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IN THIS TOGETHER

A Missouri couple works long hours to realize their business dreams through Charlene's Waste Services

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Energy Sector customers keep North Dakota PROs Barb Rogers and Kathy Zent pushing for quality service

IT'S A GUSHER

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Holding Tanks and Transport Trailers

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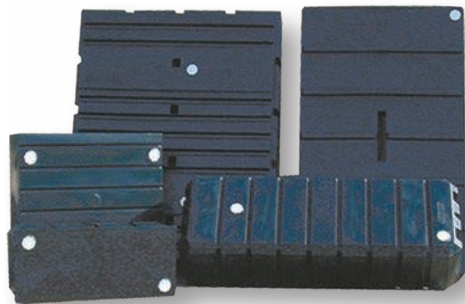
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- Dee Goerge

ON THE COVER: Business partners Kathy Zent and Barb Rogers took a small restroom company and exploded its growth serving customers in North Dakota's oil fields. The owners of MonDak Portables, Zent (left) and Rogers, are shown with an inventory of Satellite Industries restrooms. (Photo by Gabriel Black)

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Indicators Show Hiring Will Be a Big Challenge in 2019

GOOD WORKERS ARE HARD TO FIND. FOLLOW THESE TIPS TO HOOK THEM, REEL THEM IN AND TURN THEM INTO LOYAL HELPERS FOR YOUR BUSINESS.

By Jim Kneiszel

I am hooked on a popular police drama that reruns constantly. Earlier today I sat down with lunch in front of the TV and when I turned on my show, the first thing I heard was two cops talking about what jobs would turn them off in a girlfriend. "Cesspool cleaner," one of the cops blurted, and they both laughed.

Ouch! I know folks in the wastewater industry don't get enough respect, but that was uncalled for. But seriously, a PRO's job description does probably limit the pool of good candidates you have for a route driver and technician. It seems to me that you have a bigger recruiting and retention challenge than many of the skilled trades. You've probably had friends or family tell you they'd rather do just about anything than hop on that service truck and clean restrooms.

As you deal with that reality, you are probably also contemplating needing to hire a few new employees ahead of the 2019 busy season. The economy is improving. Your construction routes are getting denser and longer. The phone is ringing more for both construction and event units. This trend, thankfully, doesn't seem to be going away anytime soon and it's inevitable you'll need someone to help shoulder the burden.

This is where your hiring challenge begins. And recent numbers from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics aren't going to make it any easier for you.

MORE JOBS, FEWER LOOKERS

According to the most recent report, outlined by *Bloomberg News*, job postings are up, the number of unemployed workers is down, and maybe most interesting, the number of job-quitters is the highest in 17 years.

The summer 2018 snapshot from Labor Department shows job postings outpaced the total number of unemployed people by 659,000. Job openings

nationwide were 6.9 million, while hires were 5.7 million and separations were 5.5 million. Of employees who left a job, the layoff, or discharge, rate was 1.1 percent, while the quit rate was 2.7 percent, up from 2.4 percent earlier in the year and the highest since 2001.

Bloomberg News cites another survey from the National Federation of Independent Business, which found that 38 percent of U.S. small businesses had jobs they couldn't fill, said to be a record since 1973.

These numbers are validating something you probably already know: You'll find slim pickings when you go out searching for quality workers. And if you do find someone who does a good job, you need to keep him or her happy. And if you hire someone who is rough around the edges, you might not want to be so quick to give them the boot.

So here are four steps to overcoming what might be perceived as a gloomy labor outlook:

Find 'em: Of course you're going to use the usual channels to get the word out about your job opening. Post the job on Craigslist, use Indeed or other online employment search services. In this day and age, and when you're trying to hire millennials, it's probably money wasted to take out an ad in the newspaper, unless you have a well-read local weekly newspaper. But reach out in less conventional ways as well. Ask your friends and neighbors to spread the word about your opening. Offer your employees a bonus if they encourage one of their friends to apply, and if that person is hired and is a success for 3-6 months.

When you broadcast your need for a new employee, be sure to do some research and make sure you're presenting an attractive opportunity. First and foremost, that means competitive wages and benefits. Ask your local chamber of commerce or survey other business owners to set a benchmark for what you're willing to pay a qualified candidate. And don't be cheap about it. Realize that even some fast-food restaurants are raising their starting pay to close to \$15 per hour. Someone entrusted with your expensive equipment and responsible for taking care of your loyal customers must be paid accordingly.

Hire 'em: Take a look at your revenues and what you're charging, and make sure you're charging enough to turn a profit and attract potential hires. Your cost of doing business is always rising, so you need to monitor fees for service, as well as the labor market.

The same goes for benefits, such as health insurance, a 401(k) plan, paid time off, etc. Depending on competition for workers in your area, you may need to up your game to get quality people to take a look. Consider



ideas such as a sign-on bonus, a small stipend for a new worker who shows a good job performance for the first three months, extra dental or life insurance benefits, etc.

And the benefits don't all have to be about the money. Flextime is increasingly popular, allowing workers to tweak their schedule around family responsibilities. How about allowing a worker to start at 8 a.m. instead of your usual 6:30 a.m. so they can get kids off to school every morning? Or what if they can work a split shift, mornings and evenings, so they can take in a school program or get to a doctor's appointment? Or you may look at a schedule of four 10-hour days to give workers an extra day off. What's the harm in being flexible with the rules if all the work gets done?

Keep 'em: It's so much work bringing on a new crew member and training them for those first several weeks. It's imperative that you convince them to stay for the long haul. Keeping employees leads to better, more consistent customer service, greater efficiency and a reduction in your workload. Keeping them means keeping them happy.

The first step is making them feel like part of a successful team. So match them with a mentor, one of your best workers, to learn the ropes. Take your time training them so you set them up for success instead of throwing them to the wolves. You might think team-building exercises or social gatherings are a waste of time when there's a lot of work to get done. Fight that impulse. Look for ways your crew can enjoy some downtime together — grill out for lunch on Fridays or take everyone to a sporting event on the weekend.

Look for other creative incentives that will reinforce their decision to join your company and become the loyal helper you're looking for. Offer uniforms and use a cleaning service so they don't have to take dirty clothing home to wash. Set up performance bonuses based on efficient route-running or complaint-free service. Provide them the best equipment possible, from their service trucks to new and undamaged restrooms. All of this shows you appreciate the employees and take pride in your business.

Don't fire 'em: Sometimes I hear PROs say they put new employees on a short leash and they won't tolerate costly mistakes. They are quick to judge an employee as a screw-up and let them go. Fight that thought, and show patience to employees as they learn how you want things done. Put yourself in their shoes. Everything is new to them. They've likely never done a job like this before, and there are many safety regulations to follow and techniques to learn. You may be

shaking your head at week four as you watch them struggle to complete a trouble-free route. But if you give them time to learn and become proficient, you might be happy to see them grow into a great employee.

GET AFTER IT

These are challenging times for a small-business owner or manager. Keeping your crew happy and performing up to your standards means you might have to pay a little more, show a little patience, and spend more time than you are

used to coaching and inspiring your workforce.

But there is good news. You face these hiring challenges because the business climate is better than it has been in years. Rather than spending all of your time beating the bushes for new customers, the phone is ringing with opportunities to make more money.

So you can't really have it both ways. If you want to build the business, you're going to have a bigger job managing your workforce. You have different problems than you did a decade ago, but they are better problems to have. ■

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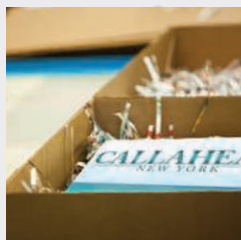
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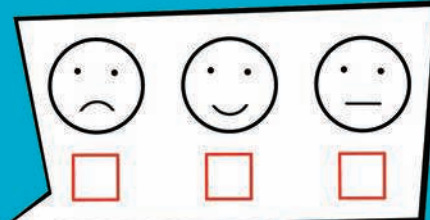
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Be Prepared for Old Man Winter

PROS UP NORTH SHOULD FOLLOW THESE RECIPES TO PREVENT RESTROOM HOLDING TANKS FROM TURNING INTO BLOCKS OF ICE

By Jeff and Terri Wigley

With winter and the end of the year upon us, we had the following questions to discuss:

Question: What are the various ways I can keep my units from freezing?

Answer: Depending on your location, winter can vary in intensity and so should your methods of keeping units from freezing. The Portable Sanitation Association International certification program was initiated in 1992. One of the primary objectives of this program has been to quantify the methods of effective winterization of units. There are several methods to consider:

Salt: Ordinary salt can be mixed with water to lower the freezing point of the unit to the following levels:

- 1/2 pound of salt per gallon of water protects to 26 degrees F.
- 1 pound of salt per gallon of water protects to 19 degrees F.
- 1 1/2 pounds of salt per gallon of water protects to 11 degrees F.
- 2 pounds of salt per gallon of water protects to 0 degrees F. This is the maximum amount of salt that can be dissolved in 1 gallon of water.

Methanol: More expensive than salt and also requiring more attention to detail due to potential flammability, methanol and water can protect units to lower temperatures:

- 5 percent or 6.4 ounces of methanol per gallon of water protects to 28 degrees F.
- 10 percent or 12.8 ounces of methanol per gallon of water protects to 22 degrees F.
- 20 percent or 25.6 ounces of methanol per gallon of water protects to 11 degrees F.
- 25 percent or 32 ounces of methanol per gallon of water protects to 4 degrees F.
- 30 percent or 38.4 ounces of methanol per gallon of water protects to 4 degrees below zero. Safety note: This is the maximum amount of methanol that may be used, as any higher concentration is flammable.

Salt and Methanol Combined: Beginning with a previously mixed solution of 2 pounds of salt per gallon of water, methanol may be added to the mixture in the following amounts:

- 5 percent or 6.4 ounces of methanol per gallon of salt water protects to 6 degrees below zero.
- 10 percent or 12.8 ounces of methanol per gallon of salt water

Comparing and projecting the following year's sales objectives will reveal any areas where units or specialty equipment may be needed to meet upcoming demand.

protects to 11 degrees below zero.

- 20 percent or 25.6 ounces of methanol per gallon of salt water protects to 21 degrees below zero.
- 25 percent or 32 ounces of methanol per gallon of salt water protects to 30 degrees below zero.
- 30 percent or 38.4 ounces of methanol per gallon of salt water protects to 40 degrees below zero.

While this is the most effective combination of winterization, it is also the most expensive.

Rock Salt and Calcium Chloride: This method involves using 200 gallons of water and mixing 100 pounds of crystal rock salt and 100 pounds of calcium chloride. The resulting solution can then be used to fill the units. This combination can be used when temperatures begin to average around 30 degrees F.

Antifreeze: Before using this method, check with your local wastewater treatment plant to ensure antifreeze is accepted in its system. If so, you need to use antifreeze with ethylene glycol as the main ingredient. Other additives are not needed and only raise the price. Based on a 5 gallon charge of solution, use 2 ounces of deodorizer and the following combinations:

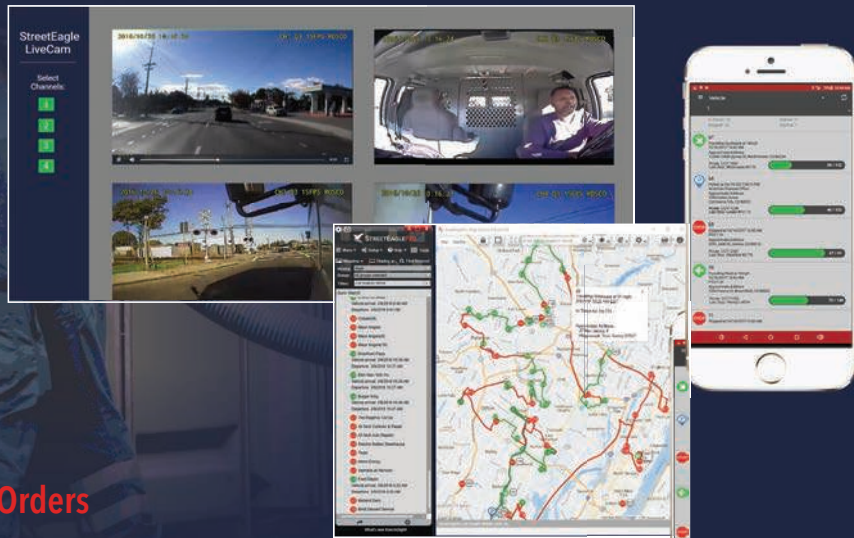
- 1/2 gallon of antifreeze and 4 1/2 gallons of water makes a 10 percent mixture that will protect to 31-35 degrees F.
- 1 gallon of antifreeze and 4 gallons of water makes a 20 percent mixture that will protect to 16-20 degrees F.
- 1 1/2 gallons of antifreeze per 3 1/2 gallons of water makes a 30 percent mixture that will protect to 6-10 degrees F.

Choose the method you are most comfortable with and that will serve your needs. Monitor your results based on temperature, keep the additional cost in mind and charge for this service. A winter service charge is certainly a reasonable addition to the customer's invoice in the winter months.

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Question: Why should I consider an end-of-the-year inventory?

Answer: Conducting a thorough inventory is important from an accounting, as well as a sales planning, standpoint. Fixed assets are a key component of your company's financials due to the fact that depreciation is based on these numbers. Fixed assets are also a component in the net worth of your business.

As a sales planning tool, your year-end inventory can be used to determine if additional units must be purchased before the spring busy season begins. Comparing and projecting the following year's sales objectives will reveal any areas where units or specialty equipment may be needed to meet upcoming demand.

Other intangibles in conducting a thorough inventory at this time include:

- The greatest number of units are typically on the yard in the winter months.
- With fewer deliveries and pickups, personnel are more available to conduct the inventory.
- While inventorying, units can be assessed for needed repairs. Again, with more personnel available, winter is an excellent time to repair and refresh your equipment. ■



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Technician Nikki Ingebritson prepares to service an oil field restroom. The truck is a Hino built out by Satellite Industries and utilizing a Conde pump (Westmoor). (Photos by Gabriel Black)



IT'S A GUSHER

The oil fields of North Dakota created opportunities for fast growth for MonDak Portables **BY DEE GOERGE**

In 2008, when many small-business owners were struggling to survive, Barb Rogers and Kathy Zent swam against the current of the economic downturn and bought a portable restroom business in the booming oil fields of North Dakota. A decade later, the pair has grown the business from 250 restrooms and one truck to 3,500 units and 15 trucks covering western North Dakota and eastern Montana.

"At first, we thought it was just a sideline thing," says Rogers, who was working as a dental hygienist at the time. "But then it just progressed, and we hired more people and bought more trucks. I quit my job in 2010, and my husband (Rick Rogers) who owned a construction company put his business on the sideline because we just got so busy."

Despite challenges with competition, high wages and a downturn in the oil industry, MonDak Portables, with main offices in Epping, North Dakota, just outside of Williston, has grown steadily through it all. To continue on that path and not fall victim to the boom-and-bust reality of the oil economy, the business owners actively pursue new markets and opportunities for a more diverse portfolio of customers.

MonDak Portables Epping, North Dakota

Owners: Barb Rogers
and Kathy Zent

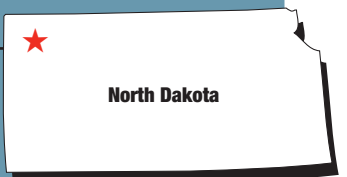
Founded: 2008

Employees: 18

Services: Portable sanitation

Service area: Western North Dakota and eastern Montana

Website: www.mondakportables.com



North Dakota

The opportunity came through Rick Rogers' brother, Loren Rogers, who worked for the owner of the company who wanted to sell. Barb Rogers and Zent, who also owns janitorial supply and manufacturing businesses, purchased the portable restroom business with the help of other investors. They hired Loren Rogers, and he ran it for the first five months. Rick Rogers continued working at his construction business during the day and helped out in the evenings and weekends as needed.

(continued)

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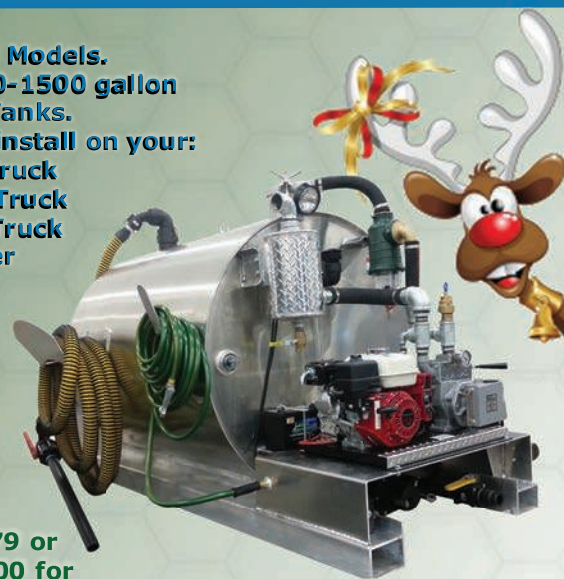
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Barb Rogers also continued working as a dental hygienist, taking care of the restroom business during her lunch hour and in the evenings. After Loren Rogers left, Rick Rogers became more involved, and he and Barb Rogers learned more about the industry by asking questions and attending seminars at the Pumper & Cleaner Expo, now the Water & Wastewater Equipment, Treatment & Transport (WWETT) Show. Rick Rogers took over duties as general manager. Barb Rogers started working full time in the office, setting up routes, dispatching drivers, and handling all the bookwork and paperwork.

Her business partner, Zent, attends quarterly meetings and is involved in decision-making, but is not involved with MonDak Portables' day-to-day operations. "(The Rogerses) bring me an issue, and I look at it with a different viewpoint. Not being there (in the middle of it) is helpful for that," Zent says, noting she has 35 years' of business experience, which helps with decision-making.

Within a couple of years, the women paid off their investors, and the Rogerses were working long hours and fully committed to the portable restroom business.

WORKING THE OIL FIELDS

With about a dozen competitors, the owners say they have steady customers because of the way they do business.

"We don't sell restrooms. We sell service. Our service — we feel and have been told — is superior because of the pride we take in our company," Rick Rogers says. That pride extends to employees. Service begins as soon as restrooms are ordered.

"We try to get the restrooms out the day they order," Barb Rogers says, even if the site is a couple of hours away and delivering restrooms is the only reason for the trip.

"If we can't make a place on the date scheduled for servicing, we let them know," Zent adds. "We try to do the best servicing, cleaning and positioning of restrooms where they want them and making sure that in areas with high winds they are staked down."

MonDak Portables adjusts services as necessary depending on what is going on at the oil field site. For example, there may be as many as 50 to 80 workers for fracking for a few days, and it doesn't take long for seven to 10 restrooms to fill up. MonDak Portables workers provide service up to three times a week during heavy usage and cut back when the number of workers drops off on a site.

"We adapt to the customers' needs. They don't adapt to what we need," Rick Rogers says. "You have to stay on top of the scheduling." Drivers help with that by calling the office when they see restrooms need to be serviced, and office workers call the client to receive approval.

"Nine times out of 10, the company agrees with what we say. They know we know how to do our business and are not just trying to get an extra ser-

Right: Barb Rogers (left) and Kathy Zent

Below: Technician Nikki Ingebritson delivers a Satellite Industries restroom to a rural work site.



"We adapt to the customers' needs. They don't adapt to what we need. ... Our reputation is on the line. If you're not proficient in your service, you're not going to make it. That's how we've been able to grow so fast."

RICK ROGERS



vice on them," Rogers says, noting they have occasionally ended contracts when the customer wasn't willing to pay for enough services to meet MonDak Portables' standards. "Our reputation is on the line. If you're not proficient in your service, you're not going to make it. That's how we've been able to grow so fast."

Rick Rogers moves units in the yard using a Cat skid-steer.

Adapting to customers' needs led to MonDak Portables building its own comfort station units, beginning in 2014. Oil field managers recruiting workers want to attract and keep employees longer, and quality-of-life issues — like good restrooms — make a difference. They didn't want all the frills (or cost) of manufactured units, just basic amenities.

MonDak Portables set up a shop in Fairmount, Indiana, where four employees build insulated steel two- and four-unit comfort stations. They have electric heat and air conditioning, wash stations, and restroom tanks. MonDak Portables builds them for their own customers and has started selling them to others.

"We also hold back newer ones for special events such as concerts and fairs," he adds.

(continued)

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Going after government contracts

Being a woman-owned business is generally seen as an asset to get special accommodations. But, Kathy Zent notes it's not that big a deal in North Dakota, where she started working for a business 35 years ago and eventually purchased it.

"I don't believe being a woman (business owner) in North Dakota is a disadvantage. It never seemed to be an issue," Zent says, nor has she applied for women-owned status to take advantage of it.

As part of MonDak Portables, she and her business partner, Barb Rogers, have not yet used the status to gain work. But they have taken steps and filled out the necessary paperwork to earn woman-owned business certification as well as small-business certification. Both could be important as the company adds government contracts.

They got started when Rogers received an email from the Small Business Administration about a seminar for federal procurements in Fargo last year. She and her husband, Rick Rogers, attended the seminar and met with the SBA program manager for individual guidance.

The free seminar helped them to learn how to read a contract, understand all the associated abbreviations and acronyms, and become aware of the many programs available through HUBZone grants to businesses with minority and other statuses. The program manager assisted them in filling out a contract and submitting an invoice, registered them with the federal government, and set them up to receive daily emails from the Bid Match system that lists opportunities for city, state and federal bids.

MonDak Portables was awarded one of three contract bids it made, based on its small-business certification. This year, they set up a site to service restrooms near Warren Air Force Base in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

The company will continue to bid on appropriate contracts.

"We're just looking for other directions to go. Being a small business and woman-owned is a plus," Barb Rogers says.

KEEPING EMPLOYEES LOYAL

Maintaining a good reputation requires keeping good employees, which can be a challenge when oil companies are constantly recruiting workers.

"Our biggest challenge is the high wages. We have to pay 50 percent higher than the national average (for restroom technicians)," he says. Barb Rogers adds, "We pay 100 percent health insurance for them and their families, including dental and life. We have to do it or they'll go somewhere else."

Because housing is a big expense for workers, the company purchased 10 single-wide mobile homes and subsidizes housing costs (charging 70 percent less than typical rents in nearby Williston) and created their own worker camp to accommodate up to 20 people. Employees have access to a gym in the nearby MonDak Portables shop.

The setup works well for out-of-state employees who prefer to work for two or three months and then go home for a month. MonDak Portables schedules accordingly to accommodate employees' desire to work long hours to make money while in North Dakota and then having a long time off to spend quality time with their families.

Though none of their employees moved to North Dakota with the plan to work for a portable restroom company, word-of-mouth about the job and benefits led them to MonDak Portables.

"We haven't lost an employee in four years," Rick Rogers adds. "We treat them how we want to be treated, and it's more of a mom and pop business atmosphere. They show us the loyalty back."

MonDak Portables provides employees with clothing and coveralls carrying the company's logo so that customers know who they are.

EQUIPMENT FOR THE LONG HAUL

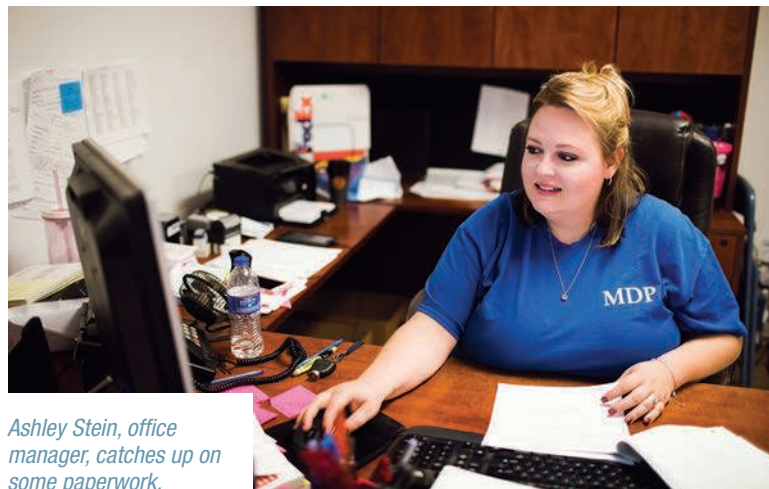
With long service routes, MonDak Portables sends out five trucks each day, including one truck from a satellite shop 135 miles away in Minot. Another driver at the Epping shop is available to deliver restrooms and handle emergency calls.

"We have big enough tanks that allows us to service everything we have during the day and come back and dump," he notes, adding the Minot driver ends his route in Epping to dump his load. MonDak Portables began 100 percent land application in 2012 when it was difficult to find waste facilities to take its loads. Drivers unload into tanks, and septage is spread on neighboring farm fields.

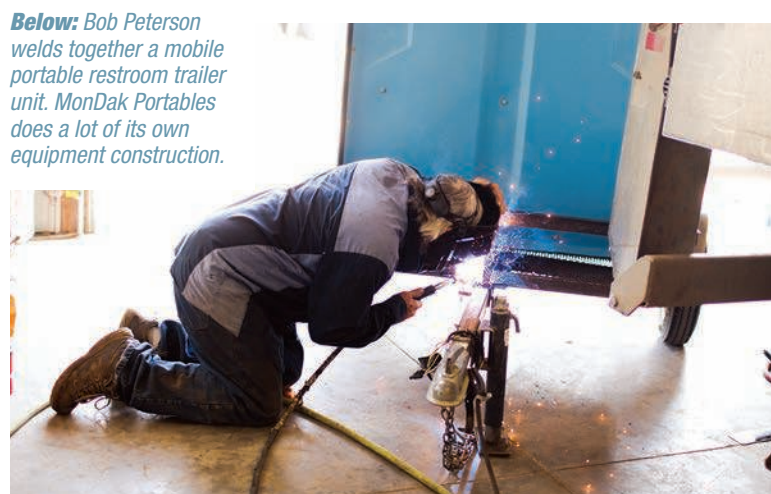
Though only part of the fleet is used daily, MonDak Portables has reasons to keep so many trucks. When work in the oil fields was ramping up, they needed more. But now the trucks come in handy for each driver to have a backup truck or for when additional opportunities turn up. Also, when over-the-road weight restrictions are in place during the spring thaw, only the smaller trucks can be used.

The seven largest trucks have 1,100-gallon waste and 300- or 350-gallon freshwater steel tanks. Four are 2012 and 2015 Hino 268 and 268A models with Conde pumps from Satellite Industries. Two are 2011 Ford F-750s with Conde pumps (Westmoor) from Satellite Industries. And one is a 2008 Sterling Acterra with a Masport pump built by Crescent Tank.

Other trucks include a 2015 Hino 268A with a Conde pump made by Satellite Industries and a 2011 Ford F-550 with a Masport pump made by Crescent Tank that each have 850-gallon waste and 300-gallon freshwater steel tanks. Five 2011 Ford F-550s were added to the fleet when oil field work was ramping up. From Satellite Industries, they have steel tanks from 500 to



Ashley Stein, office manager, catches up on some paperwork.



Below: Bob Peterson welds together a mobile portable restroom trailer unit. MonDak Portables does a lot of its own equipment construction.



MonDak Portables manufactures its own comfort station trailers that are used in the North Dakota oil fields. Trailers and Satellite Industries restrooms are shown waiting to be deployed.

ing for some customers and for land application, MonDak Portables has a 2012 Peterbilt 348 with a 4,000-gallon steel tank from Satellite Industries. A 1997 John Deere tractor pulls the 2013 Nuhn Industries sprayer that has a 12,500-gallon tank for land application.

Over the years, MonDak Portables has purchased 3,500 Satellite Industries restrooms. About 95 percent are Tufways and the remaining are Maxims. In 2018, the company purchased 150 Satellite Industries Liberty ADA-compliant units. Often restrooms are transported on the large service trucks, but when several are needed for events, MonDak Portables uses eight-unit trailers from PJ Trailers.

DAKOTA CHALLENGES

In 2011, the partners had a 14,800-square-foot shop built in Epping with a 50-by-80-square-foot wash bay to keep restrooms and trucks clean. Other spaces are used for repairs, winter truck storage, supplies, a kitchen and a gym for employees who live in the mobile homes.

With oil field companies constantly on the move, technology is important for keeping the business on track. Summit Software (Ritam Technologies) helps with bookkeeping. For routing, customers know to give MonDak Portables the GPS location so drivers can find them through GPS. StreetEagle (Insight Mobile Data) software allows office managers and dispatchers to set up routes and know where drivers are at all times.

Safety is key in the remote area where temperatures can dip to 30 degrees below zero or more and blizzards cause hazardous whiteouts. Only the worst weather stops MonDak Portables from providing service, so every morning the driver manager has a safety briefing before the crew heads out. The topic might relate to the weather, stopping distances or reminders about how to use tools.

"Sometimes a driver has problems, so we interloop routes in case one breaks down. They all work together, and they don't come in until they call every driver in their area to see if they need help," he says.

Drivers also meet weekly with shop workers and mechanics to talk about concerns with trucks and equipment.

650 gallons for waste and 300 to 350 gallons for freshwater and Conde or Masport pumps. MonDak Portables also has two older trucks: a 2007 Ford F-550 with a 600-gallon waste and 300-gallon freshwater steel tank and Conde pump and a 1990 International with a 300-gallon waste and 100-gallon freshwater steel Satellite Industries slide-in unit. For occasional septic pump-

"Our biggest challenge is the high wages. We have to pay 50 percent higher than the national average (for restroom technicians). We pay 100 percent health insurance for them and their families, including dental and life."

RICK ROGERS

FUTURE GROWTH

Currently, about 60 percent of MonDak Portables' customers are oil-related, with another 20 percent in construction and events. The other 20 percent of business is with government contracts — a new market for MonDak Portables that the partners hope will provide stability through the ups and downs of the oil field economy.

Barb Rogers says she and Rick Rogers plan to continue to learn and put in more bids for government contracts that can last one to five years.

The company seeks to add as much customer diversity as it can, including construction, events and government contracts. Barb Rogers and Zent are also open to adding other services such as waterjetting to meet customers' needs.

"Rick is good at keeping abreast of the industry and people. So, he's been a step ahead of upswings and downturns," Zent says.

"If something catches our eye, we're not afraid to go anywhere if we have restrooms available," Barb Rogers adds. ■

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Gain Respect for the Industry Through 'Learning by Doing' Experiences

By Karleen Kos

"Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn." – Ben Franklin

Any adult who has ever tried to get a kid to tie their shoe knows that you can't merely talk him or her through it and expect a bow to appear. Similarly, no one learns to ride a bicycle just by having it explained. The novice has to try it a few times, fall a few times, and have dad run along holding the seat until staying upright suddenly becomes second nature.

As we think about improving the image of the portable sanitation industry, we do well to remember this idea. People are not going to respect portable sanitation just because we tell them they should. So how can we apply "learning

by doing" to getting some respect for our industry and your business? I suggest the following:

- Teach your customers how to respect your equipment by engaging them in the actual process of problem-solving. T-shirts in the tank? Invite customers to view the tank with you and maybe even try fishing the shirt out for themselves. Toilet paper disappears? Have the site supervisor be the person who stores it and replaces it. Whatever the problem on the site, try to get the responsible party to engage with you and the equipment physically. If you can move from talking to doing, the person in charge is more likely to "get it" and help change things for the better.

- Teach the public to respect portable sanitation by educating them about our industry. As you probably already know, people outside our industry are often fascinated by what we do. Turn these interested parties into ambassadors by letting them "get their hands (a little) dirty." If you have clean equipment you can use to provide a demonstration on an event site or at a community gathering, show them how a unit is placed, prepared, pumped and cleaned. To the extent that your insurance allows, you might even let some folks try pumping clean (of course!) water out of a unit after you have let them use a pair of tongs to remove a soda can, a pair of briefs, and a diaper from the tank. Doing this will offer a powerful lesson about how things really work.

- Teach the next generation to respect your business by reporting all substantial vandalism to the police and the media. As the press picks up the stories, we have seen these incidents become a net win for the company and the industry when the (usually teenaged male) culprits are caught. Collaborating with the judge or prosecuting attorney, the offenders are invited to do community service or pay a fine by working it off with the portable sanitation company or spending some time observing the work getting done. With luck, the thoughtless kid learns something. Even if he doesn't, though, the community learns about you and your business from the publicity you receive.

There's another old saying: People respond to incentives. We, as an industry, need to create ways for customers and the public to get something positive out of interacting with our industry. We can't always control their experience using a unit. We can, however, control the experiences we create that incentivize the public to learn about portable sanitation. If you get good at offering learning-by-doing experiences, you'll discover that respect for our industry is possible. Soon, it will be as natural as riding a bike. ■

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Take 5 ... with Charlene's Waste Services

In just two years, Tommy and Charlene Endsley — the owners of Charlene's Waste Services in Wentzville, Missouri — have significantly increased their gross income and their fleet of vehicles and restrooms.

A construction boom in the metro St. Louis area helped stoke the company's growth; about 90 percent of its revenue comes from construction rentals and the rest from smaller special events. But plain old hard work and a frugal financial mindset also were strong factors, says Tommy Endsley, 39, who has nearly 20 years' of experience in the portable restroom industry.

The Endsleys were on a tight budget. As such, they bought used equipment at first. Through a classified ad in *Pumper* magazine, they bought 200 used construction restrooms from a company located a couple-hour's drive away. "I picked them up 30 at a time with a flatbed truck and a trailer," Tommy Endsley says.

The couple also found a used service truck in the *Pumper* classifieds: a 1997 International outfitted with a 700-gallon waste and 500-gallon freshwater steel tank and a Masport pump. Endsley also rigged up a 2006 Dodge Ram 3500 with a smaller slide-in unit, using a 300-gallon waste and 150-gallon freshwater stainless steel tank owned by an old friend.

"I cleaned it up, put a Conde pump (Westmoor) on it and went to work," Endsley says. "When you're just starting out as a small business, you don't have a pocketful of money ... so you have to be resourceful. The last thing you want to do is go out and get loans and then have everything flop on you. We had to first test the waters to be sure customers would use us."

The company now owns two new trucks built out by FlowMark Vacuum Trucks: a 2018 Dodge Ram 5500 with a 500-gallon waste and 500-gallon freshwater aluminum tank and a 2017 Ford F-750 with a 700-gallon waste and 700-gallon freshwater aluminum tank. Both trucks rely on National Vacuum Equipment 304 pumps.

In addition, Charlene's Waste Services owns a 2006 Dodge Ram 3500 dually pickup, used for transporting restrooms; three trailers made by Davis Utility Trailer Sales; about 500 restrooms made by PolyPortables, a division of Satellite, Satellite Industries, PolyJohn and Armal; about 15 hand-wash stations made by T.S.F.; and 15 300-gallon holding tanks made by PolyJohn and Five Peaks.

"I think that's pretty darn good for just Charlene and me," Endsley says. "We tripled our (gross) revenue in the second year compared to first year."

From left, Charlene and Tommy Endsley and Dave Menne are shown with their newest service vehicle, a 2018 Dodge Ram 5500 from FlowMark Vacuum Trucks with a National Vacuum Equipment pump. (Photos by Bradley Leeb)

In This Together

A Missouri couple puts in long hours to realize their dream to build Charlene's Waste Services into a successful portable restroom enterprise **By Ken Wysocky**

EXPLORE FIVE ISSUES THAT IMPACT CHARLENE'S WASTE SERVICES:

1 HAVING A GREAT PARTNER

Endsley had a no-compete agreement with a former restroom service employer, so he took a job working as a garbage-truck driver for a few years. After the agreement expired, he kept his job as a garbage-truck driver for another year. At the same time, he and Charlene Endsley, 47, also worked at building up the restroom business to the point it was sustainable.

"We knew we had to have enough business built up so I could quit the job and work for our company full time," Tommy Endsley says. "I was putting in a lot of hours. And none of this would've worked if not for Charlene. She is such a hard worker and her sheer determination helped make this work. She ran a lot of routes with the slide-in while I was at work and made deliveries and pickups.

"You just have to be determined and have some pep in your step," he adds when asked how they persevered during the intense startup phase. "You have to live it and breathe it every day."

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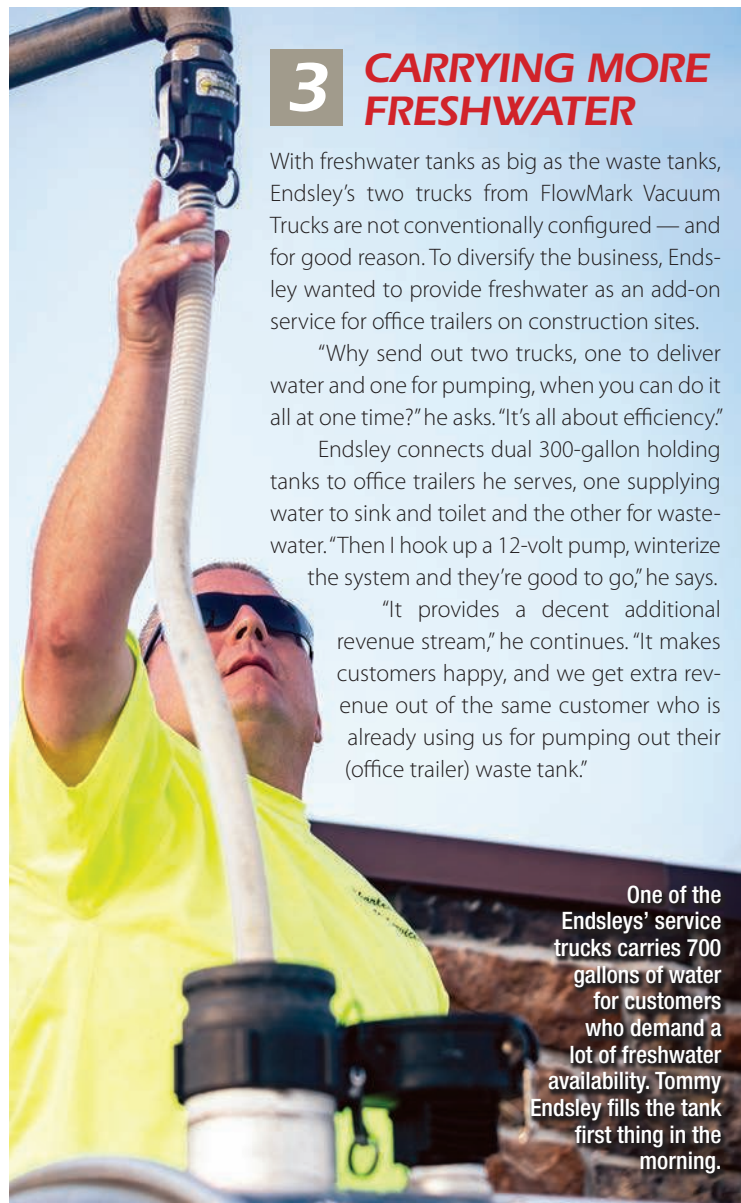
Tommy Endsley unwraps the hose on his vacuum truck (FlowMark Vacuum Trucks with a National Vacuum Equipment pump) at a job site with three restrooms to clean.

2 POUNDING THE PAVEMENT

There are 20 or so competitors in the market Charlene's Waste Services serves, which includes the metro St. Louis area and parts of western Illinois, across the Mississippi River. To establish the business, the couple did not do any advertising. Instead, they relied on the old-fashioned approach.

"I'd see a construction site and hop out of the truck and talk to someone, or maybe even run into someone I already knew. We built the business on word-of-mouth referrals and repeat business. Business just kept on blossoming and blossoming."

What is Charlene's Waste Services secret to retaining customers? Just provide great service. "Be upfront with customers and tell them the facts — you're going to do this kind of service and the driver will show up at this time. ... Then go out and do what you said you'd do," Endsley says. "No one is perfect — we've had hiccups here and there. But we always make customer service our top priority."



3 CARRYING MORE FRESHWATER

With freshwater tanks as big as the waste tanks, Endsley's two trucks from FlowMark Vacuum Trucks are not conventionally configured — and for good reason. To diversify the business, Endsley wanted to provide freshwater as an add-on service for office trailers on construction sites.

"Why send out two trucks, one to deliver water and one for pumping, when you can do it all at one time?" he asks. "It's all about efficiency."

Endsley connects dual 300-gallon holding tanks to office trailers he serves, one supplying water to sink and toilet and the other for wastewater. "Then I hook up a 12-volt pump, winterize the system and they're good to go," he says.

"It provides a decent additional revenue stream," he continues. "It makes customers happy, and we get extra revenue out of the same customer who is already using us for pumping out their (office trailer) waste tank."

One of the Endsleys' service trucks carries 700 gallons of water for customers who demand a lot of freshwater availability. Tommy Endsley fills the tank first thing in the morning.



Charlene Endsley replenishes paper products in the cabinet of a service truck (FlowMark Vacuum Trucks).

4 LOOKING TOWARD WOMEN'S BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CERTIFICATION

There's more to the company's name than honoring Charlene Endsley's role as a co-owner. In the long term, the couple is aiming to become a certified women's business enterprise, and the couple thought the name would play into that from a marketing perspective, Endsley says.

A WBE certificate can help boost business because many contractors can bid on government contracts only if they have a certain percentage of minority-owned businesses involved as subcontractors. When putting jobs up for bid, government agencies also give priority to WBEs, which must be majority-owned by a minority. (Charlene Endsley owns 51 percent of the company.)

"We have to be in business for three years before we can apply, and there's no guarantee that you'll get certified," Tommy Endsley says. The process is time-consuming and rigorous; applicants must undergo background checks and have their financial records examined.

(continued)

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Tommy Endsley tips an Armal unit after servicing to drain water from the floor.

5 SEEKING SLOW AND STEADY GROWTH

Even though the construction industry is booming, Endsley would like to diversify the company by serving more special events. "Construction is like your bread and butter — your base income," he says. "Special events are the icing on the cake." Right now, Charlene's Waste Services only takes on smaller special events because Endsley doesn't want to under-serve regular customers just to handle weekend events that occur once a year.

"But as we grow and get more employees (the couple just hired their first employee earlier this year) and equipment, we'll shoot for bigger events," he says.

In five to eight years, Endsley envisions owning 1,500 to 2,000 restrooms. "That's our goal," he says. "But we want to grow slow and steady. We don't ever want to bite off more than we can chew." ■

"When you're just starting out as a small business, you don't have a pocketful of money ... so you have to be resourceful. ... We had to first test the waters to be sure customers would use us."

TOMMY ENDSLEY

MORE INFO

Armal, Inc.
866-873-7796
www.armal.biz
(See ad page 13)

Five Peaks
866-293-1502
www.fivepeaks.net
(See ad page 33)

FlowMark Vacuum Trucks
833-653-8100
www.flowmark.com
(See ad page 29)

Masport, Inc.
800-228-4510
www.masportpump.com
(See ad page 9)

National Vacuum Equipment, Inc.
800-253-5500
www.natvac.com
(See ad page 11)

PolyJohn
800-292-1305
www.polyjohn.com
(See ad page 39)

PolyPortables, a division of Satellite
800-241-7951
www.polyportables.com
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Satellite Industries
800-328-3332
www.satelliteindustries.com

T.S.F. Company, Inc.
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Holding Tanks and Transport Trailers

By Craig Mandli

DECALS

ALLIED GRAPHICS DECALS

Allied Graphics has developed an adhesive that's engineered to adhere to the challenging textures found on all major portable restrooms. When combined with durable UV-cured ink, the adhesive ensures decals will hold up to harsh environments, according to the maker. **800-490-9931; www.allied-graphics.com.**



ROEDA GRAPHICS

Graphics from ROEDA are printed on a high-tack, permanent, adhesive vinyl with UV fade-resistant ink to adhere to rough surfaces like portable restrooms, garbage toters and other plastic products. A wide variety of stock UV inks are available, along with any custom Pantone match. Decals can be made in any size, shape and quantity. UV clear-coat or lamination can be added for extra protection from the elements. An existing logo can be used, or a new one can be designed. **800-829-3021; www.roedainc.com.**

HOLDING TANKS

FIVE PEAKS 250-GALLON HOLDING TANK

The 250-gallon holding tank from Five Peaks has a 17-inch profile that is discrete on the job site and shaped for easily transporting with most pickup trucks and haulers. The durable tank comes with one 12-inch manhole cover (plus an optional second) for ease of servicing, along with six Fernco-style fittings offering multiple plumbing configurations. Made from rotational molded polyethylene, the tank has two heavy-duty grab handles for easier moving. Its sloped design prevents water from pooling along the top of the tank. It adds reliable, discrete storage for any job site or special event, according to the manufacturer. **866-293-1502; www.fivepeaks.net.**



POLYJOHN HOLDING TANK

Holding tanks from PolyJohn are durable, sanitary receptacles used for collecting waste in portable restrooms. They may be used for long-term portable sites where indoor plumbing is not an option. Made from highly durable plastic, the holding tank design is functional and discreet. It's also compatible with other PolyJohn restrooms and sinks and can be easily configured with most any type of plumbing. For outdoor work sites or special events, use the holding tank to complete any portable restroom area. They are available in 250- and 300-gallon capacities. **800-292-1305; www.polyjohn.com.**



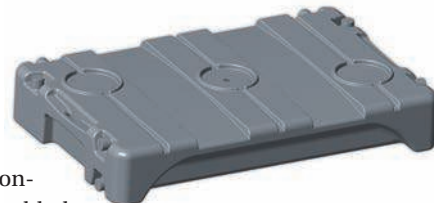
POLYPORTABLES, A DIVISION OF SATELLITE, HOLDING TANK

Rotationally molded polyethylene holding tanks from PolyPortables, a division of Satellite, are used under office trailers or for temporary waste storage in other applications. The 250-gallon, low-profile tank is 18 by 48 by 72 inches and weighs 100 pounds. Four clean-out ports are typically installed on each tank: two on the top in opposing corners and one on each end. Custom tanks with as few as two ports are available. A uni-seal grommet and threaded PVC connector are inserted in each port. Also available is a 300-gallon tank (18 by 48 by 90 inches) with one 10-inch manhole, two 3-inch spin-weld ports, and two universal clean-outs. Tanks can be daisy-chained to increase capacity. **706-864-3776; www.polyportables.com.**



SATELLITE INDUSTRIES HOLDING TANKS

Satellite Industries offers 250- or 300-gallon holding tanks made with interlocking stacking posts, recessed ports and connections, two internal pillars for added strength, molded fittings, thickened corners for extended wear, and end-to-end fittings for linking tanks. They are available in gray or a neutral translucent color, a height of 16.35 inches, width of 60 inches, length of 95 inches, and weight of 136.3 pounds. **800-328-3332; www.satelliteindustries.com.**



(continued)



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HOLDING TANKS

SPIN PRODUCTS HOLDING TANK

Holding tanks from **Spin Products** are made of durable polyethylene resin. They are available in black (graywater/wastewater) and white (potable/freshwater) in sizes from 5 to 250 gallons. Custom tanks can be made in any configuration to suit individual needs, with private labeling and custom colors available. Tooling is done in-house. **909-590-7000; www.spinproducts.com.**



T.S.F. 300-GALLON HOLDING TANK

The low-profile, 300-gallon holding tank from **T.S.F.** is 16 inches tall, designed to easily slide beneath an RV or a field office. The placement of two 3-inch holes is standard: one in the corner for clean-out and easy access from the side of the trailer and another provided for the plumbing. Varied-size holes or spin welds can be installed anywhere in the tank for any application. They have been certified in the states

that require certifications, require them by the truckload for temporary waste storage due to devastation, or are required to have aboveground tanks in campgrounds. **800-843-9286; www.tuff-jon.com.**

LABELS

ANCHOR GRAPHICS SERVICE & TESTING LABELS

Service & Testing Labels from **Anchor Graphics** are made with high-quality material and outdoor adhesives. Each label is transferred to an industrial press where the ink is embedded into the thick material. Once imprinted, a protective coating is applied over the print to resist fade and weather disintegration. They can be used to record service intervals on units in the field. They are overlaminated to protect against abrasion, oil, gasoline, and some acids and solvents. They are available in one color or full color and can be die cut in any design. **972-422-4300; www.anchorgraphics.com.**



LIGHTING

J&J CHEMICAL J-LIGHT

J&J Chemical offers two solar-powered motion-sensor lights designed for portable restrooms. **J-Light 30** offers five super-bright, cool-white LEDs emitting 30 lumens with a 1.2-volt Ni-mh 900mAh rechargeable battery. **J-Light 55** has eight super-bright, cool-white LEDs emitting 55 lumens with a 3.2-volt LiFePo4 1,200mAh rechargeable battery. Both are easy to install and fitted with a motion sensor to activate the light and day/night sensor so they will not activate in the daylight. They switch off after 40 seconds of inactivity. **J-Light 30** requires a 1.5-inch hole, while **J-Light 55** requires a 2-inch hole. **800-345-3303; www.jjchem.com.**



SOLAR LED INNOVATIONS PHONE LITE

The **Phone Lite** from **Solar LED Innovations** offers an economical lighting solution for portable restrooms. Users place a cellphone in the bracket and use the cellphone light to illuminate the restroom. The bracket attaches to any door or wall using double-stick tape, or it can be riveted for permanent installations. **484-639-4833; www.solargoose.com.**



PORTABLE RESTROOM MOVERS

ARMAL TRANSPORT DOLLY

The **Armal** transport dolly can be used to move any Wave standard portable restroom. It is made of lightweight aluminum and is compact, making it easy for one operator to maneuver a portable restroom quickly. It is designed for rigorous daily use and speeds the process of picking up and/or dropping off portable restrooms safely and efficiently. **770-491-6410; www.armal.biz.**



DEAL ASSOC. SUPER MONGO MOVER

The **Super Mongo Mover** from **Deal Assoc.** is an industrial hand truck designed to move standard and handicapped portable restrooms. It has two axles, which allow the hand truck to balance on its own when tipped back.

Once tipped back, the restroom can be easily pushed or pulled, and it provides easy access to the roof for cleaning. The unit is available with air tires with inner tubes or never-go-flat solid foam tires. Most popular are the four- and six-wheel models, but it's available with up to eight wheels for maximum flotation over soft ground. **866-599-3325; www.dealassoc.com.**

TRANSPORT TRUCKS/TRAILERS

AMTHOR INTERNATIONAL FLAT VAC

The **Flat Vac** multipurpose portable restroom vacuum tank from **Amthor International** allows the operator to carry up to 12 restrooms on top of the tank and pull a restroom delivery trailer. The tank has a rounded bottom with a full-length formed sump design for drainage and full baffles for strength. The flat tank has wastewater and freshwater compartments, as well as an option for a chemical or brine compartment. It is available in steel, stainless steel or aluminum. It comes with a workstation and a vertical cabinet with an aluminum extruded door and numerous shelves. A liftgate is installed behind the tank to load and unload restrooms. All units are custom built to specifications. **800-328-6633; www.amthorinternational.com.**



(continued)



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CRESCENT TANK VACUUM TANK

The **Crescent Tank** vacuum tank is completely flat inside and out. It can carry up to 10 portable restrooms, and the weight capacity is the same as a flatbed truck. It has no baffles, allowing it to be emptied completely to avoid internal corrosion. With the included pump at specified cubic feet per minute, unnecessary fatigue of the structure is eliminated and the life of the tank is prolonged. It is made from 1/4-inch-thick steel, making it structurally strong. Its workstation is designed for the portable restroom industry. The liftgate rail width allows units to fit, and multiple liftgate decks and rail options are available. Freshwater is held inside the external 1/2-inch-thick poly tank to avoid internal wastewater contamination. It can be installed on any chassis within the specifications required for each model based on axle ratings and maximum load capacity. **585-657-4104; www.crescenttank.com.**



F.M. MFG. 30-FOOT TRAILER

The 30-foot flatbed trailer from **F.M. Mfg.** has three 3,700-pound torsion bar axles, side roller for easy loading, low-profile tires, solid front header, and tie-downs on both sides. The customizable trailer has electric brakes on all axles and LED lights. **877-889-2246; www.fmmfg.com.**

IMPERIAL INDUSTRIES 700-GALLON ALUMINUM SIDEWINDER

The 700-gallon aluminum sidewinder from **Imperial Industries** can haul four portable restrooms on its deck. It has an 8-foot flatbed with 350-gallon water tank, 700-gallon waste tank, 1,600-pound Thieman liftgate and comes equipped with a Masport HXL4 pump. The unit is built on a 2018 Ford F-550 chassis. **800-558-2945; www.imperialind.com.**



JOHNNY MOVER TRAILER SALES TRAILER

The portable restroom transport trailer from **Johnny Mover Trailer Sales** has a skid-locking system using an iron bar with a chain-binding system to secure multiple units. Models are available to handle six to 20 restrooms,

and all feature brakes, paint options, lighting, leaf-spring suspension, front deflectors to protect units from road spray and debris, and optional powder coating and chrome wheels. **800-498-3000; www.cesspoolcleaners.com.**

LIQUID WASTE INDUSTRIES TRAILER

Custom-built portable restroom delivery trailers from **Liquid Waste Industries** carry six to 24 portable restrooms and come with or without sides. They are built with heavy-duty steel and come standard with torsion axles, electric brakes, flush-mounted lights, and 10- or 13-inch wheels and tires. Custom upgrades include gates, leaf-spring axles, fold-down ramps, LED lights and choice of hitch. **877-445-5511; www.lwiinc.com.**



McKEE TECHNOLOGIES - EXPLORER TRAILERS TRANSPORTER



The **Transporter** from **McKee Technologies - Explorer Trailers** has easy-to-

adjust carrier slats that box in any size restroom skid. Even multiple-size skids can be configured securely in the same load, providing safe, flexible transportation for many styles of portable restrooms. Models range from 8 to 48 feet, accommodating up to 24 units. All include fully independent suspension axles designed to eliminate side-to-side shock transfer. An optional front wind deflector protects units from road spray, stones and wind loading. Hot-dip galvanizing is available for corrosion protection. **866-457-5425; www.explorertrailers.com.**

PIK RITE FLATBED RESTROOM HAULER

The **Flatbed Restroom Hauler** from **Pik Rite** has a 650-gallon tank, flatbed and liftgate. The tank has a 400-gallon waste compartment and internal 250-gallon freshwater compartment for even weight distribution. The truck includes a National Vacuum Equipment 304 vacuum pump, dual 2-inch fill hoses, 20 gpm washdown system, dual spring return freshwater hose reels, and dual 2-inch bucket fills to make it user-friendly. A 20-inch top manway, 5-inch sight eyes and clear hose sight tube are included. The truck is also equipped with a 98-by-102-inch aluminum flatbed and Thieman TVL liftgate. Two diamond plate toolboxes are mounted on the passenger side. The truck has an LED running light kit with a durable, fully molded wiring harness. **800-326-9763; www.pikrite.com.**



PRO-TAINER PRO-PORTA TRAILER



The **Pro-Porta Trailer** from **Pro-Tainer** allows users to securely carry multiple units on the trailer. It has a solid floor, ramps for loading and unloading, and durable paint. Removable dividers allow

hauling of standard-sized units, as well as handicap-accessible units. Various capacities are available. **800-248-7761; www.protainer.com. ■**



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PRODUCT NEWS

Reelcraft Industries cable welding reels

WCH7000 and WCH80001 spring-retractable cable welding reels from Reelcraft Industries are designed for electric welding applications. The reels have a current path through a continuous 700-amp, 90-volt DC maximum rated enclosed slip ring. The WCH7000 can hold up to 50 feet of #3/0 or #4/0 work lead or electrode lead, and the WCH80001 can hold up to 75 feet. **800-444-3134; www.reelcraft.com.**

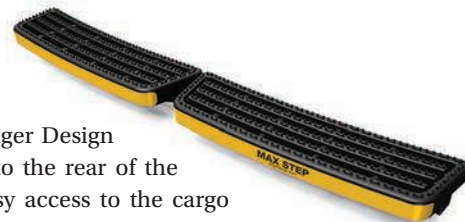


Water Cannon pressure washer

The pressure washer from Water Cannon Inc. - MWBE is constructed on a lightweight aircraft-grade aluminum frame with no welds to fracture or break. The cool deck frame helps dissipate excess heat from the engine and pump, adding to component longevity. Two oversized, fully pneumatic air tires have twin stainless steel ball bearings mounted on a sturdy 3/4-inch cold-rolled steel axle. Two shock-absorbing feet provide a stable platform, reduce vibration and eliminate "walking" during operation. **800-333-9274; www.watercannon.com.**

Ranger Design Max Step van step

The Max Step from Ranger Design is a van step that attaches to the rear of the vehicle frame, providing easy access to the cargo space or roof rack. Made with anti-slip tread plates, the Max Step is built to provide a rugged grip in any type of climate. A line of reflective tape across each step also ensures maximum visibility, day and night. It is protected by an anti-corrosive finish, has a weight capacity of 300 pounds and can be quickly attached to vans without factory steps. **800-565-5321; www.rangerdesign.com.** ■



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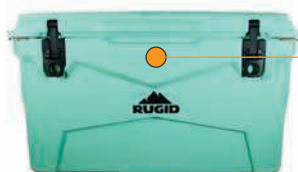


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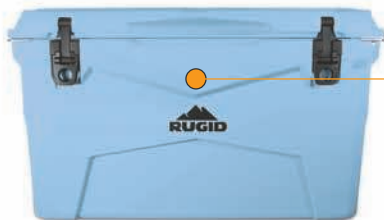


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INDUSTRY NEWS

Mr. John and Tri-Boro Trailer announce leadership changes

Mr. John and Tri-Boro Trailer announced the promotion of Christopher McCarthy to president and Jeffrey Wolfarth to vice president as part of a leadership succession plan for the company. McCarthy joined Mr. John in April 2000 and most recently served as vice president. Wolfarth started with the company in 1977 and most recently served as general manager since 2000. Michael McCarthy, who has served as president since 2013, will move to the role of chairman.

Imperial Industries promotions announced

Tom Normandy was promoted to general manager of Imperial Industries. He has a bachelor's degree in industrial engineering and product development and additional training in welding and painting. Before joining Imperial Industries in 1993, he worked for a worldwide food company, specializing in custom machine design and facilities planning. Imperial Industries also announced the promotion of Kevin Steinke to operations manager. Before joining Imperial Industries, he supervised a construction company of small cellular 4G installation sites in Indiana, Ohio and Kentucky. He joined the company in January 2018. ■



Tom Normandy



Kevin Steinke

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PORTABLE RESTROOM TRUCKS

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2008 Ford F550 cab & chassis with an aluminum 1,100 U.S. gallon, 2-compartment (750 – 350) PTS unit and Masport vacuum pump. (Stock# 6618V) www.VacuumSalesInc.com (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648) (TBM)

2012 Ford F550 Best Enterprise built 800-gallon waste tank/300-gallon water tank. 2-unit carrier. 30 ft. Tiger Tail hose. 119,647 miles. Runs great. \$40,000 OBO. 608-835-3459; sales@buckyspt.com (PBM)

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