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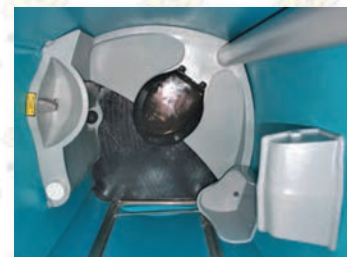
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# This PRO Had a Brush With Fame and Didn't Even Know It

**A DRIVER FOR MASSACHUSETTS COMPANY ARAUJO BROS. UNWITTINGLY PLAYED A STARRING ROLE IN BILL MURRAY'S NEW BASEBALL WEB SERIES**

By Jim Kneiszel

**H**ow does a portable restroom company not realize one of its drivers stars in two episodes of a Facebook web series with funnyman Bill Murray that is seen by millions of people? Frankly, after talking to the nice folks at Araujo Bros. on the island of Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, I still don't get it.

This story falls under the *strange, but true* category. Let me explain.

I recently watched the first two episodes of *Extra Innings*, which stars *Saturday Night Live* legend Murray and his brother, actor Brian Doyle-Murray, who yuck it up as they tour minor league baseball parks across the country. The famous baseball fanatics (Murray owns the minor-league St. Paul Saints in Minnesota and is a renowned Chicago Cubs fan) started by visiting the home of the Martha's Vineyard Sharks.

What appears like a slightly confused PRO is caught up in both episodes, as Murray stumbles into the service technician while he cleans a ball-park restroom, asking him questions about portable restrooms, his vacuum truck and other random topics. This goes on for several minutes spread over the two episodes, as Murray seems to be amused and fascinated by the gentleman and his cleaning regimen.

## DETECTIVE WORK

I couldn't see a name on the vacuum truck, and there was no label on the restroom shown. So I messaged the Sharks, who shared the name of their restroom vendor. They clearly thought it was peculiar that I wanted to know who cleaned their restrooms ... and seemed to not believe there was a magazine dedicated to this fine industry. But, of course, I've heard that before.

That's how I ended up calling Araujo Bros., based in Vineyard Haven, and got Bridget Araujo on the line. I explained the reason for my call. She had no idea what I was talking about. In fact, she was baffled at first and maybe thought I was a prank caller. So I emailed her a link to the new show and told her to take a look.

She was dumbfounded to see the company's truck on film and Murray with her service technician.

"Oh, my God, this is hilarious. I can't take this: I gotta show everybody this," she says. I think she may have even dropped the phone as she watched in disbelief.

I couldn't believe it, either.

"You mean your guy was on camera with Bill Murray and this video has had more than 3 million views in a few days and you didn't know about it?" I ask.

Um, that's right, she replies. Confused and overwhelmed, she says

she'd have her son, Kane Araujo, who is in charge of day-to-day operations for the company, call me right back.

Araujo did call me back. He says his mom called him, hysterical, telling him to watch the videos. "She was screaming. I had no idea what this even is. Then when I watched it, I thought, 'Oh wow, that's a big deal to be in there with Bill Murray,' and then I saw the amount of views."

## BIG SURPRISE

Then Araujo tells me something truly amazing. He says his driver, Alanza Murphy, likely didn't recognize the comedian and had no idea they were filming a web series.

"I honestly don't think he knew what was going on. He did mention something about it (at the time). He thought it was a home video being filmed by someone following him around," Araujo says.

And even after the videos were released, no friends or family mentioned the video to the Araujo family. It's hard to believe — in the social media-crazy world we live in — that not a peep was heard about this around the island. Especially since the Araujo family is so plugged into the community and would seemingly know about everyone in the popular vacation spot that shrinks from about 100,000 people in the summer to only 15,000 in the winter.

The Araujos are well-known in the Vineyard, even Murray himself — a regular vacationer there — seemed to know the name, referring to "old man Araujo" at one point during *Extra Innings*. The old man is Joseph Araujo, 74, who founded the septic service and restroom company 46 years ago and who still comes in at 6:30 a.m. daily to check on the crew, according to Kane Araujo.

"Absolutely, to stay in business this long is definitely an achievement; I can tell you that," Araujo says. "Since I was 7, I was riding in the trucks with my grandfather." Kane Araujo, 22, joined the company full time four years ago when he graduated from high school. Bridget Araujo answers the phones, and the crew is rounded out by Murphy, Keith Hamilton and Elijah Lerue.

The company runs two septic service trucks, has a flatbed delivery

**"She was screaming. I had no idea what this even is. Then when I watched it, I thought, 'Oh wow, that's a big deal to be in there with Bill Murray,' and then I saw the amount of views."**

**Kane Araujo**

truck, and the vacuum rig featured in *Extra Innings* is a 2006 Ford with a 400-gallon waste and 200-gallon freshwater slide-in tank (Progress Tank) and a pump (Masport). Araujo Bros. has an inventory of 250 tan PolyPortables restrooms and a restroom trailer from Comforts of Home Services, which is popular for summer weddings and beach parties on the island.

There was a good reason I didn't see a sticker on the restroom in the Murray series. The unit was brand-new, and Kane Araujo hadn't had time to add the label. Too bad because millions of people would have seen the company name.

## RIFFING ON RESTROOMS

If you watch the videos, you'll see it's almost as if Murray knew Murphy didn't know who he was when the two bantered back and forth. Murray seems amused that Murphy played a deadpan straight man ... because he didn't know comedy was happening.

"Are there certain girls that want to ride in the truck or what? What's the deal?" Murray asks as the pair look at the pump truck.

"No. No girls ride in the truck — just men," Murphy answers.

"No one wants to ride on the back? There's no girls with really long legs that want to ride on the back of this thing?" Murray continues.

"No, you're not allowed to," Murphy answers.

At one point, Murray asks about the Murphy's first name.

"Alanza? With all A's? I've never heard that one before. Where does it come from? It's probably a mistake," he jokes.

"It's not a mistake. My dad gave me it," Murphy responds.

The closing scene to the second episode shows Murray approaching Murphy cleaning the unit and says their interaction was "awesome," then walking away as the credits roll.

To see the episodes of *Extra Innings* featuring PRO Alanza Murphy, go to [www.facebook.com/billbrianextrainnings](http://www.facebook.com/billbrianextrainnings)

## PSAI Convention and Trade Show March 21-24

The Portable Sanitation Association International will hold its 2018 Convention and Trade Show later this month at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland, Oregon. The event runs Wednesday through Saturday, March 21-24. To register or get more information, go to the association website, [www.psai.org](http://www.psai.org).

The trade show will feature displays and representatives from many of the manufacturers serving the portable sanitation industry. The event will also feature speakers and workshops, roundtable discussions, receptions on the trade show floor, and training opportunities. Training sessions will cover:

- Portable Sanitation and Special Events.
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- Rafi Mohammad — "The 1 Percent Windfall: How Successful Companies Use Price to Profit and Grow," followed by a workshop entitled, "The Art of Pricing."
- Mark Carpenter — "Crucial Conversations: Tools For Talking When the Stakes Are High" and "Silent Danger: The Five Crucial Conversations That Drive Safety." ■

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company this month, Quick Space,  
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# 7 Steps to a Better Online Reputation

**WHEN IT COMES TO ONLINE REPUTATION, NO ONE CAN DO AS MUCH DAMAGE TO YOUR COMPANY AS YOU CAN DO YOURSELF. TAKE STEPS TO IMPROVE HOW YOUR BUSINESS IS PERCEIVED.**

By Judy Kneiszel

**S**o much depends on what pops up on a screen when a potential customer types your name or company name into a search engine or mentions it to Siri. The first thing someone sees after they click can make the difference between giving you business or taking it to another PRO. Make sure they like what they see by taking steps to give your online reputation a checkup and possibly a makeover.

**1. Analyze.** Type your name into a search engine, and note what comes up and how the order mentions of your name come up. Do the same for your company name. Also search “portable restroom rentals” and your city name to see how high up your company is listed. If you find negative comments, bad reviews, or come up low on the page when searched, make note of these and any other things you would like to correct, answer to, or eliminate.

**2. Consider a social media diet.** The number of platforms is growing every day, and while throwing everything at the wall to see what sticks is a popular marketing strategy, you’ll have more control over your online reputation if you limit yourself to the platforms you’re comfortable with that get the best results. Maybe you get a lot of traffic on Facebook but are ignored on Twitter, or vice versa. It’s OK to delete a stagnant account, and it’s actually better than leaving it ignored and vulnerable to negative comments that might sit for months because you don’t have time to keep up with every platform. If you decide to delete an account, make sure to also delete any connecting links on your webpage and email signature.

**3. Respond to negativity positively.** If someone posted a negative comment or review of your company, address it head on. If you were wrong or someone in the company made a mistake, admit it, apologize, and move on. If there are so many complaints you notice a pattern emerging, you need to fix the root cause, explain how it was fixed, apologize, and move on. If, however, a comment or complaint is inappropriate or completely unwarranted, you may want to delete it and block the poster. No matter how badly you want to set some complaining jerk straight, do not get into an argument on a social media site. Arguing will only draw more attention to the situation, and even if you’re right, you’re likely to end up looking bad.

**4. Be proactive.** Sometimes the best defense is a good offense. If you anticipate negative comments after a rate hike, for example, get out in front of it and write a detailed explanation justifying the increase before anyone has a chance to complain. Get them to see your side of the story and they are less likely to publicly grumble.

**5. Review your website.** While your social media sites are important, don’t forget your website. Check for dead links. Make sure everything on it

is still accurate and that it loads quickly on all devices. A tired, dated website that doesn’t fit on a smartphone screen and takes forever to load tells potential customers you’re not on top of things. You don’t want a reputation, online or otherwise, for being lazy.

**6. Assess your professionalism.** If you Google your name and the first thing that comes up is bathroom humor, political pontificating, or a picture of yourself dancing with a lampshade on your head and a jumbo margarita in your hand at the company Christmas party, it’s time to clean up your online image. Articles and columns in this publication frequently advise PROs to maintain a professional image by wearing sharp-looking uniforms, having super-clean trucks and avoiding bathroom humor in branding. The same should be true for your online presence. Keep it clean and professional at all times. And in this age of political divisiveness, why risk alienating 50 percent of your potential customers by spouting political rhetoric online?

**7. Get help if necessary.** There are companies that, for a fee, provide reputation management services. If you are facing an online reputation crisis requiring more time and expertise than you or your staff have to devote to the problem, outside help may be part of the solution. Some of these services simply offer tools you can set to monitor review sites, social media sites and search engine results for mentions of your company. Others provide managed assistance. The trouble is, it’s hard to predict how much it will cost to have an outside service attempt to fix your online reputation and if they can actually deliver results.

There are individual self-proclaimed experts who send out email blasts or advertise on Craigslist promising to fix your online reputation for a few hundred dollars. On the other side of the spectrum, there are large agencies specializing in reputation management that charge thousands of dollars or more each month for their services. If your online reputation is so damaged it’s beyond your ability to repair and you need professional help, shop around, ask trusted associates for recommendations, and hire a firm with a proven track record of results.

## KEEP IT CLEAN

Like it or not, the internet is the first place most people turn when shopping for the services your company provides. Make sure they like what they see when your company or personal website, Facebook page, Twitter feed, blog or other social media content pops up. Just like you wouldn’t show up for a meeting with a potential client in a dirty shirt, don’t show up on their smartphone with an offensive comment. Every footprint you leave online should lead one to the conclusion that you and your company can be trusted to provide top-notch professional service. ■

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*The Quick Space management team includes (from left) Ty Rogers, director of sales and marketing; Scott Offerdahl, owner and CEO; Rob Heaton, director of operations; Dick Stufflebeam, interim general manager; and Michael Brandt, controller. (Photos by Tom R. Smedes)*

# STRATEGY FOR SUCCESS

**A happy workforce, expanded inventory and community involvement build on the Quick Space brand in Reno, Nevada** **BY STEVE LUND**

**D**ynamic change in the business landscape around Reno-Sparks, Nevada, has helped Quick Space transition from a small storage-container provider into a broader site services company with a focus on tapping into customer needs for fast and flexible response.

In recent years, the company, founded in 1995 as Rapidspace, has doubled its portable restroom inventory and quadrupled its number of unit services to accommodate customer demands for cleanliness. It has also doubled its truck fleet over the past two years.

In addition to restrooms and containers, the company now offers mobile offices, portable buildings, restroom and shower trailers, storage vans, fencing, and more. It has grown to 60 employees, with one-fourth of them added in the last year.

Several key business moves helped boost profitability for Quick Space, and PROs everywhere may benefit from the company's strategies.

*(continued)*

## Quick Space Sparks, Nevada

**Owner:** Scott Offerdahl

**Founded:** 1995

**Employees:** 60

**Services:** Portable sanitation, mobile offices, containers and related site services

**Service area:** Northern Nevada, including Reno and Lake Tahoe, and nearby communities in California; additional locations in Carson City and Winnemucca, Nevada

**Affiliations:** Associated General Contractors of America, National Portable Storage Association, Nevada Builders Alliance, Builders Association of Northern Nevada

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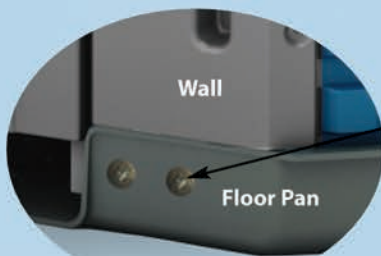
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**Left:** Technician Rob Caddell washes restrooms at Idlewild Park for a Food Truck Friday event.

**Below:** Satellite Industries restrooms and hand-wash stations are prepared by Thaddeus Coughran, technician, at Idlewild Park in Reno, Nevada.

## CUSTOMERS WANT MORE

Part of the explanation for the growth is being in the Reno area, says Rob Heaton, the Quick Space director of operations. It's been a high-growth region, in part because of the success of a huge — 107,000-acre — industrial complex east of Reno. The Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center, or TRIC, is home to many of Quick Space's customers. And some of those customers require more than the usual amount of service, and providing that has been a huge factor in the company's growth, Heaton says.

"Over the last year, we have really focused on what we call high-density customers," Heaton says. "These are customers who may or may not have a high number of units, but more importantly, those units need to be serviced on higher intervals.

"The whole industry is based on a model where every portable re-

"The whole industry is based on a model where every portable restroom is serviced once per week. That's a tried-and-true, solid business, but what we found was that a lot of our growth has occurred through customers who need more than that."

**ROB HEATON**

stroom is serviced once per week. That's a tried-and-true, solid business, but what we found was that a lot of our growth has occurred through customers who need more than that," Heaton continues. "They need everything from twice a day service to three times a week.

"They need units to have wheels and casters installed on them so they can move them around in their warehouses. They need units that have sling equipment installed on them so they can raise and lower the units with a crane from the top of the platforms to the ground level.

"We've done a really good job of working with our customers and their construction crews with sticking to

what we do best — which is servicing their units — and letting them do what they do, so they have more of everything from crane time to construction space to work on their construction projects," Heaton says.



## LOGISTICS A KEY

Heaton, 40, has education and work experience well-suited to coordinating site services with the customer's work, whatever it happens to be. He grew up in Carson City, Nevada, and graduated from the University of Nevada, Reno, where he studied logistics and supply chain operations as well as economics. Heaton worked in logistics for several local companies, including some fast-growing ones, but never in site services.

"I've done a little bit of all operations in logistics, from traditional trucks and trailers to international logistics for the Department of Defense and oil and gas," he explains. "But at the end of the day, a widget is kind of a widget, so logistics and supply chain principles apply to just about any industry sector.

"Any sort of routing business has a lot to do with your route efficiencies," Heaton continues. "There's a very fine line between making a profit and being overpriced and not having customers."

With Quick Space, having the right inventory is also a key to growth. A one-size-fits-all approach won't work for this company.

"We have restrooms that can go on the roof. We have restrooms that are stored inside of buildings that are multiple hundreds of square feet that they have to roll around and bring out to us," Heaton says. "We have trailer-mounted units that can be pulled behind vehicles that people can take to beaches or campgrounds or to mobile road crews that are moving 100 yards at a time — lots of different things."

(continued)

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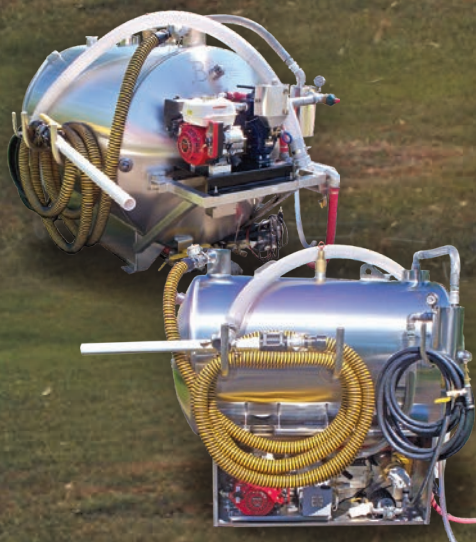
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The Quick Space truck fleet includes two Internationals with 1,200-gallon waste and 800-gallon freshwater stainless steel tanks built out by Robinson Vacuum Tanks and Imperial Industries with Fruitland and Masport pumps, as well as eight Dodge 5500s with 600-gallon waste and 400 gallon freshwater steel tanks (two are slide-in units) built out by Satellite Industries, Imperial Industries, and TOICO Industries, all carrying Conde pumps (Westmoor).

The high-volume trucks are predominantly used for the high-density customers. "What we've found is that those smaller trucks, even though they have a lower capacity, in this region and this geography, give about a 10-hour route day, which is a very efficient day," Heaton says.

Portable restrooms and hand-wash stations are from Satellite Industries. The company also carries flushing and ADA units and a shower trailer from Satellite Industries, as well as a variety of restroom trailers from JAG Mobile Solutions, Rich Specialty Trailers and Satellite Industries. Quick Space uses Walex Products chemicals, and fencing is supplied by Cafence Depot.



**Above:** Rob Heaton, director of operations, is shown with a Rich Specialty Trailers restroom trailer delivered to Nevada's Governor's Mansion for a special event.

**Left:** Technicians Thaddeus Coughran (left) and Rob Caddell service restrooms at a park in Reno.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Heaton says Quick Space relies on three characteristics to grow in the marketplace. He refers to them as the "three uniques:"

- Speed of delivery, and speed of response to customers. "It's right there in our name," Heaton says.
- Inventory depth. "We made a commitment to having inventory available so that we can deliver quickly."
- Community engagement. From supporting youth sports and University of Nevada, Reno athletics to contributing to the Reno Rodeo or the Boys & Girls Club, Quick Space tries to be visible in the community.

One way that Quick Space engages the community is by donating a portion of all portable restroom revenue to a fund that directly benefits building trades programs at local schools. Quick Space also helps sponsor community events, such as Reno Street Food and WinterWonderGrass Tahoe, a music festival at Squaw Valley Ski Resort, Olympic Valley, California. Some of the events that Quick Space helps sponsor would be natural customers for a portable restroom operator.

"In some cases, we do treat them as customers, and in some cases, we do complete charitable events," Heaton says. "In some cases, it's a little bit of both: They pay for a portion of it and we may give them additional equipment or services free of charge, so they don't have to take on the whole burden."

Quick Space finds participating in local events is an effective form of

## The benefit of sports sponsorships

Quick Space puts a high value on community engagement, and it often takes the form of sponsoring local sports. The company supports everything from University of Nevada, Reno athletics to the Reno Rodeo to Little League baseball and Pop Warner football teams.

It also supports the Reno Aces minor league baseball team and the Reno 1868 FC, a team in the United Soccer League. In both those cases, Quick Space has a customer relationship with the team as well as a charitable relationship. That's true of the local university as well, where technicians run a regular seasonal service route during the fall sports season.

"Sports fits with our core values and family atmosphere," says Rob Heaton, director of operations. "Our employee base tends to be younger and family-oriented." Heaton and his wife, April, have three boys, so he has plenty of opportunities to sponsor youth sports teams. And there's a positive marketing advantage to being involved with youth sports programs, he says.

"You have a local contractor who goes down to his kids' baseball game. If he sees there is a nice portable restroom, the next time he starts a new job maybe he gives us a call," Heaton says.



marketing. "Rather than us putting a ton of money into direct marketing, we found that community engagement marketing has gotten our brands and our image out there. People see that we have newer and higher-quality equipment and that we're very responsive."

*Rob Heaton, director of operations, coordinates with workers Thaddeus Coughran (center), technician, and Dennis Sterling (right) as they prepare to set up for a special event at the Governor's Mansion in Carson City, Nevada.*

## REMEMBER CORE VALUES

Quick Space is guided by a set of core values Heaton says are reviewed at all levels in the company on a weekly basis and once a month at safety meetings. The core values are:

- Take care of others.
- Honest communication.
- Flexibility.
- Respect.
- Trustworthy.

The core values come from the company's owner, Scott Offerdahl. He lives in Phoenix and owns other companies, but he has become more and more involved in the daily operations of Quick Space as it has grown. "He's our visionary," Heaton says. "A few years ago, when he started to get reinvested in the day-to-day operations of the company, he wanted to re-establish the core values."

Heaton says the core values are reflected in the company's hiring practices and culture. Going back to the example of a restroom for a mobile highway crew, Heaton says, "Rather than them having to pay for us to pick up and deliver this thing multiple times in a week, we can either offer them a mobile unit or we can work with our customers to move with them as they move along their projects."

Finding the right mix of equipment and service in each situation is crucial, Heaton says.

"It goes back to our core value of flexibility," Heaton says. "We've been hiring folks who can think 'beyond' a little bit and make those decisions. That's where we've really focused on customer service that's more than just a nice voice on the phone."

"We're still small enough to maintain that relationship with the customer base, but we're large enough to have the inventory and rolling assets to get the products to them."

**ROB HEATON**

Quality customer service is another factor in the company's growth, Heaton explains.

"Most of it is directly related to our customers and finding out what their needs are," he says. "To get something to them first thing tomorrow, we bring a guy in early rather than just putting them on a calendar schedule for the first block available. We're still small enough to maintain that relationship with the customer base, but we're large enough to have the inventory and rolling assets to get the products to them." ■

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**Brigette Hyacinth**

# Need to Hire for the Busy Season? Consider Older Workers.

**WE NEED TO DO MORE TO CAPITALIZE ON THE SKILLS, TALENTS AND EXPERIENCE OF SENIOR WORKERS WHO ARE USUALLY OVERLOOKED AND UNDERVALUED**

**“H**e is ‘too old’ for this job,” the human resources manager says to me after we interviewed John (not his real name). She continued, saying he “will not fit into our culture.” John had been laid off at 53 years old by his previous employer due to restructuring.

Ageism in the workplace is very real. It is the elephant in the room. I see uproars over every other “ism” (sexism, racism, etc.), but everyone turns a blind eye to ageism. It is being swept under the carpet. To the HR manager’s disappointment, I did hire John. John brought a wealth of experience and taught me a lot that I never learned from an MBA degree.

We live in a youth-oriented society. The hype about “out with the old, in with the new” needs to stop. You can’t Google experience. A person’s age doesn’t lessen their ability to work hard or to make a valuable contribution to the organization or society. When someone crosses 50 years old, it doesn’t mean they cannot function and should just retire and sit in a corner. Common myths include they can’t learn, they are not creative, they are not as productive as younger employees, and customers do not respond as well to older workers. These are all based on false premises and assumptions.

## A PRIME EXAMPLE

Anna sent me this email:

“I would get telephone interviews, which would go quite well. However, when I showed up to the face-to-face interview, it never went further as they would classify me as ‘overqualified.’ ‘Seasoned’ is another word I routinely heard. I feel like my 30 years’ of experience has become a double-edge sword. So I stopped putting the year I graduated from college on my resume. I also left out years from my employment history and started dyeing my hair and I finally got a job.”

It’s sad when someone has to submit to this ideal to land a job.

It’s easy to drop the years from the resume. It’s more difficult to hide that required information (DOB) on an online job application. A bigger majority of people don’t even get to an age discriminatory level. Keyword searches, 10-second resume scans and other high-volume candidate churning processes exclude many such candidates.

German researchers have found that older people tend to be more productive than younger employees. Additionally, verbal communication is critical in business relationships. Research confirms verbal communication improves with age. Companies are looking for diversity to foster innovation and growth ... but which type? Only gender or ethnicity? Why not age diversity?

Older skilled workers add a level of diversity to a younger team that helps create well-rounded solutions. Institutional knowledge and maturity together make people 40 and over the perfect balance. We need to do more

**Common myths include they can’t learn, they are not creative, they are not as productive as younger employees, and customers do not respond as well to older workers. These are all based on false premises and assumptions.**

to capitalize on the skills, talents and experience of a significant number of senior workers who are usually overlooked and undervalued. Subsequently, employee loyalty toward employer increases with age.

## AGE DISCRIMINATION LAWS

In previous generations, age was something to be admired and honored. However, in today’s world, it is looked upon with contempt. Only in certain high-level positions is being over 40 acceptable. We recognize it in management and politics, where we trust those with decades of experience. This form of discrimination continues to make the workforce unhealthy for individuals and creates stagnation within our society as we are not open to change.

Many people over 40 have to stay in whatever job they are doing because their opportunities are limited. We need to teach our younger generations to respect our veterans instead of just throwing them under the bus.

Mark Zuckerberg once said, “If you are over 30 ... successful companies should not employ you.” This brought no outcry. Why? Because ageism is widely acceptable and silently encouraged. The majority do not view it as discrimination. The Age Discrimination in Employment Act forbids age discrimination against people who are age 40 or older. Yes, there is legislation, but it is hard to prove. At the moment, it seems the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has no interest in enforcing the law.

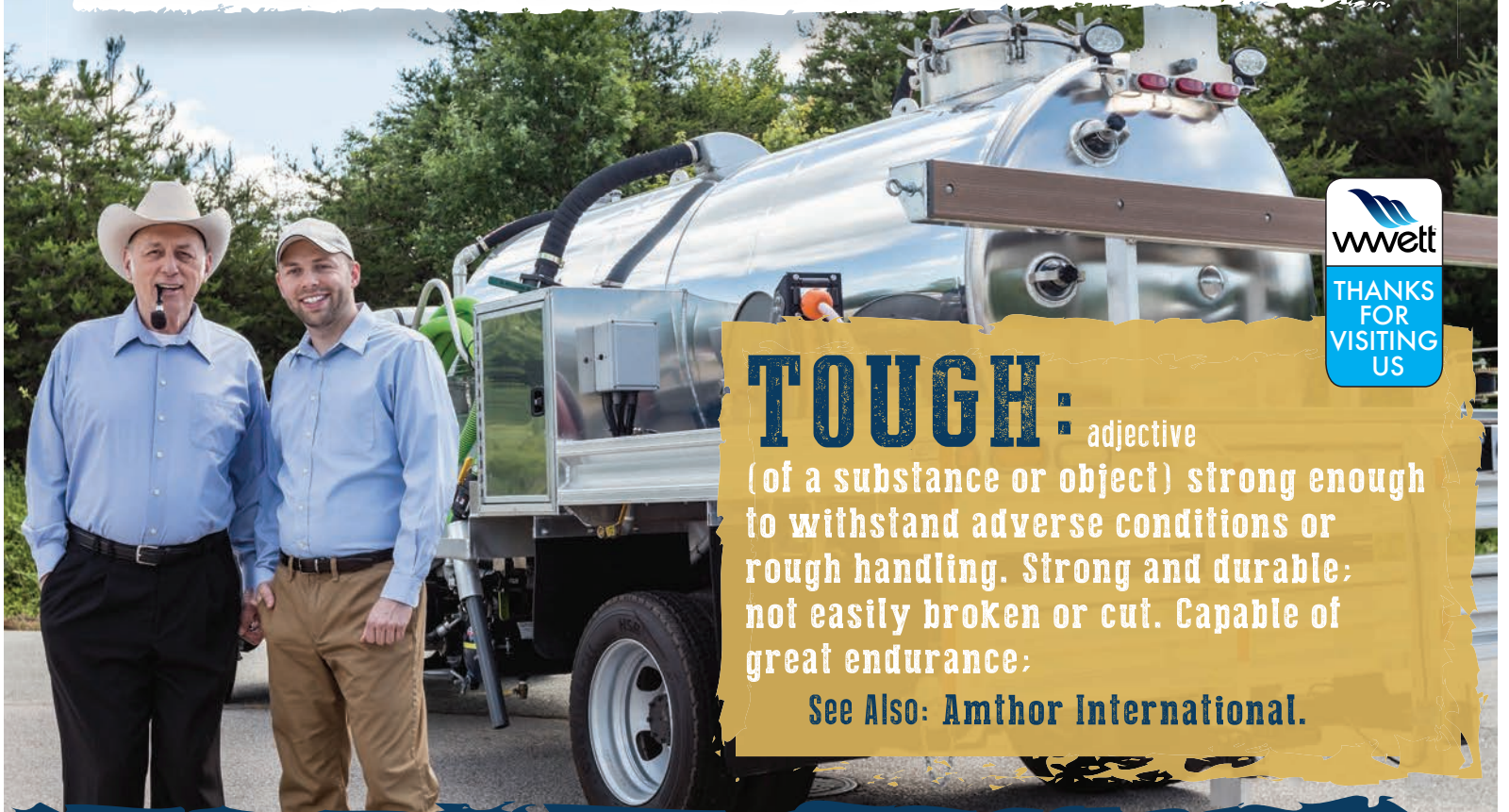
Age and experience should be rewarded, not punished. It’s time to stop discrimination on the grounds of a person’s age. We need strong advocates to stand up to businesses who embrace ageism. We can no longer sit idly by and tolerate this type of discrimination. It has gone on for far too long. Age diversity is just as important as any other type of diversity and should be included in a company’s diversity plan.

## WORKER POOL IS GROWING

With the increased life expectancy and with many countries opting to push back the retirement age, ageism has become a critical issue.

The baby boomer generation may be getting older, but, they still flex a tremendous amount of economic (and voting) muscle. Only when we, as

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individuals as well as a society, make it clear that the legal, financial, social, and other costs of age discrimination will be much steeper and more painful than any benefit — perceived or actual — that such employers might get through age discrimination will we begin to end such discrimination.

Even if you think this does not concern you now. Your decision to remain silent will come back to bite you. Inevitably, we all will grow old. ■

*Brigette Hyacinth is a leadership expert, keynote speaker and author of the book, Purpose Driven Leadership. Reach her at [bridgettehyacinth@mbacaribbean.org](mailto:bridgettehyacinth@mbacaribbean.org).*

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Partiers cut loose at the Somerset Amphitheater during the Summer Set Music & Camping Festival in Somerset, Wisconsin. (Photos by Brad Stauffer)

# Controlled Chaos

Rural Wisconsin outdoor music festival for millennials offers many fun and exciting challenges for Powers Liquid Waste Management

BY BETTY DAGEFORDE

## THE TEAM

Chris Hoppe and his wife, Shannon, are the owners of Powers Liquid Waste Management in New Richmond, Wisconsin. It's primarily a septic pumping company, but about 25 percent of their work is portable restrooms. They have one full-time employee, Zac Parfitt, but for three days twice a year, they bring in an additional 20 or so people to help out at two large music festivals, mostly family and friends including daughter Ashley Vanasse and her husband, Steve; veteran helpers Gary Utecht and Craig Thomas; and brother-in-law Roger Rineck, who's been a key player in the portable restroom side of the business. Ethan Lamirande came on board early to help with setup.

## COMPANY HISTORY

Hoppe's grandfather, Calvin Bud Powers, started the business in 1953 pumping septic systems. At one time, he also built portable restrooms to rent out. Different parts of the company were eventually taken over by his sons, with septic going to Hoppe's aunt and uncle Daren and Tammy Powers in the 1980s.

**THE JOB:** Summer Set Music & Camping Festival

**LOCATION:** Somerset, Wisconsin

**THE PRO:** Powers Liquid Waste Management

Hoppe worked for them until 2006 when he and his wife purchased the business. He added portable restrooms when he bought out a cousin in 2011, then a competitor a few years later, and eventually 50 units from Satellite Industries. The current inventory is about 210 units.

## MAKING CONNECTIONS

While working for his uncle, Hoppe occasionally picked up additional income doing security work at the Somerset Amphitheater. One music festival in the mid-1990s got out of control, and the company providing portable restrooms refused to go in and clean them even though halfway through the multiday event the units were full. "The owner at the time knew what I did," Hoppe says, "So they paid me to take my septic truck in and pump them out." Over the next few years, he occasionally provided a similar service.

In 2011, a new owner came in and built permanent restrooms and campgrounds. He used his own portable restrooms for events and had Hoppe service them, but as more units were needed, Hoppe got into the portable restroom business and started providing them.

(continued)



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**Above:** Chris Hoppe, owner of Powers Liquid Waste Management in New Richmond, Wisconsin, is shown on location at the Summer Set Music & Camping Festival with his 2006 Sterling truck that's carrying a Presvac Systems tank and National Vacuum Equipment pump.

**Right:** Hoppe makes the rounds checking on some of the 100 Satellite Industries restrooms his company placed at the music festival.

## THE MAIN EVENT

Summer Set Music & Camping Festival took place the weekend of Aug. 11-13, 2017 at the 160-acre Somerset Amphitheater in Somerset. Main activities for the millennial crowd were electronic dance music on multiple stages; camping; tubing down the Apple River; and, of course, eating and drinking. The event usually attracts about 20,000 people, but it was about half that in 2017 due to logistical issues affecting the promoter.

## THE JOB

The company was tasked with providing and servicing portable restrooms, a restroom



trailer, hand-wash stations, and holding tanks. They also serviced facility-owned units, restroom and shower trailers brought in by another vendor, and on-site permanent restrooms and showers. In addition, they pumped out RVs.

## BY THE NUMBERS

Hoppe brought in 100 standard Satellite Industries Tufways to supplement the facility's 60 units and eight Satellite Industries Liberty wheelchair-accessible units. For food vending areas, he supplied six PolyPortables hand-wash stations, six hand sanitizer stands (built by a friend), and six 250- and 500-gallon holding tanks. He also brought in one six-stall restroom trailer and one 1,500-gallon waste tank for the VIP Campground shower.

Units were set up in six groups of eight in the South Campground and one group of eight and three groups of five in the North Campground. The rest were sprinkled throughout the facility in production and backstage areas, security check-in, box office, parking lots, vendor areas, medical and police, front of house and the artist compound.

A map helped the team keep track of everything, but Hoppe says a lot of it was just familiarity. "All I can tell you is we have a plan

*(continued)*



Part of the Powers Liquid Waste Management team stands in front of the company's vacuum truck, a Sterling with a 5,000-gallon Presvac Systems tank and National Vacuum Equipment pump, along with the company's Ford F-450 water truck. They're about to service a row of Satellite Industries restrooms next to the campground at the Summer Set Music & Camping Festival.

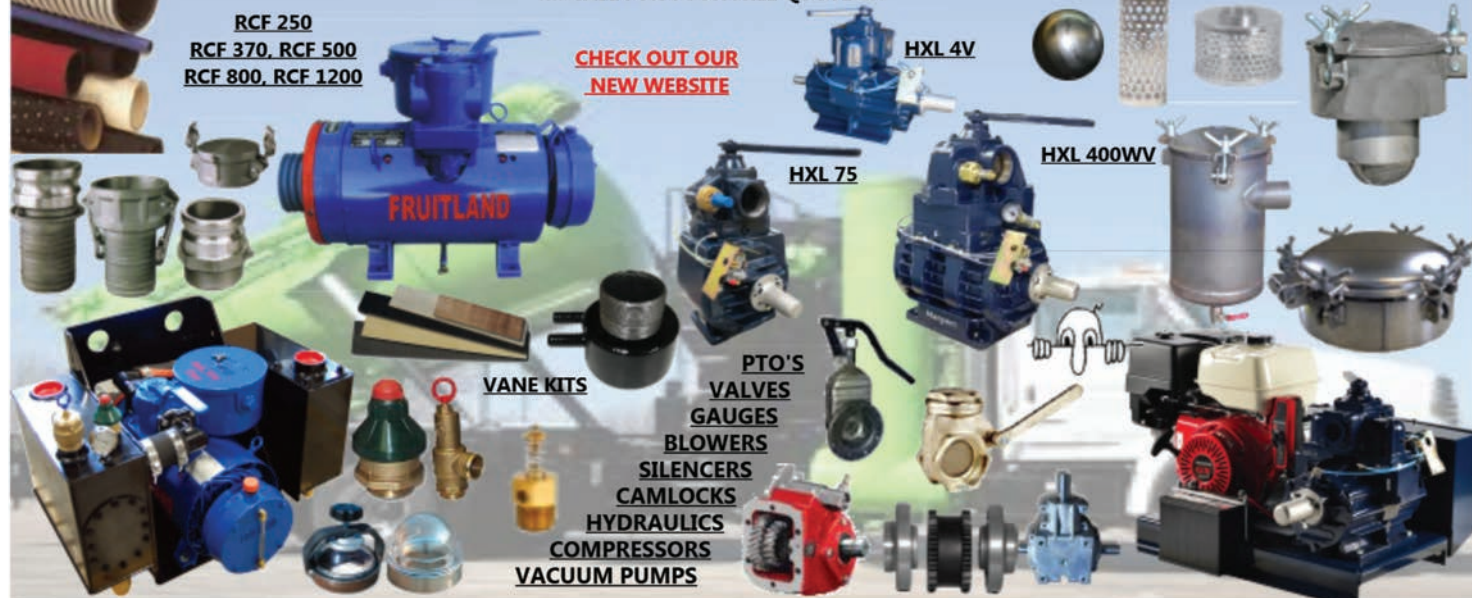


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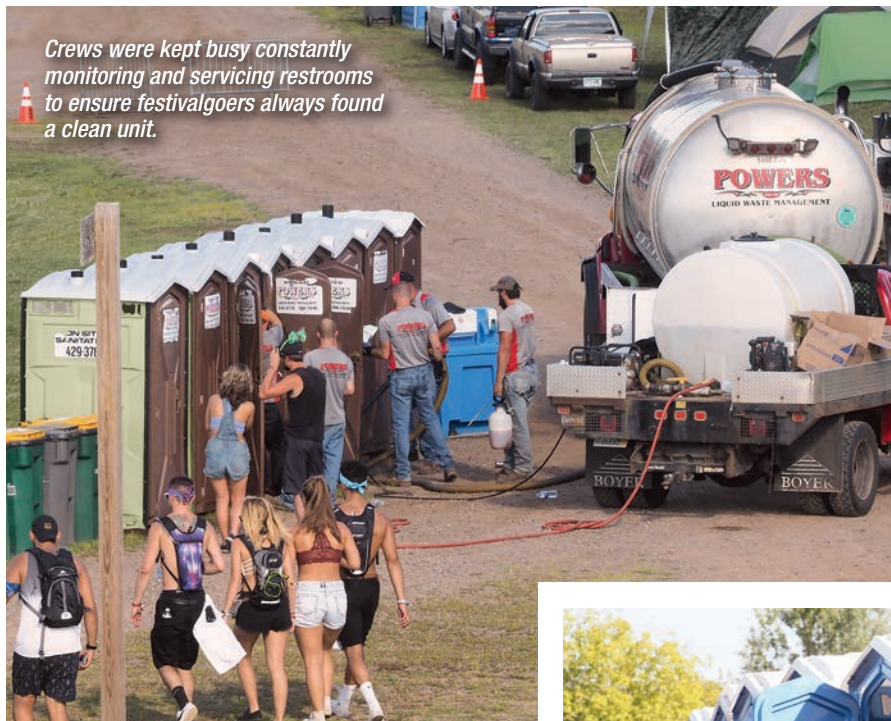
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Crews were kept busy constantly monitoring and servicing restrooms to ensure festivalgoers always found a clean unit.



of action that consists of starting here and finishing there,” he says. A spotter hired by the production company circulated through the facility checking restrooms. Any problems and Hoppe would have been called immediately. “But our goal,” he says, “and my guarantee is that they don’t have to call us. We promise our service to be that good.”

## LET’S ROLL

Parfitt and Lamirande started delivering equipment a week before the event using a Ford F-550 vacuum truck, a Ford F-450 flatbed, 8- and 16-place hauling trailers, as well as a flatbed car trailer for the wheelchair-accessible units and hand-wash stations. Before opening day, units were pressure washed, sanitized with lemon sanitizer from Supply Solutions, and freshened with coconilla-scented deodorizer from J&J Chemical.

## KEEPIN’ IT CLEAN

By Friday, all temporary help was on board, and the company started servicing everything three times a day. The first round began at 8 a.m., starting with the campgrounds. They used a 2012 Ford F-550 built out by Lely Tank & Waste Solutions with a 750-gallon waste and 300-gallon freshwater steel tank and a 2006 Sterling built out by Presvac Systems with a 5,000-gallon aluminum tank, both with National Vacuum Equipment pumps.

At 9 a.m., the team assigned to the permanent restrooms started cleaning and stocking — first the artists’ facilities, and then VIP camping, then the four buildings containing 30 toilets each. Working in shifts, they continually rotated through the facility until midnight.

By 10 a.m., the concert site opened and the team got a chance to head out to the Sportsman’s Bar and Grill for breakfast. “All my guys go in and eat whenever they’re hungry,” Hoppe says. “We run a tab, and at the end of the concert, I go in and pay.” Another favorite spot was General Sam’s Bar and Grill. “Happy employees are hardworking employees,” Hoppe notes. After returning to the venue, they checked everything and started in on RVs.

The 3 p.m. service went faster because not all units needed servicing. Two people in each truck facilitated movement through crowds, but generally people were appreciative and happy to get out of the way, Hoppe reports.

“When there’s a problem and you can solve it quickly — especially if it’s outside your scope of work — that’s even better. You have your tense moments when everybody’s tired, but you also have your funny moments.”

CHRIS HOPPE

During the afternoon break, team members either went home or headed over to Hoppe’s house for socializing or a snooze on the lawn. Then, they returned and checked everything. The last service was at 9 p.m., in time for the midnight after-parties. The company had a key to the local treatment plant and made one or two trips each day.



Temporary worker Ethan Lamirande washes a bank of Satellite Industries restrooms at the music festival.

## GO WITH THE FLOW

Hoppe’s philosophy for servicing events that can sometimes be a bit chaotic is to have a laser focus on doing the job and not getting concerned about anything else going on around them. “We’re able to shut all that off,” he says. “My people’s jobs are to keep the toilets clean so that the people that hire us — their customer — are happy. That’s what we worry about.” If something comes up that affects them, they love the challenge of figuring out how to deal with it on the fly. If somebody else needs help, they’re on it.

Two unplanned situations in 2017 that impacted them were the appearance of unscheduled pop-up stages at random locations, causing an increase in portable restroom usage in unexpected areas, and the overuse of a bank of units in the handicap camping area when tubing companies chose to pick up their customers. Those are the types of things Hoppe will discuss with the facility manager in preparation for next year’s festival, along with any changes the producers plan to make.

“It’s controlled chaos,” Hoppe says. “That’s what I like. When there’s a problem and you can solve it quickly — especially if it’s outside your scope of work — that’s even better.” He also enjoys the camaraderie. “You have your tense moments when everybody’s tired, but you also have your funny moments.” ■

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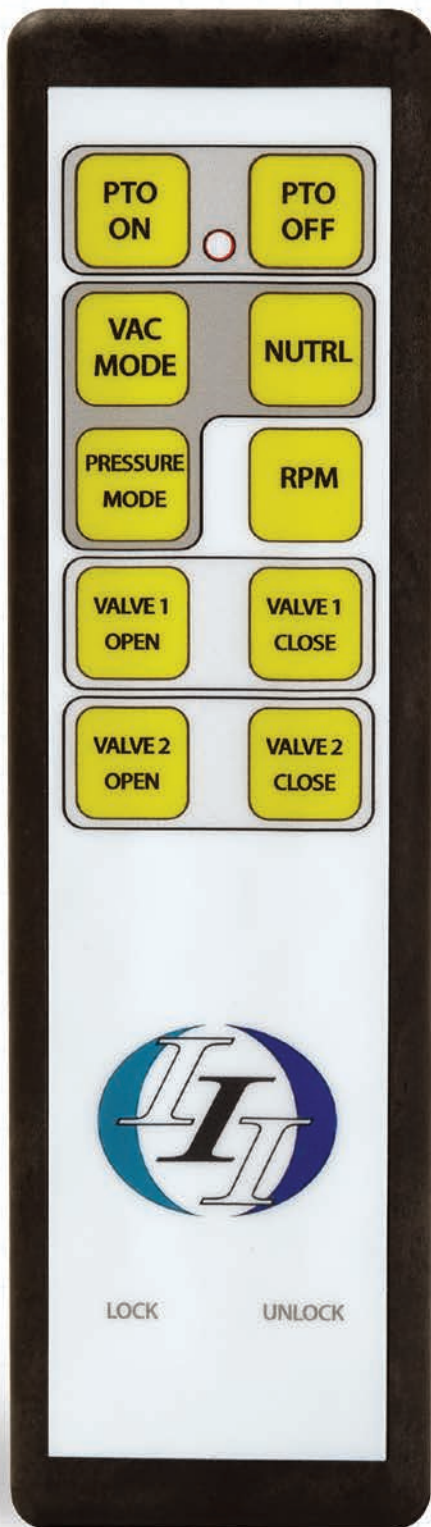
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## Trucks and Tanks

By Craig Mandli

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The **WorkMate** service truck from **FMI Truck Sales & Service** is designed for the rigors of the portable sanitation industry. The always-equal weight distribution of the side-winder tank extends brake life and improves handling. Its two food-grade poly water tanks are plumbed to provide brine, freshwater, premix, or any combination of fluids with no corrosion or rusty water. The ergonomically designed workstation with more than 60 cubic feet of storage space saves time and effort during the workday, minimizing restocking and driver movement. It carries four restrooms for delivery and pickup. E-track load securement systems eliminate the need for ropes. The modular design allows components to be easily replaced or transferred if damaged. The entire vacuum system is plumbed using hot tar hose and Masport components. **800-927-8750; www.fmitrucks.com.**



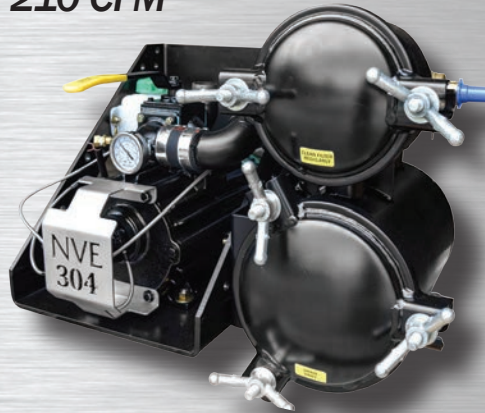
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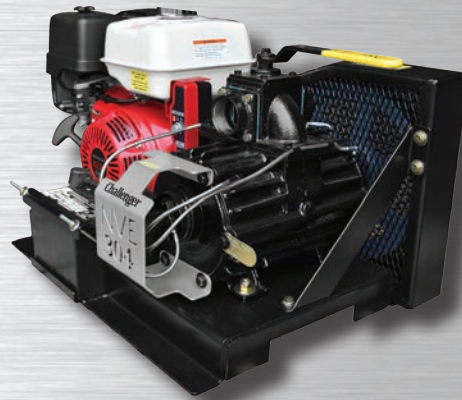
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### KEEVAC INDUSTRIES KV950

The **KeeVac Industries KV950** can be used by contractors who want to stay under the DOT tanker endorsement requirement yet still service a large route. With a capacity of 650 gallons of wastewater and 300 gallons of freshwater, it can service 60 to 65 portable restrooms. It is available in carbon steel or aluminum, with either two- or four-wheel-drive chassis. A selection of vacuum pumps is available. It includes a two-unit fold-down restroom carrier with trailer hitch. An arctic package is also available. **866-789-9440; [www.keevac.com](http://www.keevac.com).**



### PIK RITE PORTABLE RESTROOM SERVICE TRUCK

The **Pik Rite** portable restroom service truck is a Peterbilt 337 chassis with a 2,000-gallon (1,500-gallon waste and 500-gallon freshwater) aluminum vacuum tank. The side workstation features low and ergonomically friendly hose hooks with the toolboxes, and a freshwater hose reel. Fill level is indicated by a freshwater sight tube in the front and four wastewater sight eyes in the rear. The tank is equipped with a low-profile primary and internal plumbing. The 4-inch discharge is located on the passenger side of the truck for curbside off-loading. The rear rack holds two standard restrooms and has a hydraulic lift for ease of loading. It has polished aluminum hose trays and LED lighting. **800-326-9763; [www.pikrite.com](http://www.pikrite.com).**



### PRESVAC SYSTEMS PORTABLE TOILET TRUCK

The **Presvac Systems** portable toilet truck is a versatile vacuum unit. Basic or custom models are available. Units come in carbon steel, stainless steel, or aluminum with vacuum pump options from 100 to 300 cfm at 28 inches Hg full vacuum, water tank volumes of 300 to 500 gallons, and waste tank volumes from 400 to 1,500 gallons. Options include custom hose trays and toolboxes and heated valves. **800-387-7763; [www.presvac.com](http://www.presvac.com).**



### TRUCKXPRESS MD950

The 650-gallon waste and 300-gallon freshwater **MD950** restroom service truck from **TruckXpress** reduces service times and driver fatigue due to its ergonomic design, which places the pump switch, storage cabinet, hose, freshwater fill, and sprayer within easy reach of the driver. The powder-coated, carbon-steel tank is the most popular and comes with stainless steel cabinets, side panels and work area. The unit is equipped with two 5-inch sight glasses for simple monitoring. For increased safety, the tank has an internal baffle system that prevents sudden weight shifts from side to side and front to back. Tanks are also available in stainless steel. **888-660-5434; [www.satellitetruckxpress.com](http://www.satellitetruckxpress.com).**



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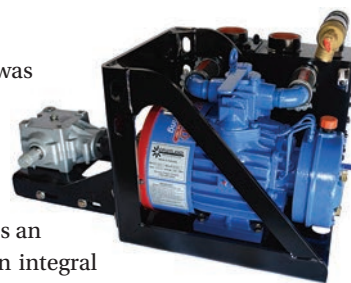


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### FRUITLAND ELIMINATOR 250PT

The **Eliminator 250PT** from **Fruitland** was designed with a smaller mount and accessories, allowing it to fit on almost all portable restroom service trucks while still allowing for big-truck, continuous-duty performance. The package includes an RCF250 180 cfm vacuum pump with an integral heavy-duty secondary shut-off and oil-catch muffler. The compact design is 26 inches wide and 19 inches high, taking up minimum frame rail space. The package comes with hydraulic or gearbox drive options; the gearbox drive allows for five distance options for alignment to the PTO shaft (8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 inches), making drive-shaft clearance hurdles easy. The mount has two emergency brake cable slots, allowing for quick and easy installation. It offers low oil consumption, including an automated oiling system with all-steel oil lines, pump oil-level sight gauge, vane gauging ports and antishock design. **800-663-9003; www.fruitlandmanufacturing.com.**



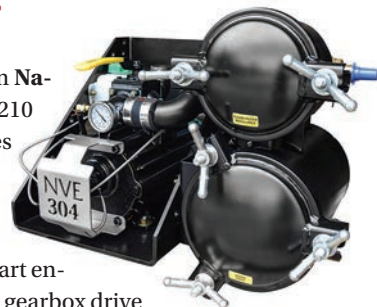
### MORO USA DCSS

The **DCSS** heavy-duty, 12-volt wash-down pump from **Moro USA** is designed for filling sinks and toilets. It has a maximum delivery rate of 20 gpm at 42 psi and uses a 1 hp, 12-volt DC motor with a 1-inch discharge and 1 1/4-inch intake. It has a high-grade stainless steel impeller, Viton elastomers, a pressure switch, and a 12-volt solenoid, allowing full-control flow at the nozzle without damaging the pump. It has an industrial-grade epoxy-coated, painted motor to protect against rust. Its stainless steel pump head won't break in freezing winter temperatures. It weighs 52 pounds. **800-383-6304; www.morousa.com.**



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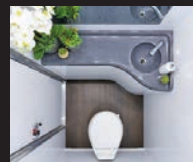
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## INDUSTRY NEWS

### Vacuum truck innovator LaVerne Charlet passes away

Wastewater industry pioneer LaVerne Charlet passed away Dec. 20 in Paducah, Kentucky. He was 83. Charlet was a manufacturer, marketer and innovator in the vacuum truck industry and a recipient of the prestigious Ralph Macchio Lifetime Achievement Award presented by COLE Publishing founder Bob Kendall at the Pumper & Cleaner Environmental Expo.

In 2004, Charlet was honored by *Pumper* as influential in vacuum truck technology. He was instrumental in septic service companies moving away from rudimentary diaphragm pumps or creating suction off a truck's intake manifold and utilizing modern pumps and vacuum tanks.

"We'd buy a truck and build a body. I'd jump in to the truck and go out and do some demonstrations and sell it. Then I'd come back and we would do it all again," he recalled at the time. "When I demonstrated a truck with a vacuum pump, they were amazed. Some people, after the demonstration, would refuse to buy one. They'd say, 'People wouldn't pay me — they'd think I was getting money too easily.'"

Charlet operated the vacuum tank manufacturing company Industrial Municipal Engineering, or IME, with Leland Pearson and then later started an aluminum tank distributorship, LC Tanks. In 2004, he told *Pumper* that IME was the first company to introduce full-opening rear doors and hoisted tanks, and brought Moro pumps to the U.S. market. Charlet also served as president of Kentucky-based IBEX, which manufactured vacuum trucks and dewatering systems.

In a 2012 letter in *Pumper*, Charlet announced the sale of LC Tanks and his retirement after 45 years in the liquid waste industry. Charlet was a U.S. Navy veteran. Memorials may be made to the Alzheimer's Association, Greater Kentucky Chapter, 6100 Dutchmans Lane, Suite 401, Louisville, KY 40206-3506.



Chad Davis

### Davis appointed vice president of manufacturing for Lely Tank & Waste Solutions

Chad Davis has been promoted to vice president of manufacturing for Lely Tank & Waste Solutions in Wilson, South Carolina. He formerly served as operations and service manager for the company and has worked for Lely Tank & Waste Solutions since 2003. He will oversee manufacturing operations in North Carolina and Texas.

### Palmer named president and CEO of Mitsubishi Fuso Truck of America

Mitsubishi Fuso Truck of America promoted Justin Palmer to president and CEO. He replaces Jack Glasman. Palmer joined the company in 2015 and spent the last two years as its director of business operations. ■

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