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# AVOIDING THE DIG

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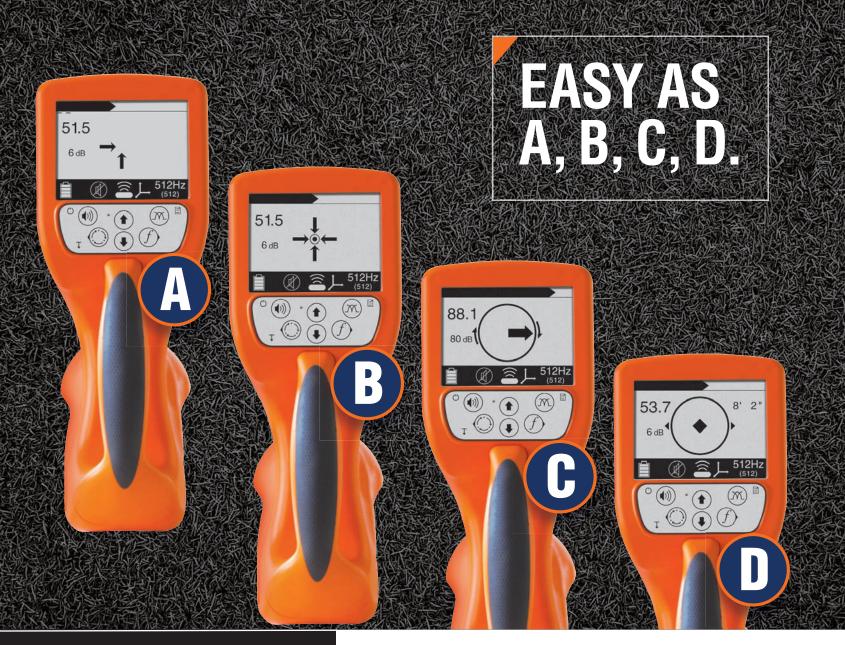


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#### **PROfile** NuFlow Certified Contractor

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**ON THE COVER** // When Max Greenberg's father didn't want to add pipe bursting to the family business's offerings, he took the leap on his own. An investor helped him get started, and Greenberg's The Trenchless Company has since built a reputation as the trenchless pipeline replacement experts in Sacramento, California. (Photography by Collin Chappelle)



FEBRUARY 2021





#### coming next month: March 2021 focus: Chemical and Mechanical Root Control

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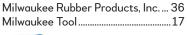


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#### S-906M1-AK Advance Kinetics For Recyclers esigned for flow 40 - 170 gpm and pressures to 3000 psi. The motor is rated to 288 lbs. of torque and 220 lbs. continuous.



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SRRK-1 Super Green Meanie Green Kit The round profile allows the cutter to enter sewer lines 4" and up. Motor handles flows from 40 - 80 GPM and pressures 2000 - 3000 PSI. Rated up to 235 ftlb. of torque, and 175 ftlb. of continuous torque. Kit comes with SRRC-1P Super Green Motor; 1" Saw Blade Hub; 6", 8", 10", 12" HD Concave Saw Blade; 6", 8" Cage Skid Single Size; Set Of 10" & 12" Fins. Motor fits Green wheeled skids you may have.



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## **SPECIALTY SERVICE**

Focusing on specific services hones your skills and can distinguish your business



Email me with comments, questions or opinions at editor@cleaner.com

**ANY DRAIN CLEANING COMPANIES FIND SUCCESS** by diversifying. Adding new services can be a great way to grow a business. But it doesn't work for everyone, and it's not the only way to grow or be more profitable.

Instead of looking to expand, examine what you do really well and find ways to get even better at it.

Some companies thrive as specialists. Offering fewer services, or taking on only certain types of jobs may seem limiting at first, but it allows you to develop strong skills in that area and really make a name for yourself. A reputation as an expert is a strong marketing



www.PipeLiningSupply.com CONTACT US info@pipeliningsupply.com or call 888-354-6464 tool, and one that gives customers confidence in hiring you.

Both companies featured in this month's *Cleaner* profiles are specialists.

Savy & Sons, located in Amston, Connecticut, is a full-service business, but they focus almost exclusively on repairing and rehabilitating old infrastructure rather than new installations. There is no shortage of aging pipelines in New England, and the company has built a reputation for successfully taking on difficult restoration jobs.

"Our plan is to 100% laser focus on our current specialty services and be the best at them in the industry," says owner Travis Savy. "We want to build a premium brand that is known for its top-quality and high-end work." The need for pipe lining continues to grow and the company's strategy of restoration is very appealing to customers.

Max Greenberg recognized the value of specialization too. He grew up in the plumbing industry, working for his father's business. When he discovered pipe bursting some 20 years ago, his father was skeptical about bringing on a new service no one was familiar with. But Greenberg saw the potential and decided to start his own business. He invested in trenchless technology and subcontracted the work out to plumbers who didn't have the equipment.

His business, The Trenchless Company, focused on "avoiding the dig." Pipe bursting gained traction and the company was in demand. The singular focus allowed him to keep the company lean, and he could use the specialty to his advantage — marketing his expertise.

Specializing doesn't mean you are exempt from having to adapt, however. Your business has to grow and change with the market, demand and new technology.

Greenberg's reliance on subcontracting eventually needed to change. More companies saw the value of investing in their own trenchless pipe replacement equipment, so The Trenchless Company had to find a new way to get in front of customers. He found the solution in a new marketing strategy, going directly to property owners in the residential and commercial markets. His focus and expertise in trenchless work made it possible.

Specializing won't be the answer to everything, but it can help you focus your energy and grow your reputation as an expert in the industry. Bigger isn't always better.

I hope you enjoy this month's issue. **c** 

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## AVOIDING THE

MAX GREENBERG TOOK A LEAP OF FAITH WITH TRENCHLESS TECHNOLOGY AND BUILT HIS BUSINESS AROUND NO-DIG SEWER REPLACEMENT AND REPAIR By Suzan Chin-Taylor

Photography by Collin Chappelle & courtesy of The Trenchless Company

hird-generation plumbers often grow up in the family business and patiently wait for their turn at the helm. Max Greenberg made his own way.

He took his chances on some new technology, branching out to start his own business, The Trenchless Company, when he was 22 years old.

Greenberg first entered the family business straight out of high school, preferring to gain his knowledge of the business in the field rather than the college classroom. He started as an apprentice and worked in various roles in the business. A

pattern started to emerge that whenever a service call resulted in a water or sewer line replacement or significant repair, Greenberg was assigned to handle the digging and preparation

	nchless Company D, CALIFORNIA
OWNER	Max Greenberg
EMPLOYEES	50
SERVICES	Pipe bursting, CIPP, HDD, point repairs, cleaning and descaling, CCTV inspection, drain cleaning
SERVICE AREA	Sacramento metro area, Reno, Nevada, the Lake Tahoe, California, area and the Bay Area
WEBSITE	www.dontdig.com

for installations performed by the master plumbers. Eventually he was assigned his own helper and began making these types of repairs and installations himself, leaving the master plumbers to handle emergency calls.



Trenchless Company crew leader Douglas Lagos uses a RIDGID camera system to monitor the progress of a Picote Maxi Miller prepping a residential sewer pipe for relining, while owner Max Greenberg looks on.

» A Trenchless Company crew feeds a CIPP liner into a Perma-Liner inversion unit to begin relining a sewer line.

➢Installer Glenn Mason (left) and installation department manager Luis Dominguez wet out a liner for a pipeline rehab project.



It was this experience in the field that made clear where he wanted to focus his efforts and future. "It was hard work, it was physical, and I just really enjoyed the work. I knew I wasn't interested in the traditional plumbing repairs like faucets, water heater installs and the like, and I became passionate about this side of the business," Greenberg says.

He also had a chance to operate a septic pumping truck for about 18 months and this gave him the chance to directly interact with customers, which helped prepare him to take a leadership role in the company. In late 1999, Greenberg approached his father about learning other aspects of the business, in particular the administration and financial elements. As he became more active in this role, expanding his knowledge and exploring new technology, father and son began having difficulties seeing eye-to-eye on the future direction of the company.





#### **BURSTING ONTO THE SCENE**

In 1999 while Greenberg was busy learning the management side of the business, he attended the annual WWETT Show (then known as the Pumper & Cleaner Environmental Expo) and encountered a booth that changed the course of his career. "I'll never forget it; it said 'Replace Sewer Lines Without Digging,'" says Greenberg. "I was sore from the job that we were on just a day or so ago and thought, 'Am I reading this right?' So I had to know how this was possible."

In that TRIC Tools booth they were showcasing pipe bursting, which was then pioneering technology. He arranged to have a field demo on his next project. Excited about the potential of what this could mean to the business, he rushed to share his findings with his father.

The demo proved that pipe bursting could do everything it claimed, and Greenberg immediately saw the potential new revenue stream for the business. The equipment investment would be \$30,000 to \$50,000, but using this method could save production time, not to mention big cost savings for their clients. Even so, Greenberg's father was skeptical about investing in a technology that hardly anyone was familiar with.

A crew member operates the controls of a
 US Jetting trailer jetter on a residential lining job.

"I'LL NEVER FORGET IT; IT SAID 'REPLACE SEWER LINES WITHOUT DIGGING.' I WAS SORE FROM THE JOB THAT WE WERE ON JUST A DAY OR SO AGO AND THOUGHT, 'AM I READING THIS RIGHT?' SO I HAD TO KNOW HOW THIS WAS POSSIBLE." MAX GREENBERG

ight Cure

Although he laid out a case for expanding the business in this direction, his father would not budge. "So, it finally hit me that this wasn't really his problem, it was my problem — and if I wanted to do something about it, then I should take the initiative and do something about it," Greenberg says.

Greenberg took his then brother-in-law up on an offer to assist with a large project in Arizona that could earn him a large chunk of money to put toward starting this new venture, and also to help him in developing the new business. While working in Arizona, on their off hours the two worked on a business plan, logo, a basic website and financed a van which they had wrapped in graphics featuring the new branding.

Shortly after arriving back in Sacramento with the van, a business plan and \$14,000 saved up, Greenberg met one of his mentors for coffee to tell him about his concept. As he showed him the van, the mentor's only question was: "So, what's stopping you?" Greenberg told him about the equipment, and explained that

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if he had the financial means, he could get started immediately. His mentor went to his car and returned with checkbook in hand, offering Greenberg a loan, on the condition that he leave immediately for Oakland, purchase the unit and return to show it to him to prove how the funds were used. The agreement was written and signed on a Starbucks napkin and Greenberg set off to acquire his first TRIC pipe bursting unit.

> "THAT'S ONE OF THE BIGGEST ASPECTS THAT REALLY SET US APART. BECAUSE WE'VE BEEN SPECIALISTS IN THIS NOW FOR 20 YEARS, WE'VE LEARNED A LOT ALONG THE WAY." MAX GREENBERG

#### **EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS**

When Greenberg showed up at the factory to get his bursting equipment, TRIC executives agreed to finance a small portion of the initial equipment purchase for Greenberg so that he would have everything needed for a solid launch, but they had some doubts about his chances for success. They had never sold bursting equipment to a contractor that did not have an existing plumbing or related business. But far from defaulting in the first year, Greenberg paid off all his loans and purchased two more bursting equipment sets and had three crews running nonstop.

The firm's fast-track success was due to a wholesaling business model. Greenberg called residential and commercial plumbers who did not currently do trenchless pipe repairs and asked to be their specialty subcontractor. Greenberg and his team would meet with these contractors, review the technology, and provide training to their staff on how to sell the process to customers. The Trenchless Company would also assist with camera inspection services if their client contractors had no camera systems of their own to assess lines and perform pre- and post-job inspections.

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## ONE STAR TO FIVE

t's not whether you're right or wrong; it's the customer's perception that's the reality and you have to deal with that." Max Greenberg, owner and founder of The Trenchless Company, took those wise words of his father's to heart when he started his own business.

Every firm strives to make sure customers are satisfied and will give them a five-star review, but it's not always possible. When Greenberg encounters those one-star and other negative reviews on social media platforms, rather than get upset or enter defensive mode, he responds personally to each one with the intent of fact-finding and gathering feedback. "It's not always the feedback you want but it's the feedback you need and from it, you can grow, make changes and turn that customer around and make them happy," Greenberg says.

In his experience, hearing out those upset customers who are just ready and waiting to do battle by simply answering that he and his team are going to make it right, instantly diffuses everything and oftentimes leaves the customer in shock that their issue is going to be resolved that easily. They don't expect that response. "Some of those first-time upset customers are now the ones who reversed their rating, keep coming back and have become some of our best referral sources."

This approach to negative reviews has also added to his team's performance and positive attitude overall since they know if things go wrong in the field, they won't get in trouble — everyone will work together to turn it around and it will be handled. Pressure is lifted and when they interact with customers, they have the confidence that their firm stands behind their work and that it's always possible to turn one star into five.



## SEWER & DRAIN MAINTENANCE







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MX FUEL "Sewer Drum Machine w/ POWERTREDZ" Kit MXF501-1CP







The model worked well for a long time but as trenchless technology became more popular and widely accepted, firms that had previously used The Trenchless Company as a subcontractor shifted to investing in their own equipment to perform repairs in-house. Greenberg knew it was time for The Trenchless Company to start going directly to property owners, so he brought on a marketing manager to solidify the company's marketing message, branding and strategy for its online communications.



Gerson Ordoñez feeds the jetter line to his partner during a residential pipe lining job in Sacramento, California.

#### THE SPECIALTY ADVANTAGE

Although this change would require more investment in marketing, the firm's specialization gave it an advantage over other plumbing companies in the region. Specialization meant Greenberg could keep his business lean and use the distinction of being a trenchless repair specialty firm to his advantage. He focused on residential and commercial properties only, forgoing entering the municipal market.

In 2006, not wanting to limit its capabilities to pipe bursting, the company added Vermeer and Ditch Witch directional boring and drilling equipment as well as CIPP from a variety of manufacturers including Pipe Lining Supply. They also invested in a CCTV inspection rig for assessment of 6-inch and larger lines. The Trenchless Company is now capable of offering pipe bursting in 2- up to 15-inch-diameter lines, CIPP lining for 6- to 12-inch pipes and sectional repairs in

segments as large as 24 inches in diameter. The addition of Picote scaling, cleaning, rehabilitation and reinstatement tools as well as a Dancutter USA robotic reinstatement cutter have opened more commercial markets for The Trenchless Company such as hospitals, schools, high-rise buildings, shopping centers and commercial centers.

Everything Greenberg has chosen to add to his firm's arsenal is centered on avoiding the dig. "That's one of the biggest aspects that really set us apart. Because we've been specialists in this now for 20

> years, we've learned a lot along the way. When we take on a project, we know that a solid project management plan, together with looking at the project from different angles will ensure the best possible outcome. It may mean we have to incorporate multiple technologies to get a project completed, and it is that knowledge and diverse set of solutions we now possess that makes us a valuable asset and partner for our clients in resolving their infrastructure rehabilitation."

> Case in point was a recent project for the Sierra Nevada Brewing Co. The company is genuinely concerned about environmental impact and so had set up a PVC system to handle the run-off from the beer production and keep it away from other equipment. This worked for a while; however, high temperatures and the caustic nature of the run-off were too much for the PVC to handle. The system cracked under the strain and started to leak. Sierra Nevada needed to resolve the situation while keeping their plant as green as possible.

> Understanding the chemical composition and temperatures of what would be handled by the PVC system, The Trenchless Company looked for the best solution for Sierra Nevada's needs and green objectives. They found that a CIPP liner with a special vinyl ester resin would stand up to the challenge. Over the course of three months, and around the plant's operating schedule, crews lined and then reinstated lateral connections

in the PVC system using a remotely operated internal robotic cutter. The new liner was put into place to seal the system, and Sierra Nevada Brewing Co. could again operate leak-free.

#### **CULTURE OF COMMUNITY**

The Trenchless Company comprises a group of people who have literally "grown up" together. Many of its employees have been with Greenberg since the beginning days of the venture when he was just 22 years old and they have witnessed each other get married, buy their first homes, have children and become active in their communities. As an owner, he has found that some of the most surprising benefits of starting his own firm and doing it on his own terms is being able to see how the business has touched the lives of the many people who have been part of The Trenchless Company family.



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Get Results Driven Commercial Equipment Financing with Navitas SVE.NavitaScredit.com "We have an owner who benchmarks his success on how many of his employees own a home, a car and are able to provide all the best for their children," says Nick DeGraff, director of marketing and business development. "And this stakeholder model is also extended to the firm's clients and network of vendors."

"WE HAVE AN OWNER WHO BENCHMARKS HIS SUCCESS ON HOW MANY OF HIS EMPLOYEES OWN A HOME, A CAR AND ARE ABLE TO PROVIDE ALL THE BEST FOR THEIR CHILDREN." NICK DEGRAFF

This culture of community makes it possible for The Trenchless Company to recruit and retain talent more successfully than other skilled trades firms in the area. The company has established a platform for entry-level team members to grow into more skilled and higher paying positions such as camera technician, full-time estimator, field sales or field supervisor. They also have a generous employee referral reward program that pays \$1,000 a year from the time that both employees — the one who refers and the referred hire — are both employed. Both parties have a vested interest in each other's success and to Greenberg, this is a small expense to protect his most valuable asset: his team.

"It has been one of the most rewarding things I've ever done in my life aside from my marriage and having children," Greenberg says. "That this little idea I had and started out of my 700-square-foot house and one-car detached garage has not only created an amazing life for me and my family but so many other families." **c** 

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## **DIG WITHOUT DANGER**

It's always helpful to revisit the fundamentals of a safe excavation site // By Chris Galloway

AFETY AND QUALITY ARE TWO OF THE MOST inseparable components to success on a job site. You can't have one without the other.

And without a solid foundation of safe practices, you'll suffer from more than a deficit of quality. Safety isn't just a quota — it's the thing that keeps workers safe, happy and productive.

You should have a profound understanding of the tenets of excellent safety. It should be a pillar of your company's identity. Most of all, you should know that there are always ways to improve upon what you already have. But without the fundamentals, you'll struggle to maintain consistent quality and high productivity.

#### SAFETY FROM OSHA'S PERSPECTIVE

OSHA has already done the hard work to collect, organize and explain the various components to keeping a safe excavation site. For free on its website, OSHA even has a Trenching and Excavation Safety manual for anyone to download. In this manual, OSHA goes over the fundamentals of excavation and trench safety, such as understanding the various classifications of soil:

Stable Rock — Natural solid mineral matter that can be excavated with vertical sides and remain intact while exposed.

Type A — Cohesive soils with an unconfined compressive strength of 1.5 tons per square foot (tsf) (144 kPa) or greater. Examples include clay, silty clay, sandy clay and clay loam. Certain conditions preclude soil from being classified as Type A. For example, no soil is Type A if it is fissured or has been previously disturbed.

Type B — Includes cohesive soil with an unconfined compressive strength greater than 0.5 tsf (48 kPa) but less than 1.5 tsf (144 kPa) and granular cohesionless soils (such as angular gravel, similar to crushed rock, silt, silt loam, sandy loam and, in some cases, silty clay loam and sandy clay loam).

Type C — Cohesive soil with an unconfined compressive strength of 0.5 tsf (48 kPa) or less, granular soils (including gravel,

#### OSHA OUTLINES THE "GENERAL PPE" REQUIRED FOR MOST EXCAVATION, BUT THE MORE PROTECTED YOUR CREW IS, THE SAFER AND MORE PRODUCTIVE YOU'LL BE.

sand and loamy sand), submerged soil or soil from which water is freely seeping, submerged rock that is not stable, or material in a sloped, layered system where the layers dip into the excavation or with a slope of four horizontal to one vertical (4H:1V) or steeper.

#### SITE SAFETY CHECKLIST

For any excavation job, it's best to create a safety checklist to be completed by a "competent person."

As defined by OSHA: A competent person is an individual, designated by the employer, who is capable of identifying existing and predictable hazards in the surroundings or working conditions that are unsanitary, hazardous or dangerous to workers, and who is authorized to take prompt corrective measures to eliminate them.

OSHA also lists the types of tasks that a competent person should be performing on a job site:

- Classifying soil
- Inspecting protective systems
- Designing structural ramps
- Monitoring water removal equipment
- Conducting site inspections

It's best to create a custom checklist based on your specific requirements and even tailor individual checklists to your various job sites.

#### **USE PROPER PPE**

PPE — personal protective equipment — is a term used for any protective equipment worn by a person for hazard protection. PPE can include helmets, goggles, clothing, gloves and anything else that is worn to keep you safe at your prospective site.

OSHA outlines the "general PPE" required for most excavation, but the more protected your crew is, the safer and more productive you'll be. OSHA's trenching and excavation worksheet outlines the following PPE:

- Hard hat for overhead impact or electrical hazards
- Eye protection with side shields
- Gloves chosen for expected job hazards (e.g., heavy-duty leather work gloves for handling debris with sharp edges and/or chemical protective gloves appropriate for chemicals potentially contacted)
- ANSI-approved protective footwear
- Respiratory protection as necessary N, R or P95, filtering facepieces may be used for nuisance dusts (e.g., dried mud, dirt and silt) and mold (except mold remediation); filters with a charcoal layer may be used for odors

Two popular sources for hardy, cost-effective PPE are ULINE and Grainger.

#### **CHOOSE THE SAFEST TOOLS**

Not every power tool is created equal. There are easy ways to increase your safety by being more mindful of the tools your crew uses.

For example, one easy way to reduce air compressor noise and the various other hazards that come with a compressor is to switch to a more portable gas-powered jackhammer. They're more efficient than the standard pneumatic variety of jackhammer and produce less noise, dust and vibration. With less equipment needed and less to haul to and from a site, making use of power tools with more portability will have a positive effect on the overall site safety.

#### **SAFETY IS MULTIFACETED**

The idea of "safety" is largely intangible. It's a multifaceted effort that should constantly evolve on both the micro and macro levels.

As your business matures, so too should its understanding of safety. Day-to-day safety on a job site should evolve as well to accommodate the changing landscape, the different weather and the stage of construction. If you follow these basic tenets, you'll be well on your way to a safer job site. **c** 

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chris Galloway is the owner of US Hammer Jackhammers and Post Drivers. A lifelong contractor, he runs US Hammer and Pioneer Machinery, his rental equipment company, from Woodland, California.

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## MONEY MACHINES

## **MECHANICAL ADVANTAGE**

Simplicity and ease of maintenance are major selling points for this well-engineered combo sewer truck *//* By Ken Wysocky

**T SOME POINT, EVEN THE BEST-BUILT SEWER** truck will need repairs. So when Wastewater Transport Services (WTS) decided to invest in a new combination sewer truck with a hydroexcavating package, repairability — along with power and performance — was a primary concern.

"No matter what brand of vac truck you buy, they're highmaintenance vehicles because they take a beating," says Cory Juby, vice president of the Texas region at Wastewater Transport Services, headquartered in Austin, Texas. "So when we needed a new combo truck, we looked very closely at ease of repair and maintenance."

The company found just what is was looking for in a Model 900 ECO truck built by Sewer Equipment. Built on a tandemaxle Western Star 4700SF chassis, the roughly \$450,000 truck features a 12-cubic-yard debris tank, a 1,500-gallon water tank, a 4,400 cfm Roots blower (a brand owned by the Howden Group), a 27 1/2-foot-long hydraulically operated boom with a 180-degree working radius and a Giant plunger-style triplex water pump (2,500 psi at 80 gpm).

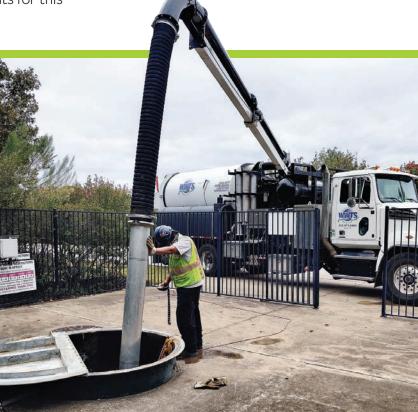
A hydraulically controlled, front-mounted reel that both telescopes and rotates can carry up to 800 feet of 1-inch-diameter line and includes a footage meter. It also offers a hydraulic lift for dumping debris (50-degree dump angle) and a debris-body pump-off system.

The truck primarily is used to clean lift stations, which explains the unusually powerful blower. "A lot of them are at an extreme depth," Juby says. "The average depth is about 30 feet. But we've gone down as far as 50 to 55 feet down and it still functions pretty well, with no loss of pressure."

WTS specializes in municipal sludge hauling and cleaning grease traps, grit traps, septic tanks and lift stations.

#### **MECHANIC APPROVED**

When Sewer Equipment representatives brought the truck to WTS for a demo, one of the first things they did was ask the



☆ Wastewater Transport Services technician Miguel Duran cleans grease, plastics and other debris from a sanitary sewer lift station. The remote control lets him see where he is working and operate the truck from a distance.

company's in-house mechanics to take a look. And they liked what they saw, Juby says.

"They got our mechanics on board first. They saw how easy it would be to repair. They loved how everything is mounted everything is accessible.

"We deal with some trucks in our fleet that are a nightmare to replace and repair components. But this truck is engineered as if someone planned to do maintenance on it."

Because most combo vac trucks are similar in terms of specifications and capabilities, ease-of-maintenance is a significant differentiator for WTS. "In the long run, maintenance makes the difference," Juby says. "If you ask even the best mechanics to twist into a pretzel to do a general lube job or a repair, they'll skip it to save time — it's just human nature."



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OWNERAmerican AllWaste LLCMACHINEECO 900 combination sewer truck<br/>from Sewer EquipmentFUNCTIONClean lift stations and sewer linesFEATURESTandem-axle Western Star 4700SF chassis; 12-cubic-<br/>yard debris tank, 1,500-gallon water tank; 4,400 cfm<br/>Roots blower; 27 1/2-foot-long hydraulically operated<br/>boom with a 180-degree working radius; Giant plunger-<br/>style triplex water pump (2,500 psi at 80 gpm); front-<br/>mounted reel that both telescopes and rotates and<br/>carries up to 800 feet of 1-inch-diameter hose.COSTApproximately \$450,000

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That, in turn, can lead to in-the-field breakdowns, which hurts profit margins and decreases customer satisfaction.

"But Sewer Equipment took the approach that mechanics shouldn't have any problem getting under there to work. We have to drive some trucks up on ramps in order to get under them, but everything here is accessible. So the work that needs to get done gets done — and that can make you or break you out in the field, in terms of breakdowns."

In addition, mechanics don't need special training or a laptop with proprietary diagnostic software to trouble shoot the trucks.

#### SIMPLE OPERATION

The simplistic approach to maintenance carries over to the 900 ECO's controls. The blower is powered by a hydrostatic pump at the front of the truck; an accessory driveshaft, driven by a hydraulic pump at the rear of the truck, powers all the other hydraulic functions.

"IT'S OUR GO-TO TRUCK. IT'S ALWAYS WORKING. IT'S LIKE SEWER EQUIPMENT TOOK ALL THE BEST FEATURES OF COMPETING TRUCKS AND PUT THEM ALL ON ONE TRUCK." CORY JUBY The unit's Hydro Drive technology allows the truck's engine to supply power to the pumps without a power take-off. As such, operators can run the truck in neutral gear, which eliminates the chances of the truck slipping into gear while operating and potentially injuring an operator.

"We've never seen anything like it," Juby says. "It works really well."

Moreover, operation is as simple as flipping a switch that puts the truck into "work" mode. After that, the operator engages switches for the water pump, blower and throttle — no complicated touchpad menu or special sequencing required.

"As long as the engine is running and in park, you just flip the hydraulics on and you're ready to work," he says.

The company bought an ECO 900 a little more than a year ago and it's been a sound investment. It's out in the field working every day, sometimes for 10 hours a day, five days a week, with few problems.

"It's our go-to truck. It's always working. It's like Sewer Equipment took all the best features of competing trucks and put them all on one truck."

In fact, WTS was so impressed with its performance that it bought a second ECO 900 for its Houston-based facility. And Juby says it's performing impressively there, too.

"We're a very happy customer. And we'll be buying from them again."  $\ensuremath{\mathbf{c}}$ 



Miguel Duran (left) and Israel Mendoza use a jetter to clean a storm sewer while recovering solids and debris with the vacuum boom.

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## SUPPORT THAT NEVER STOPS

Paramount Pipe Lining provides custom-built and branded pipe rehabilitation packages along with training to help customers every step of the way *//* By Kim Peterson

**ARAMOUNT PIPE LINING PRODUCTS IS A** relatively new company in the pipe rehabilitation industry, but it's already making strides with innovative coatings and linings. Its mission is simple: identify customer needs, find solutions to those needs, and provide a high level of tailored customer support along the way.

*Cleaner* recently spoke with Steve Parks, COO of Paramount Pipe Lining Products, about the company's CIPP offerings, innovative product lines and extensive customer support.

## **CLEANER:** Tell us a little about the history of Paramount Pipe Lining.

**PARKS**: Paramount Pipe Lining Products LLC was formed in 2019 in Clearwater, Florida, by industry entrepreneurs, in order to provide diversified services with innovative pipe rehabilitation technology and meet market needs. By late 2020, Paramount added distribution points in Alexandria, Virginia, and Seattle for product deployment and face-to-face technical assistance in those markets, which allow for immediate delivery options and troubleshooting support to meet customer needs and to keep projects on schedule.

The company operates its business through two basic divisions, Innovation and Technology, and Spray-In-Place-Pipe (SIPP) Coatings and Cured-In-Place-Pipe (CIPP) Linings. The Innovation and Technology division includes a wide variety of equipment and components for the rehabilitation of failing pipes and conduits, impregnation systems for introducing resin to rehabilitation materials, and curing systems to accelerate installation and return rehabilitated pipes to service. Custom-built equipment packages are also designed and fabricated to ensure quality and consistent installations for site-specific, unique conditions. The SIPP Coatings and CIPP Linings division provides installation materials that can be utilized for spray coating, brush coating, inversion and pull-inplace applications.

The company's formula for success is to identify customer needs, use Paramount's technology to pioneer innovative solutions

to address those needs, and maintain a team of experienced professionals to provide solutions.

## **CLEANER:** What differentiates your SIPP and CIPP solutions from the competition?

**PARKS:** The company has a team of industry innovators with a total of 63 years of SIPP and CIPP knowledge and experience. Over the past 12 months, Paramount designed two improvements for its rehabilitation technology inversion equipment, all of which have patents pending.

The Paramount inversion Auto-Oiler system allows the CIPP liner tube to be loaded into the inversion drum, dry, without prelubricant. The Auto-Oiler is a pressurized ring system that evenly lubricates the liner tube as it exits the Paramount inversion drum. The Auto-Oiler system is only pressurized during the inversion of the liner and can be turned off by the operator at any time during the inversion process. This eliminates the pre-lubricating of CIPP liner tube, potential lubricant spills, excess lubricant on equipment, and unsafe conditions.

Another noted feature is the internal Steam Ring system. The Paramount inversion drum can now safely introduce steam without disconnecting the inversion head from the inversion drum. The air pressure from the drum forces the steam away from the drum. This eliminates heat buildup inside the drum, disconnecting the inversion head from the drum, and unsafe operations.

In addition, the Paramount product lines offer 11 different types of CIPP liner with unique characteristics for all applications. Our catalog includes 2-1 and 4-1 ratio epoxy-based resin and hardeners, and high temp epoxy for industrial applications. We offer only nonshrink resin technology to meet zero-leakage hydrostatic and/or air test requirements. Paramount resins are formulated and delivered to our customers ready for installation.

Paramount is ever-conscious of promoting our customers' standing and exposure in their markets. Paying attention to every detail, each Paramount inversion drum is prominently labeled



PARAMOUNT IS EVER-CONSCIOUS OF PROMOTING OUR CUSTOMERS' STANDING AND EXPOSURE IN THEIR MARKETS. PAYING ATTENTION TO EVERY DETAIL, EACH PARAMOUNT INVERSION DRUM IS PROMINENTLY LABELED WITH THE CUSTOMER'S COMPANY NAME, LOGO AND COLORS.

### **CLEANER**: What are some recommendations for customers shopping for CIPP lining systems?

**PARKS:** First, confirm that the manufacturer/supplier has experienced technical staff with a diverse portfolio of technology skills to provide comprehensive support. Second, verify that the materials are tested and approved, and that equipment is safe and efficient. The right materials and equipment for a cured-in-place pipe rehabilitation project should never be a "what's on the shelf" offering.

#### CLEANER: How do you see the pipe lining industry evolving?

**PARKS**: There are a number of noticeable evolutions within the pipe lining industry: light curing, coatings, increased access to new European supply chains, and recent mergers and acquisitions. The major small-diameter CIPP brands are now part of larger companies or groups. This evolution has commoditized the relationship between the supplier and the customer. The entrepreneurial foundation has lapsed over time within the manufacturing and distribution chains, causing the participation levels between the supplier and customer to become diluted. Participation and

The Paramount Pipe Lining Golden Eye is a variable-range and lightweight aluminum inversion drum for lateral and main sewer rehabilitation.

The Paramount wet-out table is user-friendly and easily portable in a truck or trailer.



with the customer's company name, logo and colors. We also design custom wrapped lining trucks, trailers and equipment. Specification books and field install sheets are also customized with the customer's name, logo and colors to exhibit a tailored, formatted presentation to their clients.

## **CLEANER:** What sort of needs do they address? Tell us about the lining systems and what applications they best serve.

**PARKS:** Paramount's rehabilitation systems have been designed based on horizontal or vertical applications. Our innovative team members design and formulate product lines that offer the right solutions and best installation process for the application requirements. Paramount has designed and formulated multiple products that have patents pending. The days of one-liner-does-all is not acceptable. Resin technology is critical to the application and liner tube characteristics. Paramount's portfolio offers multiple epoxy resin formulations, 11 varieties of CIPP liners, efficient and safe installation equipment, and unique installation procedures.

## BEHIND THE GEAR

collaboration between entrepreneurs is what this industry was historically built upon. There is now an opportunity for innovative manufacturers and distributors to participate in a renovated resurgence.

Paramount is very much a part of that spirit that is evolving today. Our organization has focused on staffing with experienced technical talent. The company provides an authentic level of support by offering the industry's highest level of participation within our customer base. Interaction with customers is not a "quarterly collared shirt and khaki" visit, it's a "get in the pit, hands on, get it lined" relationship.

#### CLEANER: What's new for Paramount Pipe Lining in 2021? What can customers expect out of Paramount in the future?

**PARKS:** Paramount is currently focusing on three new strategic distribution locations in North America. The company will continue to aggressively invest in securing and, when

necessary, formulating innovative lining and coating technologies. Most important, Paramount will remain data dependent on the needs of our customer base and utilize and deploy new technology based on those needs. You can also expect a full line of business development products and services from our company. To facilitate and focus on those needs Paramount recently launched a new Division of Brand Awareness that will be dedicated to providing our customer base with support as they grow their businesses.

### **CLEANER**: What do you want your customers to think of when they hear the name Paramount Pipe Lining?

**PARKS:** Our current customers feel informed, educated and inspired, and understand that they have the support, not only in products and equipment, but also in our participation in a new era of development and growth within their business and the entire industry.

Any company can buy an image; Paramount is building a reputation.  $\ensuremath{\mathbf{c}}$ 



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## BETTER BUSINESS



Kate Zabriskie

## CONNECTING WITH CUSTOMERS

Adding a chat service is another pathway to communicate with customers, but it needs to be done correctly // By Kate Zabriskie

**CUSTOMER:** Hi, I'm having a problem with my bill. I'm being charged \$50 more than what I expected. Could someone please help? I'm finding this very frustrating. Thank you.

**CHAT AGENT:** Hello! Glad you are chatting with me this morning! This is Matt. What can I do for you today?

**CUSTOMER TO HIMSELF**: Huh? Well for starters, Matt, you could read what I typed before asking what you can do! And you can take that smile off your face.

Website chat communication with customers is becoming a popular alternative for small businesses today, who understand that more consumers would rather tap out inquiries on a keyboard than pick up a phone. Providing exceptional service via chat involves more than simply choosing a technology platform. Chat is a distinct communication channel with its own set of rules, and if you choose to implement a chat system at your drain cleaning company, you need to prepare service representatives to use it effectively.

#### **STEP ONE**

After you've chosen a chat platform, or while that activity is in process, determine who on your team is well-suited to serve customers online. Chat service providers should be able to type well, and they should have an excellent command of English spelling and grammar. And depending on your location, it may be helpful to have a bilingual representative who is fluent in Spanish to answer questions from Hispanic customers.

#### **STEP TWO**

Once you have a team in mind, identify some rules to guide their chats. The following questions are examples of basic considerations you should know the answers to before your representatives start typing.

How many chats should an agent handle at once? (In the beginning, nobody should attempt more than one, and even experienced agents shouldn't divide their attention among more than three.)

What topics can and can't be addressed via chat? Company owner preferences and industry regulations may limit what your representatives can and can't say.

When will you move customers to a different mode of communication if chat is not appropriate?

#### **STEP THREE**

Sometimes companies implement chat, and the tone of what's typed takes on a stilted or off-brand look and feel. For that reason, it's important to think about what on-brand messaging looks like before rolling out the chat platform.

How should a chat start if a customer has already shared information? What words and phrases align with your brand? What words and phrases should providers avoid?

How should representatives address angry or frustrated customers? In what way should greetings differ?

A good way to start thinking about your company's look and sound is to start chatting. Visits sites that use chat. Think about each experience: what you liked, what you didn't, how the branding came across, and so forth.

#### **STEP FOUR**

Be prepared for the obvious. Anyone who has worked in service usually starts to notice patterns. For example, if the provider is an online retailer, close to the holidays the website may receive more inquiries about delivery times. If the provider is a utility, representatives may realize they receive more inquiries about billing on certain days of the week. In the case of drain cleaning, you may get specific inquiries after a flooding event or around holidays when emergency calls are more likely to occur.

The point is to plan for the expected. Just as telephone service agents in most industries should know how to handle the top 20 or 30 customer requests without having to reference a lot of documentation, the same is true for chat. Consistency is essential. This is especially true when it comes to the basics.

#### CHAT IS NO LONGER A NOVELTY, AND MORE CUSTOMERS EXPECT THEIR SERVICE PROVIDERS TO OFFER IT.

Before being set loose with a keyboard, go through both systems training and role-playing to address common inquiries.

#### **STEP FIVE**

Determine the extent to which you wish to use canned responses. Prewritten text has its pluses and minuses. On the plus side, it's quick, it's not written in the moment, and it's had the opportunity to be proofread by one or more people. On the other hand, canned text can sound canned. Furthermore, representatives sometimes choose prewritten responses that don't get to the heart of what a customer is asking.

So what's a small business to do? The answer to that question varies. No matter the option chosen, canned text should sound conversational. If you wouldn't say what's written in the course of natural speech, it probably isn't right.

Chat is supposed to be a dialogue. It's not a brochure, the text from a website, or worse still, verbiage from a policy or legal document.

One way to help maintain a conversational tone is to keep your text short. Long sentences usually equate to a longwinded or unnatural feel.

A good place to source potential prewritten responses is from your representatives' actual chats. If your office is like most places, some people will show a natural gift for chat. Why not leverage their strengths and skills?

#### **STEP SIX**

Learn from your failures and your successes. When service goes wrong, most strong businesses address the shortcomings. Beyond fixing what's broken, the best companies also invest time in figuring out what went right and why. Then they replicate the good.

As with any service interaction, chat can go well, or it can go poorly. The key is monitoring, course correcting and standardizing success. Customer service representatives and their supervisors should regularly review chats. What can we leverage? Where are the opportunities? What was on-brand? What was off-brand?

The trick is to systematically ask and answer them. The more methodically you evaluate your chats, the quicker you will capitalize on what works and eliminate what doesn't.

#### **STEP SEVEN**

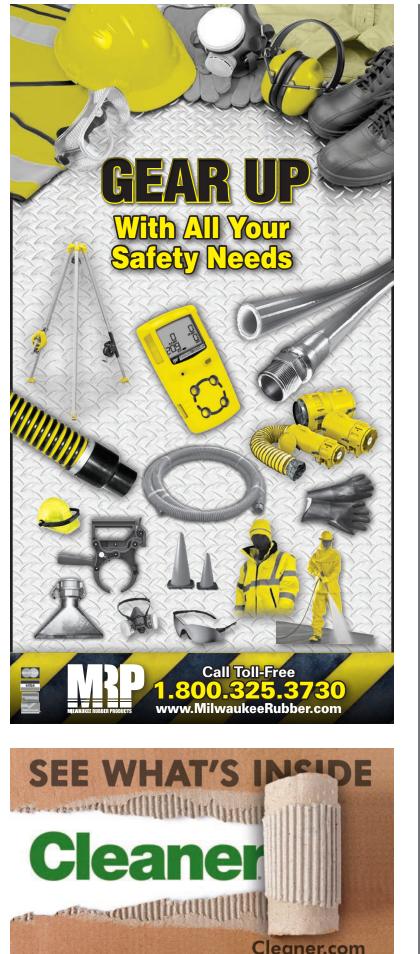
Chat training is not a one-and-done activity. Needs change, technology evolves and staff turns over. Ideally, you should focus on one or two best practices a week, evaluate the prewritten text twice a year, and spot-check transcripts daily.

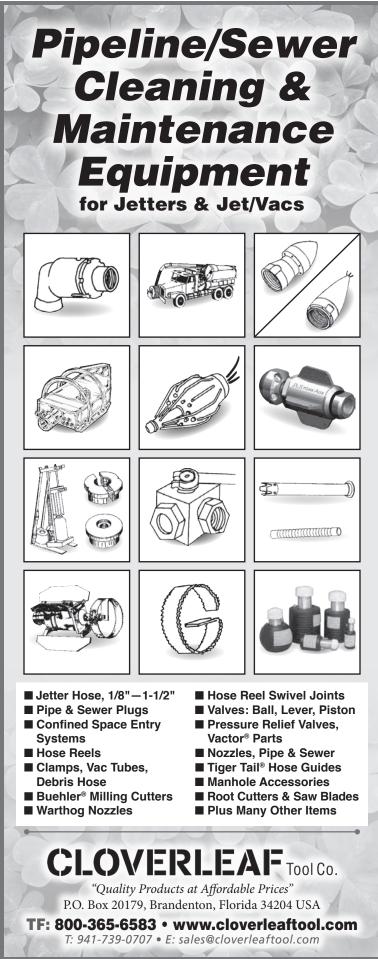
Chat is no longer a novelty, and more customers expect their service providers to offer it. No matter where your business is in the chat-implementation process, there is always room to improve the way you connect through a keyboard.  $\bf{c}$ 

#### A B O U T T H E A U T H O R

Kate Zabriskie is president of Business Training Works, Inc., a Maryland-based talent development firm. Reach her at www.businesstrainingworks.com.







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# BUILD AND RESTORE

#### CONNECTICUT CONTRACTOR SAVY & SONS IS DEDICATED TO REHABILITATING FAILING NEW ENGLAND INFRASTRUCTURE

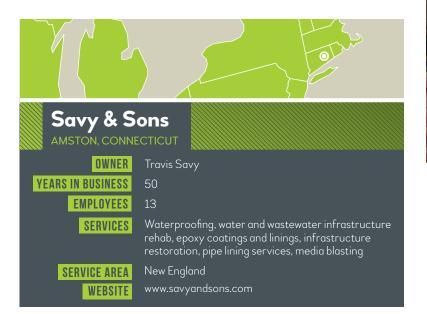
#### IT'S NOT EASY TO PIGEONHOLE THE WORK OF SAVY & SONS.

"We are a full-service contractor," says Victoria Kebalo, the company's marketing manager.

The current services provided by the privately owned company headquartered in Amston, Connecticut, are all predicated on fixing old infrastructure rather than building new. The company website spells it out: "Our approach is to repair and rehabilitate — as an alternative to replacement — for a more efficient use of limited resources."

Fifty years ago, the company began as a masonry outfit. Ralph Savy Sr. was a mason and mostly built underground structures like utility junction boxes and repaired historic brick or rock structures. For 37 years, the identity of the company was uncomplicated by any advertising of multiple services.

When the founder's son died in 2007, his grandsons continued the masonry focus. However, they also began to build out the waterproofing service the company founder had just begun to dabble in. "We saw a gap," says Travis Savy, company owner and Ralph's grandson. "We saw an opportunity in the market that we wanted to expand into and be the best."





That subtle redirection of the company was the beginning of several diversity initiatives that have grown the business into a full-service waterproofing and infrastructure restoration company. Under that umbrella, Savy & Sons provides waterproofing solutions, water and wastewater infrastructure rehabilitation, epoxy coatings and linings, infrastructure restoration, pipe lining services and media blasting. So Savy & Sons has no lack of restoration opportunities across New England. One such job the company took on last year was the repair of a culvert under a busy road in a Connecticut town. Two corrugated steel pipes — a 42-inch horseshoe-shaped pipe and a round one about one-third that diameter — were rusting away and the concrete entranceways to the pipes were deteriorating.

The choice was to dig up the road and install new culvert pipes or rehab the existing ones. The town opted to restore rather than replace. After the stream flowing through the pipes was diverted, the pipes were jetted and descaled. GI Industries drain machines and Picote milling cable machines are the tools Savy & Sons calls on to restore pipe interiors. For jetting, Savy employs a remote-controlled Brute

"WE SAW A GAP. WE SAW AN OPPORTUNITY IN THE MARKET THAT WE WANTED TO EXPAND INTO AND BE THE BEST." TRAVIS SAVY

> portable jetter from Jetters Northwest that provides 12 gpm at 4,000 psi.

> In the larger pipe, a Perma-Line cured-in-place sleeve was inserted. In the smaller, round pipe, Epoxytec CPP Sprayliner was applied. The deteriorating headwalls were repaired and a 125-mit layer of Epoxytec applied to strengther and seal the masonry. In three days the project was complete without traffic interruption and with a Savy warrance assuring that the restored culvert was good to go for another decade.

> Another opportunity for the company this year came high above ground: In a Hopewell, New York, camp that dates from 1927 stood an elevated wooden

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water tank that supplied potable water to campers and staff. The leaking historic structure seemed on its last legs. Replacing it meant an expenditure of \$500,000 or so. Savy & Sons bid to restore the old tank at considerably less cost.

The tank was hydroblasted and Epoxytec CPP paste was applied by hand to particularly deteriorated areas that needed additional bonding. Savy technicians then coated the interior of the tank with Epoxytec Sprayliner 61, a product formulated for just such applications. Happy campers applauded the restoration.

#### **PASSION PROJECT**

"We truly and passionately love what we do in helping people solve their problems," Savy says. The company coats interiors using a custom-built spray rig from Houston-based Spray-Quip Inc. connected to a Graco dual-piston pump that simultaneously accommodates two spray guns.

## A POSITIVE PHILOSOPHY

**S** avy & Sons is 50-year-old company on a mission to preserve and protect old infrastructure. Aging municipal pipelines and water tanks and sewer works are being restored to peak working condition.

Owner Travis Savy has a philosophy that guides the company's work "We make the decision to be positive in every situation," Savy says.

Positivity is a tenet of the business philosophy of Grant Cardone, founder of the online sales-training university of the same name. "Learn to stay positive and motivated each day," Cardone declares on the university website. He is the author of what is called "the 10X rule," which advocates taking extra effort to a next level.

Savy is a Cardone disciple. "You need to take massive actions — 10X — to guarantee the outcome you want. Massive action equals massive results," he says. The proof that such input indeed multiplies outcomes can be seen in the performance of his company.

From a solid but quiet masonry firm, Savy has built out his company to incorporate auxiliary services including pipe lining and coating and waterproofing.

His philosophical approach to repair and restoration work is shared by the entire 13-person staff of the company. Crew members take online Cardone classes to supplement their OSHA and confined-space certifications. Weekly team meetings are designed to enhance expertise and support one another. "We work smarter and harder together," Savy says. "Communication and game-planning are key."

Techs on staff are cross-trained in the company's different services, but have gravitated into areas of expertise, says Victoria Kebalo, marketing manager. "Some are epoxy guys or waterproofing guys or CIPP guys. As needed, some bounce between different jobs."

All of them, however, enjoy the profitsharing plan of a company intent on building its profits. The extra effort gets results.







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"PEOPLE REALLY DON'T WANT TO DIG. IT TAKES TOO MUCH TIME AND MONEY AND DISTURBS THE GROUNDS OR THE INFRASTRUCTURE." VICTORIA KEBALO



Another successful restoration project by Savy & Sons occurred in 2018 when a Greenwich, Connecticut, country club golfing range determined that a septic tank on the edge of a putting green was crumbling. Removing the tank and building or dropping in another septic container seemed the likely thing to do.

The 1,500-cubic-foot underground concrete structure was given a high-pressure blasting. For surface cleaning, Savy rolls out a 900 cfm Sullivan air compressor attached to a dual-gun Graco Ecoquip wet media blaster. Especially damaged areas were repaired with mortar and techs applied two half-inch coats of a CLADLINER product especially formulated to resist acidic and hydrogen sulfide corruption of concrete.

So, after three days of work, without the greens and fairways of Burning Tree Country Club being marred by mounded earth and crumpled concrete debris and septic smells wafting from flag to flag, golfers saw virtually no evidence that the overhaul of a major piece of infrastructure had occurred. The cost to replace the aging structure was estimated to be three times what Burning Tree management ended up paying.

#### **A NATURAL PROGRESSION**

"A lot of our services go hand in hand," Kebalo says. It's easy to see how the company evolved from masonry work to waterproofing. Media blasting is a natural precursor service to applying epoxy sealing coats. Rehabbing water and wastewater infrastructure and applying new pipe liners go hand in hand. The epoxy coating and lining service was introduced in 2017 and cured-in-place lining just rolled out in the last 18 months.

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"Our plan is to 100% laser focus on our current specialty services and be the best at them in the industry," Savy says. "We want to build a premium brand that is known for its top-quality and high-end work."

Savy's customer base is broad, though there is a heavy concentration of work with municipal and industrial clients. The pipe lining work increasingly is drawing the company into residential neighborhoods. "The pipe lining services have really taken off, lining laterals for residential customers," Kebalo says.

"A CUSTOMER COMES TO SAVY & SONS BECAUSE AT THE LEVELS WE OPERATE, WE HAVE NO COMPETITION. WE ARE THE COMPETITION. NOBODY DOES WHAT WE DO THE WAY WE DO IT." TRAVIS SAVY "A customer comes to Savy & Sons because at the levels we operate, we have no competition. We are the competition. Nobody does what we do the way we do it," Savy says. "We use the latest technologies and state-of-the-art equipment along with quality materials. Our focus is providing effective, long-lasting solutions that address critical schedules, budgets and environmental considerations."

Consequently, the company has partnered with municipal and engineering clients, general contractors, property managers and water-wastewater management companies. "They have trusted us to build value into every project," Savy says.

The company is prepared to go to great lengths to satisfy a client. "We hold our company to unreasonable levels of customer satisfaction, safety and service. No one can compete with us in service. We will forever hold ourselves to the highest standard." **c** 

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The company footprint has grown outside Connecticut and into most of the New England states and upstate New York. The service area remains fluid with pipe lining and coating work growing outside the region. "We are going to Colorado next week," Kebalo said in mid-September, "but you never know."

The company mission declared on the website is, "Building the Future, Restoring the Past," which speaks to the goal of preserving older infrastructure and returning it to its previous level of functioning. The purposeful strategy is widely appealing to clients.

"People really don't want to dig," Kebalo says. "It takes too much time and money and disturbs the grounds or the infrastructure. And the downtime for a wastewater plant, say, to replace a clarifier is significant. That's why more people are going the restoration route."









Joan Koehne

## NEXT IN LINE

A clear plan will keep your business and family financially stable if anything happens to you // By Joan Koehne

#### MAGINE THIS SCENARIO: A DRAIN CLEANER NAMED

Charlie runs a successful business in his hometown. Everything operates smoothly until Charlie passes away unexpectedly, throwing things into chaos. The sudden death leaves Charlie's son, Joe, scrambling to keep the business afloat.

Joe searches through his dad's files and finds no will, trust, or succession plan indicating what direction to take. Joe is swamped by grief and now has this big problem to deal with. "What would my dad want?" he wonders.

In a best-case scenario, Charlie would have prepared for the unexpected. A well-defined exit plan would have honored his last wishes and safeguarded his investment in the business. The plan would also grant authority to the right people to continue daily operations and keep customers happy.

The death of a business owner is both an emotional and financial blow. Businesses tend to struggle without the labor and leadership of their owner, not just immediately after a death but also long-term.

A British professor studied 341 Norwegian companies whose founder died, then compared the data to similar companies that didn't suffer a loss. The study shows that sales drop 60% and jobs are cut 17% following a death. Additionally, the survival rate for these companies two years later is 20% lower than companies in which the entrepreneur is living. Undoubtedly, business owners are the glue that holds things together.

#### **CREATE A CLEAR PLAN**

Attorney Alison Petri, of Wisconsin-based Steimle Birschbach, encourages owners to create a clear-cut strategy describing what happens if they die or become incapacitated. The plan should be in place years before the owner wants to exit the business.

"People don't think ahead," Petri says. "I don't think it's something you can ignore until you plan to retire, because sometimes there might be other plans for you." To start, she asks these types of questions:

- Do you want the business to close if you die unexpectedly?
- Do you want the business to be sold to a third party, family member or employee?
- Who will have the authority to make immediate, day-to-day decisions and long-term plans?
- How can the business stay open, at least short-term, for the sake of the employees and clients?

Estate and succession planning ensures the continuity of the business and protects business assets when an owner passes away, Petri says.

"The worst-case scenario is the business fails or folds. Then you're doing auctions of equipment, closing out accounts and perhaps not getting as much for your business as it's potentially worth."

#### **DETERMINE HOW TO EXIT**

Owners may choose to transition their business to another party during their lifetime but should also develop a plan to take effect at the time of death. Where there's a will, there's a say.

"Whether you're leaving the business to family or leaving it to a third-party owner or potential purchaser, the transfer can be done in the most cost-effective and smoothest way to avoid business disruption," Petri says, referring to the value of advanced planning.

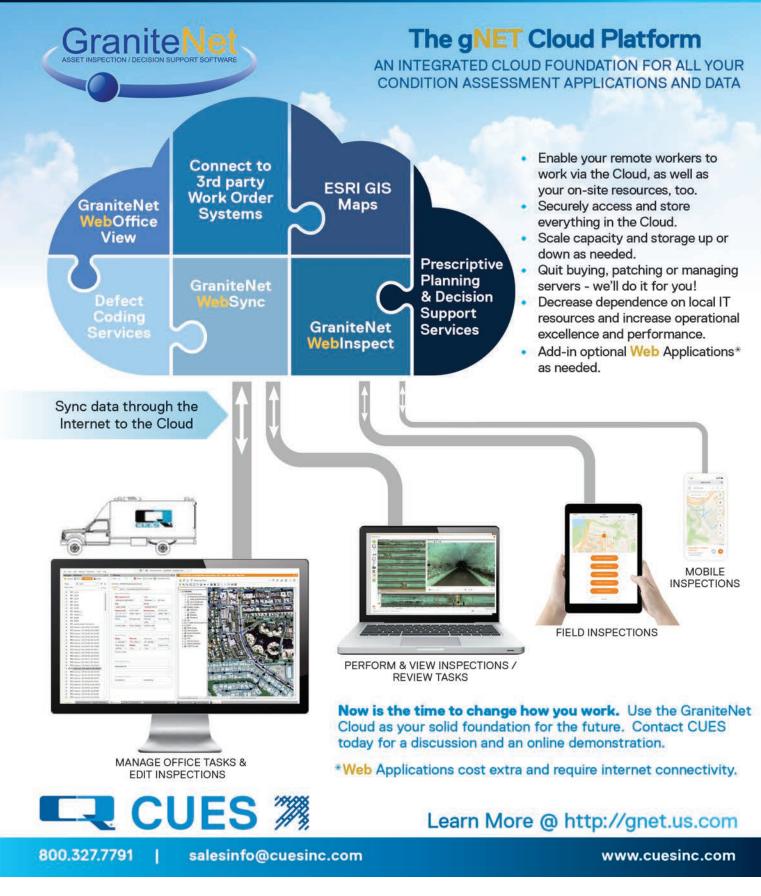
So, where do you begin?

"A will can be useful, but it doesn't necessarily deal with the continuity and efficiency that you would need to keep your small business running," Petri says. With a will, a personal representative or executor needs to be appointed before other action occurs.

"That's where you can lose continuity and potentially have issues related to business management," Petri says. Therefore, writing a will might not be the biggest concern for a business owner.

"It might be a different type of estate planning document, like a trust, or in the business, an operating agreement and organizational structure," she says.

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## MONEY MANAGER

#### **CRAFT A TRUST DOCUMENT OR DECLARATION**

For a sole proprietorship, Petri recommends a trust document. With a trust, business owners can decide what happens to the business on their passing. Perhaps they want to transfer the business to their brother, not their spouse. Maybe they'd like to give an employee or family member the first option to purchase.

"If you're a sole proprietor, you could have it laid out in a trust or simple declaration of who it's going to pass to," Petri says. For an LLC, partnership or corporation, the successor could be lined up in an operating agreement.

#### PUT THE RIGHT PEOPLE IN CHARGE

Choosing a successor ensures that the person taking over is familiar with the business; the spouse or children of the owner might not know where to start.

"A personal representative may or may not know anything about the business itself and now has an interest and stake in making decisions about the business," Petri says.

Plus, the representative would probably need to wait until the court gives permission to work on behalf of the estate.

"To ensure you don't have to wait for the courts and have a person managing the business who is aware of all the ins and outs, have a successor lined up," Petri says.

Equally important are the legal documents and management system authorizing individuals to do everything the business owner typically does. They can pay employees and invoices, serve clients, and keep the business humming.

"You want someone to get in there and do what needs to be done," Petri says.

Furthermore, without a succession plan, the surviving spouse or children can lose the business equity the owner built over time. The business may be an owner's biggest asset and only stream of income. When the owner dies, the surviving spouse or family might not have anything left.

"You worked hard with nothing to show for it, and then the income dries up on top of it."

#### WORK WITH A TEAM OF ADVISORS

The ideal time to develop an estate/succession plan is at least five to 10 years before retirement. Petri recommends working with a team that includes an accountant, financial advisor and attorney. This team can handle the legal and financial aspects of succession to avoid a lengthy probate process and reduce taxes. "Every state is a little bit different about what its rules are, but generally they'll have some version of a trust or nonprobate transfer," Petri says.

#### **STRUCTURE A BUYOUT**

A buyout can be structured in lots of ways, and the advisors can explain the advantages and disadvantages of different strategies. The owner, the business itself, or a family member may want to purchase life insurance to help cover the purchase price. The purchaser can pay a lump sum in a buyout or provide the owner with a stream of income during retirement.

Although it may be tempting to find resources online and create your own plan, Petri warns against it because of the many pitfalls. For business owners, this is not the time to cut corners.

"Overall, you want to be working with an attorney to make sure you're doing the best for your set of circumstances," Petri says.

#### **PLAN AHEAD**

Ultimately, these decisions should be made well before an unexpected death or disability shakes the business' foundation and causes shock and grief. Creating the right plan is highly individualized, based on the business and the owner's wishes. However, every estate/succession plan should:

- Be tax-effective
- Ensure continuity of operations
- Put the right people in charge to make critical decisions
- Avoid a lengthy probate process
- Alleviate stress for family and employees
- Safeguard the assets and investment built over time

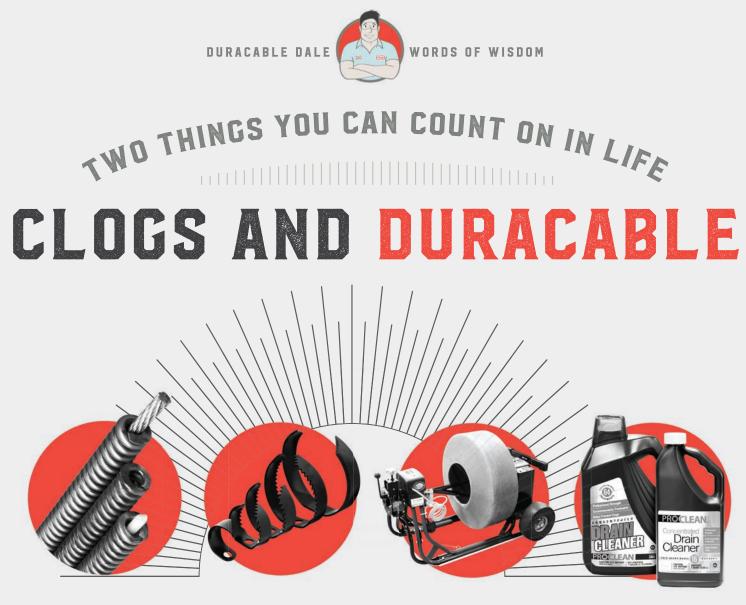
#### **GIVE YOUR SURVIVORS A BREAK**

Families who are already grieving don't welcome the additional stress of making decisions regarding business operations. Additionally, the business may lose value if a clear plan isn't in place.

"If I run a small business, when I die and I don't have planning, the value of the business can be lost completely or significantly diminished if there isn't good advanced planning," Petri says.

#### **DO IT NOW**

Creating a trust or nonprobate transfer is the ideal way to plan for the expected or unexpected transition out of a business. Do it now, before a sudden death or disability robs you of the ability to make those decisions. c





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#### Seattle Pump and Equipment moving to new location

Seattle Pump and Equipment will be moving from its current location to a larger 20,000-square-foot facility in Woodinville, Washington. The move will double the size of the current location and provide ample parking with easy maneuverability for large tow-behind equipment and trucks. The new address is 16750 Redmond-Woodinville Road NE, Suite C-101, in Woodinville. The phone number will remain the same.

#### Aries Industries adds new Alberta dealer

Aries Industries has strengthened its international market reach by adding Alberta-based Superior North America to its network of dealers. Superior North America, headquartered in Calgary, services the prairie provinces and British Columbia. The company brings over 17 years' experience in the refuse, road maintenance, sewer and public works equipment industries.

#### ServiceTitan partners with Service Finance Co.

ServiceTitan announced a new relationship and software integration with Service Finance Co., a nationally licensed sales finance firm offering financing solutions to home improvement contractors. This new collaboration between industry leaders provides contractors with greater flexibility for financing strategies and allows technicians in the field to provide a convenient, secure way to apply for financing and move forward with jobs.

#### ClearPathGPS expands management team

ClearPathGPS expanded their management team with several software-industry experts. Heather Burleson joins the company as vice president of sales. Jill Bender is the company's new director of marketing. And Kelsey Jones joins as director of customer success.



#### Super Products President announces retirement

After 13 years leading and growing Super Products, Mike Vanden Heuvel announced his retirement effective Dec. 31, 2020. As his successor, Super Products' Vice President of Rentals Randy Buening will be promoted to president of Super Products, effective Jan. 1.



Mike Vanden Heuvel

Vanden Heuvel joined the company in 2007 as the VP of industrial sales and took over as president at the end of 2008. During his tenure he added several rental facilities and maintained steady growth under his leadership. Under Vanden Heuvel's supervision, Super Products built and moved into its new headquarters in Mukwonago, Wisconsin, in January 2020. The new building allowed the organization to consolidate three separate operating facilities in southeast Wisconsin into one, where they now produce their full product line.

#### Barbco forms Omneity Innovations

Barbco finalized a split of its engineering and service departments from the company to create Omneity Innovations, a spin-off company. Omneity will utilize the departments' expertise to focus on contined improvement of service to its customers. It will provide a wide array of services including engineering, training, technical support, consultation, repair and rebuild for all underground trenchless technologies.

#### Vacuworx renovates Tulsa machine shop

Vacuworx has a newly renovated machine shop inside its Tulsa, Oklahoma, headquarters. The equipment manufacturing company is turning excess capacity into a new revenue stream as the company takes on contract work for outside companies. Vacuworx offers comprehensive design, CAM programming and machining services on an array of raw materials. The shop can accommodate short to large production runs and specializes in prototype development and finish treatments to suit individual needs. **c** 

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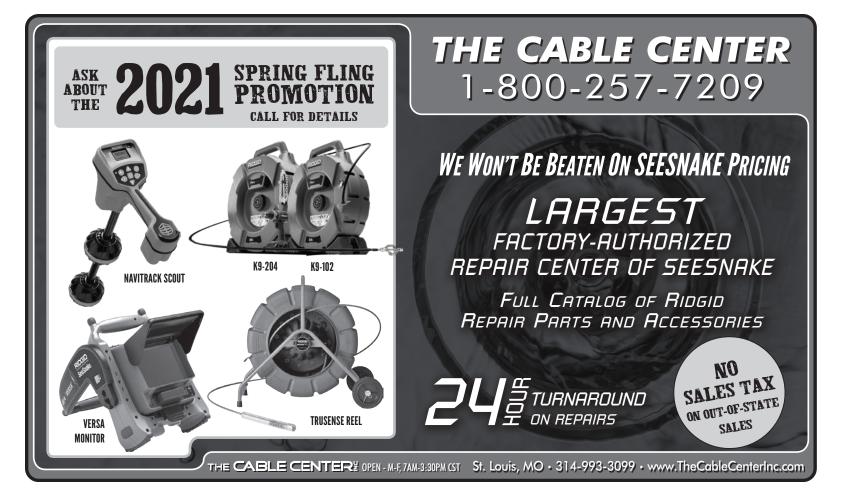


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**ClearPathGPS's** dash camera solution from **Owlcam+** detects impact or broken-glass events when a vehicle is off. Because there's no SD card, there's no way to tamper with the footage. Video captured is seamlessly linked to GPS tracking data and provides two forms of evidence in the event of a claim. Twenty-second video clips can be requested from within the portal and stored in the media manager for 30 days or downloaded locally for sharing/storing. Event snapshots can be sent by the driver to the portal by saying, "OK, Presto" and can immediately be viewed remotely by the fleet manager. Its 4G LTE connectivity means cloud upload of critical clips and remote viewing is possible even when the vehicle is off. **888-734-0384**; **www.clearpathgps.com** 

#### 3 // DPL TELEMATICS ASSETVIEW MAX TRACKING SYSTEM

The AssetView Max Tracking System from DPL Telematics is an advanced solution for wireless monitoring and remote tracking of any powered or unpowered asset to improve logistics, manage inventory and curb theft. The long lasting, portable GPS unit is completely self-contained and may be hidden on any asset, installing in seconds. It allows owners to remotely monitor any asset accurately from an intuitive, internet-based software package and mobile app. It offers quick, unwired attachment to any asset in a true "hide and track" installation. It provides immediate text and email alerts if the unit is removed, and is powered by two D batteries. It is self-powered for up to 10 years on daily updates, and up to two years on more detailed tracking. 800-897-8093; www.dpltel.com

#### **4 // GPS FLEET CONSULTING SAFEFLEET**

The **SafeFleet** dashcam/GPS combo unit from **GPS Fleet Consulting** is designed to provide important benefits to any business running a fleet of vehicles. The easily installed hardware provides location updates and event-based video recordings in near real time. The data can be viewed from a computer or through a mobile device. It helps protect billable time against customer disputes and provides accurate accounting of hours for payroll, real-world examples









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for coaching against risky driving behaviors and protection against frivolous claims. It can help reduce the risk and cost of accidents, decrease idle time and help with proactive vehicle maintenance. It includes advanced vehicle diagnostic sensors and a safe driving rewards program. 800-609-7935; www.gpsfleetconsulting.com

#### 5 // QUARTIX

The Quartix vehicle tracking system helps a wide range of businesses improve productivity, cut costs and save on fuel every day. Providing commercial fleet tracking for trucks, coaches, vans and cars throughout the U.S., U.K. and France, the system offers a host of features for fleet managers. It helps analyze data, generating simple-to-use reports that can be accessed online. Live tracking, driver time sheets, geofencing and management dashboards allow managers to easily see where efficiencies can be made. Driver League Tables and individual driver reports help to assess driving style, which if improved can save businesses up to 25% in fuel consumption, as well as positively impact the safety of road users. It offers tiered packages to help businesses identify their best drivers, make sense of mileage and fuel costs, and reduce administrative tasks. **312-800-9882; www.quartix.com** 

#### 6 // VIVAX-METROTECH MYLOCATOR-3

The free MyLocator-3 desktop app from Vivax-Metrotech allows a contractor to manage a fleet of utility locators. They can configure a fleet of locators by turning features off and on, selecting which frequencies the user has access to, and creating custom startup screens. The software will also transfer data from the locator to a host computer, perform software updates, and save the locator configuration and settings. When the locator is connected to a computer running the software, the software will automatically search a database for the latest updates for both the utility locator and desktop application. The utility locator connects to the computer running the software with an off-the-shelf mini-USB cable. 800-446-3392; www.vivax-metrotech.com

#### >> INSPECTION/MAPPING SOFTWARE 7 // CUES GRANITENET WEBINSPECT

**GraniteNet WebInspect** from CUES is a browser-based inspection app designed to perform inspections and collect information about municipal assets, such as manholes (including MACP v7 Level 1), hydrants, lift stations, grease traps, light poles and signage. It performs and tracks tasks such as valve turning, smoke tests, brush cutting and snow plowing, collecting GPS points, water quality samples and flow tests, and assessing sewer backups. Virtually any type of asset assessment or task can be quickly deployed, with or without existing GIS maps. There's no software to install on any user devices. All that's needed is an internet connection and virtually any device with a browser, such as a mobile phone or a tablet. 800-327-7791; www.cuesinc.com

#### 8 // RAPIDVIEW IBAK NORTH AMERICA IKAS EVOLUTION

**IKAS Evolution** sewer analysis software from **RapidView IBAK North America** is in full control of acquisition and sewer data analysis. This software was developed with modularity in mind. The user interface is standard throughout the software platform, so once a user is familiar with one program, they will already know their way around the next one. It is available in four base bundles with more than 24 extension options available for advanced inspections. Included is a powerful tool called 3D GeoSense, where the sensor tracks the

## PRODUCT FOCUS

movement of the camera as it travels through the lateral, capturing distance, position and depth in 3D space. This opens up new options for acquiring and using positional data for underground utilities. 800-656-4225; www.rapidview.com

#### 9 // WINCAN WEB

Maintaining sewers starts with understanding sewer condition, and WinCan Web makes it easy to collect detailed, standards-compliant inspection data. It identifies trends, pinpoints hotspots, prioritizes maintenance and lets you forecast budgets. Its broad range of reporting and data visualization tools lets you drill down to the insight you need. WinCan Web helps get more from the sewer inspection data you collect. The cloud-based platform lets you share inspection data with anyone, instantly and securely, online; view video, maps and observations on any device with a browser; safeguard your data with automatic offsite backups; and reduce IT costs and overhead. WinCan Web replaces unreliable methods of sharing inspection data — printouts, DVDs, emails and thumb drives — with cloud-based collaboration. And it works with all brands of sewer inspection equipment. 877-626-8386; www.wincan.com c



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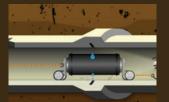


Cables

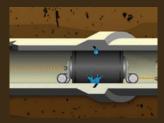
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3 Packer inflated and sleeve installed



4 Packer deflated





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## FIELD AND OFFICE TECHNOLOGY

#### COMPANY SIMPLIFIES ROUTING AND INVOICING

**PROBLEM** / Crazy Mountain Industries, a septic service company in Livingston, Montana, sought a solution that would allow them to manage their drivers' schedules in this rural location. They needed to route without addresses and be able to operate without cell service. Office staff had previously been



entering invoices by hand each month — a process that took two to three days to write, record and mail.

**SOLUTION** / After five years of shopping around for a single software solution that checked all of their boxes, Crazy Mountain decided on **ServiceCore**. Every route is optimized for efficiency and location. The team manages the drivers' schedules in Yellowstone Park, customizing the latitude and longitude of service locations as needed. They also use the optimization feature to make the routes as efficient as possible. Invoicing takes only minutes per month and can be done directly in the software. The office can see where each unit is and what inventory is available by date.

**RESULT** / Crazy Mountain Industries is happy with their choice. "It takes 10 minutes to do invoicing," says company co-owner Deonne Hillman. "It took me longer to stuff the envelopes than to do the invoicing." **844-336-0611**; www.servicecore.com **c** 



Control unit

can be mounted o reel

#### HOOKS ....

- > Several different styles of heat-treated hooks are available
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- > The Handy Hooks allow two handed use

#### PROBES...

- > Insulated, standard, and specialty soil probes
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### PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT VERSATILE REHAB CUTTER SUPPLIES CAPABILITY AND VALUE

By Craig Mandli

Small-diameter pipe rehab can be a lucrative added service for your drain cleaning company, but you need the right tools for the job. The Micro S Light+ rehab cutter from Pipeline Renewal Technologies balances both capability and value, providing crews top performance while taking on a wide range of applications.

Suitable for both horizontal and vertical work, this air-powered rehab cutter offers ideal flexibility in bends, navigating smoothly through elbows in lined 4-inch pipe. Simply push it horizontally or drop it vertically into place, inflate the bladder and let the automatic cutter rotation do the rest.

"When we developed the Micro S Light+, we worked to offer a level of versatility never before seen at this price point," says Jake Wells, director of marketing for Pipeline Renewal Technologies' parent company, Envirosight. "On the small side, we wanted operators to be able to fit through 3-inch openings and 4-inch lined elbows. On the big side, we knew they'd benefit from the ability to work in 8- and 10-inch mains. Once we combined this working range with 164 feet of self-propelled travel and three axes of articulation, we knew we had a winner."

The Micro S Light+ accepts various cutting bits to fit the application at hand. Once in position, it clamps pneumatically and offers joystick control for three axes of motion: 400-degree rotation,

90-degree swivel and 4-inch axial feed. The entire system can be easily transported on a wheeled cart weighing just 104 pounds. Its air-powered cutter motor delivers maximum torque, while an onboard, self-cleaning camera provides live visual feedback on a 10-inch touch-screen monitor. Pressurized with nitrogen, the



sealed head carries an IP54 rating. The unit provides the cutting power needed to perform prep and reinstatement work in drains, laterals and other small-diameter lines.

"As with every product we offer, the Micro S Light+ started with customer feedback," says Wells. "Our operators were telling us they wanted a system capable enough to answer diverse and challenging applications, but not so complex that it costs an arm and a leg to purchase and maintain. What we devised was a system with powerful propulsion in horizontal and vertical lines, generous range, and three-axis articulation — all in a portable package that runs on mains power, and requires just 35 cfm of compressed air at 145 psi." 866-936-8476; www.pipelinert.com

#### **1 // ELECTRIC EEL ECAM ACE 2 SL CAMERA SYSTEM**

Electric Eel's eCAM Ace 2 SL pipeline inspection camera system has a new battery cradle that accepts a Milwaukee M18 or equivalent battery. Battery life is six to seven hours. Other features include a self-leveling color camera, one-touch USB recording, on-screen footage counter, and wheels for easy transport and maneuverability. The system also includes a rugged stainless steel housed 1.68-inch-diameter self-leveling color camera for inspecting 3- to 10-inch lines. A flexible camera spring is designed to navigate 3-inch P-traps. An LCD monitor with AR film for optimal viewing in sunlight is encased in an anodized aluminum housing mounted to the reel. 800-833-1212; www.electriceel.com











#### 2 // RIDGID CS65XR DIGITAL REPORTING MONITOR

RIDGID's SeeSnake CS65XR digital reporting monitor is a powerful, all-in-one reporting solution for plumbing diagnostics. Built on the platform of the RIDGID SeeSnake CS65x monitor, the CS65XR boasts a crisp, 1024 by 768 XGA high-resolution and daylight-viewable display for exceptional viewing and clarity on the job site. It features an upgraded LCD screen with higher resolution, USB ports, 128 GB internal storage and a full keyboard allowing for the most functionality in the line of RIDGID SeeSnake monitors. 800-474-3443; www.RIDGID.com

#### **3 // SERVICETITAN MARKETING PRO SOFTWARE**

ServiceTitan launched new marketing tools as part of the company's Marketing Pro platform. The features equip users to generate, monitor and manage online reviews and listings, and create and distribute targeted direct mail campaigns, all from a single integrated platform. With the tools, users can maximize and streamline online business listings by providing consistent information across over 60 websites and platforms; generate targeted mailing lists of existing customers; automate the direct mail campaigns to trigger postcards to send at the right time; and close the loop on performance metrics and see which campaigns are profitable, and which techs bring in the most reviews. **855-899-0970**; www.servicetitan.com **c** 

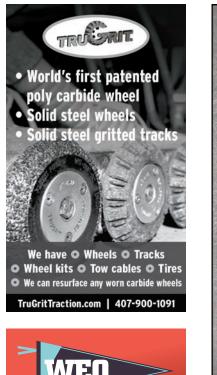




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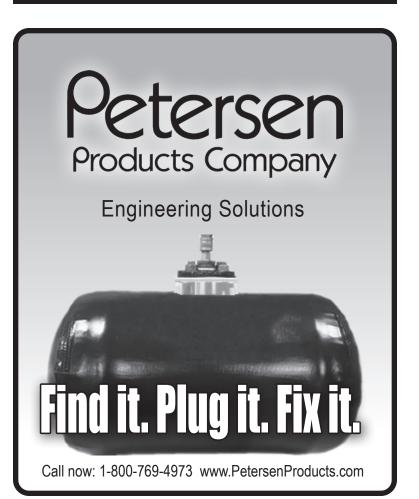
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#### JET VACS



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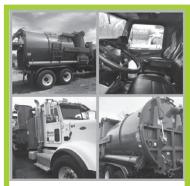
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### **MODEL 718**

#### All the Spartan power you need, packed in a compact size.

5PARTANT 800-25-3866 The Cadet portable electric suitcase jetter is the tool you need for tight spaces and smaller lines, without having to sacrifice toughness. The Model 718 cordless handheld machine is evenly weighted, with a smooth ramp-up and slow-down for the best operation of any handheld unit on the market.



'The portable Cadet is my go-to jetter when I have to jet secondary drains, where I can't fit my 727, or when I'm jetting in a high-rise building. It's compact and easy to use, so you can have it next to you while jetting the drain. The Model 718 by far is the best drum machine I own to unclog small drains. It's cordless, so you don't have to worry about a cord being in the way in a tight space. The battery life is long so you can rely on it to unclog many drains before charging it."

Tito Quintero, King Rooter of Pasadena, CA