

P R O

PORTABLE RESTROOM OPERATOR

November 2019 www.promonthly.com

POT AND PORTABLE SANITATION

Serving cannabis festivals is one of many changes seen at Vermont's Best Septic Service

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IT'S A FAMILY TRADITION

Three generations of Dresels have helped a Wisconsin community meet portable sanitation needs

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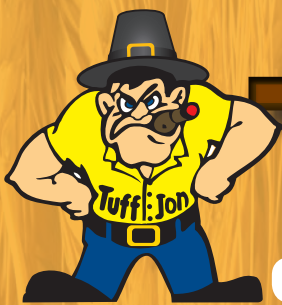


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Slide-In Units

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Published monthly by



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 1720 Maple Lake Dam Rd. • PO Box 220
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 In U.S. or Canada call toll-free 800-257-7222
 Elsewhere call 715-546-3346 • Fax: 715-546-3786
 Website: www.promonthly.com • Email: pro@promonthly.com
 Office hours 7:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Central Time, Monday - Friday

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CIRCULATION: 2018 circulation averaged 7,717 copies per month. This figure includes both U.S. and International distribution.

REPRINTS AND BACK ISSUES: Visit www.promonthly.com/reprints/order for options and pricing. To order reprints, call Jeff Lane at 800-257-7222 (715-546-3346) or jeff.lane@colepublishing.com. To order back issues, call Nicole Maney at 800-257-7222 (715-546-3346) or email nicole.maney@colepublishing.com.

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ON THE COVER: Wisconsin's Cesspool Cleaner Co. has been providing restrooms to event and construction customers for nearly 65 years. Troy and Tricia Dresel are shown with a row of Five Peaks restrooms.
 (Photo by Dan Reiland)

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Municipal Restroom Placement Fees Would Be Disastrous for PROs

ONE MASSACHUSETTS TOWN IS LOOKING TO CHARGE PORTABLE SANITATION COMPANIES \$10 PER UNIT PER DAY TO DELIVER RESTROOMS TO CUSTOMERS

By Jim Kneiszel

I was in the newspaper business for many years before I became a trade magazine editor, and we used the term “burying the lead” when a reporter misjudged the most important piece of information and started the story with a trivial bit of news.

That was my first thought when I recently read a story about portable sanitation rules and regulations discussed at a meeting of the Westport Board of Health in Westport, Massachusetts. The lead in the local *Herald News* explains that the town would now refer to “portable toilets” rather than “Port-A-Johns” when describing restroom units in its regulations. Apparently the local officials believed portable toilet to be a more generic reference and that “Port-A-John” seemed to be more of a proprietary name.

OK, big deal, right?

Rather than drive better compliance, these fees will drive many construction companies underground and they will do whatever they can to avoid using required portable sanitation. So in effect, the added fees could do the opposite of what the town is trying to accomplish.

But then the story went on to discuss an issue that would be considered a bombshell to restroom operators, and something I’ve never heard of in many years of tracking the portable sanitation industry. The story explains that portable sanitation companies and the construction companies that hire them have been ignoring \$10 per unit, per day — and \$100 for more than 10 days — town permits to use a restroom.

Yes, you read that right. Westport requires a permit fee be paid to place a restroom for usage by a construction crew or other users. And their new proposed rules were to switch the responsibility for the permit from the user to the restroom operator.

I checked fee schedule at the town website and confirmed the charges for placing a restroom. They were published along with a variety of other permit fees you might expect from your local municipality, including:

- Residential septic plan review, \$100
- Wastewater system abandonment, \$100
- Perc application, \$350
- Roll-off container permit, \$75
- Piggery permit (more than four pigs), \$100.

OK, so I included the piggery permit for a joke, but being involved with the wastewater industry, you are probably familiar with the others.

UNFAIR TO PROS

According to the newspaper story, the permit is in place to protect groundwater and surface water and prevent people from using them as a long-term solution to sanitation needs.

Philip Weinberg, board of health chairman for the town of about 15,000 south of Boston and on the Atlantic Ocean, comments: “Over the years we found multiple instances of users not obtaining permits. As the board already regulates septage haulers, we believe that making them responsible to secure the permit before putting (the restroom) on a site will dramatically increase permit compliance. It will also substantially reduce staff time on administration and compliance enforcement.”

PROs would take issue with these rules for a number of reasons.

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The extra task would take hours and hours of staff time. Imagine your office crew having to make sure a \$10 permit is obtained for every unit leaving your yard. They write the checks, keep a digital log, add it to every invoice and communicate with both the town health department and the customer.

The upfront cost to PROs would be burdensome. Let's say a PRO working in Westport has an average of 300 restrooms out on work sites. That means the small company is fronting its clientele \$3,000 per day in permit fees. Imagine increasing your carrying costs anywhere near that amount and let me know how long the small family restroom company is going to stay in business.

Customers would balk at the added fee. Rather than drive better compliance, these fees will drive many construction companies underground and they will do whatever they can to avoid using required portable sanitation. So in effect, the added fees could do the opposite of what the town is trying to accomplish.

The amount of the fee is unreasonable. Most construction site units, for example, will be placed for more than 10 days. The \$100 fee will almost double the cost of the restrooms for building contractors who probably already think they pay their PRO too much for the service. The fee is punitive if it comes anywhere near the total cost of placing and servicing a restroom for a month.

These fees are unnecessary because PROs already closely track equipment. More and more PROs are becoming certified through the Portable Sanitation Association International to provide safe, high-quality service. Required training in many states includes proper handling of wastewater and appropriate spill response. That's not to mention Occupational Safety and Health Administration compliance requirements. Companies responsibly track their valuable equipment, and service technicians are held accountable for reporting work site problems. PROs have a great incentive to follow accepted safety procedures and respond to problems professionally.

SOMETHING NEW

As I said earlier, this is the first such restroom permit fee I've encountered. And I checked with a longtime industry insider friend who had the same reaction. Were this sort of permit to be more common, I'm certain it would be a frequent topic of conversation when I talk to PROs across the country or visit with them at the Water & Wastewater Equipment, Treatment & Transport (WWETT) Show.

Though it's something new to me, I can't say I'm terribly surprised. As local governments face tighter budgets and rising costs for personnel, insurances, building upkeep and infrastructure improvements, it's often the path of least resis-

tance to fall back on increasing existing fees and creating new fees than it is to add to the tax bills.

PROs understand all too well what it's like to face rising costs and a resistance to frequent rate increases. With competition too often nipping at your feet with low prices, turning a profit and keeping customers is a major challenge. But these permits seem like the local government piling on top of small businesses — be it the PRO or the customer renting the restroom.

How about you? Are you seeing proposals for restroom permit fees emerging through your local health departments or municipal government? If so, please let me know about it so I can

share information with readers of *Portable Restroom Operator*. Send me an email at editor@promonthly.com and I promise to respond.

START THE RESISTANCE

If this permit fee is an early hint of a trend, the portable sanitation industry should be prepared to make government officials aware of the hardship that rules like these could cause to small businesses in their communities. After all, small business is the backbone of our economy, and PROs provide good jobs, deliver a vital public service and are on the front lines for ensuring a cleaner environment. ■

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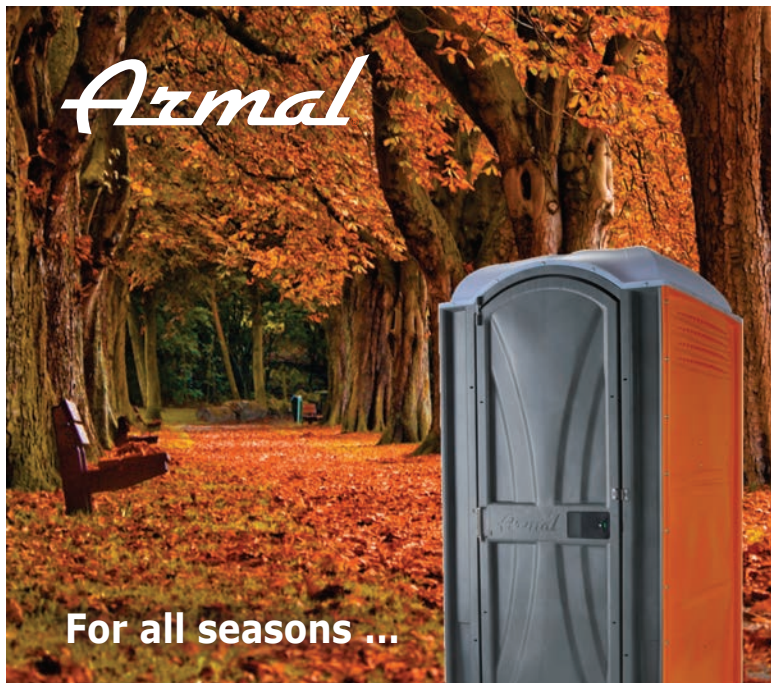
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CIVIC PRIDE

Community Cleanup Builds Goodwill for Texas PRO

Using roll-off containers and lots of volunteers, Sarabia's Portable Jons & Blue Sanitation in El Paso, Texas, sponsors two community cleanup days annually. The events are reputation-builders for the company. Read on to find out how similar efforts could promote your portable restroom operation. promonthly.com/featured

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As busy sanitation professionals, it's important but difficult to stay up to date on the latest regulations, technology and best practices. Try these five methods to improve your industry knowledge and business overall.

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VOLUNTEER



EMPLOYEE-PUBLIC RELATIONS

You've Heard of PTO; How About VTO?

For many PROs community service is baked into their business, from the types of events served to restroom donations and sports team sponsorships. And now may be the time to extend that volunteer ethic to service techs. Here PRO Editor Jim Kneiszel makes the argument for employee volunteer time off.

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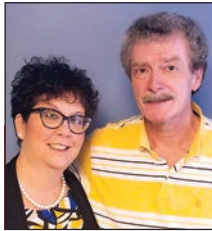
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Choosing Between ADA and Handicapped-Accessible Units

BOTH TYPES OF UNITS ALLOW ACCESS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, BUT YOUR CLIENTS AND PLACEMENT CIRCUMSTANCES WILL DICTATE SELECTION OF THE BEST RESTROOM FOR EACH JOB

By Jeff and Terri Wigley

Special events have dramatically slowed down for the winter, but we had questions from a PRO looking to enter the event marketplace next year. This company has plans to purchase new units for events, hand-wash stations and a six-stall restroom trailer. The PRO had several questions concerning another integral piece of equipment for special events.

Question: What is the difference between ADA-compliant and handicapped-accessible units? What are the pros and cons of each? If you were starting from scratch, would you invest in both types of units?

Answer: To begin with, accessibility for people with disabilities became law in 1990 with the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. This federal law ensures individuals with disabilities will have access to toilet facilities. The 1991 official ruling is entitled “Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability by Public Accommodations and in Commercial Facilities.”

Since this PRO is looking to enter the special event marketplace, be aware that there are requirements as to the minimum numbers of such units at events, as well as the construction of the units themselves.

Numbers of Handicapped Units Required

To begin with, the ADA mandates that at least 5% of the units at an event be accessible for people with disabilities. Furthermore, in some states and municipalities, there is a requirement of one handicapped unit per bank of units. For example, if there are four distinct and separate banks of five units each at an event, some municipalities would mandate that each bank must include a handicapped unit. With this example, there would be 20 units and four handicapped units required. If this PRO’s new six-stall trailer did not have ADA access, a handicapped unit would also be required to sit on the ground next to the restroom trailer.

Types of Handicapped Units in Our Industry

Two classifications of units exist for service to people with disabilities. ADA-compliant units and handicapped-accessible units are manufactured to help PROs serve those with disabilities. Both types of units are to be identified by the blue International Symbol of Accessibility.

ADA-compliant units meet all ADA requirements, primarily that an individual in a wheelchair can make a 360-degree turn inside the unit. The advantages of this type of unit are that it:

Meets all ADA requirements and therefore meets all requirements for government bid requests.

Does not make the PRO subject to any complaints or legal actions that would attempt to infer that the unit was only “accessible” and not “compliant” with the ADA law.

If there is any question about the event having a problem with the type of ADA unit provided, educate and consult with the customer and explain the nuances between these units.

The disadvantages of this type of unit are that they are generally larger, bulkier units and that they not only are harder to move and take up more space to transport, but also are more expensive.

Handicapped-accessible units can be used by individuals with disabilities. The only difference is that a person in a wheelchair cannot make the 360-degree turn per ADA requirements. Typically the user would still be able to enter the unit, pull up to the tank, use the restroom and then maneuver out of the unit. These units have the same handrails, low tank height and wide doors of the ADA-compliant model.

The advantages of these units are that they are smaller than ADA units and also cost less.

The disadvantage is that they don’t fully comply with ADA rules and regulations.

Recommendations

- If a PRO were starting from scratch, we would recommend the ADA-compliant units; there would never be any doubt or disagreement as to whether or not users with disabilities had the necessary restrooms for their use.
- If a PRO has both types of units, we would recommend caution in placing each of these units depending on several factors. If, for example, the event in question is one for the general public, consideration should be given for the ADA-compliant units where possible. At an event such as a road race with no participants in wheelchairs, handicapped-accessible units should meet the demand.
- If there is any question about the event having a problem with the type of ADA unit provided, educate and consult with the customer and explain the nuances between these units. This will strengthen the relationship with the customer and ensure open communication on a variety of issues.
- If a restroom trailer is being delivered to an event and the trailer is not handicapped accessible, given a choice we would strongly recommend the ADA-compliant unit. Should you be approached as to why a user who has a disability does not have all of the amenities of the restroom trailer, you can demonstrate that you are providing a 100% ADA-compliant unit and that is all you can do.

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Final Thoughts

“Path of travel” is one final consideration regardless of type of handicapped-accessible unit used. This section of the ADA law sets requirements that individuals with disabilities must be able to travel on a continuous, unobstructed path via wheelchair in order to access the unit. Paved sidewalks, parking lots and flat areas are ideal for the placement of ADA units. Be aware of placing ADA units next to curbs on the street since wheelchairs would not be able to reach the unit placed on the sidewalk above. Consider gravel as another impediment to a wheelchair.

Be aware and be compassionate about providing access to your portable restrooms for individuals with disabilities. They will thank you, and your customer will thank you! ■

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The Cesspool Cleaner Co. crew includes (from left) Sydney, Tricia, Troy and Kailey Dresel (with dog Squirt), Patti Humphrey, Greg Johnson, Jeremy Figy, Joel Kent, Jacob Polzin, Nathan Nispel and Joshua Brown. Missing are A.J. Schemenauer and Grant Crank, who are deployed in the Army, and Jim Brenner. (Photos by Dan Reiland)



IT'S A FAMILY TRADITION

Starting with homemade plywood restrooms in 1955, three generations of this Wisconsin family have been helping their community with portable sanitation

BY STEVE LUND

When Cesspool Cleaner Co. and Portable Toilet Rentals in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, takes on a special event, Troy Dresel, owner, makes sure it's really special — for the customer and the workers.

"With all our big events, we stay on site with our whole crew," Dresel says. "We have campers that we house all of our employees in. We keep our whole crew there, and we service the restrooms multiple times throughout the day. We service them three times a day at most of our larger events."

Dresel provides meals as well as housing for the workers.

"I usually do most of the cooking myself for three meals a day for my crew," he says. "We've got a cube van that we use to haul around some restaurant equipment. One of my campers is a 40-footer and I do a lot of cooking in that."

Dresel keeps the menu interesting, too.

"I've got a smoker. I do chicken, ribs, pork butts, pulled pork sandwiches," he says. "I don't just do burgers and brats. I go all out and cook people solid meals. You've got to do that to keep people around. You've got to take care of them."

For the last event of the season, Dresel usually cooks prime rib *(continued)*

Cesspool Cleaner Co. and Portable Toilet Rentals Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

Owner: Troy and Tricia Dresel

Founded: 1955

Employees: 8 full time and 4 to 6 seasonal

Services: Portable sanitation; office, shower, job site and beer-cooler trailers

Service area: 100-mile radius of Chippewa Falls, anywhere in Wisconsin for special events

Website: www.cesspoolcleaners.com

Affiliations: Wisconsin Liquid Waste Carriers Association, Wisconsin Builders Association, Chippewa Valley Home Builders Association, Chippewa Falls Chamber of Commerce, Eau Claire Area Chamber of Commerce, Menomonie Area Chamber of Commerce and a couple other chambers of commerce





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Left: Troy Dresel talks to the Cesspool Cleaner Co. crew in the company yard with Satellite | PolyPortables restrooms in the background.

Below: Boel Kent (left) and Greg Johnson prepare to transport restrooms using a flatbed Ford F-550 carrying a tank from Imperial Industries, a Masport pump and a Thieman Tailgates liftgate.

It's a winning formula for keeping a happy crew at big events. Like many PROs, Cesspool Cleaner has some trouble finding workers to do routes, but for the big events, Dresel has a regular crew of friends and relatives who come back event after event.

"They love coming to the events," Dresel says. "They get to come and enjoy the show. They get fed, party and do a little work on the side."

30-YEAR SERVICE

Big events have been a specialty of Cesspool Cleaner since the 1980s. The biggest one the company handles is the three-day music festival, Country Jam USA, in Eau Claire. From the camping area to the concert grounds and backstage area, Dresel's company will have more than 400 restrooms on the site.

"This is their 30th anniversary," Dresel says, "and we've been there since day one. My dad started doing it, and I've continued with it. We use 24 employees for the weekend for that job."

Two other large events that have been on the Cesspool Cleaner calendar for years aren't there this year. One of them folded, and one of them took a year off.

"We had an event that's been going on 13-14 years, and they took a year off and turned the property into a hemp field," Dresel says. "They thought they could have a lot less work and have something going on all year."

Dresel expects that event, the Northwoods Rock Rally, will come back after a one-year hiatus, and he expects 2019 will be a good year for his company, despite the loss of two big events.

STARTED WITH CESSPOOLS

Big events were not the focus of the company when Troy's grandfather,

"I've got a smoker. I do chicken, ribs, pork butts, pulled pork sandwiches. I don't just do burgers and brats. I go all out and cook people solid meals. You've got to do that to keep people around. You've got to take care of them."

TROY DRESEL



Kenny Dresel, started it in 1955. In those days, the company actually cleaned cesspools. Troy's father, Randy, bought the company in 1981, and Troy and his wife, Tricia Dresel, bought the company in 1997.

It was in the 1980s, when a dam was under construction on the Chipewewa River at Jim Falls that the company started in the portable restroom business. Troy's grandfather started with homemade restrooms. "He framed them up. They were self-contained with a holding tank. He cut a 55-gallon drum in half. They had a plywood frame, slanted roof, tin sides and a working door," Dresel recalls.

His grandfather had a few of the homemade restrooms before becoming the PRO for the hydro project at Jim Falls. Once he got that contract, he built some more but then found a manufacturer and started buying units.

Now, portable restrooms are the main focus of the company. It specializes in big events: music festivals, car shows, food truck events and marathons. It also services numerous construction sites.

EQUIPMENT LIST

The equipment inventory includes more than 1,450 restrooms. For construction rentals, Dresel uses Satellite | PolyPortables Tufway units. For special events, the company uses Satellite | PolyPortables Maxim and Five Peaks Glacier units. Handicapped units and hand-wash stations are from Satellite | PolyPortables.

(continued)

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Marketing issues, strategies

The name Cesspool Cleaner Co. has survived into the third generation, even though the company no longer pursues septic pumping work. That part of the business was sold a few years ago.

The name no longer accurately describes what the company does, but it is familiar to the locals.

"That's what my grandpa named it when he started this business back in 1955," Dresel says. "My dad kept it when he bought it, and I've kept it. Do I like the name? No. Does it fit? No, but it's well known." And "Portable Toilet Rentals" was added to the name in 1981 by Dresel's father.

The company is so well established that marketing isn't much of a problem. The company has a website and does some social media marketing, and Dresel thinks he should probably do more of that, but the crew is busy without doing a lot of advertising.

Some of its marketing takes the form of sponsoring events run by non-profit organizations. Cesspool Cleaner also belongs to several business and trade organizations and participates in their events.

The Chippewa Valley Home Builders Association has a Parade of Homes event every June with 20 to 30 homes on display. "It runs for 10 days, and I take my special event toilets and put one at each parade home so people have one to use if they need to. That's my sponsorship. My name is advertised there," Dresel explains.

The company also sponsors the kickoff event for the Parade of Homes, which is a big cookout. Dresel sends six restrooms to that event. "I get a lot of advertising out of it," he says. This helps solidify his relationship with the local homebuilders, who like to work with fellow members of the association when they can.

Dresel also participates in a trade show sponsored by the Chippewa Valley Home Builders Association in March. "This year I took one of our restroom trailers and put it on display," Dresel says. "The general public goes through. It's putting my name out there."

And, even though special events are the more glamorous part of the business, construction site work is vital to the business.

"Our monthly rentals are our bread and butter," Dresel says. "That's what we depend on."

The company also has a number of restroom trailers, including four 15-stall Ameri-Can Engineering units, three eight-stall Advanced Containment Systems models, a five-stall Black Tie Products unit and four-stall ACSI trailer. For shower trailers, it has a 53-foot, 22-stall mobile shower trailer, a five-stall mobile shower trailer, and three-stall combo shower/restroom trailer. All shower trailers are built in-house.

Cesspool Cleaner also manufactures Johnny Mover transport trailers, and it uses a number of them, including six 20-place trailers, one 16-place trailer, three 12-place trailers and two eight-place trailers. In addition to the Johnny Mover trailers, the company uses six two-stall PolyJohn Enterprises trailers and four 53-foot semitrailers that haul 28 units each.

The truck fleet includes 12 vacuum trucks that vary in size from 600 to 6,000 gallons and two cube vans for tool and supply trucks. "We build most of our own trucks in-house, but we have purchased some from Satellite Vacuum Trucks, Imperial Industries and PortaLogix," Dresel says. He orders custom tanks from Imperial Industries for the trucks built in-house. The trucks are outfitted with Masport HXL4 pumps. Cesspool Cleaner also has three recreational vehicles to house employees at

Joel Kent washes the dust off a row of Satellite | PolyPortables restrooms.

special events, a Cat forklift and a Bobcat Toolcat for loading and unloading restroom units in the yard.

GROWING BIGGER

One of the reasons Dresel grew the company so large was so it could support him working as a manager and not a day-to-day driver. At 48, he has had health problems that led to three back surgeries and two neck surgeries.

"It was a decision to make me go big, because I was not able to do the work myself," he says. He still drives the company's big waste-hauler occasionally because he has a CDL, and he does the cooking at special events. "I don't just sit at a desk and bark orders," he says. "I'm 100% involved in my business."

The economy in northwestern Wisconsin has been booming recently, but that has both good and bad effects on Cesspool Cleaner. It means considerable demand for portable restrooms at construction sites, both commercial and residential.

But the booming economy also makes it difficult for Dresel to find workers, especially drivers. The surge in mining of sand for fracking in the energy sector is one of the reasons for the economic boom, but that business employs a lot of the available truck drivers in the region. Dresel says he can't compete with the wages and benefits that the frac sand industry offers.

"It's hard to find anyone for any kind of driving business, like routes," Dresel says. "You definitely cannot find anyone with a CDL. Therefore, I have to make sure I keep all my equipment under CDL size (26,000 pounds or below). I'm the only one with a CDL. Anytime we haul with our quad-axle, I have to run it."

Patti Humphrey, office manager, processes paperwork.

(continued)





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“It’s a struggle trying to find help these days,” he continues. “We’ve been struggling the last four years here. In 2017, I hired 14 people during the summer season, and only one of them worked out and is still with me. There’s room for growth in this business, but you just can’t find enough people to support it.”

GOING DOWN ... AND COMING BACK

Despite the challenges brought by a hot economy, working them out is better than facing the problems brought by lean times. Like many in the industry, the company had a rough time of it from 2008 to 2013.

“When the economy turned, it turned bad here,” Dresel says. “Our business was cut in half. If it had gone on any longer, I might not have survived. Everything I could sell, everything I had at that point in my life, went back into this business to keep it alive. Because of the special events we do, we have a lot of inventory. It’s Wisconsin, so we have five months when we are using equipment and six or seven months when we’re not. In our area, there was nothing going on. I had just a skeleton crew at that time.”

Although Dresel also has some other businesses, such as a used car and truck business and the Johnny Mover manufacturing, they all suffered at the same time. He had owned Cesspool Cleaner only about 10 years when the recession hit, which meant he still had a lot of debt. “I dropped down to interest-only payments,” he recalls. “I was thankful I had a bank that would work with me.”

Thankfully, the tough times seem like a long time ago. In 2018, the company outgrew its facilities and moved into a significantly larger building.

“It came back, and it came back strong,” he says. “It’s been getting better and better each year since 2013. The last three years really were good. Last year was a record year for us. This year we hope is level with last year, and it should be. We’re down a few festivals, but we’re up a few smaller events.” ■

“It’s hard to find anyone for any kind of driving business, like routes. You definitely cannot find anyone with a CDL. Therefore, I have to make sure I keep all my equipment under CDL size.”

TROY DRESEL

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Masport, Inc.
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Explore Four Low-Cost Networking Tools For Hiring

FINDING THE RIGHT PERSON TO WORK IN PORTABLE SANITATION CAN BE A CHALLENGE. INVOLVE YOUR TEAM IN THE PROCESS AND GO ONLINE TO JUMP-START THE PROCESS.

By Jeremy Eskenazi

Recruiting can be challenging for portable restroom operators in any economy. When times are good, candidates have many options, and when times are bad, employed people don't want to make a move. As with any challenge, it's important to tackle it strategically. When it comes to acquiring talent, having your sourcing strategy and process in place should happen before you even need to hire someone.

You may be wondering why you would need to know your search strategy before you need candidates. With the market quickly fluctuating, it's important to know where to look and what type of talent you will be looking for, because as much as you want to snap your fingers and have amazing candidates appear, it often takes a lot longer than that.

Once your recruiting strategy is in place overall, you can start to think about where you would find the best workers for your company. To help you get started, here are some low-cost/no-cost sourcing channels to consider as part of recruiting efforts:

1. Referrals

Employee referrals are the No. 1 source of candidates by far — and usually rated the best quality source. Employee referral programs don't always need to have a monetary reward, though many do, and the best focus on recognition and simplicity.

Recognizing employees quickly for their referral is the key. Instead of monetary rewards, think about other less-costly rewards that focus on the recognition. Try not to put too many rules or barriers to participate in the process, and be sure to have a process to recognize referrals immediately and follow up with them to ensure success. If you pay a reward, consider paying it immediately upon hire.

2. Job Boards

Online job boards are great for attracting active candidates. Ensure your team's postings are well written from a candidate's "What's in it for me?" perspective. Don't use company acronyms and slang. Check out and "borrow" great postings using the job board's search system. Make sure your posting is easy to find and refreshed regularly. Resume databases are quite expensive, and because of this, they aren't suggested if you are focusing on low-cost resources. However, there are some other alternatives to this option including the use of free or "niche" job boards.

3. Social Networking

Social networks provide a great opportunity to find more passive candidates who may not be applying to your open job postings. Using social networks only helps you find possible targets to contact. You still have to

call or contact these people! Keep this in mind when you are planning your recruitment strategy. Since time is limited, focus on the best resources:

- **LinkedIn:** If you involve your manager, supervisor or key employees, make sure their profiles are easily found. They should be complete and "public." Change the settings in LinkedIn to ensure they are searchable in Google. There are places on profiles to include links to websites for your company and other information. Your team should thoughtfully ask and answer questions in LinkedIn answers to be more findable. Use LinkedIn Groups to join and start groups, and you can post jobs here for free! You can use these LinkedIn sources to build a list to actually call or email them directly.

- **Facebook:** It's harder to find sources on Facebook, but your team can use regular searches to find their co-workers, classmates and others to get beyond their own network. Search for friends on Facebook, or leverage it to find candidates who join Facebook pages that are appropriate to you and your jobs. Facebook company pages are also great ways to attract candidates.

- **Twitter and Instagram:** It is harder to find people on these platforms, but a lot of posts are public and searchable. Use these sites to broadcast your jobs (video job descriptions are a popular low-cost option) to relevant people or talk about your company's culture.

- **Google:** Searching for candidates on Google is a more specialized skill and one that is free, provided the user has the skill to do it well. There are great resources to learn how to do this even more effectively. Remember, the lowest-cost solution may not always be the best resource to actually save money if it ends up taking an unskilled person triple the time to complete the task!

4. Resume Mining Services

Instead of buying expensive resume database access, particularly for technical, sales or management-level positions, consider using a resume mining service. These services offer a low-cost solution on a per-job basis or in packages of jobs. They source and scour internet online resume databases for actual resumes and provide those resumes to you. Most services can offer an additional resource to do quick telephone screens on the resumes submitted.

Sourcing staff can be stressful, but with a game plan and a little creativity, you can find the best workers with little or even no budget. Good luck with your recruiting efforts! ■

Jeremy Eskenazi is a human resources trainer, author of RecruitCON-SULT! Leadership, and founder of the consulting firm Riviera Advisors. Contact him at www.rivieraadvisors.com.



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Pot and Portable Sanitation

Serving cannabis festivals is one of many changes Vermont's Best Septic Service has seen as the industry evolves and grows

By Sharon Verbeten

Jeff Ruggiero always wanted to start his own business with his two sons working at his side. And in 2010, Ruggiero, 54, and his wife, Lisa Ruggiero, did just that — launching Best Septic Service in Westminister, Vermont.

Ruggiero had worked in the waste management industry for 20 years, but Best Septic gave him the opportunity to be his own boss. And it's been a good ride, with most of those formative years showing growth amid challenges.

Starting with only one vacuum truck and focusing on cleaning septic systems, Best Septic soon began performing system repairs and then added portable sanitation — mainly due to customer requests — which has developed into the largest part of the business. The company now rents 300 portable restrooms from Satellite | PolyPortables and PolyJohn Enterprises and recently purchased a Porta-Lisa trailer from JAG Mobile Solutions.

Ruggiero's fleet has grown to include two trucks for septic work: a 2012 International with a 2,500-gallon steel Lely Tank & Waste Solutions tank and a 2002 Freightliner with a 2,300-gallon steel tank from Presvac Systems. Three newer trucks service portable restrooms: a 2016 Dodge Ram with a 500-gallon waste aluminum tank and 350-gallon freshwater aluminum tank from PortaLogix, a 2015 Ford with a 300-gallon waste and 200-gallon freshwater aluminum tank from Lely Tank & Waste Solutions, and a 2014 Ford with a 200-gallon waste and 100-gallon freshwater aluminum tank from Imperial Industries. All trucks carry Masport pumps.

His crew of eight employees includes sons Justin and Cris Ruggiero.



Jeff and Lisa Ruggiero. In the background is a Freightliner vacuum truck from Presvac Systems that's carrying a Masport pump. (Photos by Kevin Blackburn)

EXPLORE FIVE ISSUES THAT AFFECT JEFF RUGGIERO AND BEST SEPTIC:

1 COMING BACK AFTER ILLNESS

Just three years after starting Best Septic, Ruggiero found himself working nonstop, which was great for business but not so great for his health. In 2013, Ruggiero underwent successful triple bypass surgery, but taking it easy was something Ruggiero wasn't used to. "I ended up back in the hospital in 2017" to have additional stents put in, he says. "I don't run like I used to." Now, Ruggiero focuses mostly on the administrative duties of the business.

"I don't do the day-to-day grindstone; I oversee things," says Ruggiero, who admits the pace is "definitely different."

Justin largely took over his job responsibilities — things such as emergency calls, running jobs and helping with truck repairs. "Shortly after Justin took over helping with the day to day, my son Cris and his close friend Zach Rawels jumped in and they were part of Best Septic's success," Ruggiero says. "I'm so proud of Justin and how he stepped up and handled everything, along with worrying about me being in the hospital. Overnight he went from being an 18-year-old boy to a man running a business."

He also credits his wife, Lisa. "She took care of me in hospital with a business to run and a house to keep. She handled everything as if she was superwoman." And while he remains focused on Best Septic's success, Ruggiero has now made a concerted effort to exercise more and play with his two grandkids, who are active toddlers.

(continued)

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Jeff Ruggiero makes a stop on a route using a Freightliner vacuum truck built out by Presvac Systems and carrying a Masport pump.

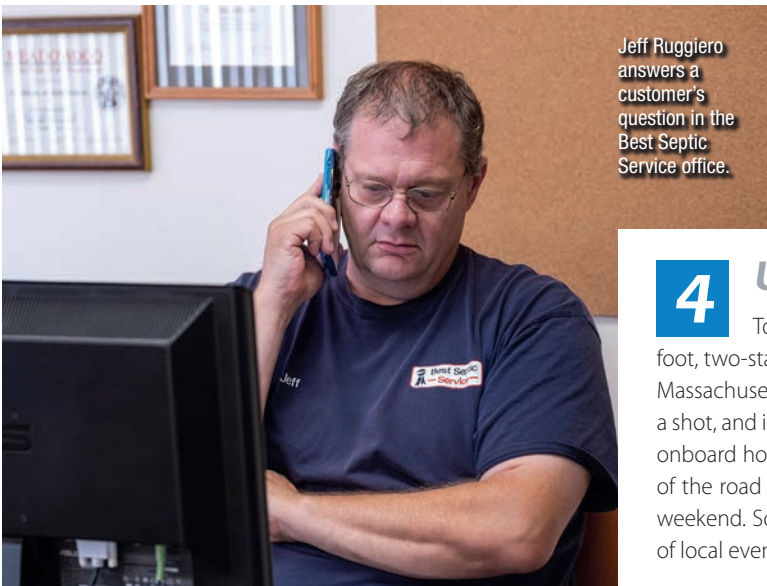
2 DIVERSIFYING IN A WIDESPREAD RURAL AREA

Westminster is the oldest town in the state, has a population of about 3,200 and is in a lightly populated rural area. Early in his business, Ruggiero realized he wanted to offer customers a wide variety of services. "I didn't want to have all my business eggs in one basket," he says, noting that his company's time is spent about 60% with portable sanitation and 40% with septic service. They also do jetting and camera work in addition to tank locating, riser installation and septic maintenance. "It's very important; you need to be diversified; it is very hard to do one thing."

Ruggiero notes he is "trying to get better ideas ... to keep on going with the times. It's harder to find a way to make your business expand and thrive. The hard part is finding a good crew and really growing that company; it's just another thing you have to adapt to. But I'm in a good spot right now. We're able to handle and make customers happy."

"I didn't want to have all my business eggs in one basket. ... You need to be diversified; it is very hard to do one thing."

JEFF RUGGIERO



Jeff Ruggiero answers a customer's question in the Best Septic Service office.

3 ADJUSTING FOR A SHORT BUSY SEASON

The average winter temperature in Vermont is 22 degrees F, and snow and cold can take hold through March. That creates a short busy season for most portable restroom operators and pumpers in the Northeast. While they still run 40 hours a week — opposed to maybe 60 to 80 in summer — they usually rent out only about half of their restrooms in winter.

About two years ago, to bring in more winter work, Ruggiero says, "We started doing jetting and steaming of frozen lines. This winter has been very, very bad with the rain and the cold," he says. The ground was solid and penetrated with cold. "A lot of people had frozen lines and started calling. ... They thought their tank was full. That's how we ended up doing inspections."



Technician Zach Rawels reviews paperwork from the truck after dropping a restroom off on his daily route.



The Best Septic Service team includes (from left) Justin, Lisa, Jeff and Cris Ruggiero and Rawels.

4 UTILIZING A RESTROOM TRAILER

To serve a niche previously filled by faraway restroom contractors, Ruggiero added a 14-foot, two-stall Porta-Lisa trailer from JAG Mobile Solutions in 2018. "Companies were coming from Massachusetts (to supply trailers), and no one had one in this area. We purchased one and gave it a shot, and it's worked out pretty well." The unit includes air conditioning, Bluetooth, ceramic floors, onboard hot/cold freshwater and a 250-gallon waste tank. "I was trying to find one in the middle of the road — not too small, not too big," Ruggiero says. "In summer, we put it out almost every weekend. So far, we're happy with it," he says, noting they've been actively contacting promoters of local events and weddings and that there have only been about five weekends it wasn't rented.



Zach Rawels cleans the roof of a Satellite I PolyPortables restroom.

5 TAKING ON CANNABIS FESTIVALS

While medical marijuana was legalized for use in the state in 2004, it wasn't until July 2018 that pot was legalized for recreational usage. And immediately, Ruggiero says, marijuana festivals started popping up, featuring paraphernalia, food vendors and bands. In July, Ruggiero says the all-day events were held almost every weekend in almost every neighboring town.

Ruggiero was hesitant at first, unsure of the legality of some of the events. "I was kind of worried about it. Were they something that was really supposed to be done? I did not realize they were going to have such major events; I did not see it was coming." But it turned out to be advantageous for Best Septic, which ended up serving several festivals with eight to 10 units at each and hand-wash stations throughout.

"It was huge, just like a mini carnival," he says of The Original Green Mountain Cannabis and Music Festival in July. While Ruggiero himself wasn't on site, he noted that about 500 people attended the first-year event. "People from about 50 miles or more traveled there, and when it was planned, promoters did not think it would be that big of a turnout," he recalls. Overall, the experience was a positive one; Ruggiero says there was no vandalism or damage to his units.

"I was kind of worried about (the cannabis festival). Were they something that was really supposed to be done? I did not realize they were going to have such major events; I did not see it was coming."

JEFF RUGGIERO

MORE INFO

Imperial Industries, Inc.
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www.imperialind.com
(See ad page 11)

JAG Mobile Solutions
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Lely Tank & Waste Solutions, LLC
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www.leytank.com

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www.masportpump.com
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PolyJohn Enterprises Corp.
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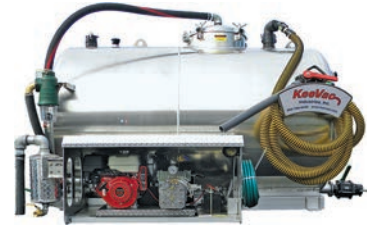
CRESCENT TANK VACUUM TANK

The **Crescent Tank** vacuum tank is flat inside and out. 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 for structural soundness. The workstation is designed for the portable restroom industry. Freshwater is held inside the external 1/2-inch-thick poly tank to avoid internal wastewater contamination. The slide-in is low profile for better weight distribution and is barely visible in the bed of a pickup truck. The chassis required is a 1-ton or greater, 8-foot bed pickup or flatbed truck, based on maximum load capacity. **585-657-4104; www.crescenttank.com.**



KEEVAC INDUSTRIES FD-950

The **FD-950** slide-in unit from **KeeVac Industries** is a full-flanged and dished head tank with a full manway for easy maintenance. It has a 650-gallon waste compartment and 300-gallon freshwater compartment. The standard pump is a 115 cfm Conde SDS 6 with a 9 hp electric-start Honda engine. Multiple pump and engine combinations are available. The 12-volt washdown pump comes with a 50-foot hose. A 30-foot tiger tail hose with valve and wand complete the unit. It is designed to fit on a 10-foot flatbed with a side engine for ease of operator use. **866-789-9440; www.keevac.com.**



FMI TRUCK SALES & SERVICE WORKMATE

The **WorkMate** three-compartment slide-in unit from **FMI Truck Sales & Service** fits in the bed of a 1-ton pickup or across a flatbed. It has a 325-gallon waste compartment and twin 75-gallon poly water tanks. The water tanks can be isolated for a three-compartment system or flow together for a two-compartment system. It includes a primary and secondary shut-off,



12-volt freshwater delivery, an oil-catch muffler and an easy-drain manifold system. It comes with hoses, wand, bucket and straps, and an ergonomic workstation. Options include a supply storage box on the passenger side and tool storage on the driver's side. **800-927-8750; www.fmitrucks.com.**



PIK RITE 450-GALLON SLIDE-IN VACUUM TANK

The 450-gallon slide-in vacuum tank from **Pik Rite** has a 20-inch manway on the front head for clean-out accessibility. The tank is built with all steel components. The 8 hp Honda electric-start engine is paired with a Jurop/Chandler PN23 vacuum pump and equipped with 30 feet of 2-inch fill hose with a nozzle. Side hose hooks are coated with a protective super liner. **800-326-9763; www.pikrite.com.**

ROBINSON VACUUM TANKS SLIDE-IN

Slide-in vacuum tanks from **Robinson Vacuum Tanks** are available in dozens of configurations, with tank capacities between 300 and 1,500 gallons. Single- and two-compartment (waste/freshwater) models are available. All units are 100% self-contained and are shipped ready-to-work. Choose one of several vacuum pumps generating 70 to 180 cfm; gas or diesel engine models are available. A line of "Quick Ship" tanks includes six models with capacities ranging from 300 to 950 gallons. Most configurations can ship within hours of order placement. All pump packages are offered with an electric-start, gas-powered Honda engine, generating vacuum and pressure. They are constructed from 5454-H32 marine-grade mill-finish aluminum and include a 3-inch discharge, 30-foot-2-inch tiger tail suction hose with 2-inch fill port, 90-degree ball valve, and a 50-foot-1/2-inch washdown hose with spray nozzle. **814-933-0927; www.robinsontanks.com.**



IMPERIAL INDUSTRIES SELF-CONTAINED SLIDE-IN UNIT

The **Self-Contained Slide-In Unit** from **Imperial Industries** allows for equalized weight distribution of water and waste. It can be used for portable restroom maintenance, grease service, oil-spill cleanup and many other applications for specialized industries.



Optional freshwater compartments or waste-only units are available with the choice of vacuum pump and engine package. It is available in steel, aluminum or stainless steel and in stock sizes of 300-, 450-, 550- and 650-gallon capacities. **800-558-2945; www.imperialind.com.**

(continued)

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INDUSTRY NEWS

Ameri-Can Engineering announces new owners

Ameri-Can Engineering announced its third generation of family ownership with the introduction of Keegan and Elizabeth Campbell as the new owners of the company. They started with Ameri-Can Engineering in 2008 and have worked with David Harling in all aspects of the business. With the change, Harling will become chairman emeritus.

Full In Partners makes growth investment in ServiceCore

ServiceCore announced that growth equity investor Full In Partners agreed to acquire a significant interest in the company to enable ServiceCore to continue its rapid growth and expansion. ServiceCore empowers more than 350 companies across the liquid waste industry to better manage their routing, scheduling, accounting and invoicing.

Infinity Trailer starts retail operation

Infinity Trailer started a retail operation, Infinity Trailer Parts. It was created to provide replacement parts for portable restroom trailers to customers and dealers. The parts are accessible for purchase through the Infinity Trailer Parts website www.infinitytrailerparts.com. The website also provides information, such as instructions on how to measure for a replacement door. Additional parts will be added depending on customer need. ■



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SLIDE-IN SERVICE UNITS

SATELLITE VACUUM TRUCKS MD SLIDE-IN

The MD slide-in series from **Satellite Vacuum Trucks** are made from high-strength carbon steel, making them easy to maintain with a long life expectancy. They are powder coated for tank longevity and to eliminate corrosion. They are available in a 300-, 400-, 450-, 550- and 650-gallon tank, with other custom sizes available. The tanks are versatile and bolt onto any truck bed. **800-883-1123; www.satellitetruckexpress.com.**



T BLUSTAR TRIOTANK

The **Triotank** slide-in vacuum tank from **T blustar** is made of lightweight, high-density polyethylene. It is composed of three independent holding tanks, including 250-gallon upper and lower tanks and a concealed 250-gallon interior sphere. The user can choose to carry 500 gallons of waste and 250 gallons of water, or 250 gallons of waste

and 500 gallons of water. It comes with a Battioni Pagani MEC1600 vacuum pump, high-pressure water pump, onboard computer and antifreeze system. Options include color or various power supplies, such as autonomous with a Honda engine or PTO. **404-719-0715; www.tblustar.com.**



TANKTEC SLIDE-IN TANK

Slide-in tanks from TankTec range from 100 to 995 gallons. The tanks are available in single-compartment for grease and septic or two-compartment for portable restroom service. **888-428-6422; www.tanktec.biz.**



HOSE REELS

HANNAY REELS 1500 SERIES

Hannay Reels 1500 Series reels handle standard pressures from 3,000 to 10,000 psi for steam cleaning, pressure washing and portable restroom washdown. They are easy to mount on cleanup vehicles such as carts, trucks or all-terrain vehicles. They can hold single 3/8- through 5/8-inch I.D. hose and organize longer lengths of large-diameter vacuum hose to help prevent kinks, cracks and damage from dragging. **518-797-3791; www.hannay.com.**



REELCRAFT INDUSTRIES SERIES PW7000

Series PW7000 hose reels from **Reelcraft Industries** are fitted with a nickel-plated, carbon-steel Aflas sealed swivel specifically for pressure-wash applications. The reel holds up to 50 feet of 3/8-inch I.D. hose. Its rigidity, compact design and powder-coat finish make it suitable for outdoor, all-weather and truck-mount applications. The guide arm adjusts to seven positions for ceiling, wall, truck, bench or pit mounting. The reel comes in standard red, but several other colors are available upon request. **800-444-3134; www.reelcraft.com.**



PRESSURE WASHERS AND SPRAYERS

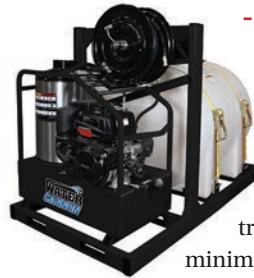
CAM SPRAY CV SERIES

The **CV Series** cargo van drain jet from **Cam Spray** offers diesel-fired hot water to add additional jetting power. Several models are available up to 4,000 psi and 12 gpm. A triplex plunger pump with power pulse valve provides an extra push when needed. Air purge and recirculation to the tank are provided for freeze protection. A 5-gallon fuel tank provides hours of runtime on a single fill. It comes with a heavily built, powder-coated frame with full deck and 130-gallon water capacity; a 12-volt DC reel with 2-1 clutch drive allowing for free spooling; and a powered hose return. It is controlled by push button or foot switch. Accessories include a four-nozzle set, storage box, tip cleaner, tiger tail, safety shield, rubber gloves, high-visibility safety vest, 50-foot washdown hose and trigger gun. **800-648-5011; www.camspray.com.**



WATER CANNON 19K02

The **19K02** commercial-duty, 225-gallon, 12-volt, tank-fed, self-contained, skid-mounted, hot-water cleaning system from **Water Cannon Inc. - MWBE** can be permanently mounted in a truck bed or trailer or moved to multiple locations or trucks with minimal effort. It arrives ready for use, serving up powerful performance and helping users complete jobs rapidly at remote job sites or when on the move at any location with or without an external water source. **800-333-9274; www.watercannon.com.**



VACUUM HOSE

KURIYAMA OF AMERICA KING BEE KBEE SERIES

King Bee KBEE Series polyethylene liquid suction hose from **Kuriyama of America** provides flexibility for maneuvering in tight areas such as portable restrooms. The hose remains flexible in subzero temperatures, is crush resistant and will not kink. The easy-slide helix protects the hose tube from cover wear and moves easily over rough surfaces. Overmolded cuffs help prevent leaking. It is available in 2- and 3-inch I.D. sizes in multiple lengths. The 3-inch I.D. hose is also available as a 3-foot hose guard. **847-755-0360; www.kuriyama.com.**



VACUUM PUMPS

ELMIRA MACHINE INDUSTRIES / WALLENSTEIN VACUUM MODEL 151

The Model 151 from Elmira Machine Industries / Wallenstein Vacuum can be used on portable sanitation tanks, slide-in units, campgrounds and marinas that require a compact package. It offers 80 cfm at 15 inches Hg, with a 2-inch vacuum/pressure valve, swivel elbows for easy hookup, air pressure or mechanical lubrication, and clockwise or counterclockwise operation. It can be direct-, hydraulic-, pulley- or clutch-driven. **800-801-6663; www.wallenstein.com.**



FRUITLAND ELIMINATOR 250PT

The Eliminator 250PT from Fruitland was designed with a smaller mount and accessories, allowing it to fit on most 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 design is 26 inches wide and 19 inches high to take up less 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). It offers low oil consumption, including an automated oiling system with all-steel oil lines, pump oil-level sight gauge, vane gauging ports and anti-shock design. **800-663-9003; www.fruitlandmanufacturing.com.**



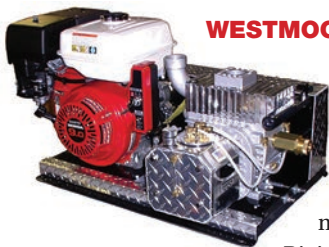
NATIONAL VACUUM EQUIPMENT CHALLENGER 304

The Challenger 304 vacuum pump from National Vacuum Equipment delivers 210 cfm in a number of compact packages that include a pump with a pump stand; a pump with a stand, prefilter and moisture trap in two variations; and an engine drive unit with a 13 hp electric-start engine. Standard packages are available in gearbox drive or with a hydraulic drive adapter. The package is designed with a ductile iron housing and stainless steel braided oil lines for durability. Routine maintenance, such as vane inspection and replacement, can be done without removing the pump from the truck. **800-253-5500; www.natvac.com.**



WESTMOOR CONDE POWERPAKS

Conde PowerPaks preassembled gasoline- or diesel-powered vacuum pump units from Westmoor are easy to install, according to the maker. They include a heavy-duty steel base with aluminum diamond plate trim and belt guard for aesthetics. Rigid assembly is designed for minimum vibration and maximum power. They are available with either vacuum/pressure or vacuum-only pumps. A wide range of cubic-feet-per-minute options ensures matching the right unit to tank size and application. They are powered with optional Honda GX commercial-series gasoline engines or Hatz industrial air-cooled diesel engines. Units are designed for easy transfer to another tank system when needed. **800-367-0972; www.westmoorltd.com.**



WASHDOWN PUMPS

MORO USA DC

Heavy-duty Moro USA DC water pumps offer 20 gpm maximum flow for quick restroom fills, while 42 psi maximum pressure makes for quick high-pressure cleaning. Available with cast iron or stainless steel pump body, both models offer a stainless steel impeller and Viton elastomers. Fan-cooled, 12-volt (83-amp maximum draw) motors are epoxy-coated for durability. These continuous-duty pumps come solenoid- and pressure-switch standard for easy installation. They have 1.25-inch suction and 1-inch discharge ports. The discharge can be mounted in four different positions. **800-383-6304; www.morousa.com. ■**

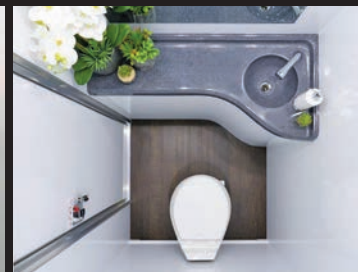


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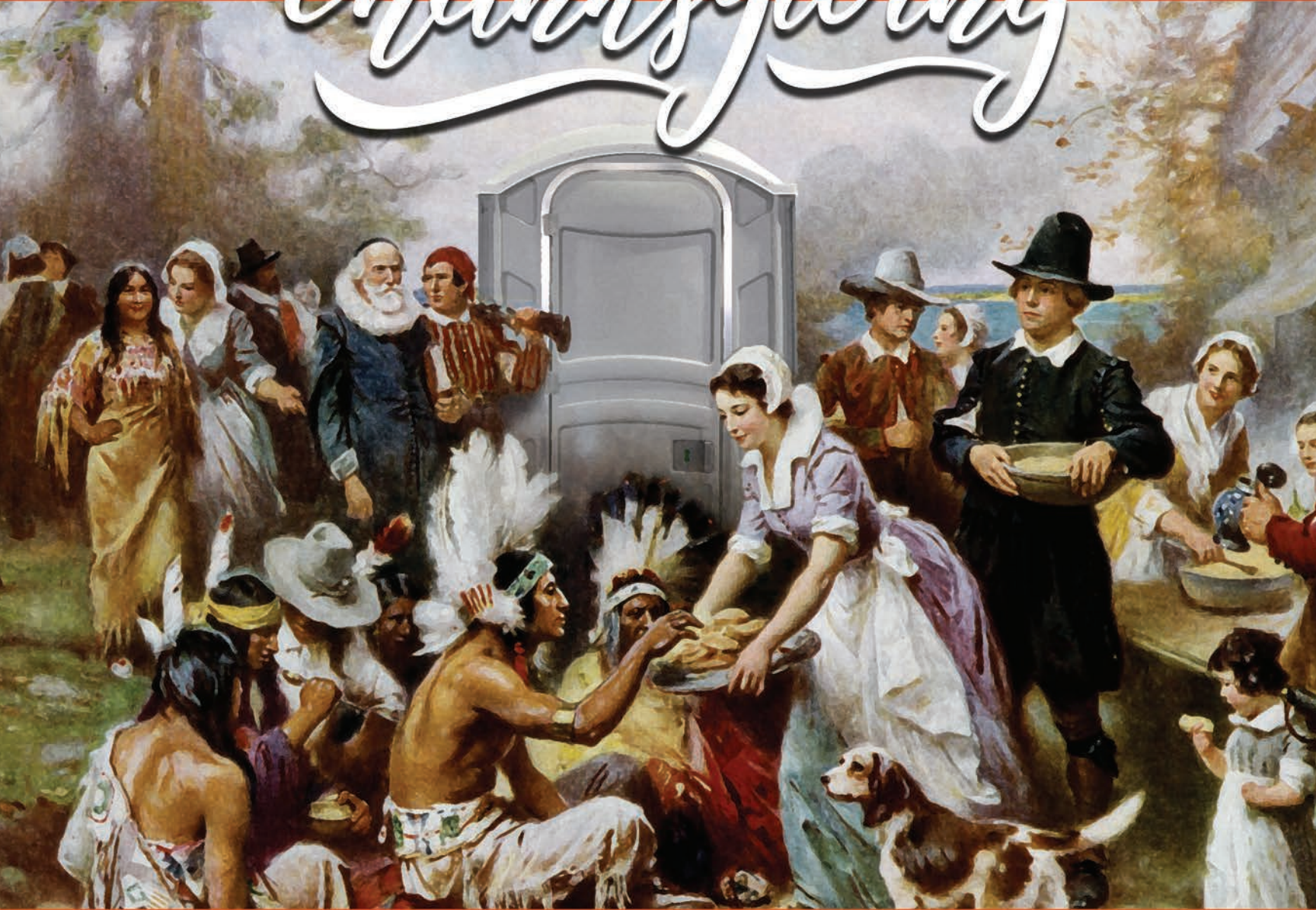
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