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Nothing replaces nonstop networking when you want to see your restrooms popping up all over town, says Tennessee's Peaches Searles

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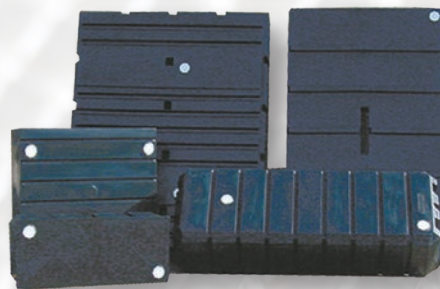


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ON THE COVER: "Throne King" Giulliano Paizante has quickly built his young company on giving customers around Peabody, Massachusetts, the royal restroom treatment. Paizante is shown in the cab of one of his service trucks, an Isuzu NPR built out by KeeVac Industries and carrying a Conde pump (Westmoor). (Photo by Noah Willman)

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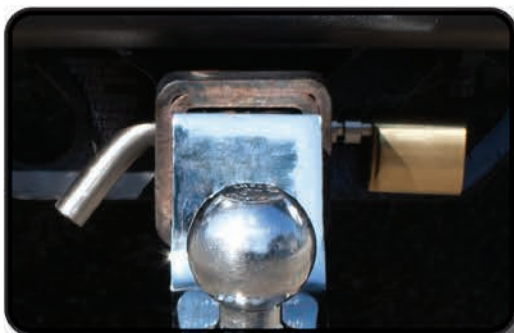


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By Jim Kneiszel

Summer 2020 Was a Roller Coaster of COVID-19 Worries and Changing Customer Expectations

Here are 10 conclusions I reached about an industry that has proven nimble and resilient in the face of disaster

So what lessons did you learn from the crazy 2020 summer season?

It's fair to say the portable sanitation industry has never faced anything like the COVID-19 pandemic. The last time a pandemic hit the U.S., it was in 1918 at the end of World War I. At that time, the first portable restroom was probably 40 years in the future.

Starting with shelter-at-home orders in March, your small business had to become reactive and not proactive. You had to roll with the punches — first dealing with large-scale event contract cancellations and then trying to fulfill the changing needs of your remaining customers.

There were many concerns along the way. Would you have to furlough or lay off some of your workers to stay in business? How would you make sure your crew was working safely to avoid catching a dangerous virus or passing it along to others? Once it became clear that so many customers demanded different equipment, how were you going to satisfy that demand?

Throughout the busy season, I've heard from a lot of PROs who were staying busy enough to keep their crews going, and even some who were adding employees and spending more money on service trucks and restroom inventory. It was a glimmer of good news amid so much bad news about this unrelenting virus.

Throughout this adventure, I have pondered the lessons PROs can take away from this experience. Here are 10 conclusions I reached about an industry that has proven nimble and resilient in the face of disaster:

THE PUBLIC REALLY NEEDS A CLEAN RESTROOM.

In the past, you probably had difficulty convincing some customers to order an adequate number of restrooms to ensure cleanliness and prevent overfilling. That isn't likely to happen anymore. The ongoing health threat we've faced has convinced customers of the need for more restrooms and cleaner restrooms. To protect the public and their employees, they will no longer skimp on service.

SANITIZERS OR HAND-WASH SINKS ARE NOT OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT.

There was a time, oh, let's say six or seven months ago, when a good number of your customers placed orders for restrooms without any hand-wash or hand sanitizer equipment. No more of that. PROs have received so many orders for additional hand-wash equipment earlier this year that they tell me vendors ran out of supplies quickly. Many contractors improvised for the time being by building their own sinks and sanitizer stands to try and keep up with demand.

You're proud of your crew. When the coronavirus struck, they answered the call with courage and determination. While many folks had the luxury of working their jobs from home during the worst of COVID-19, your drivers and technicians embraced their role as essential service providers.

YOUR WORKERS DESERVE COMBAT PAY.

You're proud of your crew. When the coronavirus struck, they answered the call with courage and determination. While many folks had the luxury of working their jobs from home during the worst of COVID-19, your drivers and technicians embraced their role as essential service providers. They kept running their routes, cleaning and repairing units in the yard and generally doing whatever it took to provide the necessary service for your customers. Perhaps bonuses for your team are in order for their yeoman's duty.

PORTABLE SANITATION IS CRUCIAL IN ANY DISASTER SCENARIO.

Portable restrooms play an important role in a variety of emergencies, such as on the fire line serving firefighters or restoring order during hurricane and tornado cleanup. The coronavirus is another kind of disaster, and you have delivered thousands of restrooms for use where permanent public bathrooms were shut down, where homeless populations need a hand and to keep the work going on construction projects. You've helped people in need and helped preserve jobs in an economic downturn.

THE INDUSTRY PULLS TOGETHER DURING TOUGH TIMES.

Sometimes it takes the worst situations to bring out the best in people, and this has been the case for portable sanitation companies during this health crisis. Competing companies are working together to make sure customers get the equipment they need. One contractor might not have any restroom trailers left but can rely on another company to provide it. Vendors have worked extra hard to help PROs with the supplies they need. The Portable Sanitation Association International has jumped in with special training and regular roundtable discussions to address emerging COVID-19 service issues.

TRADITIONAL CHALLENGES ARE EVER-PRESENT IN A PANDEMIC.

So much has changed this year. But PROs continue to face some of the same old issues that have hampered the industry all along. Customers still want to argue for lower prices while expecting the same high level of service. Vandalism persists, with fires, tip-overs and graffiti eating away at the bottom line. Despite the effort of so many, the public's negative perception of the portable sanitation industry still needs to turn around. It's clear that no matter how hard PROs work during a state of emergency, there's always more work to do.

MARKETING AND ADVERTISING MUST CONTINUE.

Many PROs report they continued to be busy this year, but the workload switched from an event-heavy summer to serving other customers. You will see the impact of the pandemic in your rearview mirror, I assure you. But in the meantime, you realize the value and importance of promoting your company through marketing, social media and advertising. Life goes on, and you must work to attract new customers.

NO CUSTOMER SHOULD BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED.

Early in the year, you were distressed when so many of your special event customers called to cancel major orders. But if you were lucky, many others filled the void and helped recover what could have been a disastrous summer season. Now you need to return to all of your

customers and keep working on your business relationships. Check in with the event organizers and see how they're holding up. Let them know you are concerned and will be ready to serve them again post-pandemic. Give your loyal customers a call and share your appreciation for their business when you really needed it.

SAFE PRACTICES SHOULD NEVER BE OVERLOOKED.

It's always been important to preach safety to the troops in the field. But the pandemic has made safety training mission critical. For the past many months, following safety best practices was literally a matter of life and death. Your procedures for keeping restrooms sanitary played a role in halting the spread of a life-threatening virus. And your employee training kept your most valuable assets safe while they were out on the front line. What can you do this winter to improve your safety efforts next year?

IF YOUR BUSINESS SURVIVES A PANDEMIC, IT CAN SURVIVE ANYTHING.

The fall is a time of reflection for most PROs. Your work is winding down heading into winter and you are taking stock after a year like no other in the history of your companies. If your financial outlook remains strong, it's time to be thankful and pat yourself on the back for a job well done. You and your crew have been tested and prevailed. Know that if you can overcome this health crisis, it's likely you can handle any small-business obstacle that comes along. ■



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DOUBLE TIME

Customize Your Service Truck to Save Big

Robert and Wendy Garland, owners of Garland Waste Services in Center Conway, New Hampshire, knew they had to think smarter not harder when purchasing a new service truck. The small portable restroom operation requires versatility and the Garlands found it in a flat-tank truck. Read this exclusive online article to learn more. promonthly.com/featured

OVERHEARD ONLINE

“Now more than ever, you may deal with your fair share of nasty or frustrating customers. When you already feel stretched thin, this is challenging. Remember that ideal customer service is firm and solution-focused.”

— *Handling Employee Relations in a Pandemic*
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DON'T HANG UP!

Neutralize Angry Customer Phone Calls

Working in portable sanitation brings with it a special brand of disgruntled customers' phone calls. Don't get caught off guard. Read this online article to see what you can do to pacify the callers and maintain peace of mind.

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JUST SAY NO

Hard Limits Can Create Business Growth

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Jeff and Terri Wigley are portable sanitation industry veterans, having owned and operated Atlanta-based Pit Stop Sanitation Services for 22 years. Send your questions for them or comments to editor@promonthly.com.



By Jeff and Terri Wigley

Honk If Your Truck Is Pandemic Safe

Your service vehicles are rolling offices, often used by multiple technicians. Take these steps to ensure they remain a virus-free zone.

QUESTION: Our company has developed a safety protocol for service technicians and our office staff, thanks in part to several of the articles in *Portable Restroom Operator* magazine. We are now looking at our truck fleet. What suggestions do you have in terms of operating and maintaining as clean and safe of a fleet of vehicles as possible?

ANSWER: Portable sanitation providers have done a tremendous job in instilling confidence in the public that not only are we an essential industry, but we are also clean and safety-conscious.

We have always referred to the route service truck as the workhorse of our industry and, as such, it deserves consideration for increased sanitary practices. Comparing good practices for truck cleanliness in 2019 BC (before coronavirus) with the need for personal health and safety now in 2020 is an effective way for PROs to enhance their practices and procedures.

THAT WAS THEN...

We owned our company, Pit Stop Sanitation Services, from 1995 until 2017. We adopted many of our truck cleaning, washing and stocking procedures from other PROs, whether through *PRO* magazine, the Water & Wastewater Equipment, Treatment & Transport (WWETT) Show or participation in the Portable Sanitation Association International. Here is a short summary of common practices we followed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Route service trucks were sprayed off at the end of each day and thoroughly washed on a weekly basis, unless the vehicles went through muddy or dusty terrains on a given day that necessitated a thorough washing.
- Washing included completely spraying down the truck with soap and water.
- The pump hoses were also sprayed with the same procedure of cleaning anytime they became muddy or extremely dirty.
- Job boxes were cleaned out as needed by removing all items, cleaning the inside area and placing the equipment back in the box. Typically, the job box on the driver's side was cleaned more frequently since it held toilet paper, which was constantly being emptied and then replenished. The job box on the passenger side would be completely emptied and cleaned once a month.
- The inside of the cab was to be kept clean and free of any items on the floor. The floor of the cab was also sprayed with water on a weekly basis as part of the truck cleaning process.

Not knowing who will be driving that truck next, it's important to clean the inside of the windshield and windows. Breathing on these surfaces throughout the day makes these areas a greater risk for virus contamination.

- Personal protective equipment in the truck for the driver included a hard hat, reflective vest, safety goggles, two pairs of rubber gloves (one for units and one for sinks) and a first-aid kit.
- Safety equipment for the truck included a fire extinguisher, hazard triangles, safety and maintenance records for the vehicle, necessary inspection forms and corresponding markings on the exterior of the vehicle.

THIS IS NOW...

To fulfill various emerging health and safety guidelines and recommendations as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, here are our suggestions on a point-by-point comparison of the former "standard procedures" listed above. These recommendations are based on conversations with other PROs, as well as an ongoing series of virtual PSAI roundtable discussions:

- Trucks should be washed and cleaned daily. A bleach or other sanitizing agent should be used in the cleaning process. All pumping hoses, as well as water hoses, should be thoroughly sprayed with water and the cleaning solution.
- Both job boxes should be cleaned. Again, the driver's side box is the easiest to clean due to its constant use throughout the day. As for the passenger side job box, an easy and less time-consuming way to clean this storage of miscellaneous equipment is to place the items in small, clear plastic boxes that will fit on each shelf. The contents can still be easily identified, and removing these smaller boxes is a far less time-consuming method of emptying the job box for thorough cleaning.

Since the route service technician spends most of the day in the vehicle cab, this area has taken on a heightened level of importance in terms of health and safety.

- The cab should be free of as much debris as possible. Areas behind the seats should be as empty as possible. Every area in the truck cab needs to be accessible to sanitizing wipes to maintain cleanliness.
- The floor of the truck should be sprayed with the water-and-bleach or cleaning-agent solution at the end of each day.
- Not knowing who will be driving that truck next, it's important to clean the inside of the windshield and windows. Breathing on these surfaces throughout the day makes these areas a greater risk for virus contamination.
- Clean all PPE at the end of the day. Each route service technician should have personal PPE to maintain safety. Again, a small tote or container to store all this equipment ensures that all PPE is removed for daily cleaning. Should PPE items be left in the truck for use on a "community basis," they should be thoroughly and meticulously cleaned at the end of each day.
- New 2020 PPE such as hand sanitizing liquid and an increased number of masks and gloves should be inventoried so an adequate supply is always available.

The route service truck also needs to serve as your company's field office in terms of having health and safety information that can be shared with customers, as well as health inspectors at job sites or events. Health and safety are paramount, and the ability to share your company's protocols can assist in this process and allow your company to maintain its image of professionalism and concern for public health. As we have suggested and referred to on many occasions, the idea of an information notebook is particularly important and can fulfill this objective.

CONSIDER:

- A short synopsis of your company's safety procedures, perhaps including some of the suggestions listed above.
- Memos the company has generated that deal directly with employee safety, whether in the field or office.

With an information notebook that contains other suggested items — insurance forms, copies of waste permits, spill-handling procedures, vehicle maintenance checklists and incident report forms — your company's preparedness can help calm some of the anxiety that has become so evident in our world today.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Personal safety and hygiene have never been more important than during the COVID-19 pandemic. Employee and customer safety are paramount objectives. Do not overlook your truck fleet in your overall safety program. ■

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The advertisement displays a collection of Masport vacuum pump models arranged in a grid-like fashion. Each model is shown with its name in large, bold letters above it. The pumps are primarily blue and black, with some featuring yellow accents. The capacities and tank sizes for each model are listed in red and black text below the pump images. A large red starburst graphic with white text is positioned in the center-right of the pump display area.

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Take 5 ...
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GIVE THEM THE ROYAL TREATMENT

Giulliano Paizante started his restroom business from scratch, but now he's The Throne King

By Steve Lund | Photos by Noah Willman

Giulliano Paizante admits he didn't know much about the portable restroom business when he started, but in four years, The Throne King in Peabody, Massachusetts, has grown from zero to 400 units and four trucks.

It was, however, a slow start. He and his sister, Lucy Paizante, incorporated the company in June 2015, but the business didn't find a suitable location until December.

"Every time I found a nice building to rent, the city wouldn't let me do it because it wasn't the right area for this type of business," Paizante laments. "And every time we went to the right area, we didn't have the right building. It took us six months to find a warehouse to rent."

While they were looking, he kept working in his construction business and his sister continued working in her cleaning business. Today she continues to operate the cleaning business, only occasionally working in the office of The Throne King, but he is now fully engaged as a PRO.

Once he had the space, Paizante went shopping for portable restrooms. He didn't know exactly what he needed. Sam Calleiro from Armal helped him get started with 30 units and advice on other startup issues.

It wasn't until February 2016 that The Throne King rented out its first unit. When Paizante delivered it, he put another unit on the truck, so he wouldn't be driving back empty. "Somebody saw it on the truck and called me," Paizante says. He rented the second restroom unit the same day.

From there, growth was steady. The Throne King had 64 units at the end of 2016 and 120 at the end of 2017. The company now has 400 restrooms and four trucks. His wife, Patricia Badaro, works full time in the office, and there are two full-time drivers, plus one who works part time.

Paizante, who was born and raised in Brazil, promotes his business in the substantial Brazilian community in the Boston-area construction industry. He also promotes his business on Facebook, especially for special events and parties.



Giulliano Paizante and his wife, Patricia Badaro, are shown with an Isuzu NPR service truck built out by KeeVac Industries and using a Conde pump (Westmoor)

EXPLORE FIVE ISSUES THAT AFFECT GIULLIANO PAIZANTE AND THE THRONE KING:

1

BRAND AND VENDOR LOYALTY

Paizante believes in product familiarity and sticks with the vendors and equipment that have helped him along the way. All of his portable restroom units are from the same manufacturer, Armal.

His first truck was an Isuzu with a KeeVac Industries slide-in unit and Conde pump (Westmoor), and he continues to add to his fleet with Isuzu trucks, KeeVac Industries aluminum tanks and Conde pumps. The Throne King still uses the first truck, a 2003 pickup with a 300-gallon waste and 150-gallon freshwater tank. In 2017, the company added a new Isuzu truck with a 500-gallon waste and 300-gallon freshwater tank. In 2018, another identical truck was added. This year the company added a fourth truck, another Isuzu with a 700-gallon waste and 400-gallon freshwater tank. Paizante consults with KeeVac Industries on the layout of the trucks, but he mounts the tanks and equipment himself. He learned to weld when he worked in his father's body shop.

The company also has two restroom transport trailers: a 10-unit and four-unit. Both trailers were customized in-house. One is modified from a snowmobile trailer; the other is a modified all-terrain vehicle trailer. Paizante expects to add another, larger trailer soon.

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to attach floor
and wall



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Our 80-gallon
Flagship Model

Weighing 220lbs; 36lbs heavier than the current
average standard industry restroom of 174lbs.



Corners dovetail joined
with fiberglass rod for
unmatched durability



80-gallon SUMPED tank
provides 6" liquid depth
with 5-gallon charge



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Weighing 200lbs; 26lbs heavier than the current
average standard industry restroom of 174lbs.



Superior Design
with four layers of plastic
on each corner



65-gallon SUMPED tank
provides 6" liquid depth
with 5-gallon charge



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Above: The Throne King staff includes, from left, Warley Prates, Helinton Gomes, Junior Andrade, Giulliano Paizante, Alexander Afonso, Christopher Paizante, Gabriel Paizante and Patricia Badaro. The vacuum trucks were built out by KeeVac Industries with Conde pumps (Westmoor).



2 THE PRICE IS THE PRICE

Paizante has strong opinions about pricing. He doesn't cut the price to get new business. "I never put my price down, because I never want to damage the business," he says. "Sometimes when people start a business, they put the price down so they can catch a lot of customers. I never did that, because I knew it would be bad for me in the future. Because any time I tried to raise the price, I would lose a customer."

The best way to keep good relationships with customers, he says, is by providing quality service. "I keep the price the same as when they start," he says. "The first customer I have, he's got the same price, same service."

Left: Technician Alexander Afonso loads an Armal restroom onto a service truck for delivery.



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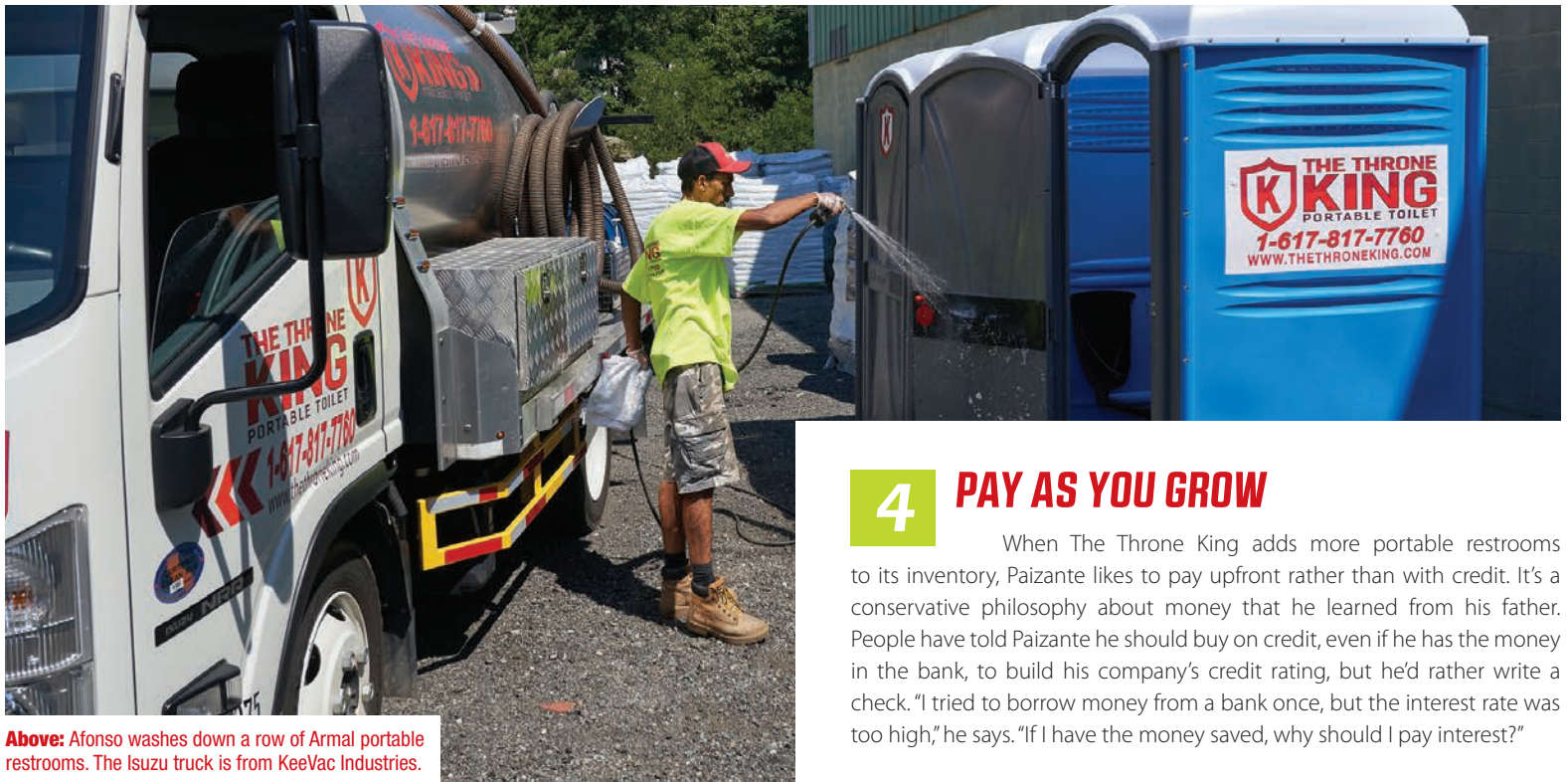
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Refer to the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> for additional information.



Above: Afonso washes down a row of Armal portable restrooms. The Isuzu truck is from KeeVac Industries.

4 PAY AS YOU GROW

When The Throne King adds more portable restrooms to its inventory, Paizante likes to pay upfront rather than with credit. It's a conservative philosophy about money that he learned from his father. People have told Paizante he should buy on credit, even if he has the money in the bank, to build his company's credit rating, but he'd rather write a check. "I tried to borrow money from a bank once, but the interest rate was too high," he says. "If I have the money saved, why should I pay interest?"

3 CLEANLINESS IS A PRIORITY

Paizante is picky about cleanliness of his units. He stresses drivers have to clean the restrooms, not just pump the tanks, and he wants them to make sure that the units smell good and have no spiderwebs. He uses a locally sourced, environmentally friendly brand of cleaning products.

Maintaining quality service requires recruiting good technicians. Although The Throne King has not had trouble keeping workers, Paizante says it is difficult to recruit new employees. He has learned to look at the cars of job applicants. "If his car is full of trash and dirty, he's not going to work out," Paizante says.

He also makes a habit of checking on his units as he drives around town, often on the day after or two days after the units were serviced. "Everywhere I go, I always check the units," he says. "Every unit has got to be clean. I try my best to make sure they are clean."

"Sometimes when people start a business, they put the price down so they can catch a lot of customers. I never did that, because I knew it would be bad for me in the future."

GIULLIANO PAIZANTE



Below: Afonso returns a suction hose to his service truck. All of the company's vacuum trucks were built out by KeeVac Industries.

5 GROWTH IS ESSENTIAL

Despite the company's slow start, The Throne King has grown rapidly in the last couple years. In 2018, it more than doubled its inventory to 340. It grew further in 2019, partly because it won a contract for a circus that needed 34 units with daily service for 40 days. Paizante thinks growth is necessary for continuing profitability.

"I'm not making money yet," he says. "We have to reinvest money. If we're not going to get big, we're not going to make money. We've got to grow." How big does he want the company to get? He's not sure: "I never stop to think about how big I have to grow." ■

MORE INFO

Armal, Inc.
866-873-7796
www.armal.biz
See ad, page 25

KeeVac Industries
866-789-9440
www.keevac.com
See ad, page 10

Westmoor Ltd.
800-367-0972
www.westmoorltd.com

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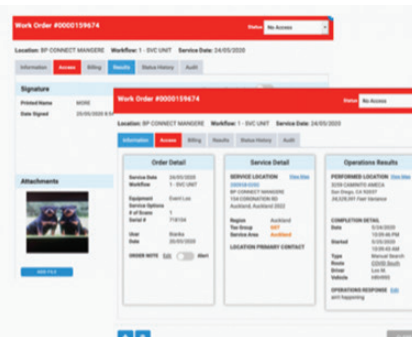
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<div></div> <div>Fruitland Manufacturing 324 Leaside Ave. Stoney Creek, ON L8E 2N7 800-663-9003 • 905-662-6552 (f) 905-662-5412 sales@fruitland-mfg.com www.fruitlandmanufacturing.com</div>	RCF 172	As Per Application	27"	30	128	4	Air	1,400	
	RCF 250	As Per Application	26.5"	30	255	4	Fan	1,400	
	RCF 344	As Per Application	27"	30	182	4	Air	1,400	
	RCF 370	As Per Application	28.5"	30	385	8	Fan	1,400	
	RCF 500	As Per Application	28.5"	30	450	8	Air	1,400	
	RCF 870	As Per Application	28.5"	30	575	8	Fan/Air	1,400	
	RCF 1200	As Per Application	28.5"	30	1,400	8	Fan	1,200	
	WR 2500	As Per Application	26"	22	385		Liquid	1,600	
	WR 3100	As Per Application	26"	22	422		Liquid	1,600	
	WR 4000	As Per Application	26"	14.5	657		Liquid	1,300	
	W1600	As Per Application	27"	29	747	6	Liquid	1,500	
	W1300	As Per Application	27"	29	615	6	Liquid	1,500	
	W900	As Per Application	27"	29	485	6	Liquid	1,500	
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Titan		4,000	27"	30	545	6	Fan	1,200 - 1,400	
Sidewinder		4,000	27"	30	550	6	Fan	1,200 - 1,400	
HXL400WV		4,000	27"	30	450	6	Liquid	1,100 - 1,250	
Viper		4,000	27"	30	400	6	Fan	1,100 - 1,250	
HXL75WV		2,500	27"	30	260	4	Liquid	1,100 - 1,250	
HXL75V		2,500	27"	25	230	4	Air	1,100 - 1,250	
HXL4V		1,500	27"	15	167	4	Air	1,100 - 1,400	
HXL3V		1,000	27"	15	110	4	Air	1,225 - 1,750	
HXL2V		750	27"	15	96	4	Air	1,225 - 1,750	
<div>See ad page 25</div>	<div></div> <div>National Vacuum Equipment 2707 Aero Park Dr. Traverse City, MI 49686 800-253-5500 • 231-941-0215 (f) 231-941-2354 sales@natvac.com www.natvac.com</div>	304 Challenger	Application Specific	27"	30	179	4	Air	1,100 - 1,400
	607 PRO Challenger Heavy Duty	Application Specific	28"	30	390	7	Fan/ Liquid	1,100 - 1,500	
	866 Challenger Heavy-Duty	Application Specific	27"	20	507	6	Fan/ Liquid	800 - 1,150	
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Peaches Searles is shown in the cab of a Ram built out by Satellite Vacuum Trucks with a 700-gallon waste and 300-gallon freshwater steel tank and Masport pump. (Photos by Martin Cherry)

THE **QUEEN** OF **CONNECTIONS**

Nothing replaces nonstop networking when you want to see your restrooms popping up all over town, says Tennessee's Peaches Searles

By Betty Dageforde



American Rooter and Portables Cleveland, Tennessee

Owners: Peaches and Ken Searles

Founded: 2000

Employees: 13

Services: Portable sanitation, septic service and line cleaning

Service area: 60-mile radius

Website: www.americanrooterseptic.com

Peaches Searles loves life, always has a ready laugh and has a passion for Tennessee walking horses. About 20 years ago, she started a portable restroom business as an adjunct to her husband Ken Searles' septic business in Cleveland, Tennessee. In the beginning, she did everything from deliveries and pumping to marketing and invoicing — and that was on top of running her other successful business, Miss Peaches' Sunny Daycare, taking care of 80 children.

"I had a director at the day care, but I'd go there in the morning," she says. "Then I'd throw a 5-gallon bucket of water and a unit in the back of our red Dodge pickup and I'd hit the job sites. Before I knew it, I had 25 of them out." When the business took off, something had to go. She sold the day care and used the proceeds to buy more units.

Other than her initial stint as a one-woman show, Searles is all about working with others, whether it's promoting company teamwork, forging alliances with competitors and other vendors, or networking with construction organizations.

The couple's combined company is called American Rooter and Portables. Peaches oversees the portable restroom side, and Ken handles septic pumping and line cleaning. Including daughter Ashley and son Bran-

don, they have three office workers, seven technicians and one mechanic. They operate out of three buildings on an old warehouse lot.

Septic equipment includes 2001 Sterling and 2005 International vacuum trucks built out by Imperial Industries with 2,500-gallon steel tanks and Jurop/Chandler pumps, a New Holland midsize backhoe and VARCo line cleaning equipment. The company stays in its county for septic work; but for portable restroom projects it covers a 60-mile radius that includes north Georgia — a state with a whole different set of legal requirements, including having to take an eight-hour pumping certification exam.

EASIER THE SECOND TIME

Searles actually sold the portable restroom business in 2006 so she could take care of her ailing mother and help her daughter get through high school. Her mother made a full recovery, but Searles waited out the noncompete and then picked up right where she left off.

The company now has 1,300 standard units, 12 ADA-compliant and wheelchair-accessible units, five flushable units outfitted with hand-washing equipment and lights, two family units with changing tables, 30 double-sided hand-wash stations, and twenty 250- and 400-gallon



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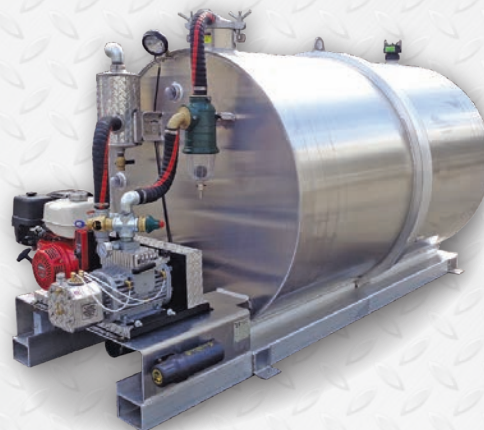
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- Flojet washdown pump + hose reel

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- 2019 RAM 5500 4x2 Gas
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- 680 waste x 300 fresh
- NVE 304 vacuum pump
- Flojet washdown pump + hose reel

• **\$75,100**



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Left: The American Rooter and Portables family is shown in the company yard.

Below: Peaches and Ken Searles, owners of American Rooter and Portables in Cleveland, Tennessee.

holding tanks. Most are from Satellite | PolyPortables. Graffiti remover, deodorant tabs and air fresheners are from Walex Products. Waste is taken to the local treatment plant.

About 125 units are red, white and blue, and two flushable units that are used exclusively for weddings are white. Otherwise Searles likes red for her units. "It's a marketing thing," she says. "If you drive through Cleveland or Chattanooga or north Georgia, you will see it because it just pops out at you. You can spot it a mile off." People recognize the units as hers just by the color.

The service fleet includes a 2011 Ram 3500 with an Imperial Industries 300-gallon waste and 150-gallon freshwater slide-in aluminum tank, a 2014 Ram 5500 with a 600-gallon waste and 300-gallon freshwater aluminum tank from TankTec, two 2015

Ram 4500s with 520-gallon waste and 260-gallon freshwater aluminum tanks from Imperial Industries, and two Ram 5500s (2016 and 2018) built out by Satellite Vacuum Trucks with 700-gallon waste and 300-gallon freshwater steel tanks, all with Masport pumps. The company has two Lane's Vacuum Tank hauling trailers (a 10 and 12-unit) and a three-unit trailer (nicknamed "Little Red"). Single deliveries are done with the Ram 2500.

About 90% of the company's work is for construction, both residential and commercial. It also services the occasional emergency. "The biggest was when Chattanooga had its main break," Searles says.

"We're going to lose our industry if we don't get our youth involved. ... Blue-collar work has been set aside — construction, plumbing, electrical, septic tank pumping and portable restrooms — all those things we do to make the world go round."

PEACHES SEARLES

"It was crazy. I ran out of toilets. I got them down there quick and gave them phone numbers for other vendors."

Searles says the special event business grows every year. They service one of the county's largest events, the MainStreet Cleveland Halloween Block Party, which attracts about 20,000 people and provides funds for downtown improvements.



Other colorful events include the Sweet Tea & Sunshine Family Festival, Prater's Mill Country Fair, Apple Festival and one of Searles' personal favorites: a local bacon festival called BaCON. They also provide units for musical events at Chattanooga's outdoor Miller Park and art events at Sculpture Park, and they do a number of American Cancer Society walks for cancer and Habitat for Humanity fundraisers at a deep discount.

SUPPORT MATTERS

The company has a full-time mechanic who stays busy with oil changes, brakes and tires, Searles says. "And there's always a light going out in a truck or trailer. Nowadays it's not just pop it out and pop one in: You've got to go inside them." The company bought tire-changing equipment and keeps tires in stock, which Searles says saves them money in the long run. And, most important, they don't have to wait for service.

The company uses Verizon Connect Reveal (formerly called Fleetmatics) fleet management software.

"It lets me know where my trucks are at all times," Searles says. "If someone goes over the speed limit, I get an email. Or if a truck is sitting for

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Above: Assistant manager Matt Mason loads Satellite | PolyPortables restrooms onto a flatbed delivery trailer from Lane's Vacuum Tank.

more than an hour, it sends me an email. Then I can call the driver and say, 'Please tell me you're not stuck.'" When technicians can't get access to a unit for some reason, they take a photo and send it to her. She then calls the customer and forwards the photo to show the problem. "I'm a firm believer in being proactive and not reactive; it just makes for better customer service," she says.

Flypaper, a digital marketing company in Chattanooga, handles the company's marketing and web presence.

"I don't have time for any of that," Searles says. "But in today's society, you need to have those things. You can't go old school any longer. They're a little expensive, but they're worth it."

BONDING OVER MARGARITAS

Searles is attached to her staff. Several are related to each other in one way or another, but to her, they're all family. Hiring can be difficult, she says. One problem is the opioid epidemic. Another is new hires may suddenly realize they don't really want to do this kind of work. "But it does get into your blood," Searles says. "And once it does, you're there to stay."

Searles feels it's important for employees to spend some downtime together.

"I make them socialize with each other," she laughs. "Usually once a month, I'll take them all out to dinner along with their wives. We'll sit there with our margaritas or whatever and chitchat. They'll go on about their week or some crazy customer they're dealing with. It lets them know they're not sitting in that boat alone. It gets their frustration out just knowing they're not the only one dealing with something."

The end-of-year office party is held at Thanksgiving time. Everyone

"I'm a firm believer in being proactive and not reactive; it just makes for better customer service."

PEACHES SEARLES

brings their family and a dish to share. Searles passes out Christmas bonuses at that time so employees have extra money for Black Friday sales.

STAYING CONNECTED

Searles sees her main job as networking. She goes to many events and spends a lot of time talking, meeting and socializing. She has developed great relationships with other PROs in the area, doesn't worry about the occasional company who comes in with cutthroat pricing and says there's plenty of work for everyone. She also knows a lot of people in related industries; so when they're asked to provide a service they don't offer, she knows who to call — roll-offs, office trailers, restroom trailers.

"And we've got friends who are plumbers who have cameras, people who put in field lines and people who install septic tanks. We recommend a lot of people. It's kind of like being the concierge of the construction industry."



Technician Cory Rutledge applies a sticker to a restroom from Satellite | PolyPortables in the company yard.



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LEARNING A TRADE

Peaches Searles is a huge advocate of trade schools.

"I paid thousands for my kid's college. She's smart as a whip, but she's working for me. I think our kids need to be taught that you don't have to go to this college and get this degree. You can learn a trade. Not everybody is built for college. And we need those people — those welders, plumbers, electricians and septic tank pumpers."

Searles has been instrumental in making a number of positive changes for associates in the homebuilders associations she belongs to. For example, she implemented a 501(c)(3) nonprofit status for the associates committee in the state of Tennessee. The committee's fundraising efforts go to provide scholarships for young adults looking to get into the building industry, not just as contractors, but also related work such as interior design or accounting.

Before setting up the nonprofit status, scholarships amounted to \$1,000 for three recipients, which Searles says would barely cover first-semester books. The nonprofit status allows them to do huge fundraisers to provide bigger scholarships and more of them.

Searles is concerned about the future of the building trades and wants to do all she can to protect and promote it.

"We're going to lose our industry if we don't get our youth involved," she says. "And it's not just our industry, it's a lot of them. Blue-collar work has been set aside — construction, plumbing, electrical, septic tank pumping and portable restrooms — all those things we do to make the world go round."



Above: Peaches and Ashley Searles work in the American Rooter and Portables office.

Below: Technician Danny Kamppi provides maintenance for one of the company's trucks.

Searles also spends a lot of time meeting with customers — "And I don't mean just Facebook. I actually go out face-to-face. Anytime I get a new contractor, I try to go out and meet them myself to let them know that, yes, I am a human being." The labels on all their units say, "Call Peaches."

Searles is involved in supporting the whole building industry. She sits on the board of the Ocoee Region Builders Association. She is also on the board and the executive committee and is currently president of the associates committee of the Homebuilders Association of Greater Chattanooga. And she is a state director for the Home Builders Association of Tennessee, where twice she has been voted Associate of the Year.

"I do a lot of fighting for the building industry to make sure we can continue to progress," she says. "I spend a lot of time with my state representatives about laws that could hinder or be expensive to the industry. If my builders aren't working, I'm not working."

Searles says networking is the thing she enjoys most about her business. She loves meeting the people who she says are just everyday folks. She has no plans to retire but is trying to back off a bit and let others run the show. "It's been a long, bumpy, joyous ride," she says. "And I'm sure there's still more to come." ■



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Karleen Kos is executive
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Join the Effort to Develop New Standards for Portable Sanitation

By Karleen Kos

"Here's something to consider. Have you ever seen a headline that says, 'Psychic Wins the Lottery'?" — Jay Leno

Every five years, the Portable Sanitation Association International is responsible for updating three American National Standards that pertain to our industry. The documents cover:

- Sanitation in places of employment
- Nonsewered waste disposal systems
- Sanitation in fields and temporary labor camps

In reality, it takes input from many audiences to get the standards right. The PSAI's role is to coordinate the process of gaining input and turning it into draft language. But our job doesn't end there. We cannot just declare that our preferred words and guidelines must be accepted by everyone. So, the PSAI also coordinates a process of voting and appeals to help ensure everyone with a direct and material interest is heard.

Why does this matter to you? How does it make you money?

Well, these standards provide support when you encourage customers to get the optimal number of restroom units, hand-wash sinks and service for their sites. The standards inform changes to federal and state rules, and they become the go-to resource when circumstances change. Like this year, for example.

Since spring 2020, the portable sanitation industry has been seen in a different light. We are essential. We are more valued, and in general, we are being listened to more often. Who saw that coming as a backhanded blessing in the midst of a dreadful pandemic?

Finally, people are seeing the value in hand-washing. Finally, they are starting to "get" that a portable restroom can be a decent, respected alternative to a sewer toilet if the cabin is tended more frequently. (Why anyone ever thought that hand-washing wasn't important or that a portable unit needed to be minded less often than restrooms with plumbing is still a mystery to me, but I digress.)

In June, the PSAI issued guidelines for portable sanitation on job sites during the time of COVID-19. Those recommendations call for more hand-wash stations, more pumping and more wipe downs than exist in any current standard or regulation. Now, the big question is: How should these temporary guidelines affect the more enduring standards I mentioned above? Should the established standards language remain once COVID-19 passes? Or should standards reflect the lessons this pandemic has taught us about hand-washing, pumping, wipe downs and more?

You undoubtedly have ideas about this. So please get involved with updating the standards. You can:

- **APPLY TO BE A PART OF THE CONSENSUS BODY.** This group is made up of people and entities directly and materially affected by the standards. Through your involvement, you will help craft the language for the updated standards and vote on whether to accept the proposed language.

- **SUGGEST OTHERS WHO ARE DIRECTLY AND MATERIALLY AFFECTED SO WE CAN INVITE THEM TO ENGAGE.** People from outside the industry who represent end users from the public, government, labor and industry are always needed. Who do you know?

- **READ THE PROPOSED STANDARDS AND PROVIDE FEEDBACK.** The PSAI expects to have these drafts ready by the end of the year or early 2021. Contact me to get a copy for review and comment.

A lot has changed in the world since we updated the standards five years ago. Much of the impact on portable sanitation was invisible to psychics, even with a crystal ball. Our standards' language must reflect the new world we live in and the new world for portable sanitation that we are trying to create. Get involved! Psychic talent is not required, just an interest in creating better work sites, better weekends and a better world. ■



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Where's the Restroom?



Rolling Construction Units Serve Hardworking Crews

THERE'S NO DOUBT PARKING IS AT A PREMIUM IN THIS MAJOR CITY. SO IT'S HANDY TO BE ABLE TO MOVE YOUR PORTABLE RESTROOM WHEN NECESSARY.

Jim Kneiszel

Construction is a constant in this large, thriving city, which probably accounts for this trailer-mounted Satellite I PolyPortables Tufway restroom being towed behind a Chevy work truck. This city is one of the most expensive North American locations to live in and is known historically for natural disasters, mining and the technology revolutions that have reshaped it. So loved by its residents, popular songs have been written about its beauty and culture.

Here are a few clues to help you identify the location of this portable restroom:

1. You see a Saks Fifth Avenue sign in this photo. This is one of a number of high-end retailers that share a few blocks of a busy city center.
2. This area could use more restrooms. A large homeless population and associated public urination and defecation are a big problem in this city with a mild climate.
3. There are many ways to get around here, including the subway, autos, ferries and buses. One mode of transportation is unique to this city. Or proceed on foot, but it's strenuous.
4. Nike, the goddess of victory sits atop a tall monument in the park behind the photographer of this photo. The statue is dedicated to a military leader from the Spanish-American War. Interestingly, the park was used by northern troops during the U.S. Civil War.
5. The Chinatown neighborhood a few blocks to the north is one of the largest outside of Asia.
6. The truck pulling the restroom is heading east/northeast on a street with a one-syllable name.

To win the contest, name the city and the street intersection where this restroom is located. The winner will be recognized as a geographical whiz on the *Portable Restroom Operator* Facebook page. Send your responses to editor@promonthly.com. ■

SEND YOUR MYSTERY PHOTOS! Do you have an interesting spot where you've been dropping and servicing restrooms? Send photos to editor@promonthly.com. We will credit you for submitting to Where's the Restroom?

INDUSTRY NEWS

Sanitrax International announces partnership with 2020 ENGINEERING

Sanitrax International announced a strategic partnership with United States-based 2020 ENGINEERING, which offers design and construction expertise in sustainable "deep green" buildings, as well as site and water systems. The partnership will promote turnkey design-build and ongoing operations for off-grid water conservation and reuse related to vacuum waste conveyance.

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PUMPS AND COMPONENTS

By Craig Mandli

HOSE AND FITTING

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**



HOSE REELS

HANNAY REELS AT1100

The **Hannay Reels** portable **AT1100** reel is lightweight and on wheels, making it suitable for washdown and spray applications and for accessing hard-to-reach areas. With a detachable steel handlebar and oversized pneumatic tires, the reel is designed to stand up to tough working environments. Deployment and rewind are made easy with a flexible swivel joint and direct crank rewind. It is available with a stainless steel hub and bearings for protection against corrosion and contamination. It is designed to handle 3/8- through 5/8-inch I.D. hose and pressures up to 3,000 psi. It can operate through a wide range of temperatures, from 20 to 400 degrees F. **877-467-3357; www.hannay.com.**



REELCRAFT INDUSTRIES REELSAFE SERIES RS7000

REELSAFE Series RS7000 controlled-return hose reels from **Reelcraft Industries** play out like a traditional reel but are engineered to retract at an average walking speed. The centrifugal clutch — integral to the reel base — decelerates the hose retraction speed by up to 83% versus a Series 7000 reel. The reels can handle 1/4-, 3/8-, 1/2- and 3/4-inch hose diameters in 25-, 50- and 70-foot lengths. Options are available for low-pressure (up to 300 psi), medium-pressure (up to 3,000 psi) and high-pressure (up to 5,000 psi) applications.



The integral clutch creates a consistent retraction speed regardless of fluid or environmental temperatures, protecting personnel and equipment. It requires no field adjustment, and the through-shaft fluid path eliminates hose interference during reel rotation. It includes a seven-position hose guide arm for multiple mounting configurations. **800-444-3134; www.reelcraft.com.**

VACUUM PUMPS

ELMIRA MACHINE INDUSTRIES / WALLENSTEIN VACUUM MODEL 151

The **Model 151** from **Elmira Machine Industries / Wallenstein Vacuum** can be used with portable sanitation tanks and slide-in units and at 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. It comes with hydraulic or gearbox drive options; the gearbox drive provides five distance options for alignment to the PTO shaft (8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 inches). The mount has two emergency brake cable slots 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.**



MASPORT HXL4V AND HXL5V

HXL4V and HXL5V plug-and-play vacuum systems from **Masport** have a compact, low-profile design that incorporates an integrated scrubber, oil separator and inlet filter. The systems are fully integrated so they can slot into place, removing installation hassles and minimizing installation labor costs. They are available with plastic, steel or combination oil/flushing reservoir; and self-aligning gearbox and hydraulic drive options are also available. An optional extended self-aligning gearbox is available for direct alignment to the PTO on all truck models. **800-228-4510; www.masportpump.com.**





NATIONAL VACUUM EQUIPMENT B250 MAX PAK

National Vacuum Equipment's B250 Max Pak is designed for the portable restroom market, using a hybrid tri-lobe blower with an integral four-way motor for vacuum/pressure use and inlet filter to provide protection. It is oil-free, and its airflow is 270 cfm. It is capable of running continuously at

15 inches Hg. It comes ready to mount and includes an exhaust silencer. The 1 to 1.5 ratio gearbox makes it easy to provide the optimum revolutions per minute to the blower while keeping truck revolutions per minute in check. While designed to fit on a Ford F-550 and Dodge 5500, it can mount on any truck with ample ground clearance. It is also available in hydraulic drive to accommodate four-wheel-drive trucks. **800-253-5500; www.natvac.com.**

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 POWERPAKS

Conde PowerPaks preassembled gasoline- or diesel-powered vacuum pump units from Westmoor are easy to install. A heavy-duty steel base with aluminum diamond plate trim and belt guard ensure the unit is aesthetically pleasing. Rigid assembly minimizes vibration and maximizes

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 can be easily transferred to another tank system when needed. **800-367-0972; www.westmoorltd.com.**

WASHDOWN PUMP



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.**



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PRODUCT NEWS



PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

Lang Specialty Trailers promotes the ADA Series of trailers

By Craig Mandli

Setting up and cleaning portable restrooms trailers can be a challenging task, especially when under a time crunch for a special event. The more parts a trailer has, the higher the chance of leaving a part behind or losing an unsecured part when in transit. Designers at Lang Specialty Trailers heard this concern from PROs and designed the ADA Series to meet the challenge.

The ADA Series was created to meet the mandates of the Americans with Disabilities Act and provide easy access for individuals in a wheelchair or for older adults. It is suitable for a sanitation or rental company that frequently moves the trailer to different locations, as it includes a self-contained, easy-to-deploy ramp that can be set up quickly by a single technician.

"The ramp can be folded and stowed without the use of any tools and without any loose parts left over," says Steve Ghrist, CEO of Lang Specialty Trailers. "It makes setup and teardown extremely fast, and you don't lose any parts going from event to event."

The ADA Series of trailers have frames designed to be hydraulically lowered via remote during install to shorten the length of ramp needed to access the ADA trailer cabin. The ADA units include all of the same features as the company's PRO Series restroom trailers. They include seamless, gel-coated exterior and interior walls, roof and subfloor for easy cleaning and water resistance; a 1/2-inch-thick polypropylene waste tank; large, framed mirrors over the vanities; a 13,500 Btu air conditioner with heat strip; metered faucets; waterless urinals; and exterior and interior LED lighting. According to Ghrist, the waste tanks are located under the toilets, meaning they function by gravity rather than mechanical maceration.

"Not having a macerating pump means less maintenance and more capacity in the long run," he says. "The ability to remove that and still make an effective trailer was a three-year journey, but it was something our customers repeatedly asked for."

724-972-6590; www.langrestroomtrailers.com. ■

Continental air and water industrial hoses

Continental partnered with COXREELS to develop a custom-built hose reel assembly called the P Series, to be used with Continental's premium rubber and hybrid air and water hose. The hose and reel package comes with a hybrid air and water hose, as well as a professional-grade rubber air hose. The reel will accommodate a 3/8-inch-by-50-foot hybrid and rubber hose with 300 psi. There is also a reel for a 1/4-inch, 300 psi rubber hose. The P Series reel is made with a 1/4-inch steel base and has solid, one-piece construction with heavy-grade steel and no welds. **800-235-4632; www.contitech.us.**



Satellite | PolyPortables Tag 4 hand-wash station

The Tag 4 hand-wash station from Satellite | PolyPortables balances the fundamental strengths of the original TagAlong sink with improved design and functionality. It holds multiple sizes of soap and towel dispensers for more flexibility while still fitting inside most standard-size portable restrooms. A new locking mechanism, easier suction port and freshwater tank access, and larger handgrips on all four sides make for added convenience. A foot pump can be easily accessed and maintained, and a redesigned top flips open to allow for better access to the freshwater tank. The Tag 4 comes standard with two towel and soap dispensers, but it can be ordered without either. **800-883-1123; www.satelliteindustries.com.**

Madison Chemical MADISAN 75 surface sanitizer

Madison Chemical's MADISAN 75 is a four-chain quaternary surface sanitizer, disinfectant, mildewstat and virucide for hard, nonporous and inanimate surfaces in various commercial, industrial and institutional settings. It kills the human coronavirus, HIV-1, hepatitis B virus, hepatitis C virus and a variety of animal viruses specified on the Environmental Protection Agency-registered label. It disinfects hard, nonporous surfaces at 3.5 to 13.5 ounces per 4.5 gallons of water. It can be applied using a sponge, brush, cloth or mop or by immersion or other applications as specified by the U.S. EPA. Treated surfaces must remain wet for 10 minutes after application. **812-273-6000; www.madchem.com. ■**





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