousness about being the interviewee rather than the interviewer. I am used to calling people — including many of you over the years — and starting to ask questions. This has been my job since I was 15 years old working as a sports reporter for my local weekly newspaper. It's as familiar to me as jumping in a vacuum truck and running a service route is for you.

BE THE EXPERT

I believe it's good to get out of your comfort zone and try something new, so I called the reporter and had a nice chat about the history of portable sanitation and how they contribute to the success of special events today. He was keenly interested in the impact the growing number of large music festivals has on the restroom industry.

I felt good about stepping up and helping out because I was able to:

- **Brag about the good people who work in this industry.** Rather than be the butt of an obvious joke, I want the general public to learn about the hardworking professionals who have been providing this critical service for so many years. I wanted to talk about how many of the founding families of portable sanitation are going on their third and fourth generations running reputable small businesses and contributing to the economy.

- **Promote the many advances that improve the restroom user experience.** PROs have come a long way from plywood boxes and 55-gallon drums cut in half for drop tanks. The writer was fascinated to learn that many special events are upgrading their sanitation requirements, adding sinks to their orders at a minimum and often taking advantage of restroom trailers. He was surprised to hear that upscale trailers now have flat-panel TVs, fireplaces and other amenities to please festival users.

- **Broaden the writer's network of sources so he could present a more accurate picture of the industry.** I offered the name of a marketing manager at a Chicago-area restroom company who is plugged into the event scene there who might like to share his insights. I encouraged the reporter to call the Portable Sanitation Association International for another perspective on the industry. If a reporter is going to delve into a topic near and dear to all of you, I felt it was important to see that he gets the best information possible.

Reassure the public that your goal is to provide clean, sanitary restrooms to offer them relief whether on the construction site or a backyard wedding. Explain your service procedures that ensure cleanliness.

YOU CAN DO IT

I overcame my doubts and called the reporter back, and hope I did a good job of representing the portable sanitation industry. And I will take this time to encourage you to do the same if a local reporter reaches out to you for an interview. Better yet, take the time to reach out to a reporter yourself, be it a local newspaper writer, a TV news anchor or a radio announcer, and offer to share your expertise.

By becoming a spokesperson for the restroom industry you will:

- **Share valuable information for restroom users.** Reassure the public that your goal is to provide clean, sanitary restrooms to offer them relief whether on the construction site or a backyard wedding. Explain your service procedures that ensure cleanliness. Ask the public to share their feedback with you and customers that rent your units. Sometimes you hear people say they've had a bad experience with a portable restroom. Ask them to give PROs another chance to impress them with service and well-maintained equipment.

- **Raise awareness about restroom vandalism.** Talk about the challenges the restroom industry faces with vandalism, including graffiti, tip-overs and arson. Explain how vandalism costs PROs thousands of dollars every year in replacement parts and labor. Ask users to respect restroom contractors and the next patron by using restrooms appropriately and reporting vandalism they see to police, event organizers or by calling the number on the side of the unit.

- **Talk about a cause near and dear to your heart.** Small businesses donate millions of dollars and free services to civic and charitable projects they believe in, but often it's behind the scenes or garners little attention. Now, I know that you don't contribute restrooms for a cancer fundraiser or a charity run strictly for the publicity. Your families often have a meaningful connection to these events. It can only help the events if you get out there and talk about them — and if you receive any positive publicity for helping an event, all the better.

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the portable sanitation industry. Few people have a background or training to deal with a call from the media, and you may not consider yourself an "expert." But in your hometown, you know more about portable restrooms than anyone else, and that qualifies you to speak on behalf of your industry.

So go ahead and answer that media call. It's not as difficult as you think it might be. Take it from someone who knows. And there may be many benefits for your company and the portable sanitation industry in general. Folks will hear about your company for the first time, realize they need the services you provide, and give you a call. And every person you can connect with in a positive way will help in turn build on the reputation for all PROs. ■

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Getting Rid of Toxic Customers

Firing a customer sounds a little crazy. Why would you ever turn down business? Obviously that's never ideal. But there are certain types of customers who are downright damaging to your business. Read this article to learn to spot those types and how to cut ties.

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5 Marketing Trends Every PRO Should Consider

IN THE EVER-CHANGING WORLD OF MARKETING, SEVERAL CURRENT TRENDS COULD HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON YOUR PORTABLE RESTROOM BUSINESS

By Judy Kneiszel

Once upon a time, a portable restroom operator could place an ad in the Yellow Pages, slap a logo and phone number on the side of the company trucks and call it a marketing plan. Today, new marketing opportunities abound. Here are some trending marketing practices that might be worth adopting to give your business a boost:

1. Mobile first. The number of web searches done on mobile devices is at least 50 percent and growing, according to Google. Optimize websites and other digital content to be viewed on mobile devices. Make sure content can be viewed and performs equally well across all devices — desktop computers, laptops, tablets and smartphones — by hiring a web developer who can optimize your website and emails for mobile devices first, and then consider other platforms.

Optimizing content for mobile devices means understanding the conditions under which people use their smartphones and devices. Consider, for example, how long it takes under average conditions to load a page over a mobile network. Insist that when your information is viewed on a mobile device, the viewer can call your company with a single click.

In general, personal computers are used for research, but mobile devices are used for action. If someone asks Apple's Siri where they can rent a portable restroom, odds are they are serious about wanting to rent and will take action, so make it easy for them. And if you really want to get into mobile marketing, the next step may be location-based marketing, which uses technology to determine where your customers are so you can connect and interact with them on their mobile devices in real time.

2. Live video. Facebook has made live video streaming simple for anyone to do. How can you use Go Live to market your company? Let's say you're providing restrooms for a major music festival in your town and stream a Go Live video on Facebook from the scene, showing the units being unloaded and set up with the festival grounds in the background.

What do you accomplish? You've reminded your Facebook followers to attend the festival, which shows the client you're a team player. Plus, you've impressed your Facebook followers with the knowledge that your company is serving this awesome festival, making you and your company awesome by association. It's also an ego boost for your employees to know you're bragging about their hard work at this cool event.

Be sure to zoom in on the company logo and phone number on the trucks and restroom units. Why take the time to Go Live? Because you have nothing to lose — all of this trendy marketing is absolutely free.

Marketing is constantly evolving and if you want your company to remain relevant and grow, it's in your best interest to keep up on the trends.

3. Personalized marketing. It's easy for consumers to get lost in the sea of marketing messages they encounter every minute of every day. That's why marketers are increasing their use of data collection, analysis and automation technology to provide individualized content to potential customers. That may not be possible for a small company lacking in IT staff, but don't underestimate the personalized touches you are able to provide.

If customers have trusted your company enough to share contact information, they will appreciate individual attention, which can inspire or deepen loyalty. Ironically, in this age of sophisticated data-driven digital marketing, personalized or one-to-one marketing like a direct phone call, an email addressing an individual decision-maker by name, or a face-to-face meeting can be a refreshing, memorable marketing tool.

4. Purpose-driven marketing. Have you noticed there are more ads today that tell a story? These ads don't just describe the product or service being promoted; they tell why a company does what it does or how it makes the world a better place. Attempting to establish an identity as a business with a conscience is sometimes called purpose-driven marketing.

Young people especially want to do business with companies that give back. While consumers can spot a phony message a mile off, you may benefit from a well-crafted message touting company efforts to be environmentally responsible or actively supportive of the community.

5. Increased voice searching. Voice assistants like Amazon Alexa, Apple Siri, Microsoft Cortana and Google Assistant get asked a lot of questions these days. According to Google, 20 percent of searches done on mobile devices are voice searches, and the number of voice searches on all devices is growing. As people see and hear their peers talking to devices with more frequency, they feel less silly doing it themselves, so the number of voice searches will continue to increase.

Make sure your website content includes key words and phrases that answer questions potential customers would ask to find a portable restroom company. How are voice searches different? Consider this: If you wanted to know the name of the tallest U.S. president and you were at your desktop computer, you'd probably type, "tallest U.S. president." If you were

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asking Siri, however, you'd likely say, "Who was the tallest U.S. president?" The difference may seem negligible, but it can actually make a difference in search results.

UPDATE THE MARKETING MENU

Not every marketing technique works for everyone. What's most effective varies from day to day, company to company and customer to customer. Marketing is constantly evolving and if you want your company to remain relevant and grow, it's in your best interest to keep up on the trends. Don't abandon the tried-and-true, but occasionally review your marketing plan and implement some fresh ideas. After all, if no one ever upgraded their marketing efforts, consumers would still be getting all their information from cave paintings. ■

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The Pete's Toilets team includes, from left, Dan Smart, Chris Loughin and Bob Zukas. The truck is from Satellite Industries and the restroom is from PolyJohn Enterprises. (Photos by Oliver Parini)

WORKING SMART

Moving up from technician and driver to company owner offers many challenges to New Hampshire's Dan Smart

BY SHARON VERBETEN

Decades ago, young Dan Smart, fresh out of high school, figured he had a pretty good deal working for a septic service company. It was good solid work and he didn't really think about owning his own business at that point.

But after about a decade of good-natured ribbing and asking, his previous employer finally convinced him to take over the portable restroom side of his New England septic business.

"I just figured I'd give it a shot and wing it," says Smart, 43, the new owner of Pete's Toilet Rentals in Plaistow, New Hampshire, located about 35 minutes north of Boston.

Smart was being somewhat modest about his qualifications to run a restroom business. He had, after all, worked in the industry for

Pete's Toilet Rentals Plaistow, New Hampshire

Owners: Dan Smart

Founded: 2017

Employees: 3

Services: Portable sanitation

Service area: 20-mile radius around the Massachusetts-New Hampshire border



many years. But after finalizing the deal early this year, Smart is now fully focused on growing the operation.

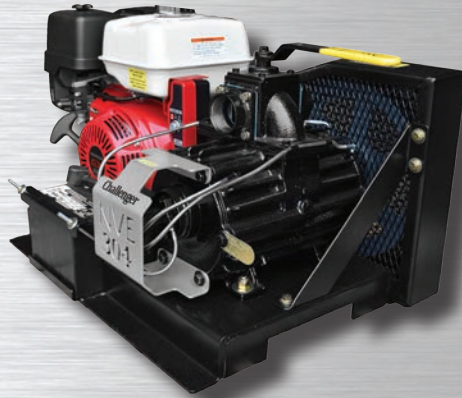
IN THE BEGINNING

Smart's entry into the portable sanitation industry was an interesting one. In summer 1991, Smart had just gotten out of high school and was dating a girl whose uncle, Peter Johnson, owned Pete's Sewer Service in Plaistow. When an emergency call came in one day while Smart was with the Johnsons, he rode along — and, as the story goes, Smart never left. While the high school romance

(continued)

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ers bought a single portable restroom just to have one at their home. When someone saw it and asked to rent it, Johnson purchased a few more units and eventually a restroom truck. But Johnson's heart really wasn't in that business.

"Pete just had such a good reputation that people wanted him to get into it," says Smart. "It was kind of more of a nuisance to him at the time." But Smart began working with the units and, as time went on, Johnson would casually ask, "When are you going to buy the business?"

Left: Dan Smart washes restrooms in the company yard.

Below: Smart loads a portable restroom onto a truck for delivery.



"We share equipment a bit, if we need a truck for something small. If either of us is busier or slower, we help each other out. We'll still work together like we always have."

DAN SMART

fizzled, Smart's career was just starting to take off.

"I never dreamed of making a career out of it, but they are super nice people to work for and they treat employees like family," says Smart. "You really can't find that kind of work relationship in this day and age."

An outdoorsy guy who likes driving a truck, Smart used to do construction with his dad. And while he tried college, he quickly realized it wasn't for him. Fortunately, Pete's Sewer Service proved an excellent training ground.

"It taught me some people skills," admits Smart, the self-described "shy kid at school." But he admits, now that he deals with customers and services large events on a regular basis, he has learned to refine his social skills and "be able to communicate with people."

Smart worked alongside Johnson at the company, which pumped and serviced septic tanks, and provided pumpouts of RVs, boats, and commercial and residential tanks. Smart was on the job 26 years ago when the own-

Smart eventually took the bait, and set the transition in motion.

While Smart took over ownership of the restroom portion early in 2017, he does still tangentially work with Johnson's company — they help each other out when needed as well as sharing the same yard and garage.

"We share equipment a bit, if we need a truck for something small," he says. "If either of us is busier or slower, we help each other out. We'll still work together like we always have."

EQUIPMENT LIST

Portable restrooms — an afterthought for Johnson — have become a solid business for Smart, 43. He acquired only the restroom portion of the business and Johnson maintains the septic and sewer service business.

Pete's Toilet Rentals inventory includes 350 blue restrooms, as well as hand-wash stations and handicap units, all from PolyJohn Enterprises. Smart uses deodorizers from J&J Chemical.

The fleet of trucks includes a 2015 Ford F-550 with Satellite Industries 650-gallon waste/300-gallon freshwater tank; a 2008 Ford F-550 with a 400-gallon waste/200-gallon freshwater stainless steel tank fabricated in-house; and a 1999 Isuzu NPR with a 300-gallon waste/110-gallon freshwater stainless steel tank from Best Enterprises. All three trucks run Conde

(continued)



The Pete's Toilet Rental fleet includes, from left, an Isuzu built out by Best Enterprises, a Ford built in-house and a Ford from Satellite Industries. All trucks run Conde (Westmoor) pumps.

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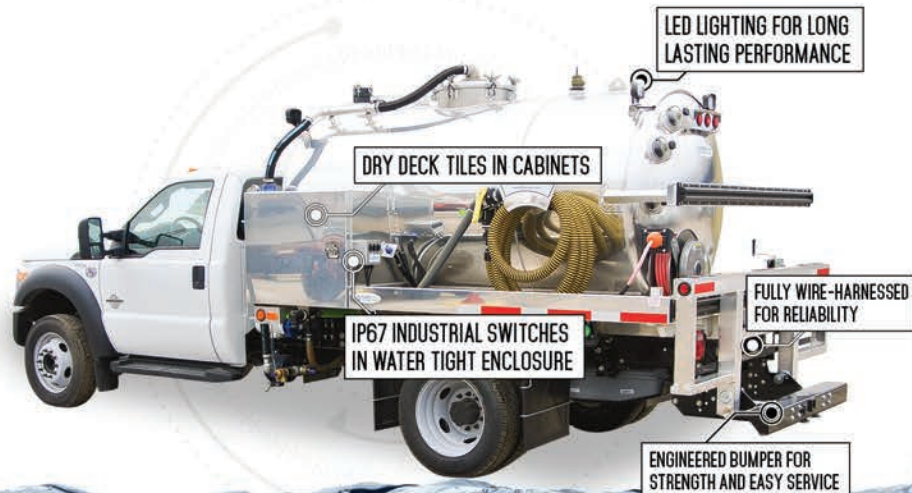
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Dan Smart makes the rounds pumping boats at a marina. Marine pumpouts are an unusual job for many PROs.



Pumping boats and RVs

Marine pumpouts look to be an area of growth for Dan Smart of Pete's Toilet Rentals. "It's a task not many pumpers do," says Smart, who finds boaters are pleasantly surprised to hear he offers the service.

"Most of the boats we pump out are done at the end of the season when they are getting winterized, so the boats are already out of the water and in the boat-yard," says Smart. That removes the risk of having a spill on the water.

Smart says maritime law allows boaters to dump when they are out at sea and far away from shore, so most of the boats he pumps are smaller (20 to 30 feet long) and have smaller tanks (15 to 30 gallons). "I do a few larger yachts that can range up to 40 to 80 feet long; they can hold up to 300 gallons."

RVs at events as well as those owned by snowbirds offer another niche service. For the RV and marine work, Smart uses a special wand with several different attachments to fit different applications.

RV pumping presents challenges. "They are usually parked in highly congested areas, so maneuvering and backing up a pump truck requires your full attention and a lot of caution," Smart says. "The last thing you want to do is have to call your insurance company to tell them you put a hole in the side of a boat or a motor home."

Smart's vacuum wand has a bleeder valve, which allows the operator to draw air to help reduce the vacuum. That's important, he says, because it is possible to collapse a holding tank if you use too much vacuum pressure. Likewise, he adds, pumping boats requires even more caution than pumping RVs.

In the average RV, graywater and black-water tanks are 30 to 50 gallons, but they can range from as little as 15 gallons to over 100 gallons in the class-A motor homes. Some RVs can have as many as four to five holding tanks.

"So you really have to get on the ground and make sure you find all the dump valves," Smart cautions. "They are mounted in so many different locations from all the different manufacturers, so it can be easy to miss a tank when you are servicing them."

In addition to finding all the dump valves, Smart notes that pumping RVs is especially precarious because "If you don't pay attention, you can spill a little ... but it's easy enough to clean up with the vacuum from the nozzle. We do have spill control kits if it's a more serious spill."

As far as costs go, Smart says, if he just does a single RV, he charges the same amount as servicing a portable restroom. "If it's a large number of RVs, say a race-track or at the state fairs, we charge less when there are five or more RV pumpouts at the same location."

"Maneuvering and backing up a pump truck requires your full attention and a lot of caution. The last thing you want to do is have to call your insurance company to tell them you put a hole in the side of a boat or a motor home."

DAN SMART

Super 6 pumps (Westmor). Two restroom transport trailers, 12- and 20-units models, were built by ALCOM LLC.

He acquired his 2015 Ford F-550, with Satellite Industries tank, after viewing it at the WWETT Show.

While Smart says he's "always been a Chevy guy," he adds, "my (former) boss is a Ford guy, and I've always been happy with their performance. Overall, they've been pretty good."

Right now, he says, "I just want to focus on paying this one off" before considering his next truck — to be a Chevy 1-ton with a small slide-in unit — which would also serve as his personal vehicle.

Smart is ready to add equipment to build the business, but in a prudent manner. He has a comfortable inventory for now, but, Smart adds, "I'd like to max out around 1,000 units. We'd like to keep our mom-and-pop reputation ... not become corporate."

Smart says he has gotten great product ideas from the two WWETT Shows. "That's where we acquired the latest Ford.

"You get to see the new products that are out and get trade show deals," he says, noting that he took advantage of one of those deals recently when they bought a full load of PolyJohn units.

He may consider purchasing restroom trailers at some point, to answer an emerging demand. "The past year or two we've been getting calls for them," Smart says, adding that he services some trailers for other out-of-area companies who drop them off, but don't want to return frequently to pump them.

"I want to grow at a slow, steady rate," says Smart, who didn't rely on a bank loan to finance the purchase. Interestingly, when Johnson originally purchased his business, it was as part of a "gentleman's agreement" of sorts, so Johnson let Smart operate the same

Right: Technician Chris Loughin pumps out an RV holding tank.

Below: Dan Smart pumps the waste tank on a boat at a local marina. A special wand with a bleeder valve is used to prevent collapsing the small marine tanks.



way; rather than a structured buy-out, Smart pays Johnson a monthly fee for the business and equipment.

Both parties agreed that was the best way to structure the transition.

"I just figured I'd pay him as much as I could each month," says Smart. That way, he says, "I'm not going to pay interest to a bank. That's a big plus right there."

KEEPING A GOOD NAME

Because Pete's Sewer Service has name recognition and a good reputation, Smart says he decided to keep the name Pete's — although he sees a time down the road that he might change the name. He believes he's got the perfect last name for a business — Smart Toilet Rental might be a choice for him.

Smart continues with the former Pete's clientele, mostly corporate and residential construction jobs with a few special events (like mud runs, foot races, etc.) thrown in. But he feels the competition is too stiff in that arena, so he sees construction as the niche he'd like to grow.

Several area fairgrounds and the events they schedule provide some steady work. While the grounds have public restrooms, Smart's company supplies 10 to 15 units on site, but pumps out about 80 campers a day.

The past year has been especially good due to remarkably mild weather on the East Coast. "It was busy all winter. ... It should be a good year," says Smart, noting that his region only had snow for about two weeks.

In addition to his construction work, Smart services the New Hampshire firearm manufacturer Sig Sauer, which has a local training grounds and rifle range where they train for police academies. The Sig Sauer contract is a year-round project. Pete's Toilet Rentals supplies 15 restrooms on site, and they pump out eight office trailers and fill them with freshwater.

OFFICE TASKS

Smart says he hasn't done much marketing to get new business. Word-of-mouth has been strong. But he concentrates on presenting a fresh presence around town. They paint and letter their own trucks and plan on building a webpage, which will link his restroom company to Johnson's septic company.

And he's only dabbled in social media — Pete's Toilet Rentals has a Facebook presence, but Smart says they have kind of taken a break from that. But he's not worried about taking his time ramping up the marketing efforts because of the solid customer base.

"We had some customers for so long ... there is customer loyalty," he says.

So while getting and servicing new business hasn't been a learning curve for Smart, the office work has. A single dad to his 15-year-old son, Jackson, Smart doesn't employ an office person, so he does it all — although his son does help out in the yard and on runs during the summer.

"So far, the biggest challenge is doing all the work in the office. ... That's not something I did much of ... it's not something I shine in," he says. "I'd rather be out in the truck." One day he'll hire an employee to work the office, but he thinks it's a good thing that he becomes familiar with all the management tasks first.

For now, Smart's girlfriend, Carly, a local restaurateur, helps out in office when she can. Her background in bookkeeping and business ownership is an ideal fit.

Smart admits the office end of the business is "not my favorite part, but I know I need to do it. The hardest part is getting myself in the office."

TIME OF CHANGE

Smart knows he's working through a transitional period, and he's still figuring it all out. He's thinking about adding fencing and trash containers to his list of rentals, but those prospects are pretty far off at the moment. "I've

actually seen in magazines that some companies do all three of those," he says, but notes he's only been asked about it by one or two clients.

Smart says he might look at buying Johnson's septic business down the road when Johnson retires. But for now, Smart is working hard and working, well, smart.

"It's not the size of my company I worry about," he says. "Customer satisfaction is more important. I just want to focus on great customer service." ■

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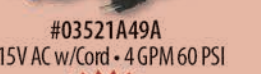
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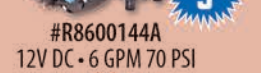
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By Peter Kenter

From durable surfaces to optimized tool and material storage, service bodies can help bring the shop out into the field. But the market offers a lot of choice, from standard issue to fully customized. Making sure that the service body matches the needs of a restroom contractor will help to ensure the best performance.

Highway Products has produced both standard and custom service bodies for more than 30 years in White City, Oregon. All of its service bodies are made of welded aluminum, not only because aluminum is durable and rust-resistant, but because it's less than half the weight of an identical steel service body. The reduced weight can make a significant dent in contractor fuel cost.

"With a lighter service body you might be able to use an F-150 instead of an F-250 and save some money on the vehicle," says Highway Products consultant Jim Lenford. "That would more than cover the initial higher price of aluminum over steel."

Standard utility service bodies are designed for a broad range of industries that could include portable restroom operators who want to carry a host of supplies and tools.

Built of 1/8-inch aluminum, Highway Products models bolt into place on existing pickup truck frames. Doors are typically smooth aluminum, while decks, bodies, top boxes and tailgates are diamond plate or other textured finish. These models consist of six storage compartments, fenders, bed, tailgate and a bumper with lighting. Inside the body are four storage compartments with adjustable shelving, two located in front of the wheel well and two behind. Two smaller compartments are located above each fender. The location of a fuel-filler bezel depends on the model of the truck.

Contractors can also choose options including toolboxes, headache racks and ladder racks. Highway Products offers a Truckslide option, a steel or aluminum platform that slides out like a drawer along the bottom of the truck bed, allowing material to be off-loaded more easily.

A Pickup Pack model slips into the back of a pickup and turns the bed into lockable storage. The standard model includes two full-length lockable low side boxes and a flat or domed center hatch. A space underneath the toolboxes provides room for additional cargo.

But no two businesses operate alike, even among PROs. Customized service bodies can help improve workflow and provide unique features to accommodate tools and materials.



Above: The Highway Products' Truckslide option provides a platform that slides out like a drawer for easier material handling. (Photos courtesy of Highway Products)



Left: Custom service bodies can offer additional made-to-measure storage space, including lift-out tool trays, which PROs could find handy to organize tools, supplies and replacement parts.

MAKING CHOICES

"Often, our standard service body with options will cover most of our customers' needs," says J.D. Martin, sales team leader at Highway Products. "Every now and then we get customers who want cabinets of a certain depth to fit a specific tool, want to build the service body around a particular item, or build something completely off the wall, like a service body built entirely around transporting a drone with camera equipment."

Customers typically begin by identifying the model of their truck, providing the vehicle identification number to ensure that a design fits the vehicle exactly.

"We ask them if they've changed anything on their trucks since buying it," says Lenford. "Maybe they've installed oversized tires or Kelderman Air Ride. A typical truck off the lot measures 56 inches from the back of the cab to the axle, whereas a cab chassis is 60 inches. The 4 inches are critical, as is the fact that the bed won't have humps in the frame to accommodate the axle."

Martin next asks customers about their business.

"If you've never ordered a custom service body before, you may not know what questions to ask," he says. "We talk about what they do from day

The Highway Products Pickup Pack fits in the truck bed, creating a lockable storage space and overhead rack.



Square tube racks and extra storage space can help to transport tools, parts and pipe.



to day. I can suggest options that customers in similar businesses have selected or found beneficial. For example, one of the big options for contractors is topper boxes featuring removable tool trays with handles on them. They can lift them out just like trays in a tool chest and take them to the job site instead of going back and forth."

OPTIONS FOR PROS

Portable restroom operators working construction sites or special events might look to handle specific needs with a pickup sporting a service body. They might see the rig as an extra warehouse for tools or cleaning supplies they would require at a major event with lots of units on site, such as a NASCAR race or a college football game.

"If you've never ordered a custom service body before, you may not know what questions to ask. We talk about what they do from day to day. I can suggest options that customers in similar businesses have selected or found beneficial."

J.D. Martin

"Drawers with dividers and compartments are a good option to organize smaller parts and fittings," Lenford says. Or you might specify a cabinet or drawer to hold safety equipment such as hard hats, high-vis vests, gloves and a first-aid kit. Maybe you want a space to organize hinges, stickers or other replacement parts to make repairs on the job site. Paper products and specialized cleaning supplies, like graffiti remover, could also find a home in a service body.

Other options include LED lighting strips that automatically switch on when a compartment is opened. Specialty pole lighting attachments can illuminate a job site at night. Service body baskets can be used to carry hand tools such as shovels, hoes and rakes.

Some customers also request a LINE-X spray-on bedliner to ensure that items stored in the bed are less likely to move during transit.

Some requests are discouraged, for example building a service body designed to extend the length of the truck.

"If you have a 6.5-foot bed, it's problematic to order an 8-foot body," says Lenford. "You can get frame extensions to make it work, but it throws

off the center of gravity of the truck. From an aesthetic standpoint, it doesn't look right either."

Other customers have requested service bodies with canopies that are too tall for the truck, something the company discourages because it subjects the vehicle to destabilizing winds. Service bodies wider than the truck bed also catch wind and affect handling.

MOSTLY DIY

Although they can drive their trucks to the shop to have the service body bolted on, customers most often have the service body shipped, along with a mounting kit containing 16 to 24 bolts.

"If you were thinking of installing it yourself, you'd want enough people or a forklift to lift it into position," says Martin. "After that, it's easy to bolt on." ■



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ON LOCATION

Tom Schenderlein, left, supervisor, and Roger Smith, a Blu-John driver, are shown servicing restrooms in a parking lot at SunTrust Park in Atlanta. (Photos by Kaylinn Gilstrap)

THE JOB: Atlanta Braves baseball games
LOCATION: SunTrust Park, Atlanta
THE PRO: Blu-John



Batter Up!

Timing is everything when Blu-John services Atlanta Braves games at newly opened SunTrust Park **BY KEN WYSOCKY**

THE TEAM

Blu-John is owned by Jeremy Hawkins and ADCO Holdings, headquartered in Atlanta. ADCO Holdings is part of ADCO International, a global portable sanitation company with operations in the U.S., Europe and Asia. Tom Schenderlein is the assistant manager directly responsible for the Atlanta Braves service operations. Many different employees contribute to the summer-long service.

COMPANY HISTORY

To build a presence in the U.S., ADCO made its first acquisition in the U.S. in 1998, and established Blu-John in 2000 as a “greenfield” start-up in Atlanta. Under the corporate umbrella of Blu Site Solutions, ADCO now operates seven U.S.-based portable sanitation operations. Three of the Blu Site operations are located in Florida, with two more in Georgia and the remaining two in North Carolina. Blu Site serves customers in seven states: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee.



EQUIPMENT ROUND-UP

Blu-John owns thousands of restrooms, primarily made by PolyPortables. The division also owns dozens of Hino and Ford restroom service trucks built out by TankTec and Lane’s Vacuum Tank. They feature aluminum tanks ranging in size from 500 gallons waste/250 gallons freshwater to 5,000 gallons waste/800 gallons freshwater, and are equipped with Masport, Jurop/Chandler and National Vacuum Equipment (NVE) vacuum pumps. The company also owns several GMC 5500 flatbed trucks used for restroom delivery and pickup, restroom trailers from Satellite Industries, hand-wash stations made by PolyPortables and flatbed trailers from by Liquid Waste Industries.

The Blu-John service truck makes its way to a parking lot to service restrooms before an afternoon Atlanta Braves game at SunTrust Park.

(continued)

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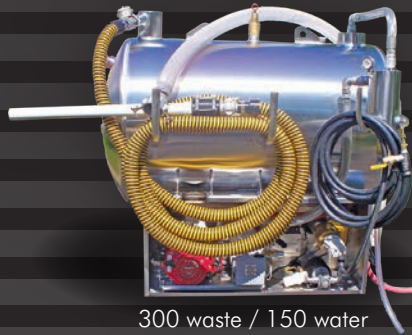
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Right: Roger Smith washes a bank of restrooms at a parking lot used for Atlanta Braves tailgating fans. The Hino truck was outfitted by Lane's Vacuum Tank. The fleet is outfitted with either NVE, Masport or Jurop/Chandler pumps.

Below: Smith fills a bucket with water to clean and recharge a restroom holding tank at SunTrust Park.



THE MAIN EVENT

This is the eighth year in a row that Blu-John is servicing the 81 home baseball games played by the Atlanta Braves. There's a new wrinkle this year, however, because the Braves moved from Turner Field to SunTrust Park, located about 10 miles northwest of downtown Atlanta.

PLANNING AHEAD

Preparation for servicing the games begins a couple months before the season, when Hawkins meets with Braves officials to review pregame ticket sales, which is a good indicator of how many restrooms will be needed for games. The most popular games, of course, are on holiday weekends like Memorial Day, the Fourth of July and Labor Day, plus any marquee games where the Braves play the best teams in the Major League.

Blu-John provides about 80 restrooms for the most popular games, 60 for medium-popular games and 40 for the least-attended games. Hawkins doesn't expect any low-attendance games this year because the new stadium is a popular drawing card for fans.

The Braves home stands range from two to 10 or 12 games in a row. Weekday games usually start at 7:30 p.m. and weekend games typically begin at 1 or 4 p.m.

LET'S ROLL

To service a typical game, Blu-John drivers use the company's GMC flatbed trucks and pull-behind trailers to deliver and pick up restrooms. Each driver can deliver 20 restrooms — eight on a truck and 12 on a trailer, Hawkins says.

On the morning after each game, Blu-John generally pumps out and cleans all the restrooms with one route technician, using one of the company's Hino 338s, equipped with a 1,500-gallon waste/500-gallon freshwater tank and an NVE pump. If another truck is required, a dispatcher calls in one of the several service trucks Blu-John typically has working in the area, Hawkins says.

Blu-John is required to provide brand-new Atlanta Braves-blue restrooms every year. The company buys PolyPortables Axxis and Vantage units, which feature a handbag shelf, a mirror and coat hook, plus Purell hand-soap dispensers.

“The Braves want the nicest restrooms available for their patrons. I don't mind it, either, because people see nice new Blu-John restrooms. So it's good for the Braves, good for the patrons and good for us.”

JEREMY HAWKINS

“The Braves want the nicest restrooms available for their patrons,” Hawkins explains. “I don't mind it, either, because people see nice new Blu-John restrooms. So it's good for the Braves, good for the patrons and good for us.” After the season ends, the new units get combined with the company's inventory of special-event restrooms.

TIMING IS CRITICAL

On the first day of a home stand, drivers deliver the restrooms around 6 a.m. It's about a 40-minute drive one way from the Blu-John yard to the stadium. “We have to start early, before the traffic gets too heavy,” Hawkins notes. “If you don't make that window in the morning, you're in trouble because thousands of people work in the business buildings that stand all around the stadium.”

(continued)



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Left: Roger Smith services PolyPortables restrooms.

Below: Smith services PolyPortables standard and Satellite Industries handicap restrooms using a Hino service truck outfitted by Lane's Vacuum Tank.



The same is true for the morning after a game; the restrooms get cleaned before freeway traffic and tailgaters become an issue, he says.

It takes about two hours to set up the restrooms, which are located within a 1-mile radius around the stadium. "About half of the restrooms are located in the stadium's largest lot, which is dedicated to just tailgating," Hawkins says. "We strategically place the other restrooms in clusters of two to six in the rest of the stadium's parking lots." The bigger the lot, the more restrooms it receives. The restroom clusters are anywhere from 200 to 500 yards apart, he says.

FAMILIAR BUT DIFFERENT

The biggest difference between the old stadium and the new stadium is the parking lot configuration. At Turner Field, the Braves owned more of the parking lots around and the lots were large. At SunTrust Park, the Braves organization leases parking space from adjacent businesses. As such, the parking lots are smaller and spread out a little more than at Turner Field.

But one thing remains the same: The pressure to deliver great service for a high-profile event, 81 times a year. The exposure to tens of thousands of people at each game is a high-risk, high-reward venture. On one hand, the publicity is great; Hawkins maximizes the opportunity by putting a Blu-John decal on all four sides of each restroom. But that visibility can also backfire if service is anything but top-notch, he notes.

"You don't want to make a mistake, because it's a lot of exposure," Hawkins says. "But so far, it's been great." ■

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Karleen Kos is executive director of the Portable Sanitation Association International. She may be reached at karleenk@psai.org or 952/854-8300.



Don't Navigate the Complex World of Portable Sanitation Alone. Join the PSAI.

By Karleen Kos

A children's book titled *Everyone Poops* has sold millions of copies since the 1970s. A couple of books for grown-ups called *Everybody Poops 410 Pounds* and *Everybody Poops 10 Million Pounds* bring into focus just how much waste an individual produces in a year and a city like New York produces in a single day.

I think we can all agree — there's a lot of waste to be handled and portable restroom operators are professionals who handle a good portion of it.

People who don't know anything about our work often turn it into a joke — but those of us in the industry know how serious it is. There is a lot to know.

- PROs have to be business people, licensing their company, lawfully

collecting and paying taxes, protecting workers, and carrying out a business strategy sufficient to make a profit and grow the company

- PROs have to be diplomats and negotiators, successfully getting the best deals from customer agreements, financing sources and suppliers
- PROs have to be experts on portable sanitation topics including processes, techniques, equipment, and a dizzying array of relevant laws at federal, state and local levels

With all this to know — and constantly changing rules — there is a role for a portable sanitation-specific trade association like Portable Sanitation Association International (PSAI). Every week I take calls from members and nonmembers with questions:

- What licenses do I need and how can I get them?
- Help — I'm being audited by my state's tax authority and they say I owe thousands of dollars in back taxes! Can that be right?
- My disposal site says they won't take my loads anymore because they are too heavily concentrated with (some mineral). What are the EPA (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency) limits? What are my disposal alternatives?
- There is a law in my state I think is terrible. How can I get it changed?
- One of my guys saw a competitor illegally dumping a load into a city sewer. What should I do?
- Are ADA units required at a private wedding held on public land?
- My state requires hours of ongoing training, but I can't find anything specific to portable sanitation. Can you work with the state to offer information relevant to us?

We know there are PROs who believe they don't have the money or the time to be part of the PSAI. In today's world, when you have a question or a need, you can always just throw it open to the world of Facebook if you can't figure it out yourself. Sometimes that works fine. Sometimes really questionable things are suggested on social media. You take your chances.

As a member of the PSAI you can be sure of a few things:

- The information you get will be as accurate as it can be
- If we don't have the answers, we'll do our best to get them or to create them
- If a law needs to be addressed, we'll help PROs in your state find a way to do so

We hope you'll consider joining the PSAI if you're not already a member. A lot has changed in the past three years, and we offer more benefits and support than ever. Most members would tell you the investment more than pays for itself.

There is a proverb that says, "If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together." Everyone poops, and everyone in the portable sanitation industry, working together, can go further in gaining both respect and profit as we handle our share of the 410 pounds per person per year. Join us! ■

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By Craig Mandli

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PORTABLE SINKS

ARMAL AQUA STAND

The **Aqua Stand** outdoor portable hand-wash sink from Armal is designed to withstand any weather condition and can be used for construction, special events and in municipal parks. Its 23-gallon water tank has a tamper-resistant lid. It has foot-pump operation and optional soap and paper towel dispensers. It is double-sided, lightweight and easy to maneuver and use. It fits inside the Armal Wave restroom unit, and most other portable restrooms for easy transport. **770/491-6410; www.armal.biz.**



POLYJOHN ENTERPRISES SOAP DISPENSER

The **Soap Dispenser** from PolyJohn Enterprises is outfitted with an O-ring and a lid secured to the container and backing plate, making it sealed and spill-proof, even upside down. It shares the same footprint as the previous soap dispenser, meaning there's no need to drill new holes in units when making the upgrade.



Convenience features include one-hand operation, ability to use a variety of soaps and a clear container to view the soap level. **800/292-1305; www.polyjohn.com.**

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Foaming Hand Sanitizer from J&J Chemical is a waterless wash disinfectant with a light lime fragrance that kills 99 percent of most disease-causing germs. It is dye-free, alcohol-free and biodegradable. Options include a standard manual foaming dispenser and an automatic no-touch foaming dispenser. Both come with adhesive wall mount system and predrilled mounting holes. **800/345-3303; www.jjchem.com.**



EXPLORER TRAILERS HAND-WASH STATION



The hand-wash station from **Explorer Trailers** is designed as a self-contained unit that allows outdoor event or work site crowds to have easy access to warm water and soap dispensers. Options include mirrors and lighting. Stainless steel sinks and counters with self-closing water-saver faucets are simple to clean and maintain, according to the maker. A large polyethylene freshwater tank, paired with a galvanized graywater tank, ensures many uses before discharge and recharge. Setup is easy, and a custom-painted steel chassis with front-locking utility cabinet ensures the unit is aesthetically pleasing, while safely containing the water heater and pressure tank. The graywater tank is horizontally mounted inside the chassis with a 2-inch discharge port at the rear. All are built on a commercial-grade trailer chassis for easy towing and placement. **866/457-5425; www.explorertailers.com.**

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PORTABLE SINKS

FIVE PEAKS SIERRA RIDEALONG

The **Sierra RideAlong** freestanding hand-wash station from **Five Peaks** has twin basins with molded-in maintenance-free spigots, recessed beverage holders, dual soap dispensers, an oversized paper towel dispenser and a large recessed foot pump. It is suited for special events, yet is durable enough to handle day-to-day use, according to the maker. The granite color camouflage dirt and scratches, keeping the sink looking new. It conveniently rides along inside most standard portable restrooms, making transportation more economical. The lightweight, heavy-duty rotationally molded sink enables easy access for cleaning and draining. Its 49-gallon capacity (22-gallon freshwater and 27-gallon graywater) eliminates the need for bladders and bags. **866/293-1502; www.fivepeaks.net.**



SATELLITE INDUSTRIES BREEZE

The **Breeze** easy-to-operate hand-wash station from **Satellite Industries** has a sealed water tank to ensure proper hygiene. It includes two stations with fingertip-to-elbow washing, and operates with a hands-free, baby foot pump. It includes freshwater and graywater drain plugs and an additional pumpout port on the base for wastewater. To aid drivers, all plugs are tethered to the unit to prevent loss or damage. It has two handles for lifting and fits easily inside most portable restrooms for ease of transporting. It has a sealed freshwater tank where chlorine can be added to kill bacteria. Blue areas have a fleck pattern to hide scuffs and scratches. For added protection and simple care, the top, middle and bottom gray sections are extended to provide a natural bumper. The middle gray washbasin section is replaceable. **800/883-1123; www.satelliteindustries.com.**



MONSAM ENTERPRISES MODEL PSE-2004R

The **Model PSE-2004R** four-deep-basin portable sink from **MONSAM Enterprises** is a blend of dishwashing and hand-washing stations. It has a divider between hand-wash and dishwashing basins, is fully mobile, provides hot and cold running water and is completely self-contained. All the technician needs to do is fill the tank and plug it in.



The three 12-inch-deep basins provide space to soak, rinse and dry utensils, while allowing users to wash their hands opposite the dividing wall. Each sink comes with heavy-duty swivel casters. It can be used indoors or out. **800/513-8562; www.portablesink.com.**

POLYPORTABLES TAG II

The **Tag II** from **PolyPortables** is a versatile freestanding hand-wash station. Design upgrades include better grips for easier transport, a taller backboard to protect dispensers, and a modern design. It is lightweight, making it simple to transport and easy to clean. It will fit inside most standard-size portable restrooms for delivery. It has 24-gallon graywater and freshwater tanks, a 1.8 gpm foot pump and two spray soap dispensers. **800/241-7951; www.polyportables.com.**



SANITRAX INTERNATIONAL WASHBASIN

The eight-person **Washbasin** module from **Sanitrax International** is part of the company's modular sanitary concept, making it a fit for events, humanitarian aid, military deployments and other situations where masses of people need temporary facilities. It has a strong and sustainable design; simple, safe, economic transport and loading; proven vacuum technology; flexible on-site placement; a hygienic one-form washbasin; full-size stainless mirror; integrated towel dispensers or hand dryers; and an energy-efficient LED lighted interior. **www.sanitrax.com.**



technology; flexible on-site placement; a hygienic one-form washbasin; full-size stainless mirror; integrated towel dispensers or hand dryers; and an energy-efficient LED lighted interior. **www.sanitrax.com.**

SPIN PRODUCTS DUAL STATION HANDWASH SINK



The **Dual Station Handwash Sink** from **Spin Products** has triangular faucets that eliminate breakage. A sturdy corner brace provides a secure method for hoisting, meaning no more broken faucets because someone thought it was the lifting handle. Paper towel dispensers are built into the lockable top. The corner brace also provides a protected area to mount a soap dispenser. Molded backsplashes and deep sinks keep water where it belongs. The unit has a 20-gallon freshwater tank, two Baby Whale foot pumps, and a molded, stabilizing bottom bumper. Three-inch threaded caps are provided for easy power washing. Units are field serviceable and fit easily inside most portable restrooms. They are available in granite grey and blue polyethylene. **909/590-7000; www.spinproducts.com.**

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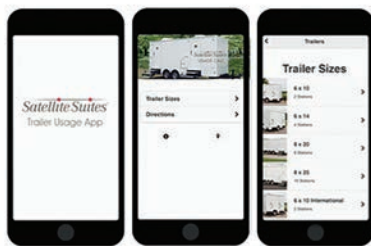
The **Tuff-Jon 90-gallon freestanding sink** with trash container from **T.S.F. Company** provides two wash stations; hands-free, foot-operated pumps; towel dispenser; and 10-cup-capacity soap dispenser. A sink-lifting bracket allows for easy positioning in high-rise applications. The sink-lifting bracket has a 1/4-inch wire cable, weighs 30 pounds and is safety orange. The unit is constructed from easy-to-clean polyethylene, with 45-gallon waste and freshwater capacities, a towel dispenser, trash container, protective skid plate and freshwater drain plug. The unit weighs 85 pounds. **800/843-9286; www.tuff-jon.com. ■**



PRODUCT NEWS

Satellite Suites usage calculator app

The Usage Calc app from Satellite Suites works with Satellite Suite restroom trailers to help determine the right-size trailer to place on site. It is available in both the Apple and Google Play stores under the name Usage Calc. The app provides information on trailer sizes 6 by 10, 6 by 14, 8 by 20 and 6 by 10 feet International with the allowable number of uses based on the trailer tank size. To use, open the app, choose trailer size, and use the slide bar and buttons to determine the maximum number of uses. 574/350-2150; www.satelliterestroomtrailers.com. ■



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RestroomDeliveryTrailers.com

BUSINESSES

Portable restroom equipment & accounts for sale. Septic & portable restroom company in Southwest Florida is looking to sell off portable restroom equipment and accounts. 5 service trucks, 8-unit toilet hauler, state & county contracts in place. Approximately 700 units currently in the field with long-term customer base. For more information call 941-270-0539. (T09)

COMPUTER SOFTWARE

FreeServiceReminderSoftware.com, FreeServiceDispatchSoftware.com, FreeRouteManagementSoftware.com. (T08)

PORTABLE RESTROOM TRAILERS

1993 Olympic fiberglass restroom trailer, 5 stalls (3 women & 2 men), air conditioning, hot water tank. \$2,000. powellsan1@windstream.net (T08)

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2015 JAG 3-room restroom trailer. Cottage decor, ac/heat, non-wood Forever Floor, dusk-to-dawn LED porch & stair lighting. 490 waste, 160 fresh tanks. \$25,500. 904-315-7027; bo@thelovelyloo.com (P08)

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PORTABLE RESTROOM TRUCKS



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Contact Steve Bishop
607-857-1312, PA T08

2014 Isuzu with FMI Workmate 1050, 122,646 miles. All service records from purchase date included. \$48,000. Please contact Jason for more information: 208-467-0089; jason@portapros.com (T09)



2002 Chevy 3500 4x4, 300 waste/150 fresh, Conde pump. Hauls 6 units with gate down. \$14,000
608-835-7767, WI PBM

2007 Isuzu with Progress slide-in 400/200, 143,594 miles. All service records from purchase date included. \$39,000. Please contact Jason for more information: 208-467-0089; jason@portapros.com (T09)

2003 Chevy, 166,000 miles. 1,500-gallon (500 fresh, 1,000 waste), Jurop vacuum pump. DC to washdown pump. Everyday work truck. \$18,000 OBO. Email mbseptic@gmail.com (T08)

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