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# Cleaner



## Learning While Doing

Utility Services Group president combines education with real-world experience  
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Good debt, bad debt

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**TECH PERSPECTIVE**  
Developments in combination trucks

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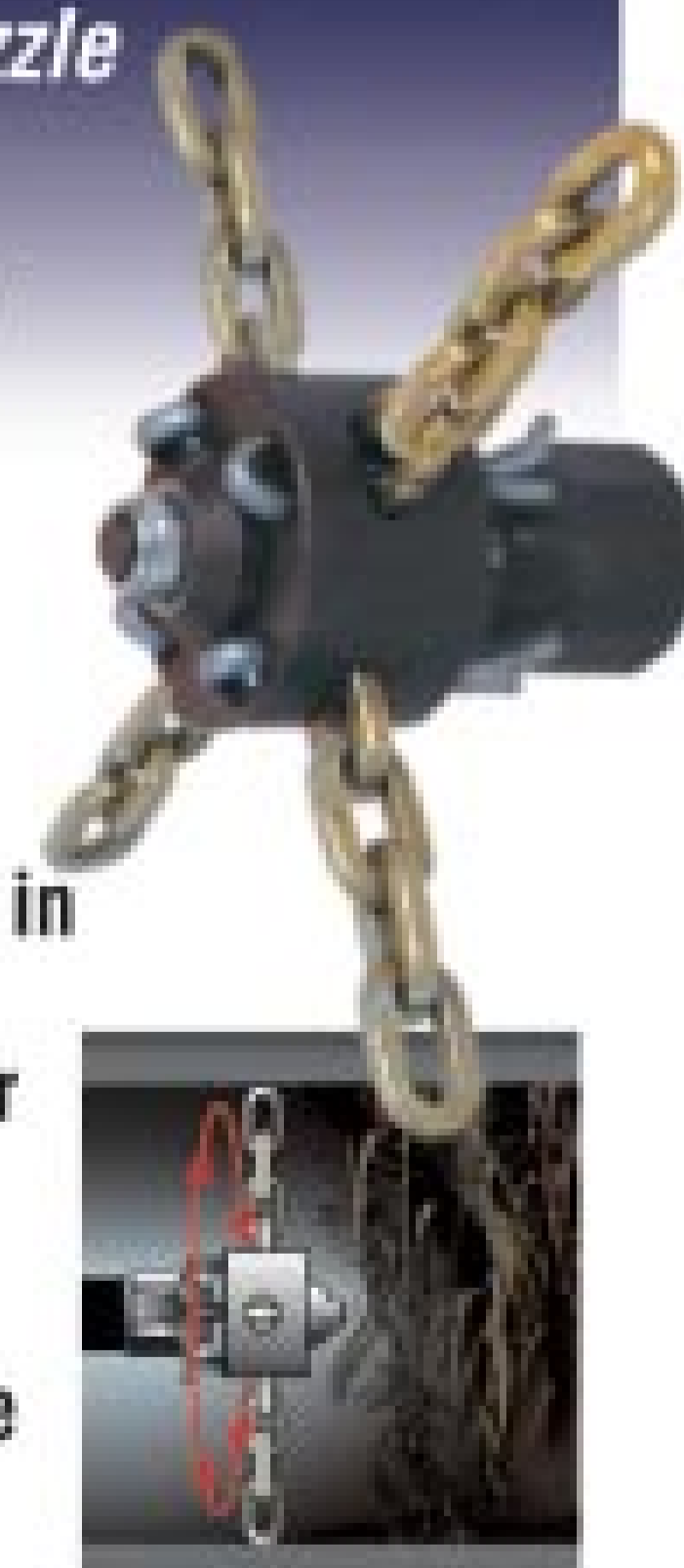
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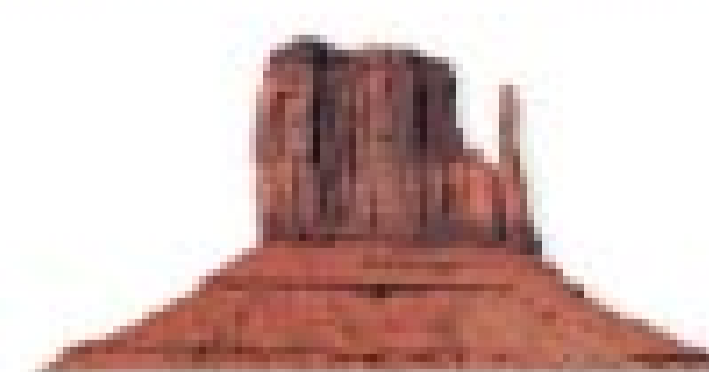
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On the cover: Robert Kalbach, III, president of Utility Services Group in Camp Hill, Pa., earned a degree in civil and environmental engineering while helping to build his company. He combines his education with on-the-job experience in leading a company that serves commercial, industrial and municipal clients. Here, employee Vince McLaren operates a combination truck from GapVax Inc. (Photography by Carl Socolow)

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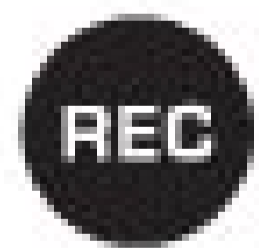
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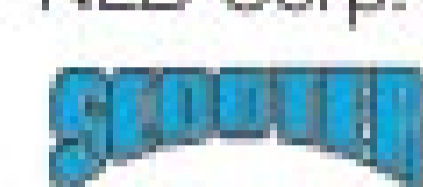
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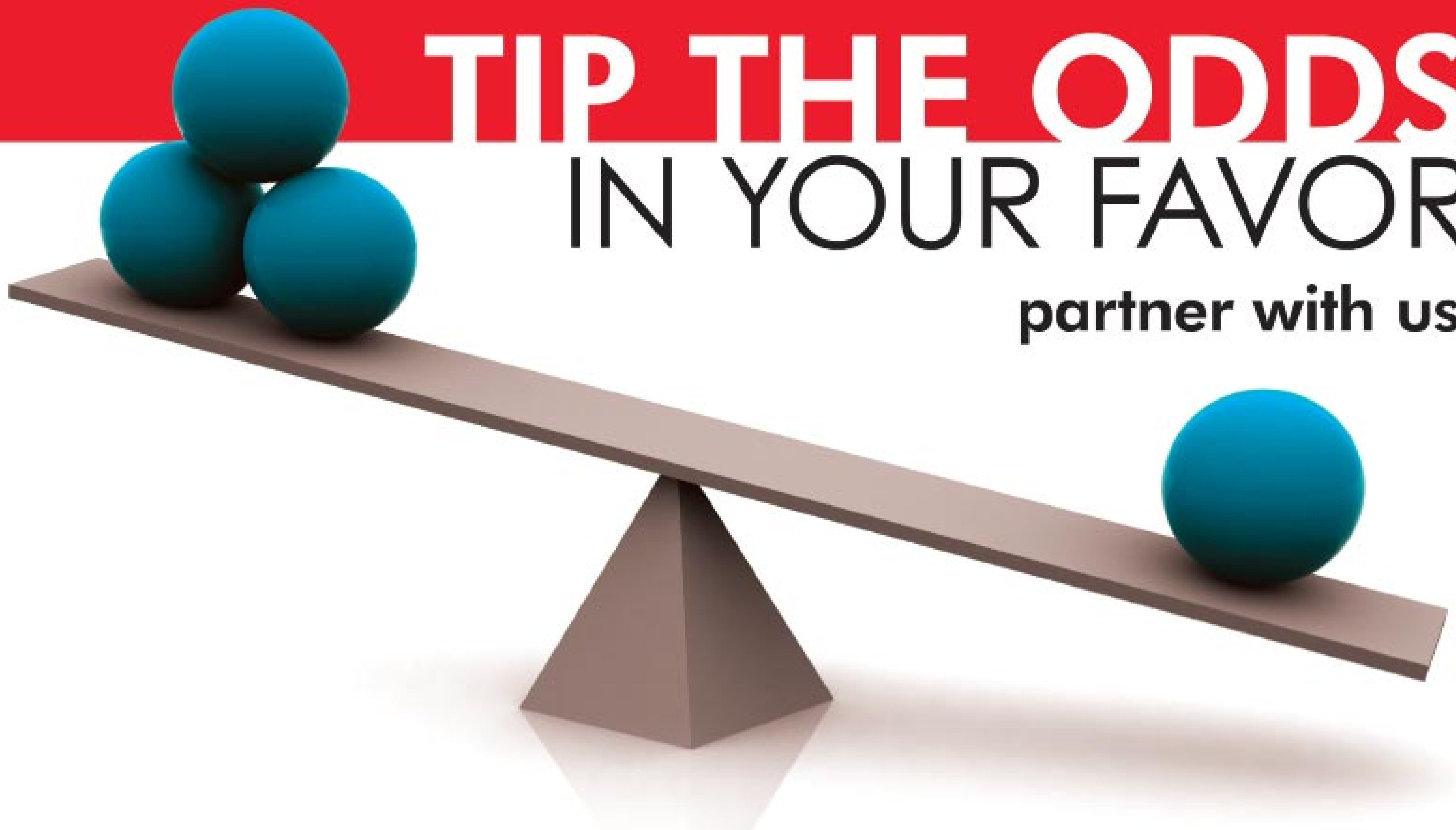
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## How's Your Care?

Health care reform is now the law, but the debate is far from over. How does the health care system affect you? What change would you like to see?



Ted J. Rulseh

**A**s I write this in early April (we work on long lead times here), I am hoping that by the time you read this the rhetoric over health care reform will have cooled.

I'm not interested in revisiting the politics. I'll make no claim to know just how the new law will affect health care in the end. I do suspect that the law will require quite a bit of fine-tuning before we arrive at health care reform that truly serves the country well.

What does interest me is how the health care system – as it exists today – affects readers of this maga-

zine. At times that employer has been me. Health care for our family has never been a crushing expense, even when we've had to buy insurance on our own.

There were a few glitches, such as when, after my wife left her teaching job, we were turned down for individual coverage because of some pretty minor medical issues, and we had to continue her insurance through the school district under the COBRA law, at a rather lofty price.

The trouble began when the COBRA period expired and we had to buy insurance for ourselves and

insurance pool. The coverage was good, but whereas we could have added a young person with no bad health history to our family policy for just a small amount per month, we had to cover our son separately through the pool at a substantial price – one that kept rising rapidly.

Because we had a good income, we could well afford it, but we wondered what would happen to a family in a less fortunate position.

### The difference in insurance

And that was where we saw the health care system as having failed. When we buy car insurance, we

have coverage regardless of pre-existing medical conditions. The new law provides for that, although it remains to be seen how well the specifics will work out.

### Give and take

So for us, the health care status quo has been both good and bad. What is your experience? Conventional wisdom says that the system is hardest on small business owners and their families. Please share your stories about the successes and shortcomings of the current health care structure from your personal perspective.

**What is your experience with the health care system? Conventional wisdom says it's the hardest on small business owners and their families. Please share your stories about the successes and shortcomings of the current health care structure from your personal perspective.**

zine. I welcome you to share your stories of where the system has failed you, or where it has served you well. In that spirit, here is my story.

### Survivor son

My wife and I have always had health insurance through an

our 18-year-old son, who is a cancer survivor. I found a company that would overlook the issues my wife and I had, but none that would pick up my son.

Because Wisconsin, where we live, is an enlightened state, we were able to enroll him in a high-risk

expect to pay more if we have a bad driving record. That's our own fault. It's within our control; we can learn to drive better and in a few years qualify for lower rates.

But where health insurance is concerned, our son did nothing to cause his cancer. At the time we asked the doctor why Todd got sick. He said it basically boiled down to "bad luck." So under our system, a person who has the "bad luck" to fall seriously ill gets cut off from health insurance – cannot buy it at any price – on the private market. And high-risk pools, possibly such a person's only recourse, can be very costly. And what if you live in a state with no such program or one that's severely limited?

A great many people are in the same position as our son. So to me, personally, the most important fix to health care is to enable everyone to

I'm not interested in whether Republicans have been "obstructionists" or whether the Democrats have engineered a "government takeover of health care." I'm interested in how the system affects real live people.

We'll report your comments in a future edition of *Cleaner*. Because while a health care reform law has been adopted, no one thinks it's perfect. The debate is likely to continue for years, and that can be a good thing, especially if the discussion can stay focused on people and not on party preferences.

Send your thoughts to editor @cleaner.com. ■

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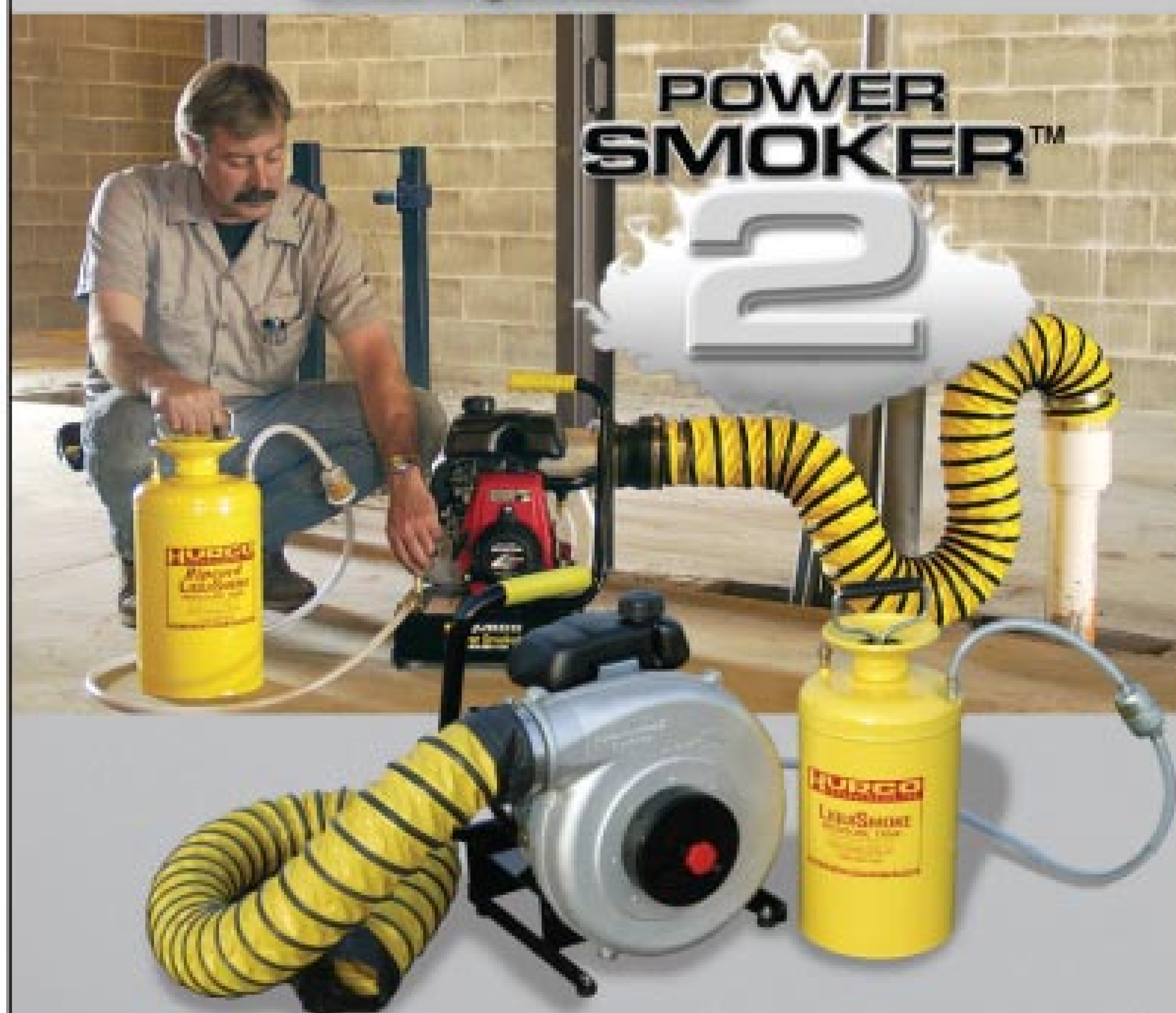
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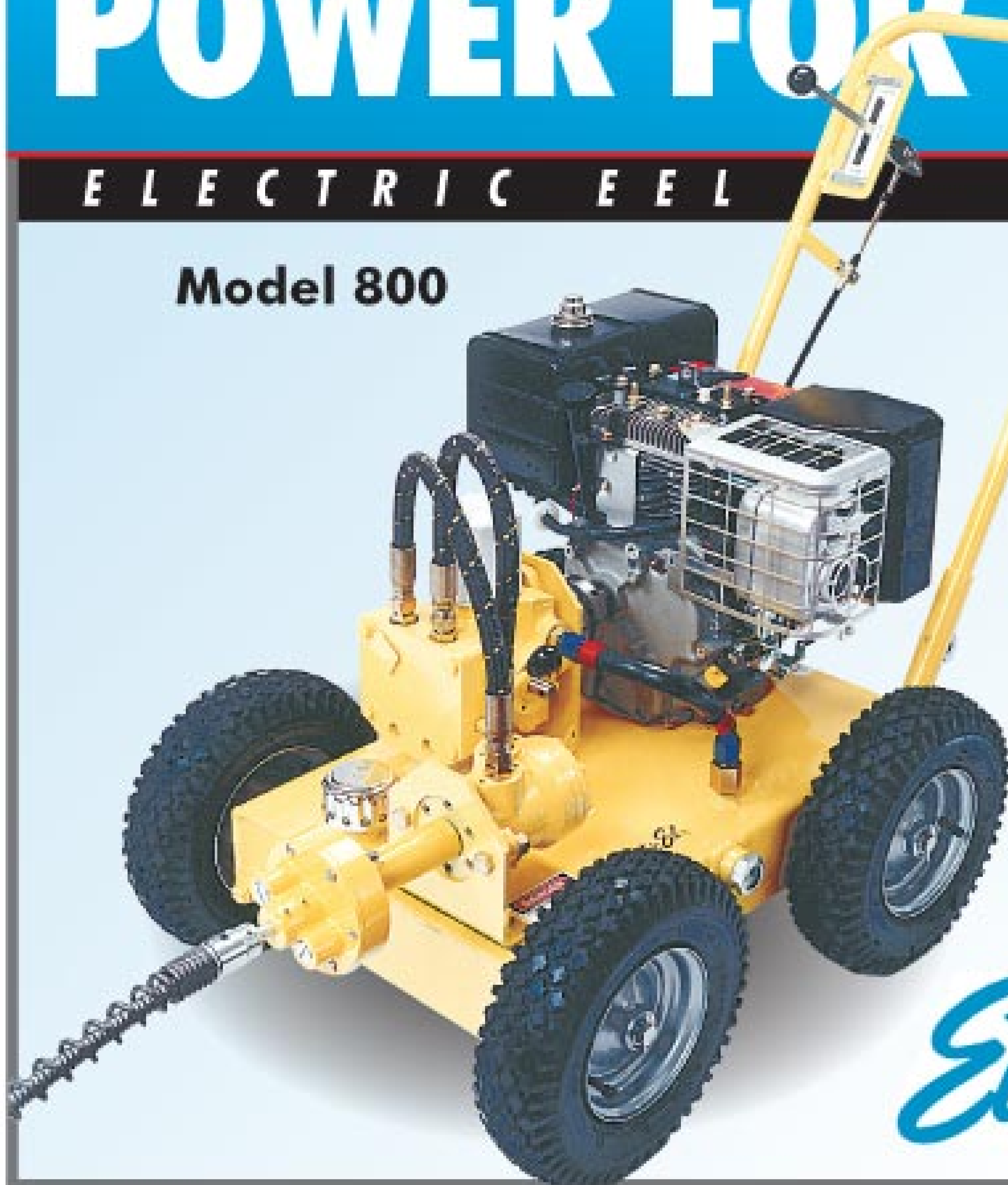
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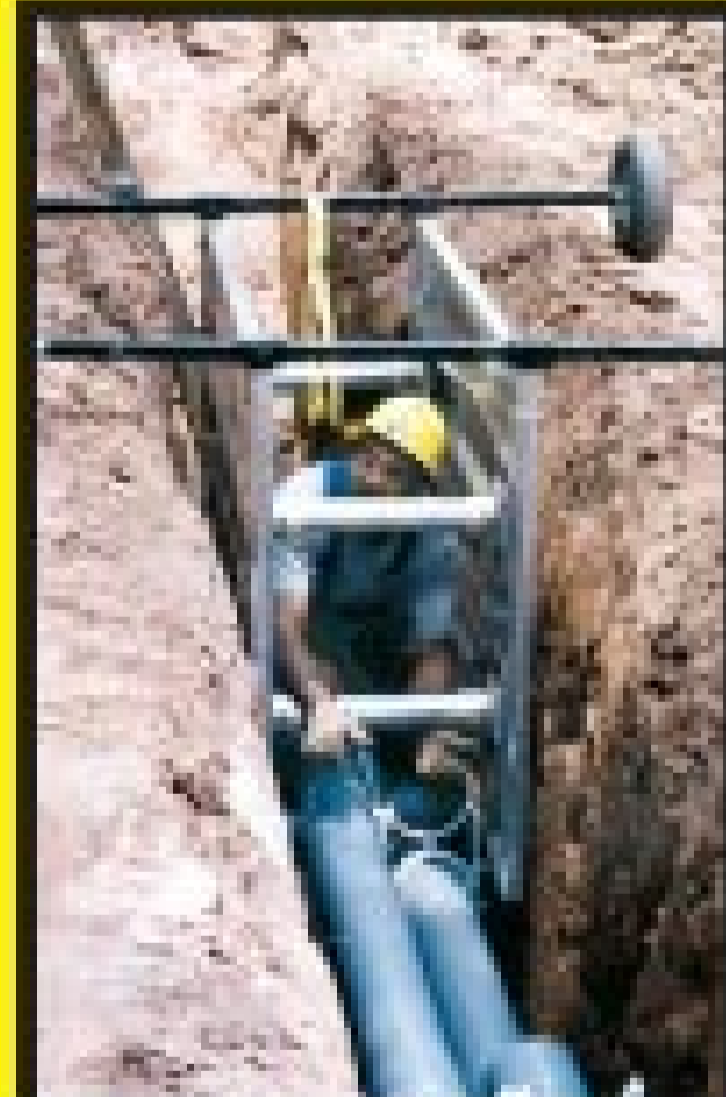
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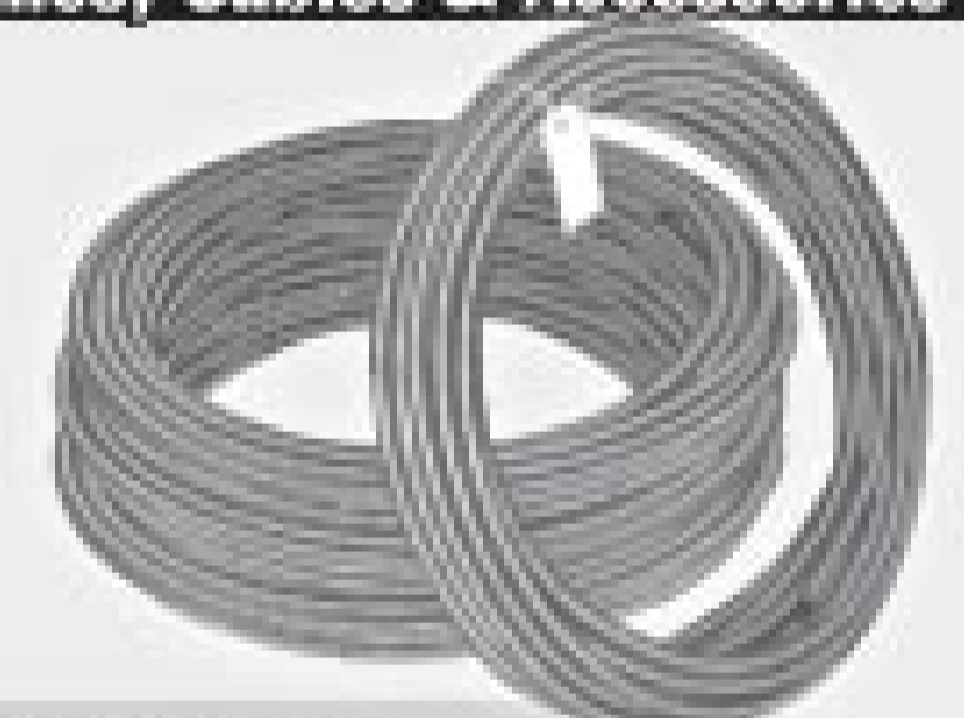
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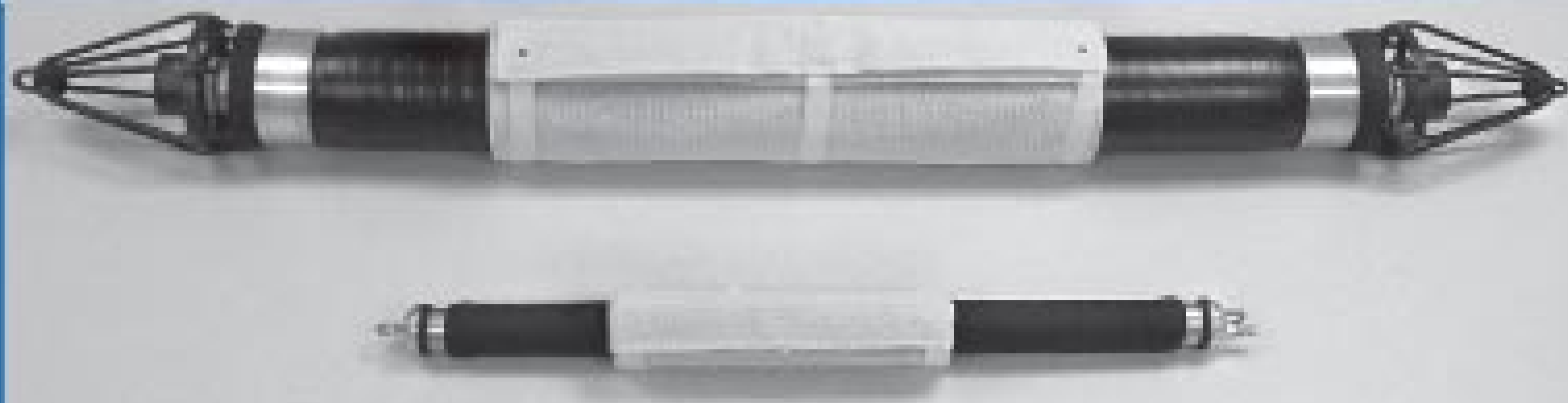
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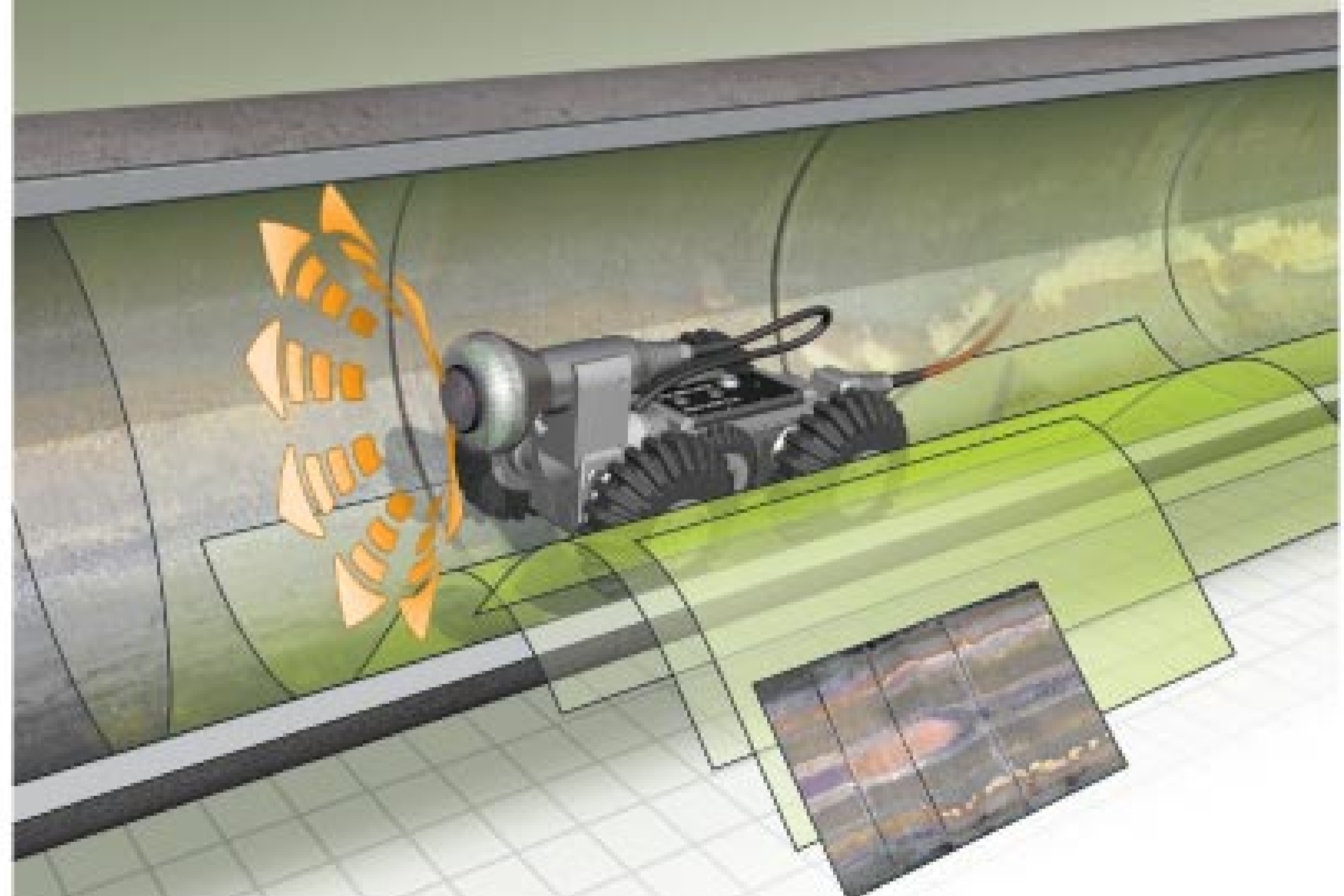
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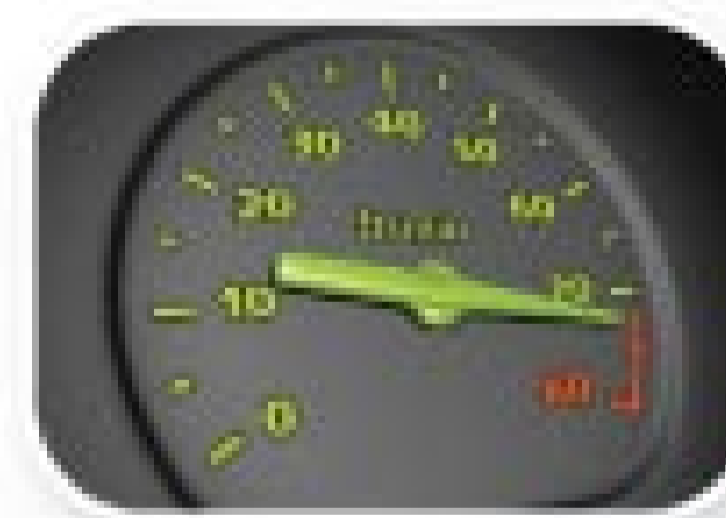


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# Eyes in the Back

Obstacle detection technology helps avoid costly collisions with other vehicles and fixed objects

By Kirk Knobel

**A**s the economy improves, more cleaning contractors will be out on the job, operating large trucks and tanks on and off roadways. The increase in workers means potential for more workplace accidents.

## Safety FIRST

Such accidents can be costly – the typical lifetime cost of an accident is \$3,000 per vehicle or more. Not surprisingly, cleaning contractors are seeking ways to save this money and ensure the safety of their drivers and those around them.

**Systems with both visual and audible alerts are preferable because roads and workplaces can be loud and distracting environments where workers become immune to noise. Here, visual alerts are valuable.**

Tools for that purpose include vehicle obstacle detection systems that help drivers avoid collisions. These systems include vehicle-mounted sensors that detect the presence of vehicles or fixed objects behind, alongside and overhead, where drivers may not see them.

Dash-mounted digital displays visually and audibly alert drivers when an obstacle is within a preset distance. Systems can be programmed to emit audible “Geiger-counter-like” tones that begin at 10 feet away and change in intensity as the vehicle closes in on the hazard. Up to seven sensors can be placed on the vehicle – wherever the driver needs an “extra set of eyes.”

Research demonstrates that obstacle detection systems can save

on vehicle and property damage costs, reducing insurance expenses and enhancing productivity. The systems can provide a 200 to 500 percent return on investment, equating to a one- to two-year payback for most users.

Numerous types of collisions can be prevented using obstacle detection technology, including those that occur during backing, lane changing, maneuvering in tight spaces or heavy traffic, and operating a vehicle at night or in poor weather conditions.

A fully capable system works when users are driving fast or slow, backward or forward. The systems should operate in both active and passive modes. Advanced obstacle detection systems constantly detect objects but emit warnings only

when the operator takes action, such as by activating a turn signal or shifting into reverse. Some sophisticated systems can be programmed to sound alerts only in specific situations.

While rear-mounted cameras are useful, they may not be enough to alert operators working in hectic conditions. A complete system includes distance-to-hazard alerts that provide a side, rear and overhead obstacle detection network.

Systems with both visual and audible alerts are preferable because roads and workplaces can be loud and distracting environments where workers become immune to noise. Here, visual alerts are valuable.

Some obstacle detection systems are easily retrofitted as plug-



The Eagle Eye obstacle detection system alerts drivers visually and audibly to potential surrounding hazards. The inset at the upper left shows an in-vehicle readout. The diagram shows potential placements of sensors and example scan areas. Users typically determine the optimal locations for sensors and the combinations of sensors that are best for the application.

and-play items that a technician with little training can install in two hours or less. Users can install the equipment on their own or have the manufacturer do so.

The systems require no regular maintenance and are built to withstand dirt, mud, chemicals and water, and to resist corrosion and impact damage. They operate in rain, fog, snow and other difficult weather. High-end systems have heated sensors that are SAE certified and rigorously tested to perform in extreme conditions.

In fact, obstacle detection systems work in bad weather when a camera does not. With a camera, a driver can become addicted to looking at it during lane changes (poten-

tially in poor weather), see no foreign object, and then make a lane change that could cause an accident.

Companies in a variety of industries find that the cost of obstacle detection systems is easily outweighed by savings from prevention of accidents and especially by the potential to protect employees from serious injury. This makes deployment of obstacle detection a sound investment. ■

Kirk Knobel is sales and customer service manager for Transportation Safety Technologies (TST), manufacturer of the Eagle Eye obstacle detection system and other electronics for transportation and other industries, based in Indianapolis, Ind. He can be reached at 800/428-4449.





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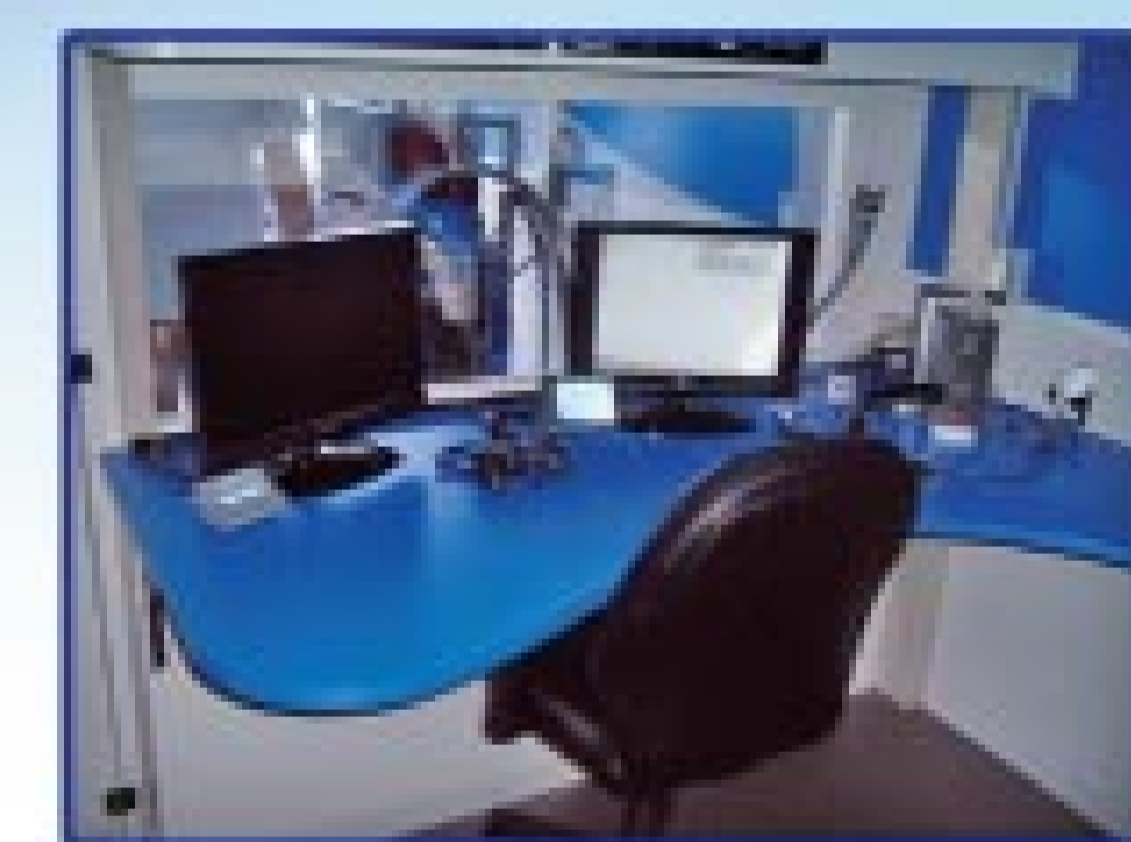
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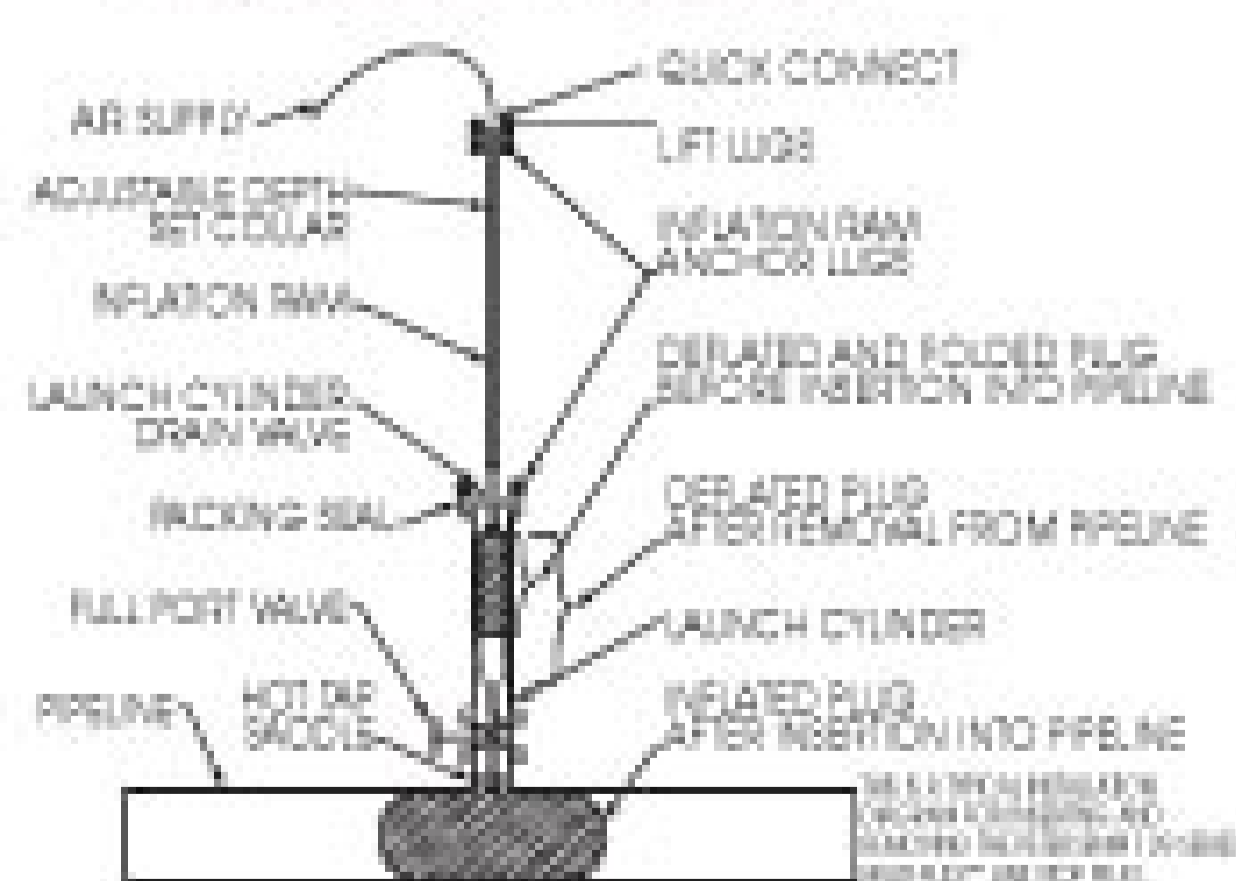


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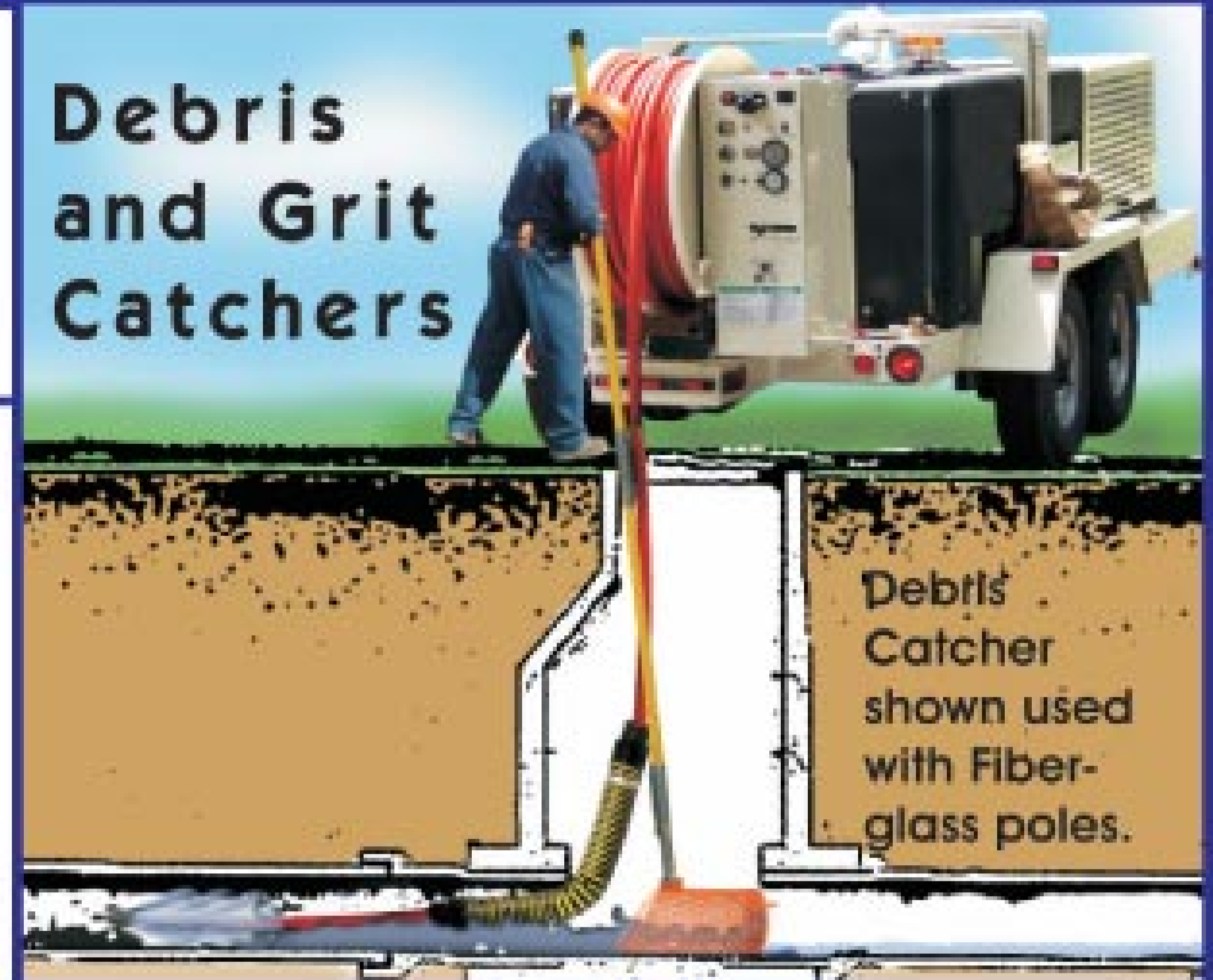
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Debris Catcher shown used with Fiberglass poles.



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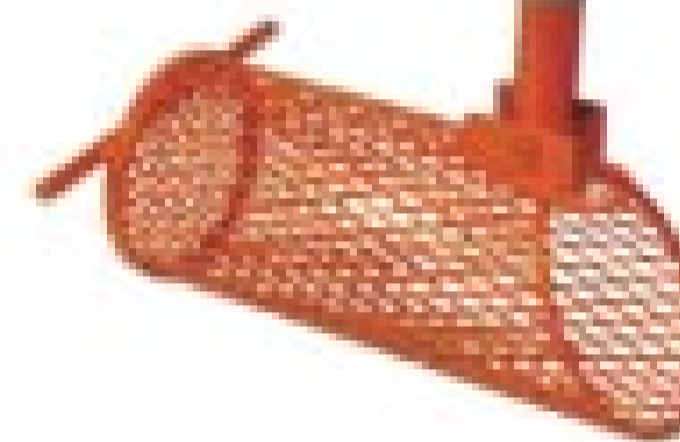


### Grit Catchers

Stops finer grit, black sand and smaller, loose debris.



Debris Catcher for use with Poles



Grit Catcher for use with Poles



Debris and Grit Catchers both can be used with Fiberglass Poles. Provides for positive action of positioning, raising and/or lowering these catchers in manholes.



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## Special Manhole Tools from Max-Life for Use with Fiberglass Poles.

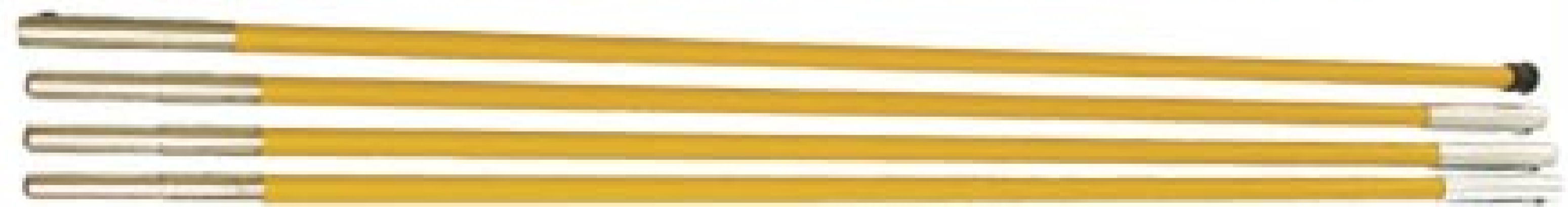


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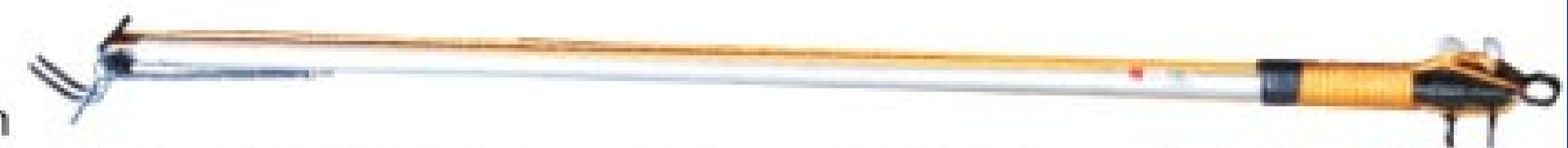
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A crew from Advanced Vacuum Services prepares for a confined-space entry on a 12-foot storm-sanitary sewer. (Photography by Tori Powers)



# Creating the Culture

**For Advanced Vacuum Services, it's all about workplace safety and employees who are engaged in pleasing customers and helping the business grow.**

By Marian Bond

Advanced Vacuum Services (AVS) has an impressive list of equipment. Still business manager Donna Raver says that what sets the company apart – and contributes most to its success – is attention to safety and the quality and dedication of employees.

The company, based in Greensburg, Ind., spends up to \$100,000 a year on safety training and in evaluating safety issues before and during jobs. To take safety to another level, AVS hired a full-time safety director, Dylan Osborne, in 2006. He oversees training in confined-space entry, waterblasting, HAZWOPER requirements and all other areas of concern.

As for finding the right employees, that's the job of operations manager Ted Moorman, who has been with AVS from the beginning. Employees are expected to be aware of and observe all safety matters, and to help in winning new customers, keeping good customer relations, and reporting any problems with equipment by filling out detailed request forms.

Today, from its base 45 miles from Cincinnati, Ohio, AVS serves customers across five Midwest states. Providing a wide range of industrial

cleaning and environmental services, the company and its 17 employees (plus 10 part-time or temporary) supports municipalities, automotive companies, construction companies, power plants, agribusiness firms and others.

## Highly committed

"Our employees are committed to safety and quality," says Raver. "They have a lot of responsibility, and they recognize it. When we hire someone, that person will be trained on every piece of equipment they will work on."

---

**"Our employees are committed to safety and quality. They have a lot of responsibility, and they recognize it. When we hire someone, that person will be trained on every piece of equipment they will work on."**

**Donna Raver**

The company has been known to use graphic demonstration to stress the importance of safety. "We are based on a farm," Raver says. "We had the carcass of a pig out here, and we took the waterblast gun to it to show what the gun would do. Our people are very aware of what can happen to them without safety precautions." As the waterblasting business has grown, AVS has





Technician Ronnie Smith cleans the company's supply truck. Advanced Vacuum emphasizes high-quality equipment that is always well maintained.

offered extensive training classes led by outside consultants.

"We're not only selling product to our customers, we are selling safety as well," Raver says. "We will walk away from jobs if we see potential problems. We see others in the business cutting corners and taking risks that we're not willing to take. It doesn't matter how much money is involved. If you take a risk and have a problem, it is not worth it."

When the company takes on a new job, the employees do their own safety analysis before starting work in order to identify hazards. Depending on the type of job, Osborne may go to the site and do an analysis of his own. Where the facility in question has a safety program, the AVS crew sometimes attends training classes there.

AVS employees receive highly competitive compensation along with benefits that include health insurance and a 401(K) plan – a package that befits their level of responsibility. "They have to be able to step up to the plate when it comes to their job," Raver says. "There might be four crews on four different jobs, and they are 100 miles from each other. They are on their own. They have to recognize and understand the job, and then accomplish what is needed.



Brain Ploeger fills out a request form for service.

"Until they are on the site, they often don't know just how the work will need to be set up. If the site is a factory, for example, will it be operating while we are there? And if so, how will we stay out of their way? They can fall into a trap if they are not fully prepared."

#### Quality equipment

Safety and employee commitment alone would not get the job done. The employees come equipped with a range of top-quality, well-maintained equipment. The inventory includes:

- High-pressure waterjetting system (10,000 psi/30 gpm) from NLB Corp.
- Jetstream of Houston waterblaster (20,000 psi/10 gpm, convertible to 10,000 psi/20 gpm).
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**WEB SITE:** [www.advancedvacuum.com](http://www.advancedvacuum.com)





Top photo: Company president Adele Corya.

Lower photo: Team members Bill Corya, Dylan Osborne, Donna Raver, Ted Moorman.



**“In all our efforts, we focus on doing things better and safer. We take care of our customers, invest in our employees, and never at any cost put employees at risk.”**

**Bill Corya**

- A 21,000-gallon frac tank from Dragon Products Ltd. and a 10,000-gallon frac tank from Environmental Tank Services.
- Five semi-tractors.

The fleet also includes a custom built vacuum truck outfitted with a 15-ton, 70-foot-swing crane for reaching the middle of large lagoons. The pump can deliver more than 1,800 gpm over up to 1.5 miles.

Maintenance on all this is monitored with Fleet Maintenance Pro software from FLEETMATE. Employees also note when repairs may be required by filling out work orders when they see problems. Employee Jon Moore has diesel mechanic training and oversees routine maintenance. Local repair shops handle any major issues.

## FROM FARM TO FACTORY

Advanced Vacuum Services (AVS) operates from a 4,000-acre farm in Greensburg, Ind. The company was formed in 1999 by the Corya family after they established Hygrade Excavating Inc. in 1995 to remove underground storage tanks in the area.

When this work required vacuum services and they could not find reliable contractors, they launched the sister company. “We thought it important to have our own equipment to have this capability,” says Bill Corya, who handles finance and accounting for both companies. “When you think about digging up a tank and you don’t know what you are going to find, you manage the process better with your own equipment. It turned out to be very lucrative work for us. If you do it yourself, you capture that profit.”

When the company added waterblasting and vacuum trucks, the customer base broadened considerably. AVS now does about 50 percent in industrial cleaning, 15 percent pressure washing and waterblasting, 5 percent emergency response, 10 percent transportation and 15 percent manure application.

The company considers carefully when buying or replacing equipment. Bill Corya, who handles finance and accounting, says the company may buy new or used, depending on a variety of factors. In addition, if the firm has been renting a piece of equipment for an extended time, that may trigger a decision to buy a unit.

### Around the clock

Because of its diverse services, AVS gets calls anytime, day or night. Corya says the company generally can have staff and equipment on site within 90 minutes. The company also performs routine maintenance for customers on an as needed basis.

Emergency work can include responding to incidents such as spills of fuel or corn on Interstate highways. On work during plant maintenance shut-downs, AVS crews may work 12 to 15 hours a day to get the project done within the customer’s time window. “We’ll be in there cleaning and working whatever hours it takes,” says Corya. “Our guys are used to staying in hotel rooms for those longer jobs.”

In June 2008, when a major flood hit the area, AVS was called to the Decatur (Ill.) County hospital to pump water as local fire department’s pumps were not big enough to keep up with the water.

On another job, they worked three days in Columbus, Ind. at a farm cooperative where a lower level full of meal and seed was flooded. After hauling the vacuumed material to a landfill, they pressure-washed the entire basement and set up fans to speed drying.

In another project, the company worked for ten months as a subcontractor in cleaning up an automotive parts manufacturing company in Indiana, one and a half hours from the AVS home base.

That work covered an entire plant comprising 22 acres under one roof. The crews cleaned machinery, floors, trenches and pits along with the wastewater treatment tanks and powerhouse. In addition, some machinery that was to be sold needed cleaning before shipment.

The job used almost every piece of equipment in the AVS inventory. At times, as many as 14 people were on the site, working in two- and three-man crews.

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Safety director Osborne says that the project called for numerous confined-space entries as workers cleaned tanks, vessels and furnaces. The pits and trenches contained bacteria, oil and other contaminant, which atomized when pressure-washed, so crews had to wear special personal protective equipment. AVS used the HAZWOPER-trained crew to clean the furnaces using HEPA-filtered vacuum units. Osborne says that at least half of AVS employees have taken a 40-hour HAZWOPER class, and each year they take an 8-hour review course.

#### Home base

AVS typically works in a 100-mile radius for jobs lasting up to one day, but will travel up to 300 miles for jobs lasting a week or more. Corya says the five-year plan includes adding more garage space on the farm that serves as headquarters.

At present, AVS has a 3,000-square-foot shop, another 2,000 square feet of storage space for vacuum trucks, a 1,000-square-foot office, and about three acres for parking. Corya would like to see a heated garage, especially on cold mornings when emergency calls may come in the middle of the night.

"In all our efforts," says Corya, "we focus on doing things better and safer. We take care of our customers, invest in our employees, and never at any cost put employees at risk." ■

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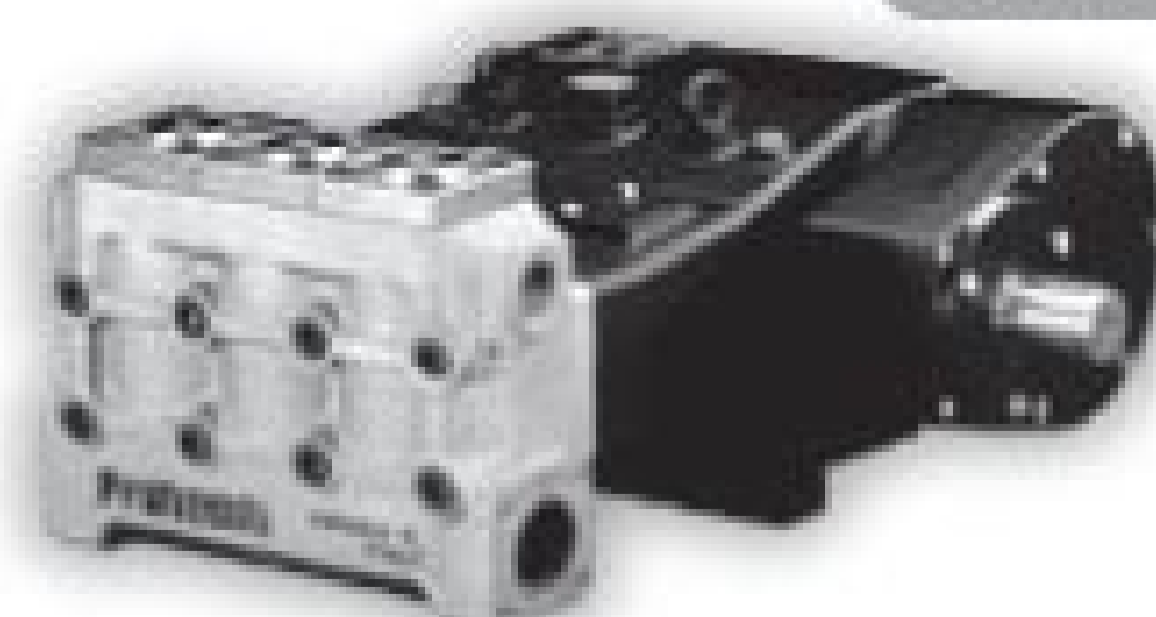
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# Learning While Doing

**Engineering school gives a young contractor valuable knowledge to combine with real-world experience while building a company**

By Doug Day

Sitting in classes at Virginia Tech, Robert Kalbach, III, had a pretty good idea of his future: president of Utility Services Group in Camp Hill, Pa. It wasn't just a dream. He and his mother, Chiara, started the company in 2005 while he was still pursuing his degree.

He graduated in May 2008 and is now a civil and environmental engineer. "We saw a niche," Kalbach says. "The things I was learning in class could be directly applied to what we were doing. It was neat having that take on things, being able to talk to professors about the scope of what we were doing."

Utility Services Group is a turnkey contractor for municipalities, government agencies, site developers, excavators and general contractors. "A lot of other companies have to get multiple subcontractors involved," Kalbach says. "We can investigate a problem, take it all the way through to a solution, and offer all of it in-house."

The approach, as he learned at school, is called value engineering. It seeks to optimize function and cost through a team approach to problem solving and project management.

"I see that as one of our big strengths," he says. "We can offer a complete scope and ensure that everything is getting done correctly with the clients getting exactly what they need."

## The three Cs

The mantra at USG is: communication, cooperation, and coordination, with customers and within the company. "Our focus on detail has helped us rapidly establish ourselves and set us apart from competitors as a specialty contractor in the underground infrastructure industry," says Kalbach.

"Our people have experience in the different aspects of utility construction," Kalbach adds. "Several have worked for other jetting, trenchless rehabilitation and I&I investigation companies. We've been fortunate to pick up experienced people."

Upper photo: Vince McLaren of Utility Services Group uses the company's easement machine to clean out a culvert. Lower photo, he inserts the hose for line cleaning. (Photography by Carl Socolow)





Utility Services Group works extensively with industrial clients. Here, Ray Zwald uses a hydroexcavator at an industrial plant site.



## P R O F I L E

### UTILITY SERVICES GROUP, CAMP HILL, PA.

OWNER:	Chiara Kalbach, majority owner; Robb Kalbach, III, president	
YEARS IN BUSINESS:	5	
SPECIALTIES:	Pipe cleaning, inspection, repair, testing, rehabilitation, soft-dig services	
CLIENTS:	Municipal, contractor, commercial, industrial	
EMPLOYEES:	11	
WEB SITE:	<a href="http://www.USGinc.net">www.USGinc.net</a>	
EQUIPMENT FLEET:	GapVax Inc. Jet/Vac Trucks, Aries Industries Inc. CCTV Trucks, Yanmar Rubber-Tracked Easement machine, The Strong Company Inc. Spray-mate Seal Machine, Cobra Technologies CCTV/Grout Truck	

Training extends well beyond normal manufacturer-provided sessions. "We have internal meetings where we do a lessons-learned analysis and talk about ways to improve our processes," Kalbach says. "We talk about problems and quality issues our competitors have had and learn from their mistakes. But the key is having veteran employees mentor the younger and less experienced guys."

Some may see such meetings as unproductive time. Kalbach views them as an investment. "A lot of companies get tied up in the day-to-day grind and lose track of long-term strategy," he says. "Our company policy is to improve every day and that requires input from the field, office staff and our clients."

The team drives improvement by looking for root causes. "We'll sit down and look at what caused a problem. Was there anything in place to keep it from happening? If there was, why didn't it work? If there wasn't, what can we put into place?" Later, they'll analyze the solution to make sure it worked as intended.

---

**"There are a lot more logistics in right-of-way work. In some cases, it's physically impossible to get vehicles to a manhole. You have to be careful about getting stuck, rutting up people's yards and causing big hassles. We'll spend the time to plan it out before going on site."**

**Robert Kalbach, III**

It's a culture that promotes a questioning attitude, reporting of mistakes, and learning rather than punishment for errors which encourages employees to think creatively, develops a team atmosphere, and improves communication with management. "All too often, people fall into the rut of 'management doesn't care about me,' or 'management doesn't understand,'" Kalbach says. "That can be very disruptive and very damaging to a business."

#### Early growth

Customers noticed the difference early on, according to Kalbach. They like the personal touch and integrity they get from a family-owned business. "I like to touch base with clients and ask how we're performing. That helps us

improve and make sure they're happy and want us back," says Kalbach. USG also offers a satisfaction guarantee on all work.

He says the approach has led to good word-of-mouth advertising, allowing the company to maintain consistent growth through its first five years. Jetting is still the backbone of the company and makes up about half the work. Kalbach and his team also do sanitary and storm line flushing/CCTV inspection, vacuum excavation, manhole rehabilitation, grouting, CIPP point repairs, smoke testing, segmented sewer testing, air testing, hydrostatic water-pressure testing, core drilling, concrete saw cutting and turnkey I&I investigations.

The company doesn't compete with drain cleaners and septic system pumpers. "We focus more along the lines of municipal pump station and collection system maintenance, treatment plant services, and contractor support activities," Kalbach says.

One specialty project was at a new industrial facility near Harrisburg that couldn't certify its storm water/spill containment system because an underground line would not hold pressure during testing. The contractor, who couldn't get paid until the line passed inspection, called in USG.

"We gave a value engineering proposal to find and fix the problem without digging out the pipe, which would have been a nightmare," says Kalbach. After segment testing every foot, they found a hairline crack running longitudinally through the pipe. The company proposed CIPP lining use the process from Perma-Liner Industries Inc.



Robert Kalbach, III, and his mother, Chiara (shown front left) started the company in 2005. They are pictured with members of the Utility Services Group team.

The repair passed post-repair TV inspection and pressure testing, so the line could be put into service. Their expertise prevented more work for the contractor and possible penalties. Diagnosing and fixing the problem took less than two days. "We had two happy customers," says Kalbach.

### Taking care of cities

Like many companies, USG does preventive maintenance on municipal storm and sanitary sewers, including inflow and infiltration studies. "We jet the pipe, vacuum out the debris, and then use CCTV to inspect the condition of mainlines and laterals using PACP-certified operators," says Kalbach.

The resulting report lists defects and also proposes a project-specific rehabilitation plan with a cost-benefit analysis of the various digging and trenchless options. Their service includes assistance in creating budgets and clarifying scope. It is good customer service, he says, but doesn't always help in getting the job in a highly competitive field.

## LEARNING THROUGH EXPERIENCE

Being a student at the same time he and his mother were starting Utility Services Group in Camp Hill, Pa. gave Robert Kalbach, III, an advantage over students who didn't know for sure how they would be using their education. "I already had my path set, so I was able to focus my studies on relevant topics," he says. "I originally chose Virginia Tech because of its reputation as a premier civil and environmental engineering program. Once I got into the coursework and started interacting with students and professors, I realized just how stimulating the culture was in Blacksburg. I had some incredible teachers who really challenged us to strive toward excellence."

He worked at the family business during the summer, but spent most of the year off at college while employees ran the operations until his graduation in 2008. "I helped guide the strategy and business model, but I wasn't involved in the day-to-day operations at that point," he recalls.

It helped him appreciate the difference between a textbook and real life. "A lot of it comes with experience and knowing when to ask questions. Whether it's dealing with people or the specifics of a project, everything seems a lot simpler in the classroom or textbook," he says.

"Coming out of engineering school, I figured I could logic my way through anything," he adds. "Once you get in the real world, you realize that there's a lot more feel to this business and engineering than one might think. That's one of the neatest things: being able to apply book knowledge, but also keep in mind that there's nothing more valuable than experience."

What does help is having the right equipment, which was rented in the beginning. "As we built a backlog and client base, we were able to purchase new, front-line equipment," he says. "Some companies try to buy older equipment, patch it together and do repairs. Our direction has been to spend the money up front and make it up in productivity, performance and quality."

Equipment has made a difference in one special aspect of working with municipal pipe maintenance: right-of-way work. Many competitors, he says, avoid work in people's backyards, along creeks and rivers, in wooded areas, and other challenging conditions. "Municipalities need work performed from manholes where a standard jet/vac truck can't get close. We come to them with solutions to their problem," says Kalbach.

USG has acquired new jetters, CCTV equipment, and rubber-tracked vehicles – along with experience – for right-of-way work. "Cleaning on a street, you just pull up to the manhole and jet the line," Kalbach says. "There are a lot more logistics in right-of-way work. In some cases, it's physically impossible to get vehicles to a manhole. You have to be careful about getting stuck, rutting up people's yards, and causing big hassles. We'll spend the time to plan it out before going on site."

---

**"All too often, people fall into the rut of 'management doesn't care about me,' or 'management doesn't understand.' That can be very disruptive and very damaging to a business."**

**Robert Kalbach, III**

Harford County, Md., for instance, has contracted with USG to televise and clean a large quantity of sewer lines. "They range in size from 4-inch service laterals to 48-inch interceptor lines, some within easements where access has been a definite challenge," says Kurt Westendorf, P.E., of the Harford County Division of Water and Sewer. "Their work effort has been diligent, thorough and efficient, from the initial review of the work to the final submittal of deliverables."

### Looking to expand

Growth is still on the agenda for Utility Services Group. Kalbach and his mother read industry magazines and attend conferences looking for the next service or technology to offer.

One possibility is geographic information systems (GIS). While it is different than waterjetting and maintaining infrastructure, the engineering background of the firm's management staff makes them aware of the potential value. "GIS, although costly, can give municipalities and their engineers an excellent tool to manage their infrastructure," Kalbach says.

Expansion will require building on the trust of customers and employees. "One thing that's very important in business is having people around that you trust," he says. "My mom and I have a very good relationship. She's been around the construction industry her whole life and passes that knowledge to me constantly. We both believe in delegating responsibility to everyone in the company. We look for people who are motivated, want to be challenged, and want to think." ■

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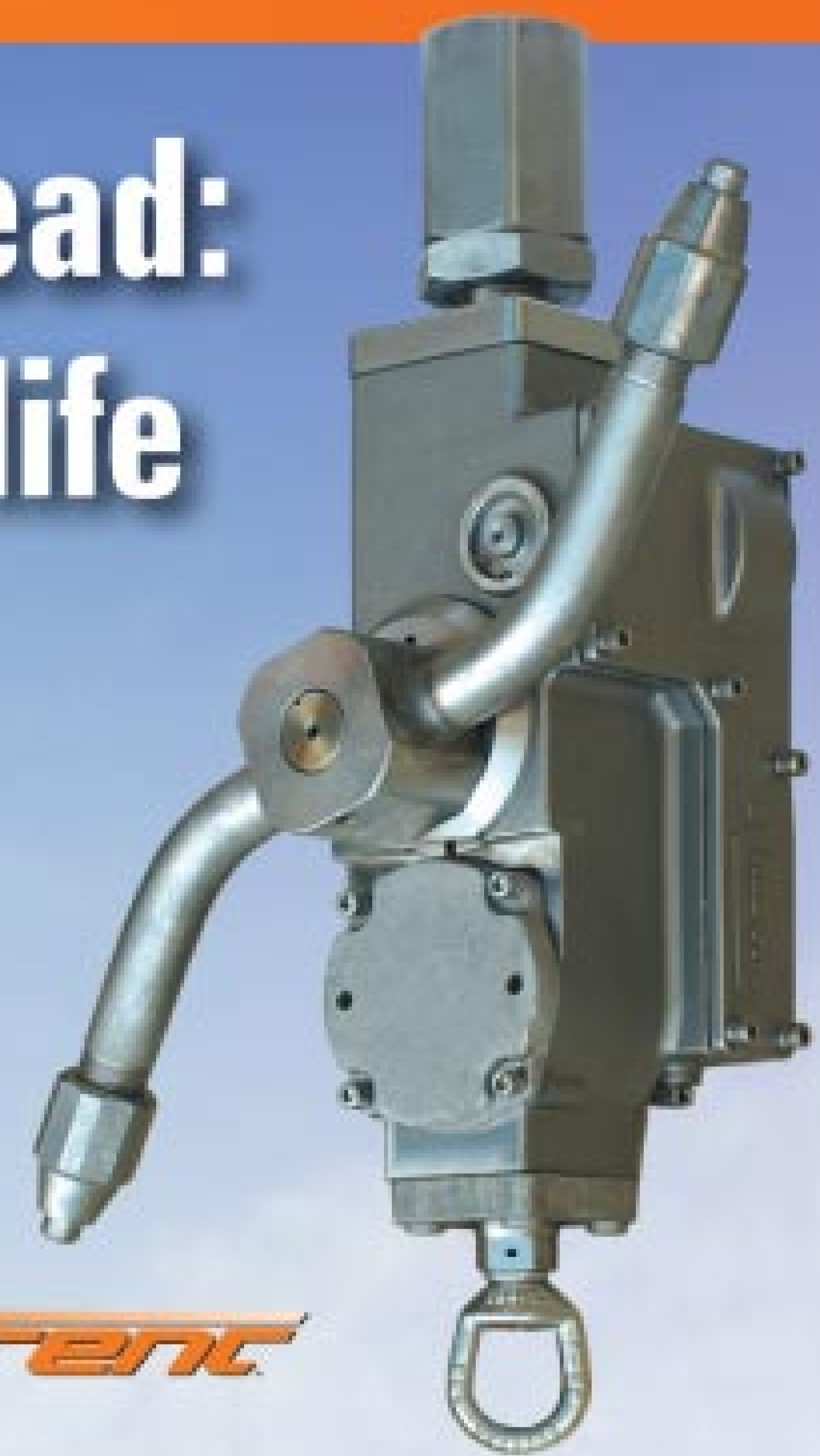
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# Winning Combinations

**Manufacturers report on innovations that make the latest jet-vacuum sewer cleaning trucks more intelligent, powerful, and productive on the job site.**

By Peter Kenter

**C**ombination sewer cleaning and vacuum trucks are becoming more sophisticated as manufacturers expand their capabilities, improve design and make them safer – all the while attempting to hold the line on prices.

*Cleaner* asked manufacturers a simple question: “In your view, what is the most important advance in recent years in your company’s combination sewer cleaning trucks as it relates to productivity, reliability or safety – and why?” Their answers are as varied as the broad range of trucks they sell.

### Hi-Vac Corporation

“One of the main advantages of the combination units we build today is that they can be used for multiple purposes,” says Pat Snyder, vice president of sales and marketing. “A unit can be used for cleaning pipe, straight jetting, and vacuuming debris from a manhole or catch basin. It can also be used as a hydroexcavator, benefiting a lot of municipalities.”

The company points to its rear hose reel design as safety innovation. “You eliminate the noise problem from the engine and the effect that has on the operator,” says Snyder. “It allows operators to communicate with co-workers and to be more in sync with what’s going on in the work environment. The driver also has a better view with the rear hose, because the front hose reels usually hang at the front right of the truck and decrease the sight line.”

Hi-Vac has also worked to design its vehicles to take advantage of user-serviceable parts. “That’s a deliberate choice on our part to improve reliability and make maintenance easier,” says Snyder. “If the end users need parts for a triplex water pump, they’d probably want to do the repairs themselves, rather than have to source proprietary components. We won’t create a mandate to go back to the manufacturer for repairs.”

### Keith Huber Inc.

For Suzanne Huber, president and CEO, the biggest change in combination units is all about the pumps. “We haven’t changed a whole lot of things about our combination units, except in the area of the pumps,” she says. “We have changed the moisture traps and upgraded them to high efficiency to improve the protection of the vacuum pump and to increase its serviceability.”

Huber says the high-pressure water pump on the combination units has also been upgraded. “It wasn’t a service issue,” she notes. “The original pump manufacturer had discontinued the pump we were using, so when we sourced a new pump, we decided to switch to the currently available unit we thought would do the best job.”

### Sewer Equipment Co. of America

“The biggest thing we have done in our combo trucks is to create a sewer cleaning nozzle that has the additional capability of being a TV system,” says John Wichmann, vice president of operations. “Previously, you just stuck a nozzle down the line and if it didn’t go somewhere, you had to dig the line out. Video inspection gave operators the ability to better diagnose the lines, but often the sewer truck was waiting a day or a week for the TV truck to come along.”

The company’s Umbilical Cord, launched in 2002, is comprised of a single

cord that houses both a sewer hose and a television cable. The camera, located on the jet propulsion skid, uses high-pressure water to propel itself, televising the pipe in full color as it travels from manhole to manhole.

“These are self-leveling color cameras that provide a live feed and also save the image to a digital capture device, so you can update your database,” says Wichmann. “From a safety standpoint, nobody needs to crawl down a manhole to figure out what’s going on. From a productivity standard, two jobs are accomplished at the same time with one machine, and one job site procedure.”

### Super Products LLC

“We’re designing the units more toward the contractor market, and that means building more robust machinery, as with our Camel truck line,” says Dan Koziczkowski, product manager, sales. “The municipalities don’t run a combination truck as hard as a contractor might.”

He says the company has always strived to use high-quality components on its vehicles and to source the best components. “We’re just more focused on that right now,” he says. “The point is to do it while maintaining a stable price. We’ve found ways to improve pretty much all the materials used in the combination trucks, but we’ve also found ways to improve some of the major components, such as water pumps, vacuum pumps and pump drive systems.”

Koziczkowski says it’s a challenge to make those improvements while expanding the range of capabilities for the trucks. “It’s not only a sewer and catch basin cleaner – it’s now doing extra duty for hydroexcavating, potholing, trenching, water main repairs and many other applications,” he says. “And it still has to be a tough unit.”

The addition of electronic fail-safe features has made the units safer, he says. “When we design the system so that an operator can’t turn on a water pump or a vacuum pump unless the truck chassis is on idle, it becomes a safer unit.”

### VacAll Industries

“The largest advance for the VacAll product line has been the use of Finite Element Analysis to redesign the major weldments that are the backbone of the machines,” says Phil Keller, director of engineering.

“This redesign has reduced weight while increasing structural integrity and payload capacities, resulting in less downtime for unloading waste. During the redesign process, a major focus was placed on designing for robotic welding, which assures a consistent high-quality weld process and a more reliable machine.”

Keller says the company has leveraged its ties with Gradall Industries Inc. to incorporate hydraulic systems and CANbus controls found on that company’s excavators to improve performance, reliability and ease of operation.

“We have the only debris tank in the industry galvanized for corrosion resistance,” says Keller. “Working with engineers at Gradall, a new 85 gpm/2,000 psi water pump has been designed specifically for VacAll. The water tanks are not just standard round shapes. They’re all aluminum and designed specifically for the VacAll to optimize axle weights with the machine loaded or unloaded.”

Keller notes that VacAll combination trucks are now pre-painted before assembly to reduce rust and corrosion while improving appearance. A new

*Tech Perspective looks at technology-related issues and provides information and advice that cleaning professionals can apply to equipment selection and to their daily work in the field. Industry members are welcome to offer ideas for this column. Please direct them to editor Ted J. Rulseh, editor@cleaner.com.*



Hi-Vac Corp.: Rear hose reel design



Sewer Equipment Co. of America: Umbilical Cord



Keith Huber Inc.: High-efficiency moisture traps



Super Products LLC: Quality in critical components



VacAll: Advances in componentry



Vac-Con Inc.: Three-stage fan vacuum system

powder-coat paint system was added to the company's manufacturing facility to assure a durable finish.

### Vac-Con Inc.

"Perhaps the greatest impact on our product line has been the evolution of the Vac-Con three-stage fan vacuum system," says Tom Jody, marketing manager. "We introduced the three-stage fan in 1987 with the capability to vacuum underwater."

"This vacuum system became a mainstay for the Vac-Con product line, and with the introduction of hydrostatic drive in 1992, immediately became more versatile and easier to operate. Hydrostatic drive enabled easier operation by eliminating the need for transfer cases, split shafts and belt drives. This feature also allowed the chassis to be operated in neutral, a strong safety consideration."

The company has recently upgraded the three-stage fan with a fan silencer and a larger 160-cc hydrostatic pump. "These features enable the fan to perform at maximum vacuum levels (200 inches H<sub>2</sub>O) at much lower rpm for significant fuel savings, as much as 40 percent over previous versions and at lower noise levels – as much as 5 dBA lower – for operator safety and community acceptance," says Jody.

"So the three-stage fan continues to offer highly productive, short loading times and the ability to vacuum under water without any special attachments, and all with the convenience and safety of hydrostatic drive, but at lower cost through fuel conservation and reduced wear and tear on the chassis."

### Vector Manufacturing

"As we developed the Vector 2100 Plus combination truck, we made dozens of improvements that address user-driven priorities, including increasing the cfm rating at the hose inlet, increasing fuel efficiency by up to 34 percent, and mak-

ing high-dump and variable-flow control standard features," says Kevin O'Brien, director of marketing with the Federal Signal Environmental Solutions Group.

One feature that stands out for the manufacturer is the Intelliview electronic system, which allows operators to monitor key measures, such as blower temperature, flow, pressure and system diagnostics.

"Intelliview keeps the machine running at peak productivity, saves time and money and helps keep operators safe," says O'Brien. "It displays readings such as system pressures in real time and also allows the operator to log in settings such as water flow and hose footage deployed."

"This can help reduce water use and equipment wear, and that reduces the cost of ownership. Intelliview also has an easy-to-operate troubleshooting system that accurately diagnoses fault codes. It also validates proper sequencing of functions to prevent misuse of the equipment, and it enables the electronic modules to perform self-diagnostics to ensure that all safety interlocks are satisfied before a function can be completed." ■



Vector Mfg.: Intelliview electronic system



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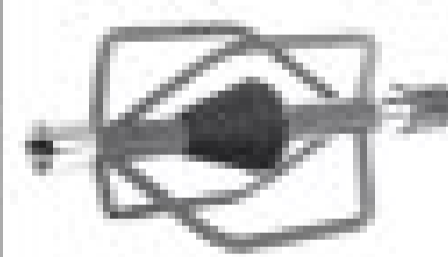
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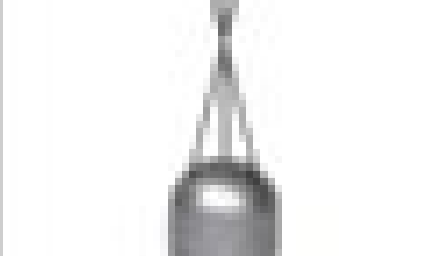
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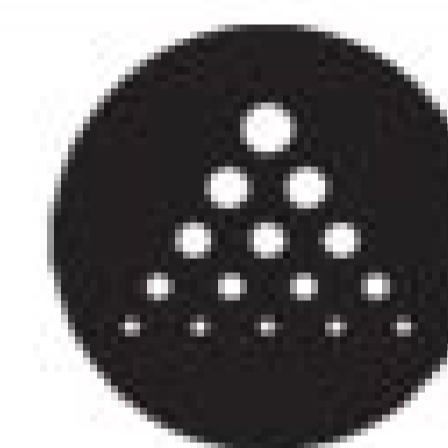
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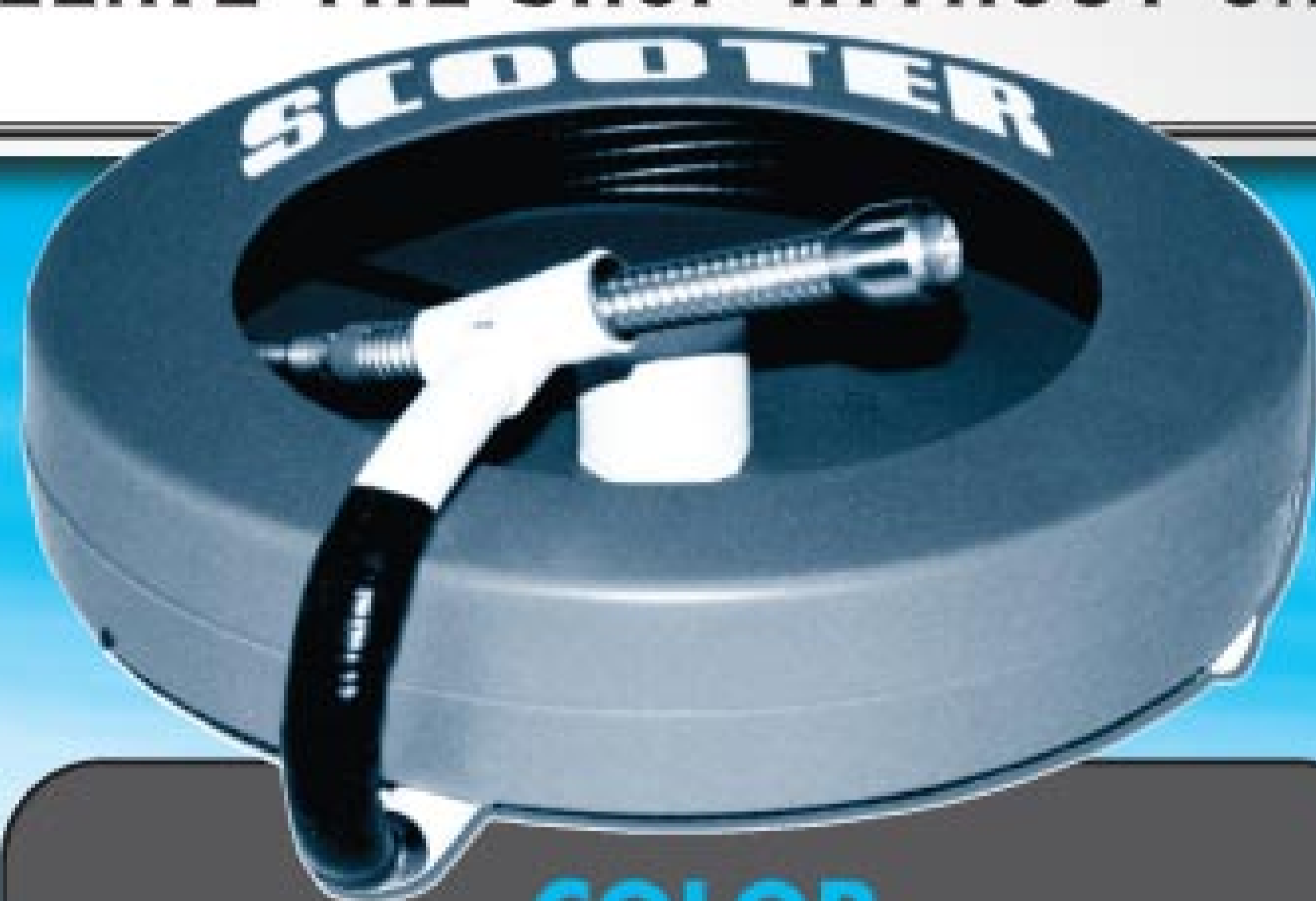
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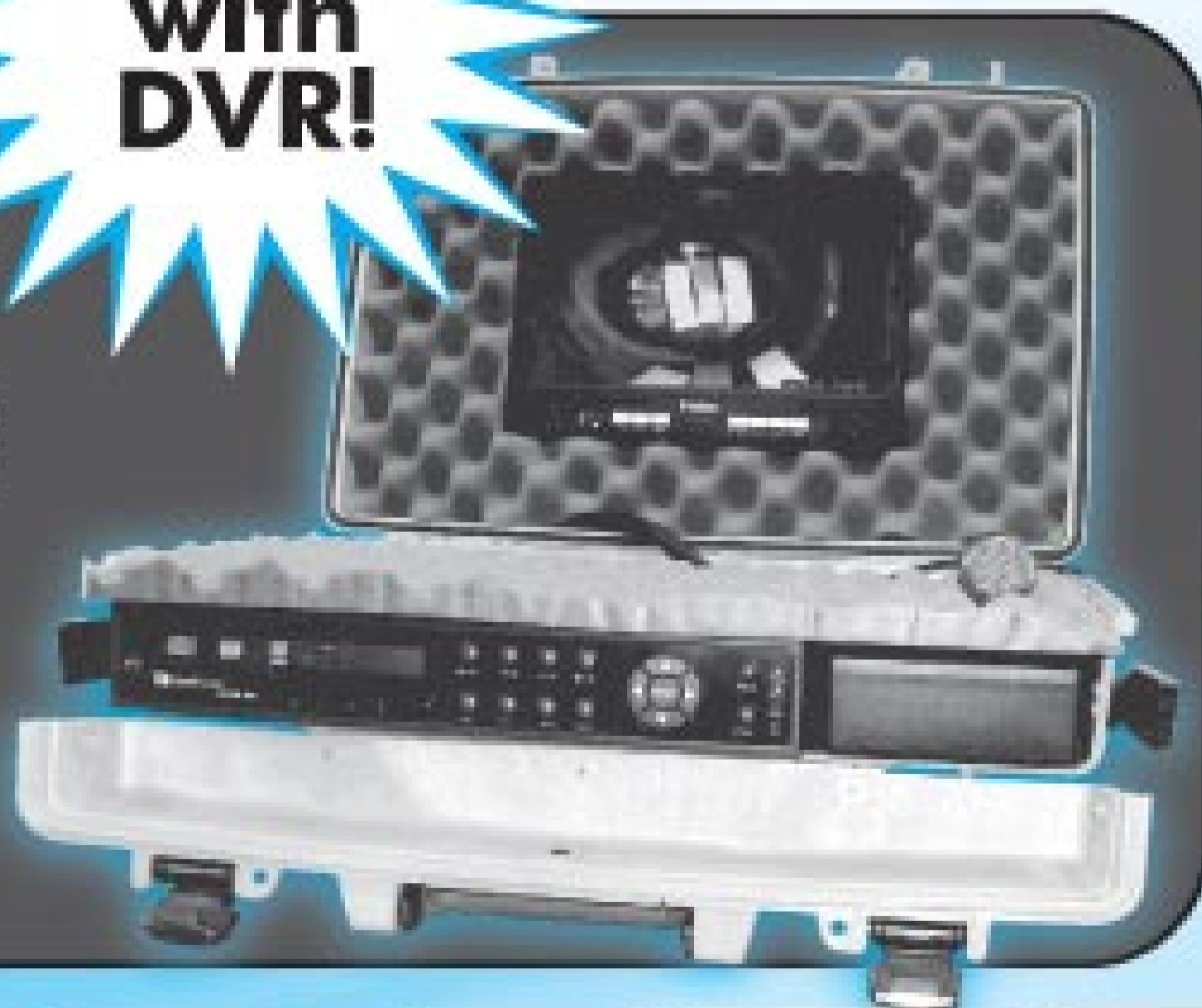
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# Going Undercover

**A CBS reality television series features a Roto-Rooter executive getting an inside look at day-to-day operations in the company**

**R**oto-Rooter Services Company president and chief operating officer Rick Arquilla experienced a week undercover in his own company, using the alias of Hank Denman, a rookie service technician assigned to some of the dirtiest jobs.

It was an adventure and an emotional journey for Arquilla, who learned a lot about himself, the company policies he put in place, and the men and women who have made his company so successful by taking part in an episode of the CBS TV series, "Undercover Boss." The segment aired April 4.

Each week, the program follows a senior executive who leaves the comfort of his or her corner office to examine the inner workings of the company. Working alongside employees, they see the effects their decisions have on others, see where problems lie within their organizations, and get an up-close look at the good and the bad while discovering the unsung heroes who make their companies run.



Darrell Walker, left, a sewer and drain technician and line camera operator at the Roto-Rooter branch in New Orleans, joined Roto-Rooter chief operating officer Rick Arquilla on several jobs during the filming of the "Undercover Boss" segment that aired April 4. (Photography by Studio Lambert)



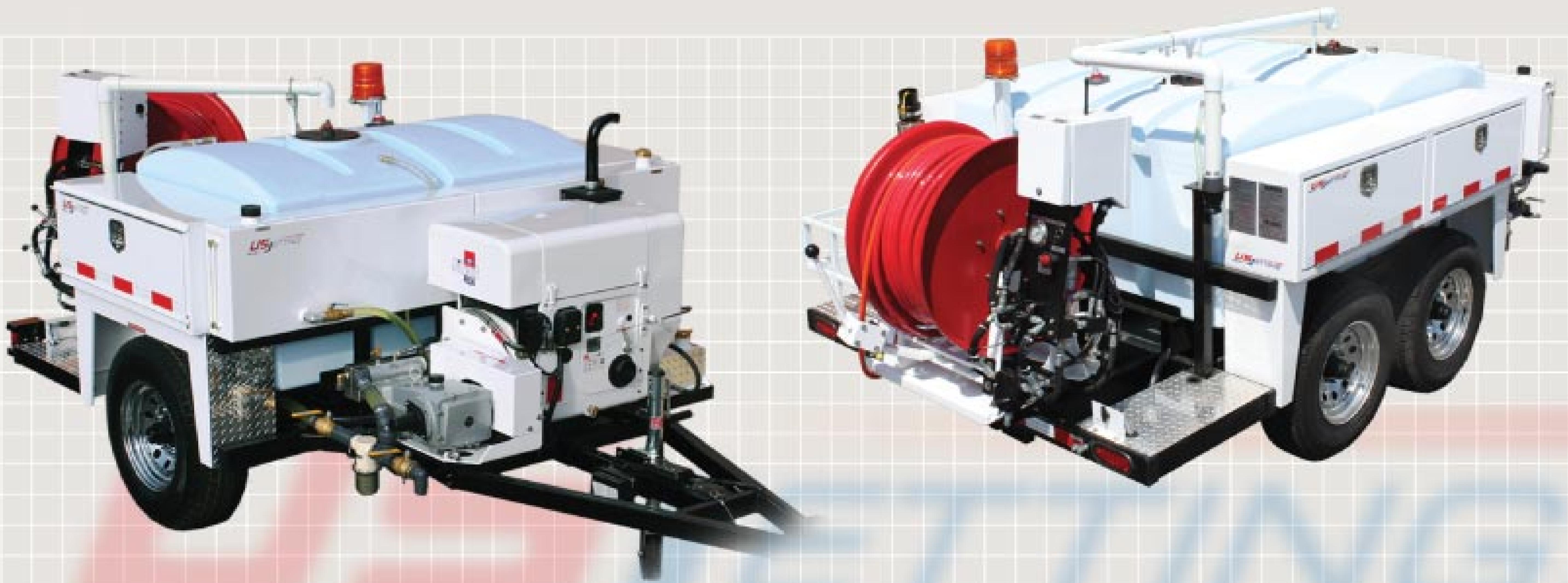
Roto-Rooter chief operating officer Rick Arquilla put on his work clothes for a segment of "Undercover Boss" on CBS.

Scenes for the show were taped at Roto-Rooter corporate headquarters in Cincinnati, at company service locations in New Orleans and Chicago, and at the manufacturing plant and world headquarters in West Des Moines, Iowa.

While undercover, Arquilla got filthy and exhausted working shoulder to shoulder with employees who had no idea he was the boss. He cleaned sewers and drains with three service technicians in New Orleans and even lay in sewage while working beneath a house. He tried his hand at building the company's cable machines at the factory, and in Chicago he dispatched plumbers from a 24-hour company call center late at night.

Arquilla, 57, came away with a newfound respect for his employees and the hard work they do to keep America's plumbing working and sewer pipes draining, according to a company news release. "Undercover Boss" has featured senior executives from highly successful companies including Waste Management, White Castle and 7-Eleven. ■

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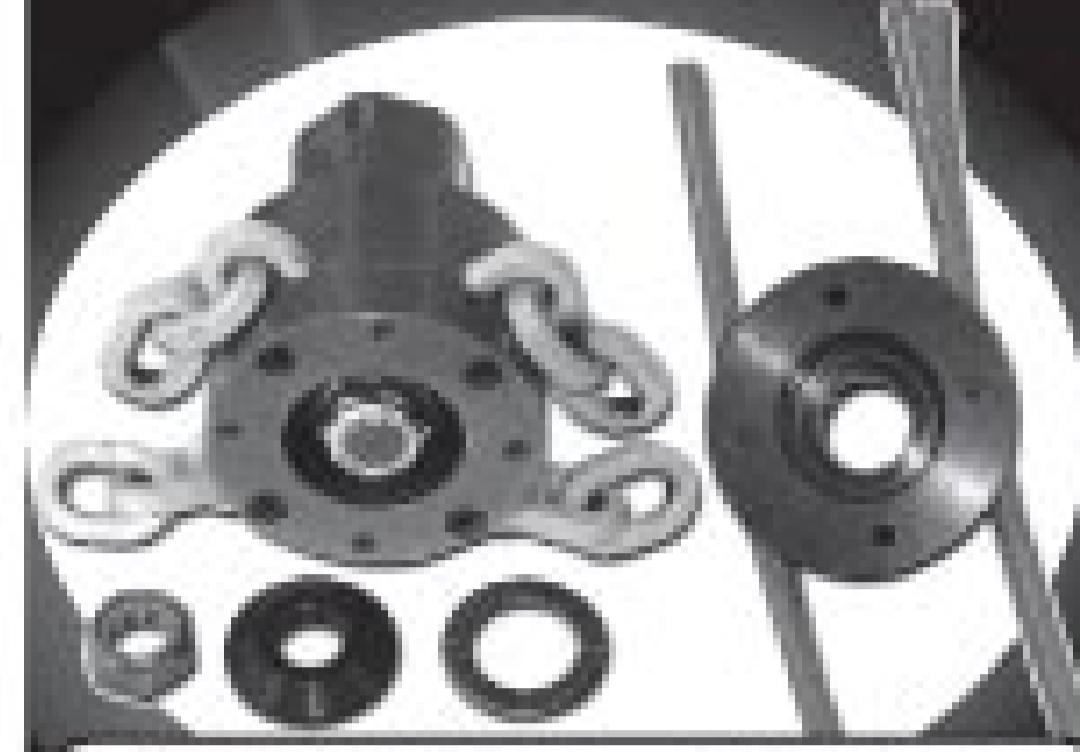
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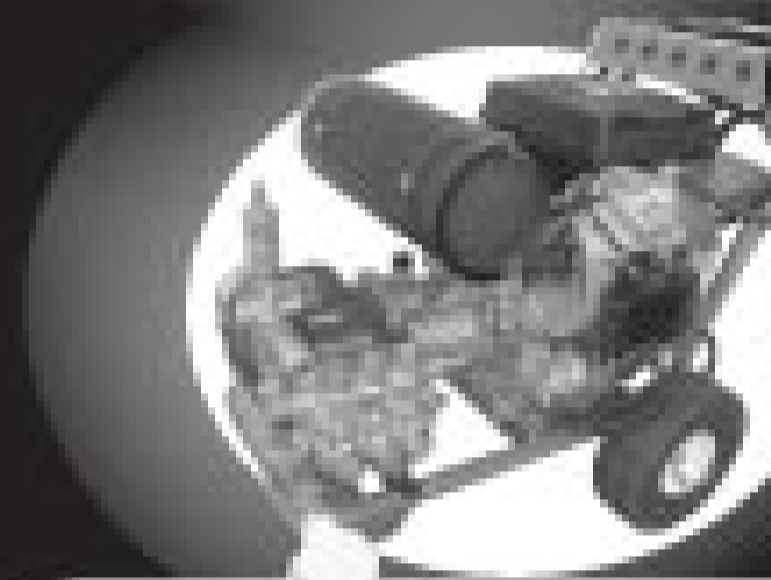
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# Right Credit, Right Reason

**Don't be afraid to borrow money when your business needs it. Just know good debt from bad debt and avoid getting overextended.**

By Erik Gunn

**D**ebt. It cuts two ways. There's no question that bad loans and risky lending strategies have helped create the economic troubles we face today. Or that credit is a lot tighter these days than just a few years ago (and for good reason).

It's never been easier to be afraid of debt. But today's lesson is: don't throw the baby out with the bathwater. It might sound smart to just kiss debt goodbye. But that would be almost as risky as taking on debt thoughtlessly.

Businesses have failed because their owners weren't willing to seek the resources they needed to expand when an opportunity presented itself. The key is knowing good debt from bad debt – and making sure you get one and not the other.

## Two kinds of debt

Broadly speaking, there are two kinds of debt. One is a *line of credit* – a source of money you can turn to when your business bumps into cash-flow problems. This is also called revolving debt, because you borrow it, pay it back, and borrow it again. At home, this is like a credit card.

The other is *amortized debt* – a limited-term loan, usually for equipment or supplies or property or some other fixed asset – that you pay back over time. Your home mortgage or car loan are examples.

One big mistake is using one kind of debt when the other is what you need. Suppose you use your line of credit to buy a new truck. That would be like putting it on your credit card. Typically, the finance costs on a line of credit are higher than on amortized debt. So credit lines should be used only in short-term situations where you can pay the money back

quickly. To buy that truck, amortized debt is the way to go.

## Amortized debt

New assets, thoughtfully selected and purchased, can make a big difference in the future of your business. Suppose you find there's a need for your services in the next county, but to expand effectively you need a new service truck and related equipment.

First, do your homework. Realistically, how many customers can you gain by expanding? How

much monthly income is that likely to generate? How long will it take you to get the word out and the calls coming in?

Now perhaps you're cash-rich and can pay for that new truck without borrowing a penny. Great if you can do it, but for many businesses that's not realistic. So does that mean all is lost? Absolutely not.

If the numbers show that your additional revenue can more than cover monthly principal and interest payments on a loan for the truck, then it's sensible to make the move. That's where it helps to have a good handle on your day-to-day costs, and income.

## Credit lines

On the day-to-day side, you bill customers, and you have bills to pay – to suppliers, vendors, employees. Wouldn't it be nice if your customers paid instantly and you didn't have to pay your bills until the end of the billing period?

Of course it doesn't work that way. Instead, your bills are due today, and the money you've got coming in won't arrive until next week, or even next month. A line of credit helps you bridge the gap. By using it, you can buy the fuel your trucks need and cover your employees' paychecks on time. When the revenues come in, you turn around and pay down your credit line.

A credit line is like a home credit card with an important difference. A credit card is unsecured debt: It's backed by nothing more

receivables, such as those 90 days old or older, don't count. Banks will subtract those old receivables from your total, and they typically won't lend you more than 65 to 85 percent of the rest.

They'll also consider other factors: Do your business costs and income rise and fall depending on the season? Do you have a broad or narrow base of customers? (Broader is better.)

Finally, you need to be realistic about your ability to pay the loan down to zero on your cash flow.

**Businesses have failed because their owners weren't willing to seek the resources they needed to expand when an opportunity presented itself. The key is knowing good debt from bad debt – and making sure you get one and not the other.**

than the card issuer's belief that you'll pay back what you owe. That's one reason interest on credit cards is often much higher.

On the other hand, a credit line for your business is secured, typically by a lien on your business, some real estate, or at least your accounts receivable.

That suggests two important rules: First, don't carry a balance on your credit line longer than you must. Try to pay it off as soon as your business income allows. The other rule follows from that first: Never borrow so much that you can't pay off the line of credit quickly from your cash flow, once your customers do pay you. Otherwise, you could end up losing your business to repay that debt.

## How banks figure it

While banks may base your credit line on your accounts receivable – the money your customers owe you – here's an important caution: Older

Erik Gunn is a magazine writer and editor in Racine, Wis., where he operates Great Lakes Editorial Services, consulting for businesses, nonprofits and individuals. Readers may direct inquiries to him by contacting this publication at 800/257-7222 or e-mailing [editor@cleaner.com](mailto:editor@cleaner.com).







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# Cutting Through

**A trailer hydrojetter boosts an Arizona drain cleaner's productivity and profits, pleases customers and helps open new markets.**

By Ken Wysocky

**F**or technicians at Diamondback Plumbing Services Inc. in Phoenix, Ariz., using underpowered equipment to break up heavy grease clogs in restaurant drain lines was like using a dull handsaw to cut down a tree.

Now they relish the challenge. The company uses a trailer jetter that delivers 4,000 psi/18 gpm. President Steve Herzog estimates the machine increased drain-cleaning capacity by 35 to 40 percent.

looked at trailer jetters that could handle any line on the commercial end. We didn't want anything to

charges a flat fee for drain cleaning but can charge more if a job with the trailer jetter takes longer than

---

**"You have to have a hydrojetter to compete at all in this market. If it's 10 p.m. and you can't get a line open, that's not good for business. You can't just leave them hanging. Opening lines quickly impresses customers, and it saves them money, too."**

**Steve Herzog**

stop us from serving our customers."

Two years ago, the company bought a 798 Sidewinder trailer jetter, made by Spartan Tool LLC (the manufacturer

has since replaced that unit with their new Warrior model).

### Same time, more jobs

Herzog finds that the jetter enables crews to perform more jobs in the same time, boosting profitability. The company generally

expected. "It's hard to charge for additional time if you're using sub-par equipment," Herzog says.

The unit opens more business opportunities because Diamondback technicians now can tackle 6- to 8-inch drain lines, plus lateral lines in grease traps. Unclogging lines quickly and getting restaurants back in business boosts customer satisfaction, creating repeat business and referrals.

"Before, we might have had to hire an outside firm to jet a line we couldn't handle," Herzog says. "Now we can sell customers on a complete line of services. You have to have a hydrojetter to compete at all in this market. If it's 10 p.m. and you can't get a line open, that's not good for business. You can't just

## **MONEY** Machines

"We had been relying on cable equipment, and if that didn't work, we'd try a small jetter," recalls Herzog. "But it didn't work on really heavy grease. We have a lot of Mexican restaurants here, so there's a lot of grease in lines, and the small jetter just wasn't cutting it. So we

### MONEY MACHINES

<b>OWNER:</b>	Diamondback Plumbing Services Inc., Phoenix, Ariz.
<b>MACHINE:</b>	Spartan 798 Sidewinder trailer-mounted hydrojetter
<b>FUNCTION:</b>	Cleaning restaurant drain lines
<b>FEATURES:</b>	4,000 psi/18 gpm; swivel reel; large water tank; remote control
<b>COST:</b>	\$35,000



A service van with bold graphics pulls the waterjetter owned by Diamondback Plumbing Services in Phoenix, Ariz. The machine helps the company handle tough jobs in less time and broaden its business possibilities.



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leave them hanging. Opening lines quickly impresses customers, and it saves them money, too."

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There's another benefit, too: When technicians open a drain line with the jetter, Diamondback warrants the work for 60 days – twice the warranty for a line cleaned by a cable machine. If a line cleaned by the jetter clogs within 60 days, Diamondback will clean it again for free, unless technicians verify with a camera inspection that it was clogged through negligence or abuse.

Proper training, provided by the manufacturers, is key to maxi-

mizing the jetter's capability. "There's more to it than just owning a jetter," Herzog says. "Knowing how, when and where to use it sets us apart from others."

Herzog considers the jetter indispensable: "It would be very difficult for us to live without it. I don't even want to think about it. It would be awful." ■

### MORE INFO:

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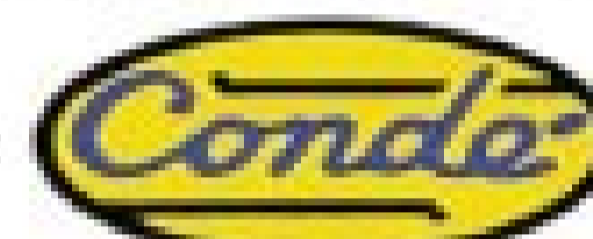
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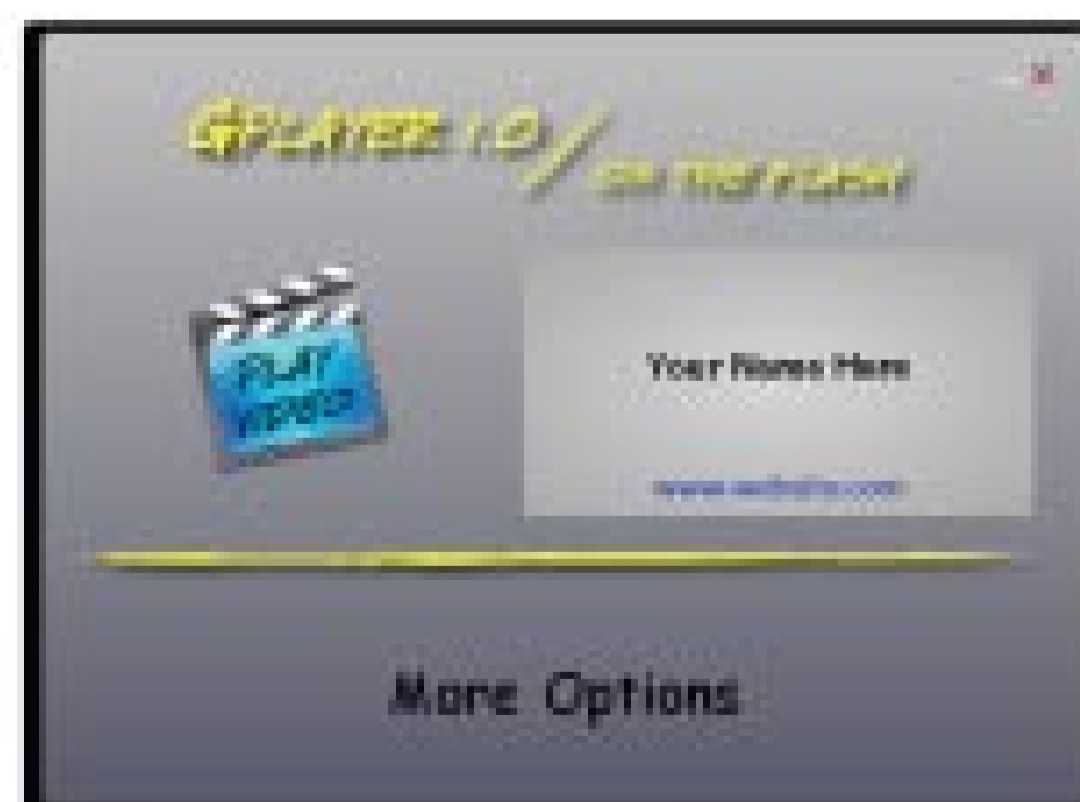
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# He Says, She Says

An understanding of gender differences can help foster better communication at work and more rewarding professional relationships

By Jean Kelley

*Jean Kelley is president and founder of Jean Kelley Leadership Consulting and Jean Kelley Leadership Alliance. With her alliance, she has helped more than 500,000 businesspeople enhance their careers. She is the author of Dear Jean: What They Don't Teach You at the Water Cooler, and Get A Job Keep A Job Handbook. Visit [www.jeankelley.com](http://www.jeankelley.com).*

If you're a woman, you may sometimes wonder how your male colleagues can get into a heated discussion during a business meeting, end with issue unresolved, yet walk out of the room as the best of friends.

And if you're a man, you may get frustrated when talking with

roles, and as a result, their brains developed in different ways. For example, a man's brain goes in and out of a rest state all day. Millions of years ago, when men sat in trees waiting for their prey, they had to be quiet and disengaged. They didn't want to scare away their dinner. So their brains evolved to learn to

they can go out and hunt), wanes in the afternoon, and spikes again in the evening around 8 p.m. It then goes back down, only to repeat the cycle the next day.

**Brain matter.** Men have more gray matter, while women have more white matter. The gray matter is used for local processing of thoughts and

about personality, values and behavioral differences in communication. Now it's time to overlap gender differences into the equation.

For example, while women have distinct viewpoints on topics, when they communicate they often try to "keep the peace." Men, however, are typically more aggressive in

**We all know that men and women think and act differently, at work and at home, but knowing there are differences is only half the battle. To have successful working relationships with members of the opposite sex, you also have to know why those differences matter and what to do about them.**

women co-workers about one topic, and they bring 14 more topics into the conversation, all of which seem totally unrelated.

We all know that men and women think and act differently, at work and at home, but knowing there are differences is only half the battle. To have successful working relationships with members of the opposite sex, you also have to know why those differences matter and what to do about them.

The good news is that with a little insight, you can overcome the communication and behavioral challenges that plague any workplace and gain greater understanding of how men and women function.

## Once upon a time

Before we can look to a harmonious future, we need to look back into human evolution. Once upon a time, about a million years ago, communities consisted of hunters (men) and gatherers (women). The hunters left every morning and hunted for food, while the gatherers stayed home, gathered nuts and berries, and made preparations for the food the men would bring back.

So as far back as scientists can tell, women and men had different

engage, disengage, engage, disengage.

Women, on the other hand, had to be on high alert all day, protecting themselves and their children as they gathered necessities and tended to the community's needs. Their brains evolved to be always active. In fact, if you look at a functional MRI of a man's brain at rest and a woman's brain at rest, you'll see that the woman's brain is busy and firing everywhere, whereas the man's brain is quiet.

## Different wiring

This is not to say that one gender is better than the other; it simply illustrates one of the many differences between the genders and how it evolved. So, what else is different from a brain wiring perspective? Here are a few highlights:

**Brain chemicals.** Men produce more testosterone, and women produce more oxytocin. Testosterone is an aggressive chemical, and oxytocin is a "tend and befriend" chemical. These chemicals are significant drivers in a person's brain.

**Cycles.** While women have a 28-day cycle, men have a cycle every day. Their testosterone spikes in the morning when they wake up (so

tasks. The white matter is what connects everything. This is why when a woman is processing an emotional event, she will do so immediately. All the interconnections make processing faster in her mind. A man is processing locally and will do so for a longer time.

**Hierarchy.** While both men and women understand hierarchy, men really understand it. Whoever brought back the biggest animal from hunt received the most status in the community. So that desire to be "top dog" and get their point across is innate in men. Likewise, women wanted the security of being with the men who could provide the most food for the family, which is why even today, women want to be associated with successful men.

Of course, there are exceptions to every rule. Within the spectrum of male and female brains, there are gradations. There is also something called the "bridge brain," which is someone who has characteristics of both male and female brains.

## Why this matters

In working and communicating with each other every day, knowing the differences in gender communications is vital. Much has been written

their communications, more argumentative about their ideas, and more vocal about their stand on a certain thing.

Women focus on building consensus. And because they're contextual and process information in the white matter, they often try to reduce heated arguments. That's not to say a woman doesn't like a good argument, but if it gets hostile and she gets stressed, she'll start producing oxytocin, which will prompt her to calm the situation down.

And because women have so much white matter, they may take a longer time to answer a question because they're filtering it through the article they read this morning or what their boss said two days ago. Think of it like sorting in a computer: They're doing a huge sort through the entire database to arrive at an answer.

## Better communication

To ease daily workplace communication challenges, keep these points in mind:

**For men:** Keep women's white matter in mind. They are not jumping from topic to topic just to annoy you. In their brain, everything is connected.

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Remember that women "tend and befriend." As a result, they tend to use up-talk, where it sounds like they end every sentence with a question mark. Or they say such things as, "What do you think?" This does not mean they don't know what to think. They simply want to gain consensus.

Women all over the world tend to use more emotionally loaded words when they communicate. So they use high-drama words such as "always" and "never" much more often than men do.

**For women:** If you want to talk to a man about something that's critical, and you think he's going to be defensive, don't do it at the 9 a.m. meeting or after hours at the company dinner. Remember that daily cycle.

Don't jump from subject to subject, and always condense your thoughts into short sentences. Men have a word limit (this has been scientifically tested), and once they reach their word limit, it's almost like a little blind goes down. They simply can't process any more information.

Remember that a man's brain shifts into that rest state throughout the day. So when you're talking to him and he's fidgeting, tapping his fingers on the table, or even doodling during the meeting, it doesn't necessarily mean he's bored or not interested. In fact, it probably means just the opposite. He's unconsciously forcing himself to stay alert, keeping his brain active by that movement.

#### Closing the divide

The key now is to accept this information, embrace it and impose it as a new structure of thought in your own mind. Become conscious and aware of the differences between the sexes and use your knowledge in your daily interactions with others. By doing so, you can ease some of the frustrations you feel when communicating at work and foster professional relationships built on understanding, collaboration and trust. ■

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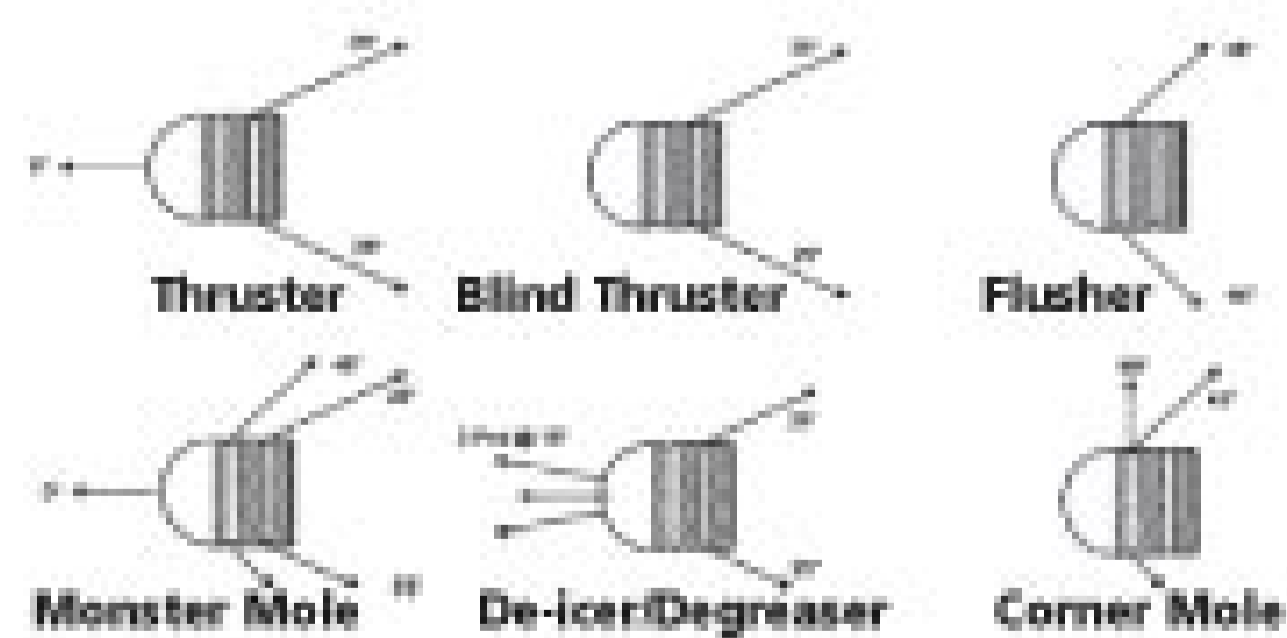
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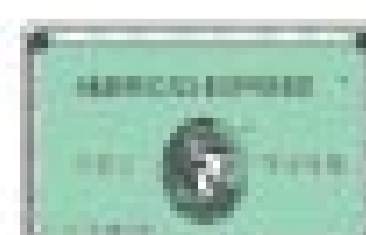
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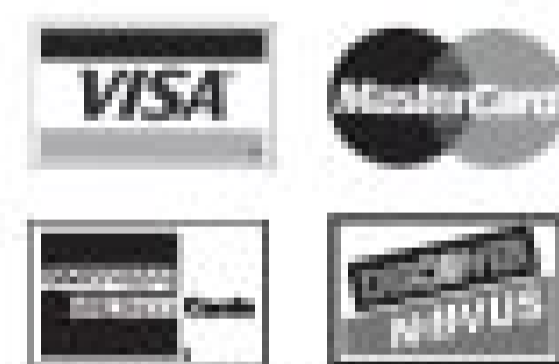
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Pictured (from left) Chris Loudermilk, franchise system specialist; Saunda Kitchen, franchisee; Mary Thompson, president; and Jeff Moody, vice president of operations.

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# Marriage and Business

Three contractors' wives tell their perspectives on running a family business, sharing responsibilities, and balancing home and work life

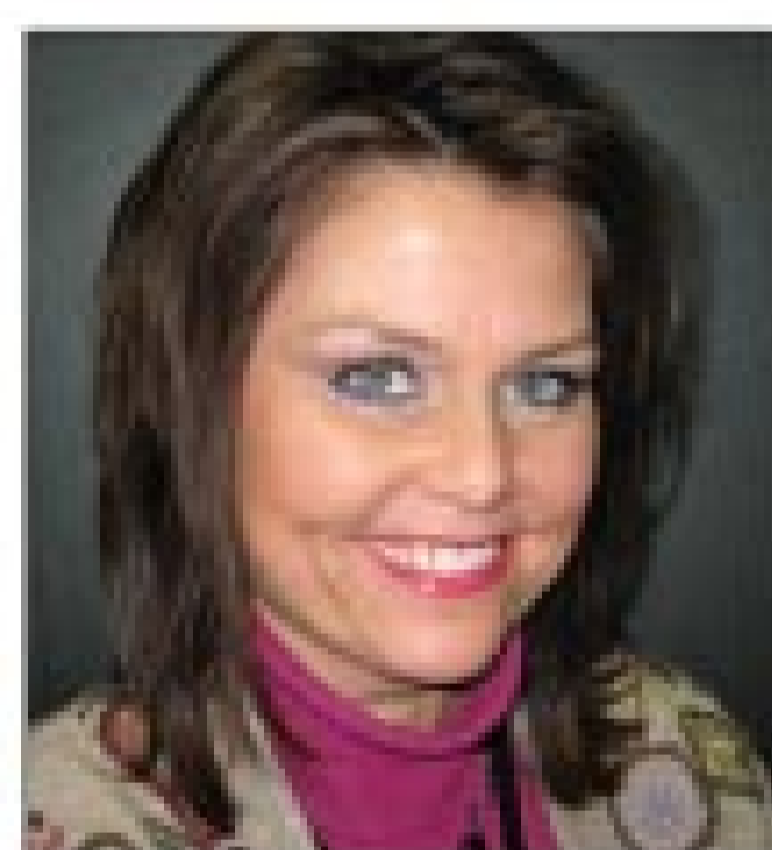
By Ken Wysocky

**F**or many contractors, a hard day at the office also equates to a hard day at home with the family. When spouses help run a business, the distinction between home, work and marriage often becomes blurry.

Successful partners find ways to deal with living their jobs all day, every day. For some, clearly separated duties do the trick. Others must make a conscious effort to leave work problems at the office.

That's not to say there are no rewards to being business partners: Spouses share the joy of building something together, and that can breed a unique sense of closeness and gratification. Here's what several contractors' wives had to say about helping to run a family business and balancing work and marriage:

"I married into the business about 16 years ago," says Michelle Anderson, who handles bookkeeping and marketing



**Michelle Anderson**

**Business Manager  
Mr. Rooter,  
Hartsville, S.C.**  
Employees: 12  
Years in business: 19

while working alongside her husband, Phillip, at the Mr. Rooter Plumbing franchise in Hartsville, S.C.

"A big advantage of being self-employed is the flexibility it affords me in raising our children. I have a staff in place, and since it's a franchise, we have a systematic way of doing business. Because our staff is trained to follow certain procedures, it allows me

**"I think the most important thing is to avoid bringing home work issues. Those things come and go, so they're not worth bringing home. Those issues are still going to be there in the morning, so don't take them home."**

**Michelle Anderson**

the freedom to get out of the office when I need to.

"At the same time, when you're self-employed, the buck stops here. At the end of the day, it's your responsibility to make sure things got done. Sometimes you get home and there are things to deal with after hours. In the plumbing industry, you're never off work – it's sort of like being a

doctor. So both of us are really never off work.

"He comes home with technical issues and I come home with the money issues. It brings a lot of stress into your home. The good part is you can discuss things together because you work in the same field. We don't usually disagree on business decisions; we're usually on the same page. He trusts my judgment and I trust his.

"I think the most important thing is to avoid bringing home work issues. Those things come and go, so they're not worth bringing home. Those issues are still going to be there in the morning, so don't take them home.

"Sometimes work gives us a chance to be together. Once we got a service call after hours, and it would have required one of our technicians to drive 40 minutes to get a truck and 40 minutes back. We lived near the customer, so we decided it would be quicker and better for the customer if we went.

"So we took our daughter, and it was really a lot of fun. I explained to her the importance of commitment to customers. I think that living what we do maybe provides her with a better education than anything she'll learn in college. It's instilling in her a work ethic. She's an entrepreneur in training."

"I've been involved with the business since we established it," says Laurie Michelini, who takes care of accounting, certifications and employee payroll and benefits for Illinois Valley Excavating Inc. in Peru, Ill. She helps run the business, which among other things offers sewer cleaning and inspection services, with husband Steve, who handles everything from equipment and material purchasing to site supervision.

"One of the biggest advantages? Job security!" she says. "He can't do it without me. There are a lot of things I know on my end that he doesn't know



**Laurie Michelini**

**President  
Illinois Valley Excavating Inc.,  
Peru, Ill.**  
Employees: 6  
Years in business: 14

about. I do similar work for another family business in the heating and air conditioning industry. I do that a couple days a week and do it for him the rest of the week. I learned a lot from that job and was able to translate it into this business.

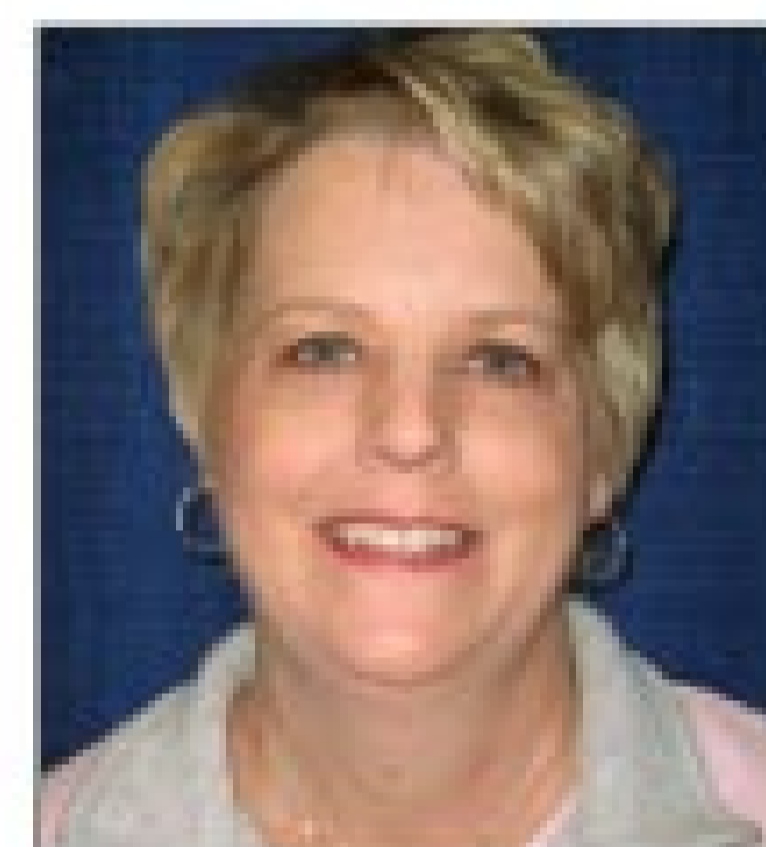
Comments may be directed to Ken Wysocky in care of *Cleaner*. You may also e-mail [pipelines@cleaner.com](mailto:pipelines@cleaner.com).



"One downside is we always talk about work-related items. But having clearly defined duties helps. He handles different things than I do. That way I'm not always judging him and he's not judging me. We have our own things we do and there are certain things that mesh together, but there's a lot that doesn't.

"The work/marriage relationship definitely is something you have to work at. It's a learning process. Working together is almost like a marriage within a marriage."

"The great thing about having a family business is that it allows us to be together more often," says Tanya Bumgarner, who



**Tanya Bumgarner**

**Office Manager  
Bumgarner Septic Tank and  
Grading, Hickory, N.C.**  
Employees: 3  
Years in business: 49

handles bookkeeping and invoicing at Bumgarner Septic Tank and Grading in Hickory, N.C. She helps her husband Mike run the business, which includes drain-cleaning services.

"You're so much closer together. It also gives me more flexibility as a mother. I also have three grandchildren, so I can watch them for a day or so here and there. It provides a lot more flexibility than having a full-time job outside the family.

"The downside is that many times you have to drop what you're doing and go do what needs to be done. And sometimes work tends to consume our lives. I've found that there are times when you just have to put everything aside and say, 'Hey, I need a break. You're going to have to take care of things without me.'

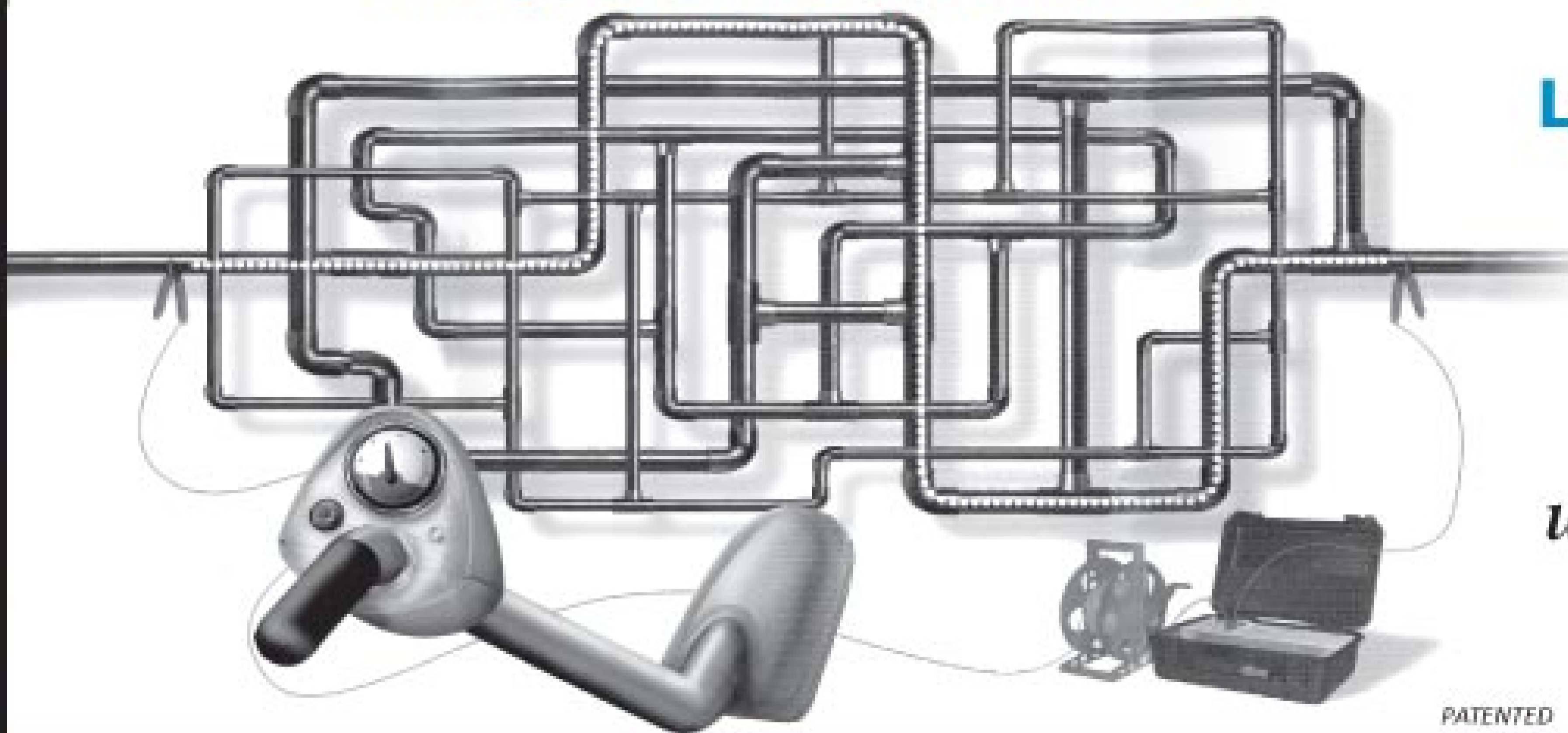
"It helps that we have very different responsibilities. At night, we compare notes – I tell him what went on in my day and he tells me what went on in his day. We're comfortable making suggestions to each other." ■

## Tell Your Story?

What are your experiences with owning and running a business as a couple? *Cleaner* would like to hear both men's and women's perspectives. Please feel free to share your thoughts. Send a note to [editor@cleaner.com](mailto:editor@cleaner.com) or call Ted Rulseh at 877/953-3301.

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PATENTED

The Pulsar 2000 line tracer is designed primarily to locate metallic pipes. The Pulsar 2000 is a directional line tracer. Connect the Pulsar's powerful and unique transmitter to your target pipe and locate only that pipe. Locating can be accomplished under floors, in walls and in ceilings. The Pulsar 2000 does not require grounding.

**Leak detection personnel...** The Pulsar 2000 is a must have locator. Now you can quickly identify the pipe location, thereby reducing the search area of the leak.

**100% satisfaction guarantee...** We are so sure that you will see the time

saving benefit of the Pulsar 2000, we will let you return it for a full refund if you are not satisfied. If you want to learn more about the Pulsar 2000 and our leak locating equipment, please call **1-888-752-5463** or e-mail [jsmll@aol.com](mailto:jsmll@aol.com) for a **free** demonstration video or CD and references of satisfied customers.

We have been using the Pulsar 2000 along with the XL2 fluid detector and Geophones since January 1989 in our leak locating business. Our leak locates are **accurate 95% of the time**, but I can honestly say, the line we trace is always there. Our equipment is user-friendly and requires very little training, as you will see on the video. Purchase the Pulsar 2000 line tracer, XL2 fluid detector and Geophones, and start locating leaks immediately.



## Pipeline Cleaning & Maintenance Equipment for



### JETTERS & JET VACS



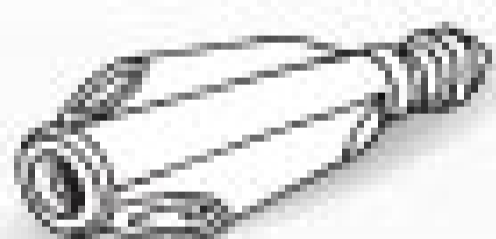
#### Penetrators

1/4"-15°	\$24.00
3/8"-15°	\$33.00
1/2"-25°	\$46.00
1/2"-25°LT	\$49.00
3/4"-12°	\$55.00
3/4"-12°LT	\$65.00
1"-12°	\$69.00
1"-12°LT	\$81.00



#### Aluminum Grease

3/4" or 1"-17° \$122.00



#### Truder

1" \$345.00



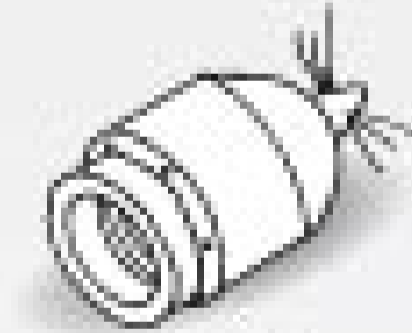
#### Shark

1" \$480.00  
1" Big Shark \$595.00



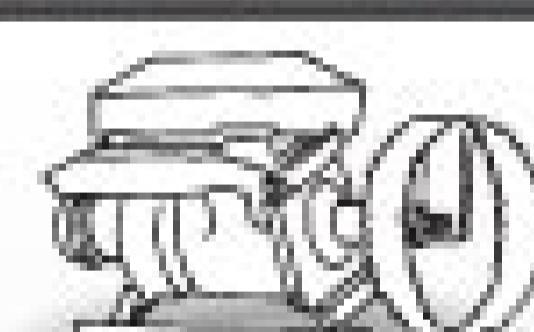
#### Radial Bullet

3/4"-18° or 35°	\$50.00
3/4"-18°/24°	\$53.00
1"-18° or 30°	\$66.00
1"-15° or 30°	\$68.00
1-1/4"-18 or 35°	\$85.00



#### Steel Sand

1"-12° \$70.00



#### Root Cutter Assemblies

**Skid Mounted**  
w/flat blades \$868.00  
w/concave blades \$910.00  
w/spiral blades \$910.00

**Donut Mounted**  
w/flat blades \$847.00  
w/concave blades \$889.00  
w/spiral blades \$889.00

**Lateral Mounted**  
w/flat blades \$825.00  
w/concave blades \$895.00

Assemblies come with one ea. of 6, 8, 10 and 12" blades, saw blades, hub, skids, etc.

#### Sewer Hose Guides

**TigerTail™ Style**  
3" x 36" \$40.00  
2" x 36" \$34.00  
with 24' rope



#### Clamps

##### Power Clamps

8" \$13.00

3"-6" available

##### King Clamps

8" \$29.75

4"-6" available

##### Bandlock® Clamps

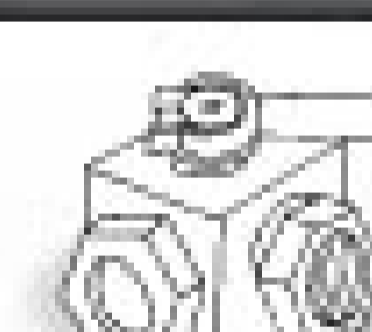
8" \$24.00

3"-6" available

##### Quick Clamps

8" \$26.50

3"-6" available



#### Hycon® Valves

2 & 3-way Ball Valves

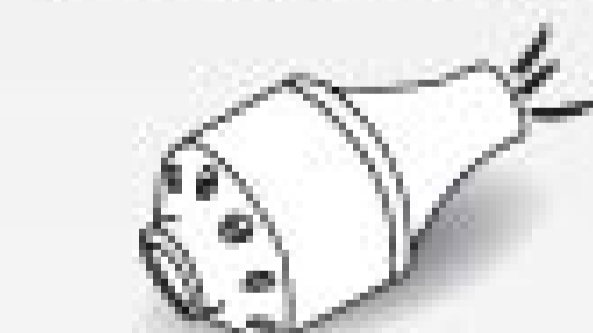
5000 psi	
1/2" 2-way	\$65.00
3/4" 2-way	\$89.00
1" 2-way	\$119.00
1-1/4" 2-way	\$226.00

4500 psi	
3/8" 3-way	\$115.00
1/2" 3-way	\$160.00
3/4" 3-way	\$180.00
1" 3-way	\$190.00
1-1/4" 3-way	\$440.00



#### HD Washdown Gun

25 gpm @ 850 psi  
1/2" Inlet \$155.00



#### Aluminum Sand

3/4"-24°	\$139.00
1"-17°/24°	\$153.00
1"-24°	\$139.00



#### Swivel Joints

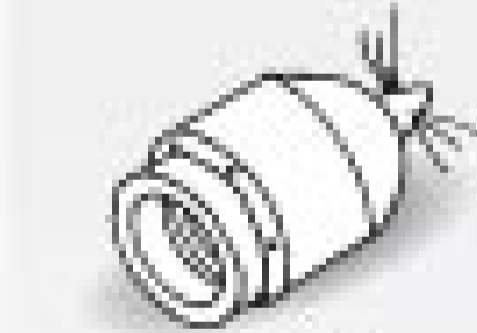
T-M® Style	
90° or Straight, 6000 psi	
3/4" & 1"	\$175.00
1-1/4"	\$179.00
1-1/2"	\$453.00
2"	\$570.00

#### Stainless Steel Nozzles

1/8"	\$30.00
1/4"	\$33.00
3/8"	\$39.00
1/2"	\$54.00
3/4"	\$59.00
1"	\$105.00

#### Ball Valves

Dyna Quip® Style	
3000 psi	
1"	\$227.00
1-1/4"	\$243.00



#### NEW Storm/Culvert Floor Cleaner Nozzles

#### Parker & Piranha Jetter Hose

1/8"-1-1/4"



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4"-48", All Stainless Steel, No Lubrication

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Kanaflex™/Rubber Debris Hose • Full Line Of Warthog Nozzles



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## Recording System Is Built to Handle Rough Weather

By Ted J. Rulseh

**T**he SeeSnake DVD Pak recording system from RIDGID lets contractors reliably monitor and record inspections even in hostile weather.

The system can be purchased with what the company says is the industry's first organic light-emitting diode (OLED) display, enabling users to inspect in bright sunlight and at temperatures from -30 degrees F to 130 degrees F.

OLEDs differ from traditional liquid crystal displays (LCD) in that they do not require back-lighting. As a result, they can display deep black levels, draw less power, and be thinner and lighter than LCD panels.

"OLED is the new technology for television and is starting to become more prevalent and

affordable," says Sarah Golish, director, inspection systems and networks. "We put that technology into the DVD Pak because it has certain advantages versus an LCD screen. One thing we've heard from end users is that LCD screens don't perform well at very low temperatures, around zero degrees F. Contractors in Canada and the northern states were having that issue. This takes care of it for them."

The OLED screen measures 4.3 inches. Contractors who want a larger viewing area and do not face cold temperatures can choose a 5.7-inch LCD screen.

Other keys to the design were portability and



weather proofing. The unit folds into a 9.15-pound package that can be carried with a shoulder strap. It is also highly water resistant and can be used in rainy conditions, Golish observes.

Units with either screen type can be purchased with an 18-volt lithium-ion battery and charger to enable inspections where AC power is not available. Battery life between charges is four hours. The unit can connect to any SeeSnake push cable reel. For information: 800/474-3443; [www.RIDGID.com](http://www.RIDGID.com).



### Reed Offers Pipe-Cleaning Reamers

Plastic Pipe Fitting Reamers from Reed Manufacturing Co. are designed to clean out old or broken pipe and left-over solvent cement from PVC fittings so they can be reused. The reamers are available in four sizes for Schedule 40 PVC, fit

into standard 1/2-inch drills and feature a four-sided carbide insert that provides an extra cutting edge after 180-degree cutting insert rotation. 800/666-3691; [www.reedmfgco.com](http://www.reedmfgco.com).

### StoneAge Introduces Warthog WV-1/4

The Warthog WV-1/4 cleaning nozzle from StoneAge Inc. is designed to cut roots, clear grease, ice blockages and remove hard mineral deposits in 2- to 4-inch residential and commercial lines. The nozzle features a maintenance-free design, eliminating the need to replace seals. It has a



maximum pressure of 4,000 psi, operating pressure of 2,000 to 4,000 psi and flow of 3-8 gpm. The 2-inch nozzle measures 1.3 inches in diameter and weighs 0.45 pounds. 866/795-1586; [www.stoneagetools.com](http://www.stoneagetools.com).

### NLB Introduces Torrent Tank Cleaning Head

The Torrent 3-D waterjet tank cleaning head from NLB is rated for flows up to 150 gpm and operating pressures to 10,000 psi. The head features nozzle tips with carbide orifices and stainless steel body. The high-velocity nozzles rotate vertically while the head spins horizontally to remove hardened resins, plastics and more. 248/624-5555; [www.nlbcorp.com](http://www.nlbcorp.com).



### Vector Introduces SXP Insulated Water Tank

The SXP insulated water tank from Vector, designed for the HXX HydroExcavator, is made of superlinear XL polyethylene to retain heated water at temperature longer, reducing the chance of freezing during operation in subzero conditions. The lighter weight tank also reduces fuel consumption while increasing payload and hauling capability. The 1,200-gallon tank has a 3/8-inch thick outer shell and 3/8-inch foam liner. 800/627-3171; [www.vector.com](http://www.vector.com).

## Sewer Equipment Co. Offers 7500 Cable Machine

The model 7500 cable machine from Sewer Equipment Co. of America has 350 feet of 1 1/4-inch stress-relieved cable coiled from 0.312 oil-tempered steel rods. Powered by a 13 hp gasoline engine with throttle control and 5-inch diameter double pulley and centrifugal clutch, the unit has a 12-volt electric start. The trailer frame is made from 3-inch channel iron with 14-gauge steel bottom supported by a 1 1/2-ton type axle with leaf springs, adjustable legs and retractable stand, mud guard and drum cover. The unit has a multi-speed, totally enclosed transmission with forward, reverse and neutral. A safety hand brake stops reel and cable rotation. The 7500 B uses 1-inch cable. 800/323-1604; [www.sewerequipment.com](http://www.sewerequipment.com).



## Rohmac Introduces Robotic Culvert Cleaners

The SL 436 and MT 3234 radio remote-controlled Microtraxx culvert cleaners from Rohmac Inc. are designed to safely clean culverts, eliminating the need for confined-space entry. The SL 436 fits 48-inch box or 60-inch round culverts. It measures 42 inches wide, 42 inches high and is 120 inches long. The unit has a 1,550-pound lifting capacity and 1/3-cubic-yard bucket capacity. It weighs 5,600 pounds, has a ground pressure of 7.5 psi loaded and drawbar pull of 4,700 pounds. Powered by a 30 hp diesel engine it has a 360-degree swing rotation and QDS system for attachments. The MT 3234 is designed for 36-inch box or 48-inch round culverts. It measures 32 inches high, 34 inches wide and 134 inches long. The unit has a lifting capacity of 1,500 pounds and bucket capacity of 1/4 cubic yards. It weighs 4,600 pounds, has a ground pressure of 5.5 psi loaded and drawbar pull of 3,700 pounds. Powered by a 26.1 hp diesel engine, it has a low tram speed of 55 feet per minute and high speed of 110 feet per minute. 304/259-2201; [www.rohmac.com](http://www.rohmac.com).



## Jamko Introduces INVU Inspection System

The INVU remote portable inspection system from Jamko Technical Solutions Inc. is designed to inspect multiple angle pipes and confined spaces. The unit comes with 25 feet of spring cable. Its 0.9-inch camera head is made for inspecting pipes 1 inch or greater, including drain lines, house laterals, septic lines, vent stacks and other confined spaces. 315/871-4420; [www.jamkosolutions.com](http://www.jamkosolutions.com).

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## McElroy Offers Hydraulic Clamping Retrofit Kit

Hydraulic Clamping retrofit kits for the 500 line of fusion machines from McElroy include a manifold block that controls the two fixed-jaw cylinders and two moveable jaws. Designed to increase speed and productivity by replacing manual clamping with hydraulic power, the kits can be installed at local distributors or ordered preinstalled on new machines. 918/836-8611; [www.mcelroy.com](http://www.mcelroy.com).



## Superior Signals Introduces LED Work Lights

The Illuminator SY2L and SY4L Series LED work lights from Superior Signals feature a bright white flood beam pattern with 60-degree viewing angle and polycarbonate lens. The lights are shock resistant, reverse polarity protected, spike protected and have stainless steel mounting hardware. Mounting options include pedestal, pendant and lateral RH or LH with stud swivel and wire leads. They are CE certified and have an IP66 rating. The SY2L is an oval two-LED unit providing 310 lumens of light. The SY4L is a four-LED, 450-lumen unit available in round or square configurations. 800/447-3693; [www.superiorsignals.com](http://www.superiorsignals.com).

## Electric Eel Offers Auto Cable Feed Cleaners



Four models of auto cable feed drain-cleaning machines from Electric Eel Mfg. Co. Inc. are designed to retrieve cable with the push of a lever. Model D-5 cleans 3- to 10-inch diameter lines up to 100 feet. It features a quick-remove continuous auto cable feeder and drum. Model Z5-P-AF cleans 1 1/4- to 3-inch lines up to 100 feet. It runs 1/2-inch galvanized aircraft wire inner core cable. Model E-P-AF cleans 1 1/4- to 3-inch lines up to 75 feet. It has an inner drum that eliminates cable buckling. Model CT cleans 1- to 2 1/2-inch lines up to 50 feet and features a variable speed motor. 800/833-1212; [www.electriceel.com](http://www.electriceel.com).

Model D-5 cleans 3- to 10-inch diameter lines up to 100 feet. It features a quick-remove continuous auto cable feeder and drum. Model Z5-P-AF cleans 1 1/4- to 3-inch lines up to 100 feet. It runs 1/2-inch galvanized aircraft wire inner core cable. Model E-P-AF cleans 1 1/4- to 3-inch lines up to 75 feet. It has an inner drum that eliminates cable buckling. Model CT cleans 1- to 2 1/2-inch lines up to 50 feet and features a variable speed motor. 800/833-1212; [www.electriceel.com](http://www.electriceel.com).

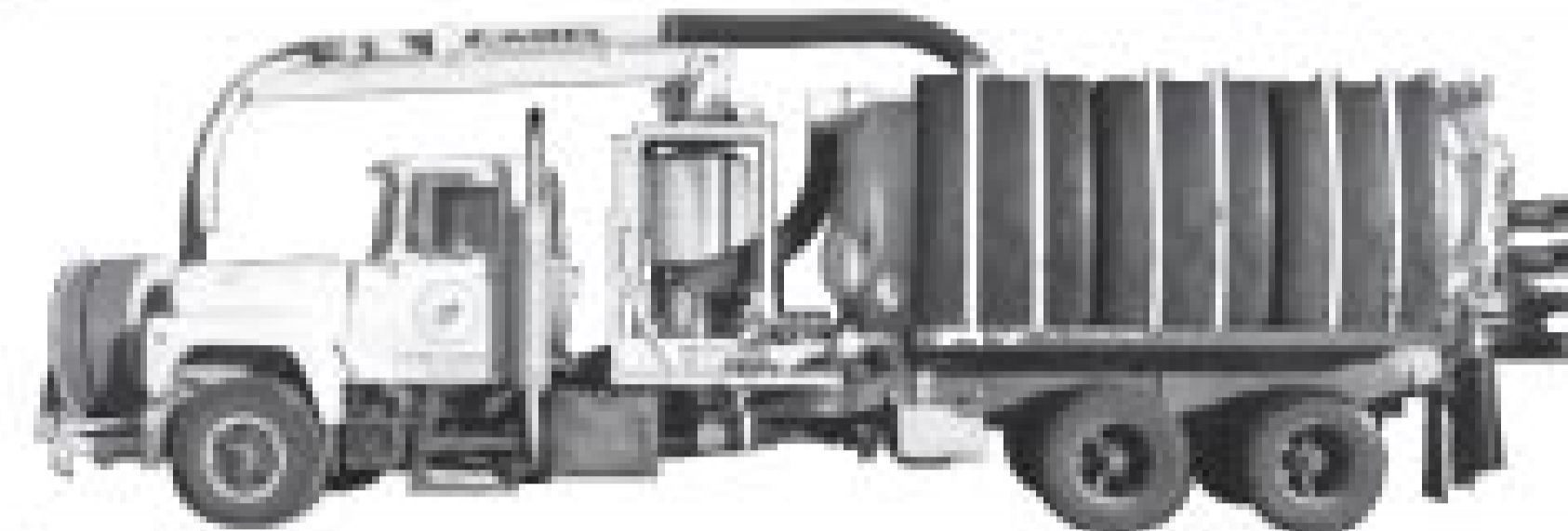
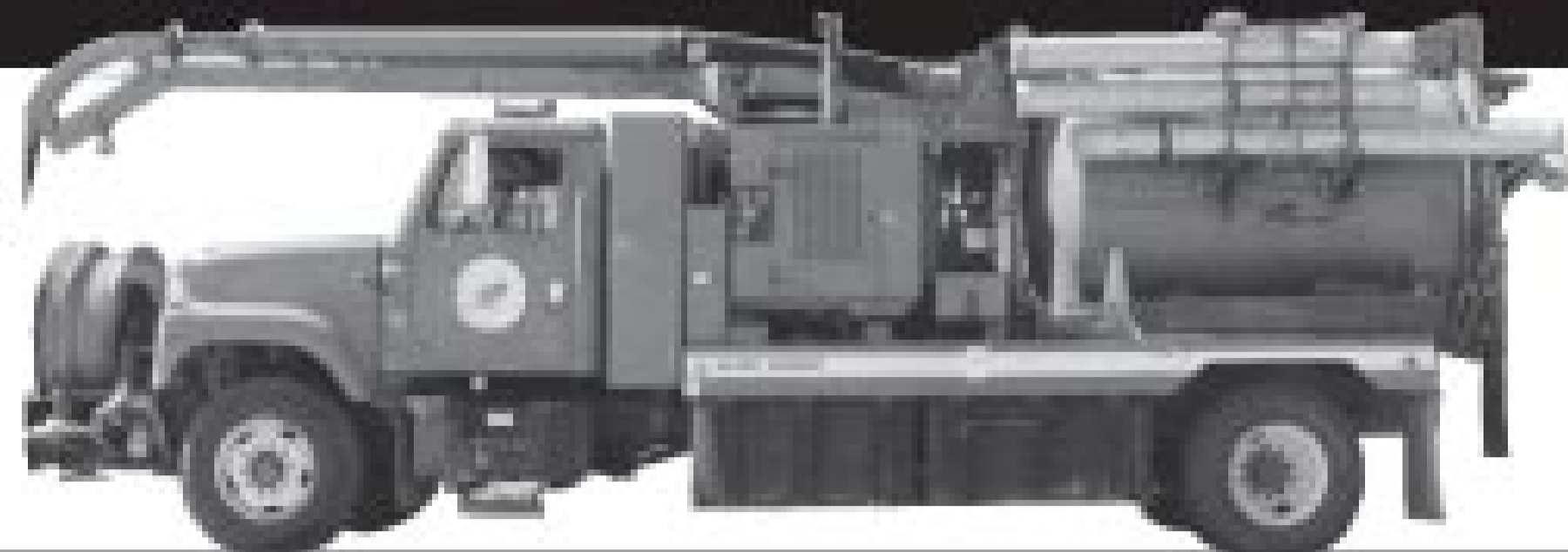


## Super Products Introduces Camel Jet 1600

The Camel Jet 1600 truck-mounted, high-pressure waterjetting system from Super Products is designed to keep municipal sewers, sanitary and storm sewer lines, laterals and drainage lines clean and free flowing. An alternative to a combination sewer cleaning unit, the system features three modular, polyethylene water tanks and 1,600-gallon capacity. The unit has a triplex continuous flow water pump, delivering up to 80 gpm and 2,000 psi as well as optional front- or rear-mounted 180-degree rotating hose reel with 1,000-foot capacity. 800/837-9711; [www.superproductscorp.com](http://www.superproductscorp.com).

# Great Trucks. Great Price.

**1998 International Vac-Con  
Combination Cleaner:** 69,700  
miles, 65 gpm @ 2000 psi,  
1,000 gal. poly tank, 1' x 600'  
hose, TigerTail/ MiniMissile.



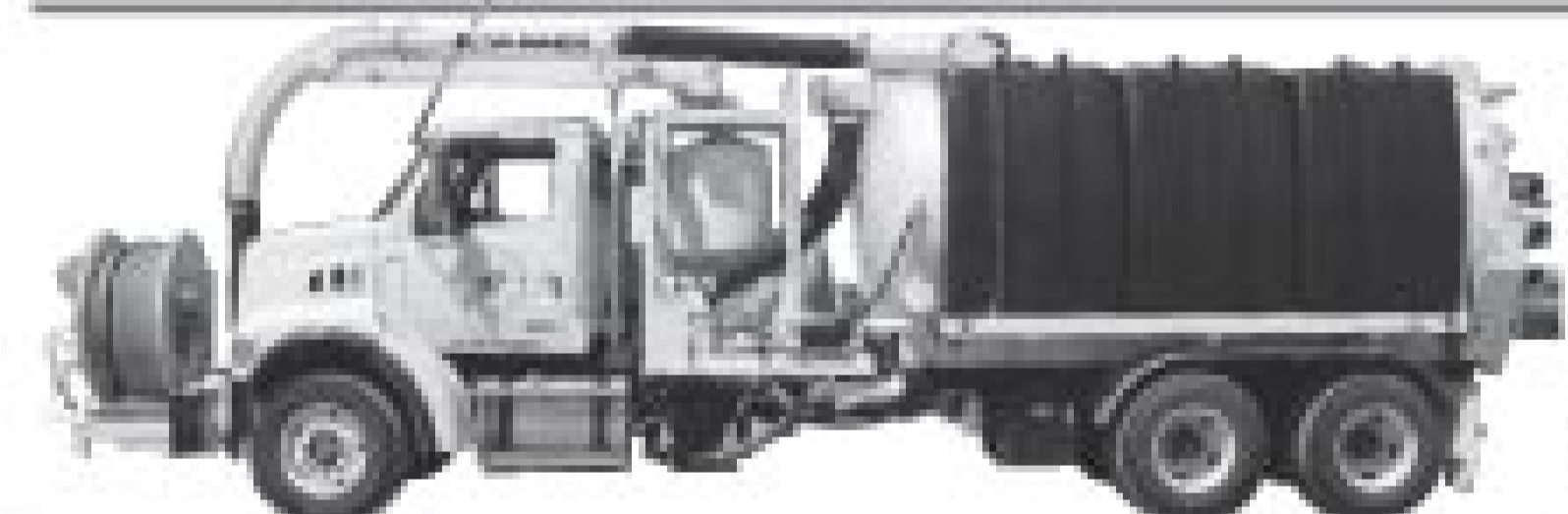
**1987 Mack Chassis Combo  
Truck:** 235 hp, 1997 Super  
Products Camel, 16-yd. debris,  
Hicks blower, 1500 gallon water,  
65@2000 psi Myers pump.

**1992 Western Star Combo  
Truck:** 280 hp, 1995 Super Products  
Camel, 16-yd. debris, 6-24 blower,  
1500 gallon water, 65@2000 psi  
Myers pump.



**1991 Camel Combination Cleaner  
w/1986 Mack:** 80 gpm @ 2000 psi,  
1,500 gal. poly tank, 1' x 600' hose,  
TigerTail/ MiniMissile.

**1993 Ford LNT 8000 Vector  
Combination:** 80 gpm @ 2000 psi,  
1,500 gal. alum. tank, 1' x 600' hose,  
TigerTail/ MiniMissile.



**2007 Sterling Combo Truck:**  
335 hp, 2008 Super Products Camel,  
16-yd. debris, 6-24 blower, 1500 gallon  
water, 80@2000 psi Myers pump.

**1996 Ford L8000 Vector  
Combination:** 87,500 miles,  
80 gpm @ 2000 psi, 1,500 gal.  
alum. tank, 1' x 600' hose, Tiger-  
Tail/MiniMissile.



**1994 Ford Cargo Van:** 1994 7.5  
Onan gas generator, 1996 RST TV  
equipment. Many extra TV compo-  
nents included.

**1994 Isuzu Step Van:** 2000 Onan  
10K diesel generator, 1996 RST TV  
equipment. Many extra TV compo-  
nents included.



## Bilco Offers LadderUP in Safety Yellow

The LadderUP safety post from The Bilco Co. is available in safety yellow. The powder-coat finish provides greater visibility than the original black design. The extension device for fixed ladders provides workers with safe entrance and egress from roof hatches, manholes or floor, vault and sidewalk doors. The spring-balanced unit features tubular construction and permanently mounts on the top two rungs of any fixed ladder. A release level enables the attachment to be lowered to a retracted position. Models also are available in galvanized steel, aluminum, stainless steel and can be custom ordered in the original black finish. 203/934-6363; [www.bilco.com](http://www.bilco.com).



## IPS Introduces Test-Tite Pressure Relief Plug



The Test-Tite pressure relief pneumatic test plug from IPS Corp. features an internal-pressure safety relief valve that reduces the risk of exceeding the proper inflation pressure, reducing the potential for damage to plugs and drain, waste and vent systems. The relieved pressure exhausts through the top of the plug. It is designed for testing or temporarily blocking plumbing DWV systems and can be used in place of standard pneumatic test plugs. It features no moving parts, five center sealing rings and one-piece injection-molded construction. Additional features include a crimped ferrule that activates the relief valve. 800/888-8312; [www.ipscorp.com](http://www.ipscorp.com).

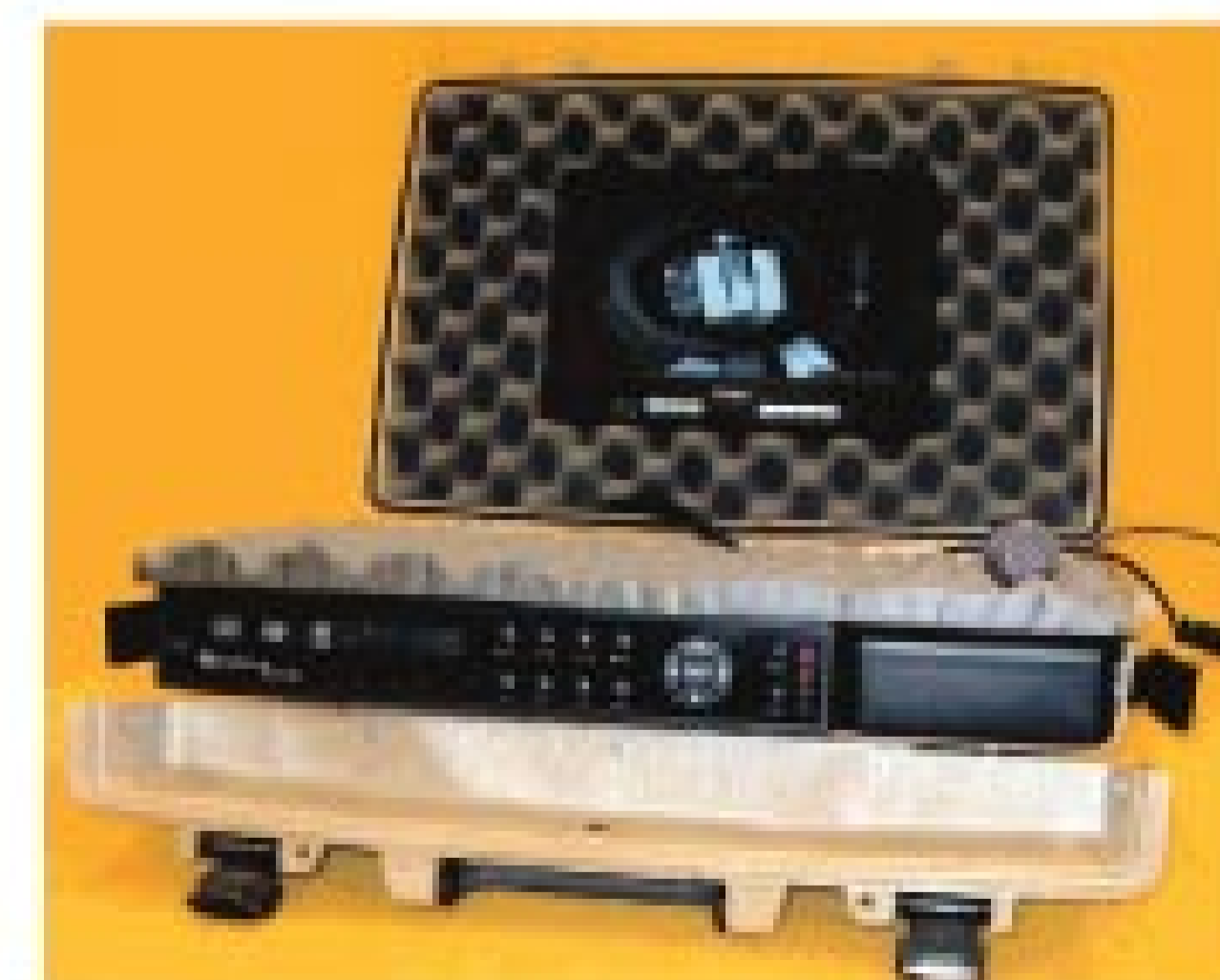
## Anue Introduces Automating Lift Station Cleanout

The EP-1115 automating sewer lift station cleanout system from Anue Water Technologies re-circulates wastewater to break up fats, oils, grease and bio-film buildup. The process also increases dissolved oxygen up to 800 percent. Solids are homogenized, increasing the surface area, allowing for even dispersal. The interrelated actions promote pretreatment in the lift station. The unit is installed by either tapping an existing discharge main or by using Anue's dedicated grinder pump option. 760/476-9090; [www.anuewater.com](http://www.anuewater.com).



## Scooter Introduces Attache DVR Inspection System

The Attache DVR inspection system from Scooter Video Inspection Systems features a 10-inch color monitor, 250-gigabyte hard drive that records to a built-in DVR and a USB flash drive. Also included are a microphone and amplifier for narration as well as a 20-foot coil cord. The system measures 19 by 13 by 5 inches when closed. Also available is the Attache DVR Lite and Attache mono. The Lite has a 10-inch color monitor, DVR that records to an SD card, microphone and 20-foot cord housed in a compact case. An SD/USB adapter is included. The mono features a 10-inch color monitor, power supply and 20-foot coil cord, when recording is not required. 800/722-6151; [www.tvinspection.com](http://www.tvinspection.com). ■



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- 10' hydraulic telescoping boom with pendant control
- Hydroexcavation package
- 400 gpm pump off system
- Gravity drains system
- 80 @ 2000 water pump with 4-cylinder diesel auxillary engine

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2007	Peterbilt 340, Cat C7 300 HP	1,576	9,400	\$166,500
2007	Peterbilt 335, Cat C7 300 HP	1,000	7,500	\$189,000
2006	Sterling, Cat C7 275 HP	1,475	30,039	\$135,000

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anything unless your business sells. To learn more about brokering your business through B<sup>2</sup>, call 800-257-7222.

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**Allentown, Pennsylvania Area Sewer Business.** Specializing in collection systems, video inspection, jetting, municipal work. Includes CUES TV & grout truck, Sewer Equipment Corporation jetter truck, Vactor 2100, RIDGID camera, confined space equipment and more! Good revenue history. Great opportunity to expand or start your own business. Current owner wants to retire. **\$330,000.**

**Massachusetts Sewer & Drain Franchise For Sale.**

Confidential listing, Non Disclosure Agreement required. Turn-key business, good revenue. **Asking \$165,000.**

**Dallas/Fort Worth Texas Area Sewer/Rehab Business For Sale.**

Drain Cleaning, TV inspection, Pipeline & Manhole Rehab/Relining, Municipal Cleaning and Maintenance business for sale. Excellent opportunity to expand or start your own business. Good revenue history and priced to sell. Includes all equipment to get started. **Asking \$150,000.**

**Northern Minnesota Septic & Drain Cleaning Business For Sale.**

Established in 1965, owner is retiring. 3,500 customers including some contracted. Well-established name for 45+ years. Real estate available for additional fee that adjoins municipal dump site. Hunt, fish, snowmobile right out your back door. **Affordably priced at \$50,000.**

**Texas Septic and Sewer Business.**

Grossing in excess of \$1,000,000 annually. Includes 2007 2500 gallon septic truck, 1995 2500 gallon septic truck, 2007 and 2008 Chevy service trucks, portable restrooms and more. 430 contracted customers. **\$799,000.**

**Houston, Texas Area Septic & Drain Business.**

Grossing nearly \$300,000 annually and showing growth. Established commercial clients and customer list. Includes all equipment to operate, a turn-key business. Huge potential, owner is motivated and moving on. **Asking \$140,000.**

**Green Bay, Wisconsin Area Septic & Drain Business For Sale.**

Solid and steady revenue history and nearly 20 years established. Excellent opportunity to expand or start your own business. Includes very well-maintained 3,800 gallon septic service truck, fully outfitted 2002 Chevy drain service van, drain & sewer equipment, all office equipment and computers, 2,700+ customer list, and more - a true turn-key or easy expansion opportunity. Very meticulously maintained equipment all kept inside a heated shop. Current owner is retiring. Large shop and real estate is also available if desired at additional cost. **Asking \$249,000.**

**North Carolina Septic Business.** Grossing in excess of \$125,000 annually. Includes 2,000 gallon service truck, backhoe, jettors and more. **\$110,000.**

**Northern California/Reno, Nevada Area Portable Restroom Service Business For Sale.**

Averaging \$115,000 in revenue over past 4 years. Includes two service trucks, 100 restrooms, trailers and more. **\$75,000 REDUCED \$55,000** - motivated seller.

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# Holding Water

**A trenchless lining system saves a small municipality in southwest Minnesota from digging up the bottom of its new swimming pool**

By Scottie Dayton

**T**he municipal swimming pool in Tracy, Minn., was losing hundreds of gallons of water per day. When a local contractor televised the pool's 6-inch drain line, he found multiple, severe cracks in the two-year-old Schedule 40 PVC pipe.

Looking at the damage, Paul Desmith, a Public Works technician, remembered questioning the rationale when told by the pool builder that it didn't need winterizing. What he saw on the video was clearly the work of ice.

Two contractors tried to repair the 90-foot drain line using pulled-in-place liner systems, but the material hung up on seven tight 90-degree bends. Both repairs were aborted for fear the resin would cure with the liner halfway through the pipe.

Desmith contacted other area contractors to install a liner, but most told him flat out, "No way." He then searched the Internet, found Perma-Liner Industries Inc., and was directed to Troy Ouverson of Ouverson Sewer and Water Inc. in Buffalo, Minn.



The calibration tube, inflated to 8 psi, rises through the pool drain. The plastic sheet around it is designed to catch any stray drops of resin. The gray duct tape represents the route of the drain line. (Photography by Mary R. Christen)

"One of my first calls was to Doug McCullough at Perma-Liner to ask if we were getting in over our heads," says Ouverson. "We had never shot a liner with that many tight bends spaced so closely

together, and neither had the majority of Perma-Liner installers. We also would be using a product that was new to us."

**"We crossed our fingers, put 2 psi on the liner, and watched it take off like a Slinky toy down the stairs. We couldn't believe it."**

**Troy Ouverson**

With technical support from McCullough and his confidence that a special liner could be shot, Ouverson's crew repaired the drain line without digging up the bottom of the city's multi-million-dollar pool.

## TOUGH JOB

### PROJECT:

**Line 90 feet of a 6-inch drain pipe under a municipal pool**

### CUSTOMER:

**City of Tracy, Minn.**

### CONTRACTOR:

**Troy Ouverson, Ouverson Sewer and Water Inc., Buffalo, Minn.**

### EQUIPMENT:

**Perma-Lateral flex liner, Perma-Liner Industries Inc.**

### RESULTS:

**Line repaired without digging up the pool bottom**

### Slow and steady

Officials wanted the repair done in April, giving them enough time before summer to dig up the pipe and repair the bottom of the pool if Ouverson failed.

Preparation was critical, and Ouverson talked often with Desmith and McCullough.

"I studied the video and drawing Paul sent until I felt confident



From left to right, Doug McCullough, Paul Desmith, Troy Ouverson, and Scott Veal wait for the liners to cure.



**Scott Veal lubricates the calibration tube with a mixture of liquid dishwashing soap and water before shooting it into the liner.**

material that is stretchy and could be pulled too thin during installation. Ouverson discussed the risk factor with McCullough, who advised keeping the air pressure low.

#### **Lucky charm**

A security fence surrounds the pool, but Ouverson was allowed to back the lining trailer up to a gate. After evaluating the situation and walking through the motions, the team felt confident enough to go live.

The crew impregnated and wet out 40 feet of the liner using a warm epoxy resin to give them ample working time. "The process was challenging because the felt kept wiggling away and wouldn't readily soak up the resin," says Ouverson. "When completely wet out, the liner was similar to handling a cooked noodle."

The men rolled up the liner, then quickly transported it from the trailer to the air inversion tank in the pool. "Our first shot was upstream and had five tight 90s, three to four feet apart," says Ouverson. "We crossed our fingers, put 2 psi on the liner, and watched it take off like a Slinky toy down the stairs. We couldn't believe it."

The last 90-degree bend went straight up to a pool drain. As the nose of the liner rose over the lip, the men sighed with relief. They then shot in the calibration tube and

about working on the line," says Ouverson. He learned that when the pool was emptied over the past two winters, no one plugged the two drains afterward. Enough residual water trickled down, froze, and cracked the drain line.

Ouverson, whose shop is a four-hour drive from Tracy, scheduled three days to complete the job. "I wanted one day just to assess the situation and talk about different approaches on how to shoot the liner," he says. "We didn't want to rush into anything."

City workers cut a 4- by 4- by 5-foot-deep hole in the bottom of the concrete pool to expose the drain line, then removed a 4-foot-long section for access. Ouverson planned to use part of the first day as a training session. "Everybody had to know what to do at exactly the

**"I had three people pulling on the calibration tube line, working it back and forth, trying to rock the tube past the 90s. I was afraid we'd rip the reinforced rubber bladder because it has no stretch."**

**Troy Ouverson**

right time, and we had to block out our emergency response should something go wrong," he says. The schedule was to shoot one liner on each of the next two days.

McCullough had recommended a 2-mil 6-inch flex liner instead of the standard 3-mil Perma-Lateral system, which uses a needled felt

inflated it to 8 psi to force the liner against the walls of the host pipe.

"The tube went around the bends effortlessly, then climbed right out of the drain to protrude two feet past the liner," says Ouverson. After waiting into the evening hours for the first liner to cure, the men decided to shoot the

50-foot liner. The downstream pipe had two tight 90-degree bends, the last going straight up to a second pool drain.

"The shoot was a repeat performance of the first and absolutely flawless," says Ouverson. The men left the pressure at 8 psi on both liners overnight. "By giving ourselves a lot of working time, we also extended the curing time," he says.

#### **Morning after**

Early the next morning, the men removed the calibration tubes. "That became the hardest part of the job, because they didn't want to come back around those bends," says Ouverson. "I had three people pulling on the tube line, working it back and forth, trying to rock the tube past the 90s. I was afraid we'd rip the reinforced rubber bladder because it has no stretch."

"Mentally, this was one of my harder jobs for 2009. It was very stressful because of the multiple tight bends and the unknowns working with a new product. If we failed, breaking up the bottom of the pool would be a nightmare for the city,

and cost the taxpayers tons of money. Moreover, the pool would never look the same. The patch on the bottom would always be visible."

With the calibration tubes removed, Ouverson inspected the liner using a mainline push camera from MyTana Mfg. Co. Inc. There was no stretching. Before heading home at 8 a.m., the men connected the new pipe sections with two Fernco couplings.

City officials were thrilled to hear that their pool was repaired and unmarred. Ouverson credits McCullough's technical support as playing an integral role in the success and completion of this job. ■

#### **MORE INFO:**

**MyTana Mfg. Company Inc.**  
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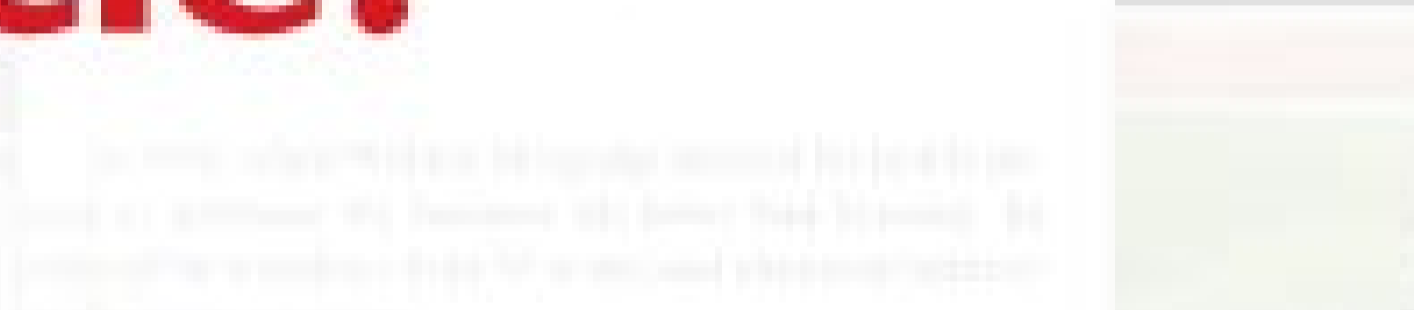
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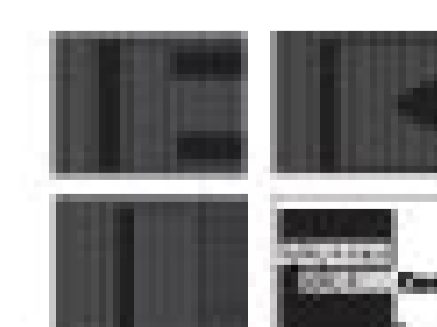
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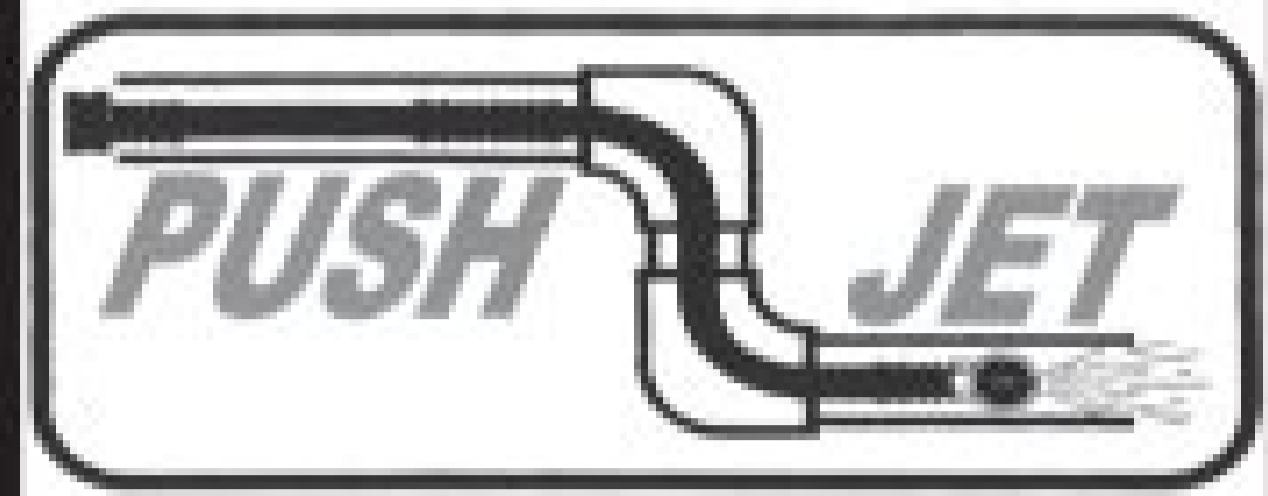
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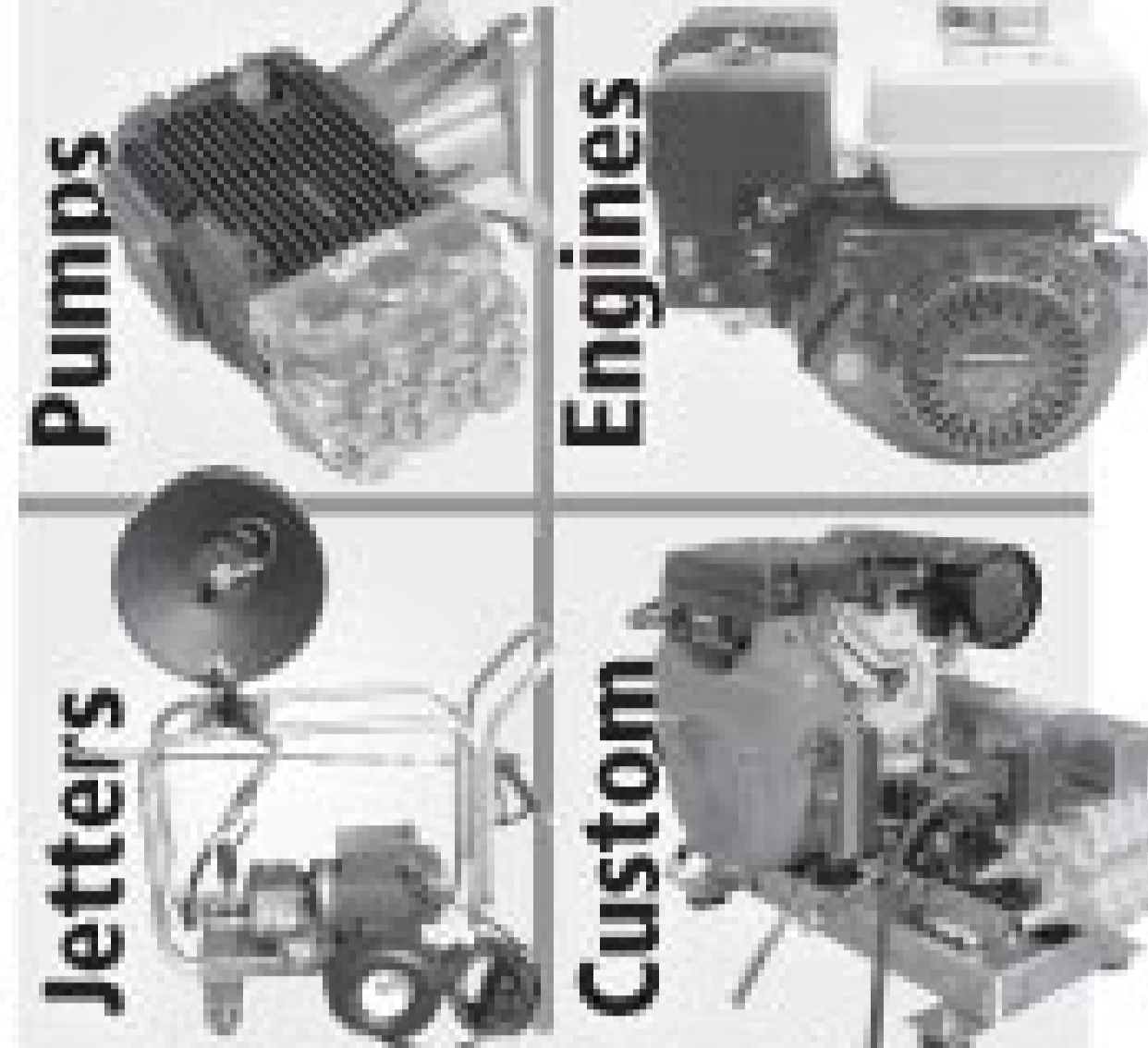
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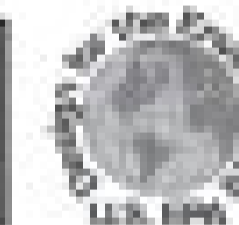
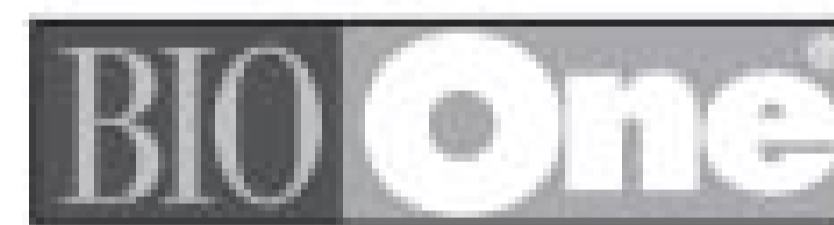
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## BUSINESSES

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**Northern California/Reno, Nevada Area Portable Restroom Service Business for Sale.** Owner is motivated and inventory alone is worth the asking price. Includes 100+ restrooms, sinks, ADA units, holding tanks, 2 service trucks and a delivery trailer. Annual revenue in excess of \$100K each of the past 4 years. List of existing customers and contracts included. Owner is willing to train if needed. Asking \$75,000 - **REDUCED TO \$55,000.** E-mail jeffb@colepublishing.com or call 800-257-7222 and ask for Jeff Bruss for more details. **A B2 Business Brokerage Listing.** (C6)

## BUSINESSES

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**Dallas/Fort Worth Texas Area Sewer/Rehab Business For Sale.** Drain Cleaning, TV inspection, Pipeline & Manhole Rehab/Relining, Municipal Cleaning and Maintenance business for sale. Excellent opportunity to expand or start your own business. Good revenue history and priced to sell. Includes all equipment to get started. **Offered at \$150,000.** E-mail jeffb@colepublishing.com visit www.Btwo.biz or call 800-257-7222 and ask for Jeff Bruss for more details. **A B2 Business Brokerage Listing.** (CBM)

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## BUSINESSES

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**Looking to sell your portable restroom business?** We have buyers looking in the following areas: Florida, California, Virginia, Iowa, Kentucky, New York, Pennsylvania and more! Must have gross revenue in excess of \$250,000 in most cases. E-mail jeffb@colepublishing.com or call 800-257-7222 and ask for Jeff Bruss for more details. **A B2 Business Brokerage Listing.** (CBM)

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## JET VACS

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## VACUUM LOADERS

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Aerators                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Dredges                | <input type="checkbox"/> Levels & Transits        | <input type="checkbox"/> Positions Wanted    | <input type="checkbox"/> Root Control             | <input type="checkbox"/> Trailers- Vacuum/Tanker    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blowers                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Excavating Attachments | <input type="checkbox"/> Locators                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Pressure Washers    | <input type="checkbox"/> Safety Equipment         | <input type="checkbox"/> Trucks (dump/septic/misc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bucket Machines             | <input type="checkbox"/> Excavating Equipment   | <input type="checkbox"/> Miscellaneous            | <input type="checkbox"/> Pumps-Dredge        | <input type="checkbox"/> Septic System Components | <input type="checkbox"/> TV Inspection              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Businesses                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Hand Tools             | <input type="checkbox"/> Parts & Components       | <input type="checkbox"/> Pumps-High Pressure | <input type="checkbox"/> Septic Tanks             | <input type="checkbox"/> Vacuum Loaders             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business Opportunities      | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazardous Waste Units  | <input type="checkbox"/> Pipeline Rehabilitation  | <input type="checkbox"/> Pumps-Submersible   | <input type="checkbox"/> Septic Trucks            | <input type="checkbox"/> Vanes                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cable Machines              | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydroexcavation        | <input type="checkbox"/> Portable Toilets         | <input type="checkbox"/> Pumps-Vacuum        | <input type="checkbox"/> Service/Repair           | <input type="checkbox"/> Vehicle Tracking           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer Software           | <input type="checkbox"/> Jetters-Trailer        | <input type="checkbox"/> Portable Toilet Tanks    | <input type="checkbox"/> Pumps - Washdown    | <input type="checkbox"/> Slide-In Units           | <input type="checkbox"/> Wanted                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dewatering                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Jetters-Truck          | <input type="checkbox"/> Portable Toilet Trailers | <input type="checkbox"/> Pumps-Water         | <input type="checkbox"/> Sludge Applicators       | <input type="checkbox"/> Wastewater Transfer        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drainfield Restoration      | <input type="checkbox"/> Jet Vacs               | <input type="checkbox"/> Portable Toilet Trucks   | <input type="checkbox"/> Rodding Machines    | <input type="checkbox"/> Tanks                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Waterblasting              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drain/Sewer Cleaning Equip. | <input type="checkbox"/> Lease Financing        | <input type="checkbox"/> Positions Available      | <input type="checkbox"/> Roll-Off Containers | <input type="checkbox"/> Tools                    |   |

**CHOOSE THE PUBLICATION(S):** (Deadlines are for the month preceding issue)

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>CLEANER</b><br>Deadline: 1st of the Month                     | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>PUMPER</b><br>Deadline: 10th of the Month            | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>PRO</b><br>Deadline: 17th of the Month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>MUNICIPAL SEWER &amp; WATER</b><br>Deadline: 1st of the Month | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>ON-SITE INSTALLER</b><br>Deadline: 17th of the Month |  |

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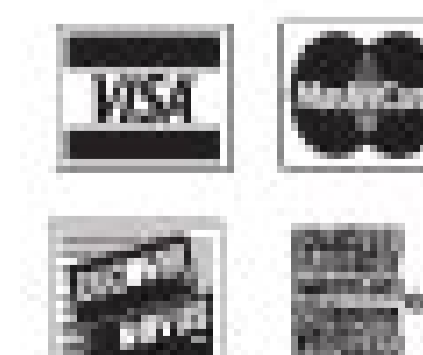
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