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FINDING THE SWEET SPOT

Jack Werry believes smaller PROs can remain profitable by providing quality service

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WE'RE ON A ROLL

A women-owned Oregon company delivers personalized service for weddings, construction sites and film sets

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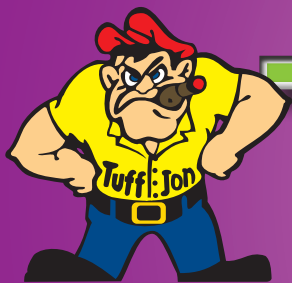
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Trucks and Tanks

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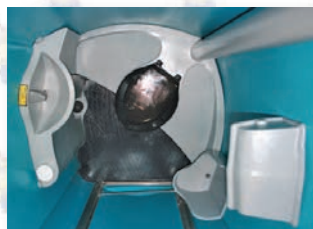
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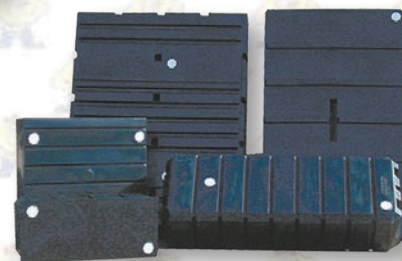
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Women-owned Pacific Northwest company delivers high-end restroom trailers and personalized service for weddings, construction projects and film sets.

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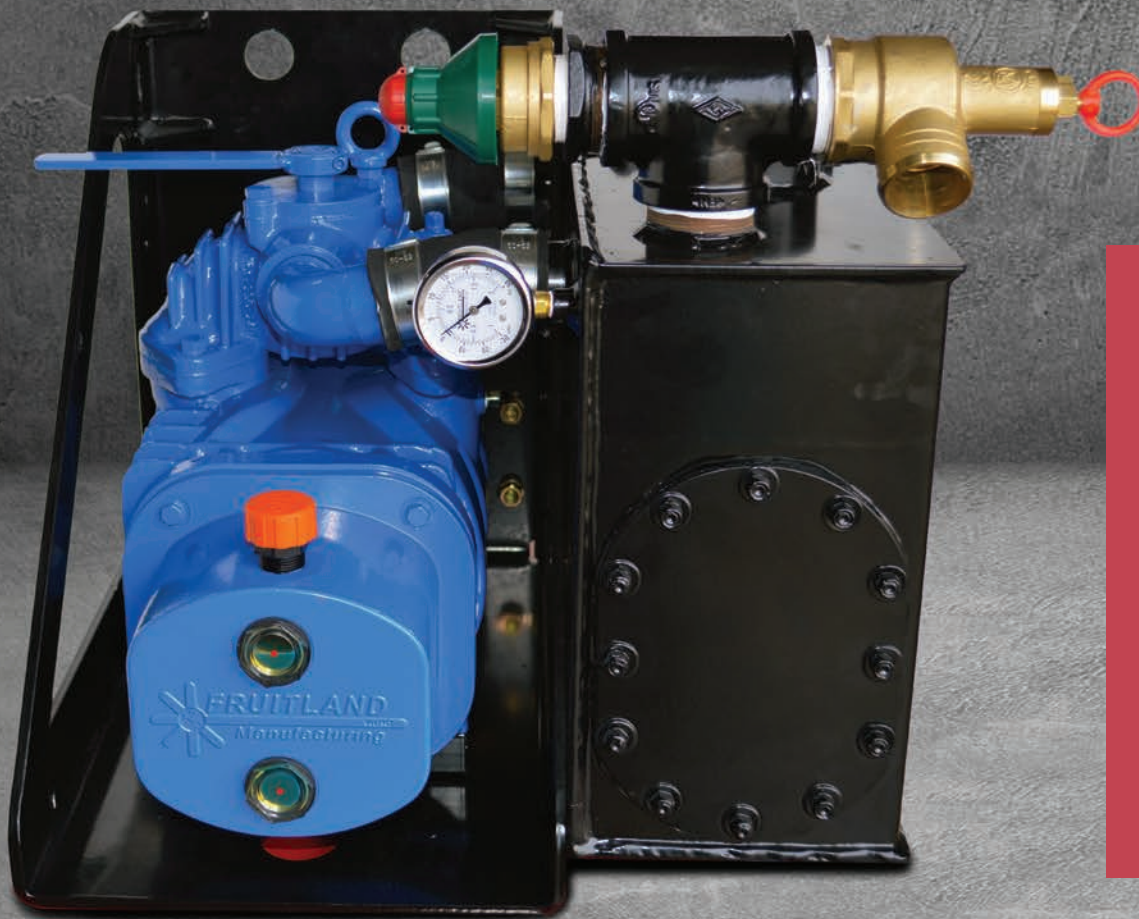
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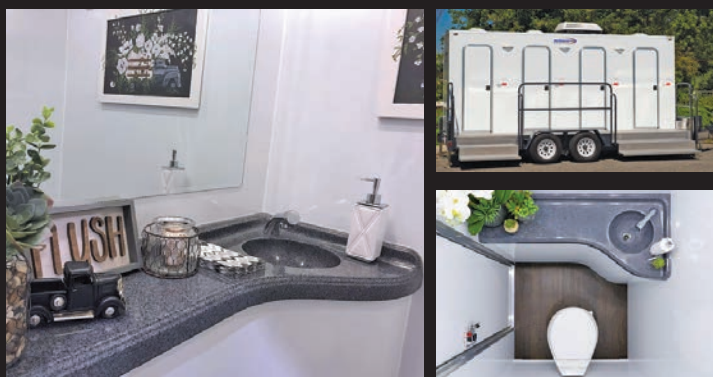
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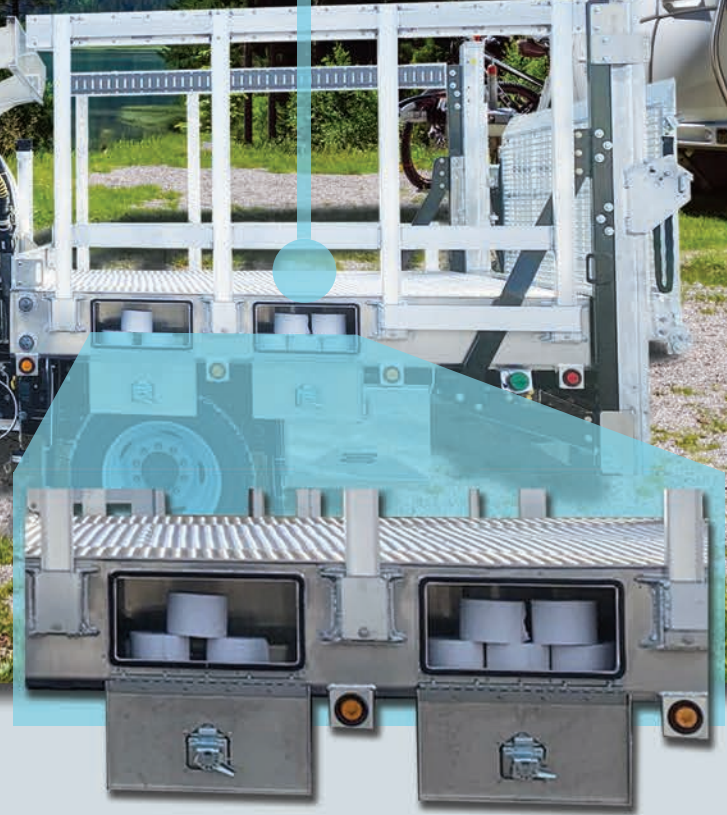
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It's a Sick Day: How to Handle Workload When You're Suddenly Shorthanded

IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH, FOLLOW THESE TIPS TO KEEP YOUR PORTABLE SANITATION COMPANY RUNNING SMOOTHLY

By Jim Kneiszel

It's late winter, and that means cold and flu season is upon us. On any day in the month of March, you or a member of your team may come down with a sore throat or fever that puts someone out of commission and throws a wrench into your operation. For many PROs who operate with small staffs, a few missed days due to illness can be a big deal.

But don't panic. You can take steps to lessen the blow if one or more people go down and have to call in sick. An illness-induced worker shortage doesn't mean you have to abandoned customers in need of essential services or close up shop for a few days, putting your company at risk of losing critical revenue.

And if currently everyone is healthy and at work, this is a great time to review your procedures for handling sick day short staffing. Here are eight suggestions to help you cope with the cold and flu season and not compound all that feeling bad with bad feelings from your crew and customers:

An ounce of prevention:

Think about the impact of illness on your business before you or other key workers call in sick. Start a wellness program that encourages eating right, regular exercise, plenty of rest and preventive health care. Contact a local clinic and have a nurse practitioner talk to your team about these topics and make suggestions to reduce the likelihood that illness will spread through your ranks. This might include stressing germ-fighting sanitary habits in the office, taking multivitamins and extending good cleanliness habits out into the field. Because sanitation is always top-of-mind for PROs, your crew has a head start on preventing the spread of illness.

Make cross-training a part of job descriptions, and make sure each employee shadows another regularly to stay up to speed on a different aspect of your operation. Then when one gets sick, another is ready to step in and take care of business.

Act fast at the first sign of sickness:

When you feel that throbbing headache indicating a sinus infection or that uneasy feeling in the pit of your stomach that signals a flu bug, get in to see a medical professional right away. Over-the-counter and prescription medications can often shorten the duration of an illness and reduce the time you're out of commission. Share that same advice with your crew. Paying for a visit to a walk-in clinic for a sick employee may reap dividends in the long run if you lose them for only a day instead of three. Health care is expensive, but so is trying to cover for a lost person with overtime or the potential of losing clients due to service interruptions.

Promote flexible scheduling:

If you allow employees to flex their work time around family and other important obligations all year long, they will likely be more open to the idea of pitching in with long hours to help cover for you or someone else who falls ill. Promote the concept of teamwork: You are a team, and you give each other a hand when an emergency strikes — no questions asked. Flexible scheduling can buy goodwill and that goodwill, can be cashed in for help during times when you are shorthanded due to illness.

Cross-train everyone:

Just like you are prepared to jump on a truck and set up and service restrooms when necessary, the technician on your truck should be able to work in the warehouse, and the yard person should be able to answer the phones. Sure, not all office workers will be able to drive a truck, and not all drivers will be able to balance the books. But to the extent you can, cross-training every employee to perform another aspect of the work in your company can help give you options when someone goes down sick. Make cross-training a part of job descriptions, and make sure each employee shadows another regularly to stay up to speed on a different aspect of your operation. Then when one gets sick, another is ready to step in and take care of business.

Prioritize your service to customers:

You want to give every customer the solid service they expect. However

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when you or others are down with illness, you might have to make concessions to your normal top-notch service routine. Make a list of regular customers and note those who are typically flexible and understanding, those who are the most loyal to your company, those who are the most demanding and those who you wouldn't mind losing if the workload was suddenly too much for you and your staff to handle.

Put customers who are indispensable — for instance the huge construction site that accounts for 50 restrooms — on the top of the list. Also rank the most demanding, but critically important, customers up high. I know, this means you might have to call some of your favorite and most loyal customers and ask them to understand delays because of illness, and that's not fair to them. But being caught shorthanded sometimes requires drastic measures.

Have a fill-in ready:

Many restroom companies are owned and operated by families. So there is probably a logical person sitting on the sidelines who could be called in on short notice for a few days. That might be a recently retired family member or former employee. Or it could be a friend or an acquaintance who works part time or seasonally and would be willing and available to help out on occasion. Create a list of at least a few of these candidates and train them (with pay) to fill in for sick or vacationing workers. And offer them enough money to make it worth their while to drop other things to come and work for you intermittently.

Designate a No. 2:

Look at every member of your team. Is there someone who can always be relied on to get the job done and do it well? If so, it might be time to promote that person into a management position to back you up. Open that person to more of the company records and decision-making. Gradually give him or her more responsibility to handle the day-to-day operations with the goal that this person will be capable of steering the ship when you are away from the helm. And because you have been cross-training everyone else, your company won't miss a beat when you or somebody else comes down with a 24-hour bug.

Set up a home office:

When you're sick, you may not want to come to the office, but you might be able to run things while sitting at home in your pajamas. You may want to set up a dedicated home office for your business, even if it's just a corner of the basement between the water heater and the furnace. Or you may just want a capable laptop computer you can

work on from bed. While it doesn't have to look as nice as your regular office, it should have all the same technology so you can respond to customers and your crew. That means a computer loaded with the software you need, a fast and reliable internet connection, and access to your work email account and a cloud account so you can easily transfer large amounts of data back and forth to your office staff and technicians.

LAY IT ON THE TABLE

If sickness is affecting the quality and timeliness of your service, don't be afraid to explain

the situation to your customers and ask for their patience. They've probably been in the same position as business owners or managers, and chances are they will understand.

But it's better still to implement some of these measures to make sure you won't be caught unprepared in the future when you or someone on your team invariably comes down with an illness and is out of commission for a few days or a week. And even if you are blessed with good health throughout the year, these tips will improve the efficiency of your portable sanitation operation in many ways. To your health! ■



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Follow These Steps to Define the Duties of Your Service Technicians

EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE PLANS HELP YOUR CREW MEMBERS REACH THEIR CAREER GOALS AND PROVIDE THE BEST SERVICE FOR YOUR CUSTOMERS

By Jeff and Terri Wigley

Two questions this month deal with the issue of employee performance plans. This is a very important topic, and we highly recommend that you have plans in place for all employees. As the well-known business management consultant Peter Drucker once said, “What gets measured gets improved.”

Performance plans are necessary to clarify communications and expectations between management and the employee. Plans are indeed the measurement tool in which outstanding performance is rewarded and advancement is earned. Plans are also needed to protect the employer if poor performance leads to termination.

Question: Could you make some general suggestions about information we should include in the performance plans for our route service technicians? We have long thought that their job is to properly service units and to provide excellent customer service. Please help us to expand upon these principles.

Answer: These suggestions are general in nature, and you must tailor the requirements to the specific needs of your business.

Over the last several years, the Portable Sanitation Association International has surveyed PROs as to the major job responsibilities of the route service technician. While these individual job descriptions were confidential once received by the PSAI, an overall job task analysis was completed on this data and five areas of responsibility emerged. These areas would be a great starting point in developing a performance plan for your route drivers. We would recommend taking each area and listing specific tasks necessary for the job that can be measured. The five areas of responsibility with examples of requirements are:

Transportation and Logistics – Pretrip and post-trip inspections of the service truck, operating the truck in a safe manner in accordance with traffic laws, completing the route in a timely manner, placing units and equipment in areas where they can be serviced and proper disposal of waste.

Servicing Portable Sanitation Equipment – Proper cleaning of the units and equipment, identifying problems such as overuse or equipment damage onsite and resolving such issues, and wisely managing supplies such as deodorizer, toilet paper and paper towels.

Safety and Hazard Management – Using proper personal protective equipment (PPE), spill containment procedures, accident and incident management, and safe driving.

Recordkeeping – Completion of service information once a unit has been cleaned, truck inspection reports, and accurate and timely reporting of hours worked.

Performance plans are necessary to clarify communications and expectations between management and the employee. Plans are indeed the measurement tool in which outstanding performance is rewarded and advancement is earned.

Professional Demeanor and Conduct – Positive feedback from customers, a clean record regarding customer complaints, a “team player” within the company, and an overall positive attitude toward the job, customers, co-workers and management. In this section, you could include other work attributes such as reporting to work on time, adherence to company policies and maintaining a clean service truck and work area at the office.

One additional job responsibility could be added as a catchall to cover unforeseen job tasks. That description could read “other duties as assigned.”

Once all job responsibilities have been determined, share the performance plan with the employee to elicit feedback and then schedule the performance review as you deem necessary. Many PROs will do a 90-day and a six-month review on new employees, with annual reviews after that point. Again, this review process will vary from one company to another. Our experience is that it’s a good thing to be consistent once your company has established a timetable for reviews.

All of the information shared are merely suggestions to initiate thought, conversation and discussion about the job responsibilities of a route service technician. As correctly stated in the question, “properly servicing units and providing good customer service” are the foundations of building a strong and descriptive performance plan, and perhaps some of these suggestions listed will help in this process.

Question: We have developed descriptions of the necessary tasks for each of the jobs in our company. How can we now assign value to these tasks to measure performance?

Answer: Once you decide how you will evaluate performance against various job descriptions, communicate this information to the employees, be consistent in your evaluation methods and use as much factual data as possible in the evaluation process.

The simplest method of evaluating performance in a performance plan is the “yes-no method.” The manager evaluates each job responsibility and the employee either does the task or does not. While functional, this does

not delineate the employee's level of accomplishment. For example, yes, they do a certain task, but do they do the minimum or do they far exceed in that area?

Another method is "relative performance." To prevent the shortcoming of the yes-no method, here the employee is evaluated along a range of performance. Examples on this continuum would be consistently does not accomplish, occasionally accomplishes, consistently accomplishes, occasionally overachieves and constantly overachieves. After evaluating all job responsibilities in this manner, an overall rating can be obtained with "consistently accomplishes" describing a situation where the employee is doing the job as described.

"Point accumulation" is another method whereby the employee is given points based on achieving certain objectives. For example, if an employee is consistently on time, they would receive a certain point value for that job responsibility. If they were late on some occasions, a smaller point value would be assigned. At the end of the review, a total score would be calculated against preassigned targets. For example, an employee with 90 or more points on a scale of 100 would receive the top pay increase available.

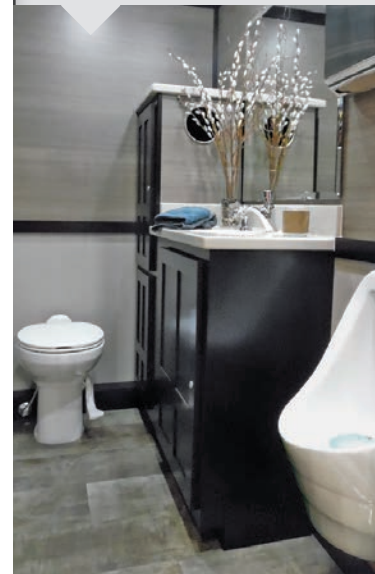
"Weighted average" is another method based on point accumulation, however, the relative importance of the job tasks are taken into account. For example, in the first question of this column, five job tasks were determined to be important for the route service technician. Perhaps these five tasks are determined to be 75% of the job in terms of time and importance. The point values here therefore comprise 75% of the total score. Perhaps the remaining 25% would include responsibilities such as not being late for work, keeping a clean work area in the office, being a team player and volunteering for extra work. This method gives the best overall description of the employee's performance.

FINAL THOUGHTS

We can only make suggestions based on our experiences. Use this information as a guide, and work to personalize your performance plans based on the unique circumstances within your company. As a final reminder, present the performance plan to the employee well in advance of the actual review, schedule the reviews on regular schedule, be consistent in evaluating all performance and use as much empirical data as you can to support your evaluations. Performance plans are a necessary and valuable tool in training and maintaining good employees. ■



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WE'RE ON A ROLL

When Kasey Salvetti and her mother, Julie Herring, planned Salvetti's wedding, they never anticipated it would lead to starting a business in the portable restroom industry. But the market around Portland, Oregon, and Seattle has proven to be ripe for Luxury Restroom Trailers by Privy Chambers. The focus on thoughtful details, cleanliness and investing in trailer units has allowed the woman majority-owned company to grow from one restroom trailer to 38 trailers in six years.

WEDDING FOCUS

Salvetti and her husband, Joe Salvetti, set their wedding date for Sept. 10, 2011, without realizing it was one of the busiest weekends for weddings and other events in the Portland area. Because the venue was on a friend's property, they needed to rent restroom facilities. They thought all the quotes for construction-grade trailers were high. They ended up with regular portable restrooms for the guests, and Kasey Salvetti used the bathroom in the home.

Salvetti knew there were other options.

(continued)

Luxury Restroom Trailers by Privy Chambers Portland, Oregon

Owners: Kasey Salvetti, Julie Herring, Joe Salvetti and Cliff Porter

Founded: 2013

Employees: 5 full time, 12-15 seasonally

Services: Restroom trailer rentals

Service area: Oregon and Washington

Website: www.luxuryrestroomtrailers.com

OREGON

The Luxury Restroom Trailers by Privy Chambers family includes, from left, Joe Salvetti (holding Morrow Salvetti), Julie Herring, Kasey Salvetti (holding Erasmus Salvetti), Cliff Porter, Breanna Hays-McKay and Jen Drake. Trailers in the yard are from JAG Mobile Solutions, NuConcepts and Black Tie Products. (Photos by Ethan Rocke)

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Right: Technician Robert Anderson services a JAG Mobile Solutions restroom trailer in Portland, Oregon. The Chevy pickup carries a Garsite/Progress tank.

Below: Anderson carries water to a JAG Mobile Solutions restroom trailer during a service call.



"I knew I could make them beautiful and do a nice job with them," she says. In 2013, she and her husband, both archeologists, decided to invest in one three-stall trailer to rent on weekends to help pay off student loans. With very little marketing, they covered nine events the first year, doing all the work themselves. They added two two-stall trailers the following year.

By the end of the second year, Kasey was full time in the Luxury Restroom Trailers business. Joe went full time the following year. With Kasey's mother as part owner, the mother/daughter duo have 51% ownership of the business. In addition to Joe, they took on a fourth partner in 2015. Cliff Porter was retired from other restroom businesses and brings experience and CPA expertise to help with the financial side of the business.

"He is a mentor," Kasey Salvetti notes, though he was hesitant initially of the trailer niche because of the Pacific Northwest rainy, cool weather and short season, as well as the durability of trailers with wooden components. Despite the climate, couples who want weddings in the region are not deterred and demand has continued to grow. Trailer manufacturers have modified designs to use wood sparingly so trailers hold up better in the wet climate.

"We consider ourselves to be in the event industry," Salvetti says. "Late-ly our summers have been warmer, and July through September is our peak season. The outdoor wedding community has grown exponentially."

Part of that is because the region's venues with spectacular views and scenery attract East Coast and other clients seeking destination weddings. Many clients live in Washington and Oregon and have great backyard views, perfect for family weddings.

With that focus, the owners have a "tight vision" of what they want for their business. Salvetti has an understanding of the clients' perspective. She had a full-skirted, ballgown-style wedding dress and knows brides don't want to worry about brushing up against dirty surfaces.

"We want them (trailers) to be approachable on cost and absolutely clean, and I want to make them beautiful," she says. "We have new interior designs each year and pay attention to details." That includes simple things like thoughtful positioning of a shelf, as well as high-end options like vessel sinks, backlit mirrors, crown molding and wainscoting upgrades. Salvetti works with JAG Mobile Solutions to add custom features to each new trailer.

"We have never had an event go over capacity. We calculate and educate. We want them to understand what makes their event successful."

KASEY SALVETTI

CUSTOM CHOICES

Salvetti understands the importance of walking clients through the process to explain options and calculating the right size units. "We have never had an event go over capacity," she says. "We calculate and educate. We want them to understand what makes their event successful."

Clients often comment that they feel like they are the first to use the restrooms, which reflects Luxury Restroom Trailers emphasis on "zero odor." The cleaning team follows extra steps to ensure that. All tanks are pumped and cleaned before the trailers are moved, using enzymes and ozone cleaners and additional rinsing time.

At the same time, environmental and water usage factors are considered. For example, the low-flow water system in the trailers use an average of one-third of a gallon of water for flushing and hand-washing. And, instead of dumping the freshwater, they have custom-built valves (an innovation they came up with) so the water can be recycled to rinse out the restroom tanks. Outside cleanliness is as important as the inside, so the trailers are all taken through a commercial car wash before every event.

The need to protect wetlands in their region also helped the business to set up long-term contracts for trailers in environmentally-sensitive areas.

(continued)



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Right: Joe Salvetti delivers a restroom trailer to a location along the Willamette River. Several pickup service trucks carry slide-in tanks from Garsite/Progress.

Below: Salvetti sets up the ramp for a JAG Mobile Solutions trailer along the Willamette River in Portland.



Clients don't have to do excessive permitting and invest in expensive septic systems. While about 75% of Luxury Restroom Trailers' business is weddings, other clients use their trailers for long-term bathroom remodels, office operations and other industrial uses.

With the area's variety of backdrops from mountains to desert to ocean, the trailer demand for photo shoots, commercials and the film industry is also growing. The trailer restrooms are also used at music venues. The best ones go for backstage VIPs, and the industrial units are provided for the general public.

"We're pleasantly surprised that because we keep the restrooms so clean, people treat the restrooms better than we anticipated," Salvetti says.

THE INVENTORY

To serve the wedding, event and industrial markets, Luxury Restroom Trailers has 38 units in a variety of models. For industrial and long-term customers, they have two NuConcepts trailers. One is a two-stall Industrial, and the other is a two-stall Elementary. Black Tie

Products restrooms cover a variety of customers. They include a two-stall Bridal Suite, two five-stall Industrials and an eight-stall Executive.

"Everything else is built by JAG Mobile Solutions. Most of the JAGs are custom built, but they fall into the category of the Porta-Lisa Plus. They range from two-stall restrooms up to 10-station restrooms," Salvetti says.

She explains that she works with JAG to customize new models. "We've changed up colors and materials," she says, to set different moods for events. Beadboard adds a country feel, while picture-frame wainscoting creates a Victorian atmosphere. Instead of neutral colors, she's opted for everything from stark white to bold colors like a charcoal navy blue and emerald green to a relaxing dusty lavender.

"We're always changing vessel sinks. And urinals are a passion of mine — how they function, look better and have flushing mechanisms more like home restrooms," she says.

With LED lighting and skylights, units are well lit. A sound system and air conditioning/heating make them comfortable.

Instead of stalls, many have floor-to-ceiling walls with interior doors to separate each unit. Baby changing stations are available in both men's and women's restrooms, while sign holders on the exterior allow gender-neutral options when appropriate. Trailers with three stalls include an ADA option that is fully ADA compliant with the correct ramp pitch, door weight, accessory placement, etc.

"Even the sign is different, with a wheelchair in motion," Salvetti says. "It's a mission we support."

(continued)

Communicating with clients

Being part of the "wedding industry" means that Kasey Salvetti and other members of the team at Luxury Restroom Trailers by Privy Chambers deal with clients who are excited and happy. To maintain that goodwill requires good communication and helping the client get exactly what they need.

"I say we write emails with a smile on our faces," Salvetti says, but she notes that specific protocols are followed. Clients fill out an online questionnaire and have a phone conference with staff.

"With dates, numbers and location, then we can start putting together an efficient bid for them," Salvetti says, and her policy is to make it in a timely manner. "When I was planning my wedding, even a couple of days was a long time to wait for a reply. I don't want to leave a client hanging like that. So that they can make a decision, I want them to have information — and no secret hidden fees."

Because they serve markets in two regions, costs vary. Due to more traffic and longer times to make deliveries, Seattle is more expensive. Sites make a difference too, so setting the groundwork means asking if there is power and water available to hook up. If not, Luxury Restroom Trailers can provide a generator and holding tanks.

Size is also an important factor to ensure the restrooms don't go over capacity. Often, the two-stall trailers are sufficient for 150-200 wedding guests.

"We want the success of the event to take priority," Salvetti says. "At the same time, budgets are important also, so clients may be comfortable if there are lines on occasion."



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Robert Anderson prepares to empty the holding tank of a restroom trailer on location.

Though they don't market standard polyethylene restrooms, the company owns 11 PolyJohn Enterprises units (including an ADA model), mostly for behind-the-scenes and event support staff. They also have a couple of PolyJohn hand-wash stations.

The truck fleet includes seven Chevrolet pickups (2016-19), four carrying 350- or 325-gallon waste and 150-gallon freshwater slide-in Garsite/Progress (three aluminum and one steel) tanks from FMI Truck Sales & Service. All carry Honda engines.

They also have a 1999 International 4700 with a 925-gallon wastewater and 600-gallon freshwater stainless steel tank and Masport pump from Lely Tank & Waste Solutions and a 2018 Isuzu NPR with a 325-gallon wastewater and 150-gallon freshwater WorkMate steel tank from FMI with a Honda engine.

Luxury Restroom Trailers is based in Portland and has a secondary site in Seattle to cover that area.

HAPPY BUSINESS

Because they serve mostly clients in the wedding market, Salvetti says their business is different from many PROs. "People planning a wedding are excited about it; we get to be a part of that planning process and want to maintain that excitement. It's a fun industry to be part of. Our drivers get many hugs," Salvetti says.

She finds good employees through a hiring firm and personal contacts and follows a lengthy interview process. Besides being willing to meet cleaning standards, employees need people skills to give clients "a five-minute hotel experience" while giving tours of the trailers and educating how to use all the trailer's features.

Drivers have at least six weeks of training. Only one truck requires a CDL license, but Salvetti offers to pay employees' costs to get licensed with the goal of having them all CDL-certified.

To retain good employees, Luxury Restroom Trailers pays well, offers vacation and sick time and is flexible with scheduling to meet busy families' needs.

"We don't ask others to do things that we haven't done," Salvetti says. With the recent birth of her second child, she understands the challenges of balancing work and family life.

BRIGHT FUTURE

At 33, Salvetti is proficient with technology and comfortable with social media to efficiently run and market the business. QuickBooks software keeps track of bookkeeping and Smartsheet covers almost everything else related to office work, providing everyone live access to everything from generating quotes to booking to scheduling.

The entire crew also connects with Slack, a team text message app that can be used to send messages, photos, invoices and other documents to individuals or all.

Because weddings for millennials is the company's main target, the internet and social media are its biggest marketing tool. Salvetti regularly posts on Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest, as well as occasionally on Twitter.

"We focus on the beautiful side with interior and exterior photos and wonderful locations, not so much the operational side. We cater to high-end, so they want to see what it's like and how it blends in with scenery. On Facebook, we do blogging on how to overcome event hurdles like providing water and electric. And we cover trending ideas," Salvetti says.

In the end, good service and offering a great experience lead to the best advertising — word-of-mouth. Salvetti credits a dedicated team for the growth of the business in just a few years.

"People planning a wedding are excited about it; we get to be a part of that planning process and want to maintain that excitement. It's a fun industry to be part of. Our drivers get many hugs."

KASEY SALVETTI

The business has been an interesting leap from the couple's careers in archeology, but they joke that it was "in the stars" because of their own wedding experience and from research work they did for the University of Oregon Museum of Natural and Cultural History. They rehydrated and studied 15,000-year-old coprolites — mummified human feces.

In naming their business, they incorporated another piece of history to match their upscale market. The "Privy Chambers" part of the company's name

refers back to the time of King Henry VIII. He was the first king to have indoor restroom facilities — called privy chambers.

The Salvettis have discovered that many skills and experiences as archeologists are helpful with their business.

"My husband is very mechanically inclined and good at troubleshooting," Salvetti says. "I have done marketing with community outreach and administrative work with museums. This business uses the same strategies."

As they serve the Portland and Seattle markets, they see growth potential in rural areas and for industrial markets. They added trailers in 2019 and by midyear were turning away work, so they plan to add 10 trailers in 2020.

"We are always expanding, as much as the market allows," Salvetti concludes. ■

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CAN YOU NAME THE PICTURESQUE WATERFRONT CITY WHERE FOLKS ARE HAVING A GREAT TIME DURING A DOWNTOWN SUMMER FESTIVAL?

By Jim Kneiszel

You can see sailboat masts in the background of one of these photos flying both U.S. and Canadian flags. And what's with the giant inflatable rubber duck? There are a lot of restrooms set up for the event, and the PolyJohn Enterprises PJN3 units are getting a good workout on this sunny afternoon. This could be the setting for any coastal town festival, but it's a real mystery for you to solve.

Can you name the city where these photos were taken? Here are a few clues:

1. This is a traveling maritime festival where visitors can take a ride on an old-fashioned schooner.
2. The city center is nestled around a waterfront, with steep surrounding hills you can see in the background.
3. Closely linked to an apparel company not headquartered here.
4. The festival park is in the shadow of a regionally famous bridge.
5. Home of the first indoor shopping mall, built in 1915.
6. The first time someone dropped a scoop of ice cream on a piece of pie happened here.
7. Surfing is big here, where waves reaching 15 feet during the winter are comparable to the biggest swells in Hawaii and California.

To win the contest, be the first person to respond with the correct location where the restroom trailer is located. The winner will receive a *Portable Restroom Operator* T-shirt and recognition as a geographical whiz. Send your responses to editor@promonthly.com. The winner will be announced at www.promonthly.com and through the *PRO* Facebook page. ■

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Finding the Sweet Spot

The owner of Jack's Expert Flush & Toilet Rentals believes smaller PROs can be profitable if they concentrate on hard work and quality service **By Peter Kenter**

Jack Werry, owner of Jack's Expert Flush & Toilet Rentals in Halifax, Nova Scotia, has been a portable restroom operator since 2004. With about 260 restrooms, Werry believes he's found the sweet spot where he can remain personally involved in all aspects of providing quality service while making a good profit.

He serves primarily construction industry clients in the Halifax area, rounded out by weddings and occasional events. He employs two full-time staff members and one part-time worker. The company offers restrooms from PolyJohn Canada, Five Peaks and Satellite | PolyPortables. A single VIP wedding trailer was self-built.

Werry operates three vacuum trucks, all built out by VacutruX with Wallenstein pumps and steel tanks. The first is a 2005 Chevrolet Silverado with a 240-gallon waste and 180-gallons freshwater tank. The second is a 2010 Ram 5500 with a 300-gallon waste and 150-gallon freshwater tank. The third is a 2011 Ram 2500 with a 120-gallon waste and 120-gallon freshwater tank.

A new Ram Sport delivery truck pulls units on three self-built trailers — a 10-unit model, six-unit model and three-unit model. "I like the way the Rams sit a little taller than the others," he says. "Working on construction sites, I like that higher ride because I don't want to tear the bottom out of that truck."

The company is a member of the Waste Water Nova Scotia Society, a professional organization primarily serving the province's onsite industry. Although he's not a member, Werry also attends Portable Sanitation Association International events. He's a regular attendee at the WWETT Show. "I talk to other operators, check out what's new and I buy stuff," he says. "If it's about my business, I go."



Jack Werry is shown in the company yard. (Photos by Warren Robertson)

EXPLORE FIVE ISSUES THAT AFFECT JACK WERRY'S PORTABLE SANITATION BUSINESS

1 PIVOTING TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Werry spent most of the 1980s working as a flooring installer contractor in high-rise buildings in Calgary, Alberta. Returning to Nova Scotia, he filled a market niche by launching Expert Rubbish Removal in 1992, a garbage removal service that grew to 44 containers.

"We served construction and residential customers and specialized in cleaning out the properties of hoarders, like the ones you see in the TV shows," Werry says. "I only had three competitors in the market when the business started and 73 when I got out."

Realizing that the bulk trash business had only a short shelf life left, he pivoted to offering construction customers both containers and portable restrooms as part of a package deal.

His first vacuum truck came in handy during the business crossover period, most prominently in executing a contract on a hoarder's home in Dartmouth. "The house was waist-high in trash and rats were running everywhere," he recalls. "The toilets had been plugged long ago and human waste had been stored in 5-gallon buckets. I was the only company that would bid on it because I was the only one with a pumper."

As the portable restroom business became busier and busier, he moved entirely away from trash into portable restroom rentals and service. "I've never looked back," he says.

As a PRO, he's always looking for new opportunities as well. That includes branching out into wedding service. He takes on about 50 weddings per year.

(continued)



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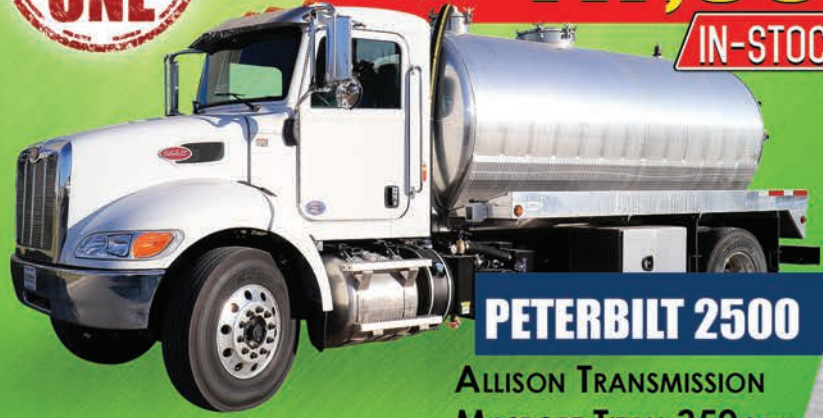
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FOR MORE INFORMATION

Jack Werry maneuvers a Ram 5500 service truck in the company yard. Company trucks were built by Vacutrux and carry Wallenstein pumps. Restrooms are from PolyJohn Canada, Five Peaks and Satellite | PolyPortables.



2 REMAINING SMALL TO MAINTAIN QUALITY SERVICE

Werry is a hands-on owner. He and one other employee provide most of the outside labor for the business. A part-time employee maintains the portable restrooms and the truck pumps. His girlfriend, Shelly Dollemont, handles book-keeping and office duties.

"I want to make a good living, but I have no interest in managing a lot of employees," he says. "I want to stress cleanliness, and personal service is the best way to achieve that. I also believe that if I became a lot larger, additional costs would result in a smaller rate of return."

Werry says many clients tell him they prefer working with a small company that can offer personal service. At 65, he remains in good physical shape, in part because he never shies away from the physical labor required to keep the business running.

"I work seven days a week," he says. "Some people just say that to let you know that they're really busy. I mean that I literally work seven days a week. That's as many hours as I can handle."

"I want to stress cleanliness, and personal service is the best way to achieve that. I also believe that if I became a lot larger, additional costs would result in a smaller rate of return."

JACK WERRY



The lone restroom trailer in the Jack's Expert Flush & Toilet Rentals inventory was built in-house.

3 KNOWING HIS COMPANY'S STRENGTHS

While many PROs like to bring work — such as vehicle repair or marketing — in-house, Werry sticks to what the business is good at.

"We repair all of our portable restrooms and the truck pumps, but don't even show me a mechanic's wrench when it comes to truck maintenance because I won't touch it," he says. "We're good at a lot of things and so are mechanics who specialize in fixing broken trucks. I don't mind paying a garage a little more, as long as they give me service. That means fixing my truck and getting it back to me the same day, because our profit is measured in trucks on the road."

He feels the same way about marketing, trusting his ad spend to phone books and paying them to operate his website. "Business that doesn't come in from word-of-mouth comes in from Yellow Pages advertising and the website," he says. "It's worth every cent I pay them."

Werry, owner of Jack's Expert Flush & Toilet Rentals, is shown with one of his service trucks, carrying a Vacutrux tank and Wallenstein pump.



4 ADJUSTING TO A THRIVING LOCAL ECONOMY

Once thought of as a rural province, Nova Scotia has grown to almost a million residents, with much of that growth centered in Halifax (population 410,000). "For many years, Halifax wasn't considered a city of opportunity," he says. "But it's definitely a place of opportunity today because the economy is so strong. There are so many people with money moving here who are making this economy go."

The construction industry, one of Werry's biggest markets, has also grown along with the economy. "My business has undergone a steady improvement under the current economic expansion," he says. "I'm busier in winter of this year than I was in the summer."

Working in Nova Scotia means contending with cold winters, but business continues year-round. "We winterize our portable restrooms using a salt brine," Werry says. "They never freeze. We have at least two pumper trucks running all winter."

(continued)

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Jack Werry checks out one of his restrooms from Satellite I PolyPortables.

5 BUILDING THE COMPANY'S VALUE AHEAD OF RETIREMENT

Werry would be happy to pass the business on to his son, who lives in Alberta, but family obligations keep him tied to that province. Instead, Werry plans to sell the company in the next two years. Although he's satisfied with the success of the business, he's entered one final sprint to maximize its value before putting it on the market.

"I continue to order new portable restroom units," he says. "I've ordered new units four times this year alone. And I'll also be bringing in a new pumper truck from Vacutrux in 2020, another Ram 5500. I believe a new owner with ambition could make a lot of money with the business I've built."

When the new truck arrives, Werry says he plans to hire an additional employee to handle the increased activity.

His advice to people interested in becoming a PRO: "We'll always have a need for portable restrooms, and there'll always be business opportunities here. If you're a young person with energy, there's money to be made." ■

"We'll always have a need for portable restrooms, and there'll always be business opportunities here. If you're a young person with energy, there's money to be made."

JACK WERRY

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Trucks and Tanks

By Craig Mandli

VACUUM TANKS

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 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.**

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 for structural strength. 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. 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.**



VACUUM TRUCKS

FMI TRUCK SALES & SERVICE WORKMATE

The WorkMate service truck from FMI Truck Sales & Service has equal weight distribution of the sidewinder tank designed to extend brake life and improve handling.



The two food-grade poly water tanks are plumbed to carry brine, freshwater, premix or any combination of fluids with no corrosion or rusty water. The ergonomically designed workstation with over 60 cubic feet of storage space saves time and effort during the workday, minimizing restocking and driver movement. With the ability to carry four restrooms, delivery and pickup expenses are greatly reduced. An E-track load securement system eliminates the need for ropes. Its modular design allows components to be easily replaced or transferred if damaged. The entire vacuum system is plumbed using hot-tar hose and Masport components. Marine-style wiring is used, and all of the electrical systems are contained in a watertight panel with automatic reset circuit breakers. **800-927-8750; www.fmitrucks.com.**

IMPERIAL INDUSTRIES FLATVAC

The 1,000-gallon stainless steel Flatvac from Imperial Industries can carry up to six portable restroom units on top of the unit's 1,000-gallon stainless steel flat vacuum tank. The baffled internally divided



tank offers 700 gallons of waste capacity and 300 gallons of freshwater capacity. In addition, the unit offers dual-sided bucket fill, dual Hannay hose reels with 50 feet of hose, a Pumptec X-5 washdown pump, Masport HXL4 plug-and-play vacuum pump system, Thieman liftgate, and a 3-inch stainless steel boom with 30 feet of 2-inch intake hose and a suction nozzle. **800-558-2945; www.imperialind.com.**

VACUUM TRUCKS

KEEVAC INDUSTRIES KV999

The KV999 from KeeVac Industries carries a 999-gallon portable restroom vacuum tank for operators who want to stay under the U.S.

Department of Transportation tanker endorsement requirement. It is available in aluminum, stainless steel and carbon steel, with single- or dual-side service, holds 699 gallons of waste and 300 gallons of freshwater and includes a two-unit fold-down restroom carrier with trailer hitch. The tank can be mounted on a variety of chassis and with a variety of pump options. Each unit also comes with an upgraded DC-10 washdown pump and hose reel from Hannay Reels. Exterior controls and dual cabinets are designed for operator safety and convenience. An arctic package and safety lighting are available. **866-789-9440; www.keevac.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 compart-

ment 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. 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.**

CASE STUDY

PRO picks truck that performs two jobs in one

PROBLEM: Syracuse, New York, PRO Galaxy Restroom had a limited amount of capital for its annual fleet expenditures due to a recent acquisition. Meanwhile, much of the fleet it acquired was tired and outdated. The company needed to buy at least two trucks, one for service as the company almost doubled in size with the acquisition and a second one to help with delivery and pickup at special events.

SOLUTION: Company owners chose a PortaLogix truck designed to service more than 65 units on a route utilizing an 800-gallon waste tank and 350-gallon freshwater tank in the flatbed. The same truck carries up to six units on the bed.

RESULT: The company stayed within its fleet budget and posted higher profits. It then did 80% of its deliveries and pickups with PortaLogix trucks, which allows for a smaller fleet, less fuel expense and fewer labor hours for drivers.

585-484-7009; www.portalogix.com.



SATELLITE VACUUM TRUCKS MD995 FLAT VAC

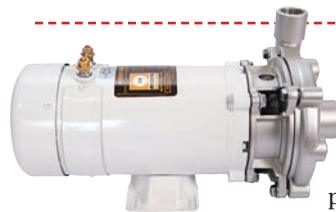
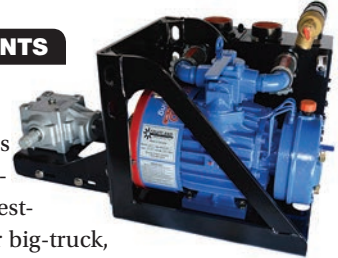
The Satellite Vacuum Trucks MD995 Flat Vac provides added capacity for hauling restrooms. It is designed with space for eight standard units, with a 695-gallon waste and 300-gallon freshwater tank. Ergonomic features, including lowered service area and easy-to-reach stainless steel cabinets, are designed to increase driver efficiency and lower fatigue. **800-883-1123; www.satellitetruckxpress.com.**



VACUUM TRUCK PARTS/COMPONENTS

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. It 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). The mount has two emergency brake cable slots, allowing for quick and easy installation. It offers low oil consumption, including an automated oiling system with all-steel oil lines, pump oil-level sight gauge, vane gauging ports and anti-shock design. **800-663-9003; www.fruitlandmanufacturing.com.**

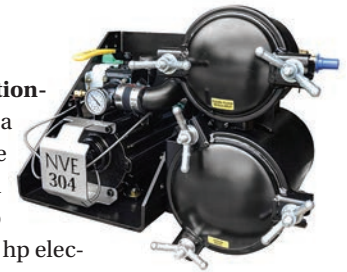


MORO USA DC

Heavy-duty Moro USA DC water pumps offer 20 gpm maximum flow for quick restroom fills, while 42 psi maximum pressure provides 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.**

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.**



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VACUUM TRUCK PARTS/COMPONENTS

PRESVAC SYSTEMS PV750

The Presvac Systems PV750 rotary vane pump is designed for continuous full-vacuum operation in extreme conditions. It offers 400 cfm at free air, 350 cfm at 15 inches Hg, a maximum vacuum of 27 inches Hg and maximum pressure of 35 psi. Dual fans and twin ballast ports efficiently cool the pump. The solid housing with deep cooling ribs allows for greater heat transfer from the vacuum chamber. Aluminum fans and shrouding work like a heat exchanger to aid in heat reduction. Multiple manifold and drive options are available for truck, trailer or stationary applications. **800-387-7763; www.presvac.com.**



WESTMOOR CONDE FLUSH KIT

The Conde Flush Kit from Westmoor makes it easy to periodically flush the pump on a vacuum truck, helping to prolong its life. It can be used by simply turning on the pump and opening the ball valve. Made of durable aluminum, the unit has instructions on the side. It can be mounted in any convenient location. **800-367-0972; www.westmoorltd.com.** ■



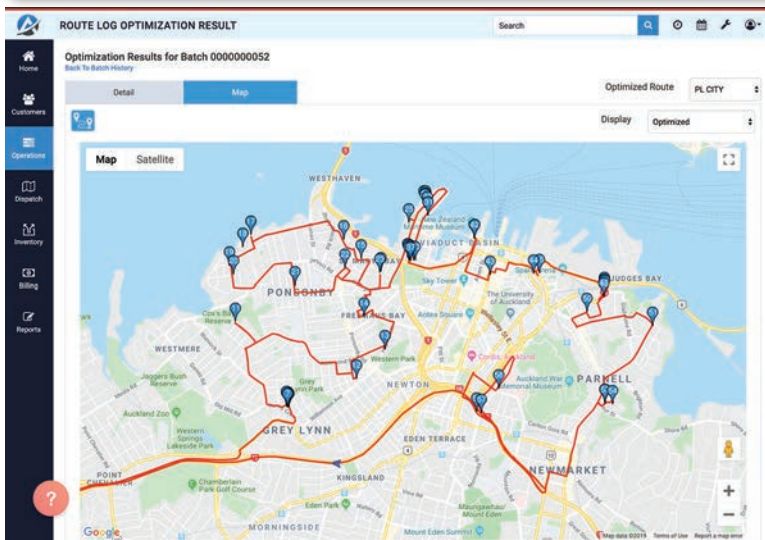
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PRODUCT NEWS



PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

AllyPro software is designed specifically for portable restroom industry

By Craig Mandli

AllyPro from **Jates Co.** is business management software designed to reduce the cost of operations and simplify processes. It allows PROs to review critical business information in real time.

With three years in development, AllyPro is designed to meet the varied, but specific needs of the portable restroom industry, including comprehensive inventory, paperless dispatch, mobile application, complete CRM, billing, fleet maintenance and many other business needs. According to Lee Moore, senior project manager for OnPoint AVL and Navigation, the North American distributor for AllyPro, the program offers a complete solution.

“AllyPro incorporates collecting data in the field as services such as delivery, repair, cleaning, removals and whatever other things the company sets up to happen,” he says. “The customizable mobile app updates the back office, continually providing near-real-time visibility into field operations.”

AllyPro is able to leverage OnPoint’s nationwide footprint, with more than 1,000 successful launches of other platforms. Selecting OnPoint was an easy decision, according to Shawn Parks, CEO and chief developer of the AllyPro platform. “AllyPro will still be deploying its international clients but having OnPoint engaged in the U.S. allows us to stay focused on what we do best, ongoing development and improving the platform,” he says.

As a software as a service platform, the customer’s business can be accessed from any internet-connected device by anyone with the proper credentials. It’s suitable for the small operator who may need to be on the move some of the time, as well as large enterprises that require multiple accesses to follow their business.

The flexible system allows the user to name and arrange varied field functions, describe equipment, and customize status updates and services provided. AllyPro can be used in any service enterprise, with any combination of rental, delivery, pickup, one-time and/or periodic services.

“Everything from the structured query language database schema to the look and feel of the mobile application and user interface was built from scratch to minimize intrusiveness in operations while providing incredibly granular data,” Moore says. “That means no more corner cutting or ‘good enough’ judgment calls.” **888-974-8488; www.allypro.com** ■

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Portable restroom service business for sale located in Bluffton, Ohio. Approximately 160 portable restrooms, 8 handicap units, 12 handwash stations, 2006 FM Mfg. 10-unit trailer with hand cart, 2006 Ford F750 service truck with 1,500/300 gallon tank. Serious inquiries to Mrseptic6@gmail.com or basi1@comcast.net. (P03)

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2018 Hino 268A cab & chassis, 25,950 GVW with a new 1,600-gallon portable toilet service unit. (Stock# 13762) www.VacuumSalesInc.com (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648) (TBM)

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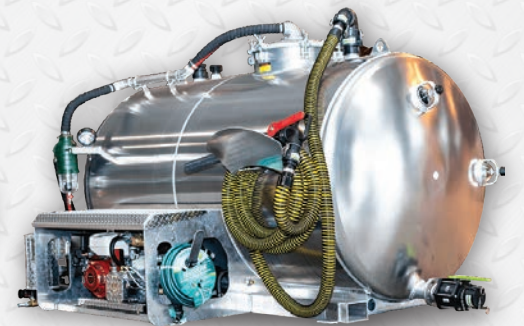
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