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General PIPE CIFANERS

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PROfile

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In his first year as a NuFlow Certified Contractor, Jeff Lane generated nearly \$1 million dollars in lining revenue.

Jeff became a NuFlow Certified Contractor in 2019 after a big company called because of sewer backups. Machinery throughout the warehouse made busting out the concrete floor impossible.

"NuFlow gave me the words of wisdom I needed. I made my money back on the first job, and then some. That's no joke."

Jeff continues to invest in new equipment and grow his team.

"Lining is a huge part of my business. It has carried me during this pandemic.

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ON THE COVER // Drain Mob co-owners Billy Teeter and Jacob Kemble combined their strengths to work as a team when Teeter quit his job at another drain cleaning company to start his own business. The San Diego-based company has grown quickly since its beginnings in 2017 due to the owners' customer-first philosophy. "We want to take care of people, to protect them," Teeter says. (Photography by Matt Dayka)







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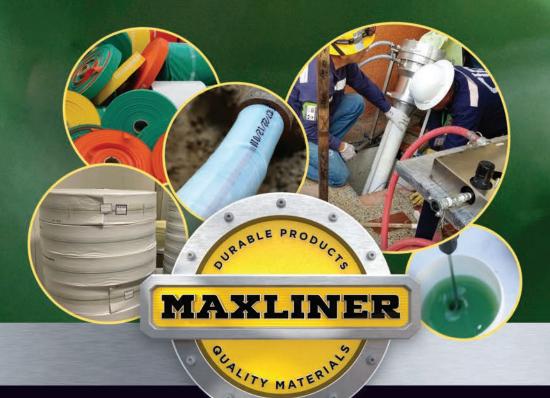


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FROM THE EDITOR

// Kim Peterson

POLISHING THE FUNDAMENTALS

Knowing the basics doesn't mean you're executing them properly

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

OMETIMES CHOOSING TOPICS for the regular columns in *Cleaner* — Money Manager, Better Business, Safety First — is challenging. Obviously the main goal is to bring you helpful stories, but finding topics that will appeal to all our readers isn't always easy.

I work with other editors for some of these; it's often easier to brainstorm content when you have multiple people pitching and discussing ideas. With perspective gained over our (collective) decades in the industry, I think we manage to deliver stories that the majority of you appreciate and find useful.

While working on ideas for this month's Money Manager column, another editor and I went back and forth a bit about whether the information was too basic. We know we have readers who are just starting their own business, or hope to one day, and we want to be of service to you. But would everyone else know all this basic financial stuff? Were these reminders too far beneath all the seasoned business owners who read our magazines?

Honestly, the answer might be yes for some of you. If you've owned a business for a long time, it stands to reason that you understand budgeting and pay your bills on time.

But reminders about even the simplest of best practices should be welcome, at least sometimes. Frequently reviewing financial habits, or any part of your business processes, should be standard procedure. Everyone from young students to professional athletes to longtime business owners needs to go over the fundamentals from time to time. Think of it as perfecting your free throw by shooting it over and over.

Knowing the steps you should take — like creating a budget or dusting off that business plan more than once a year — is different than acting on them regularly. This idea, known as the "G.I. Joe Fallacy," plays on the closing line from the 1980s cartoon. "Knowing is half the battle" isn't really true. Knowing something doesn't automatically change the behavior. Only discipline and hard work is going to change it.

So we included the article, "Get Back to Financial Management Basics," this month as a reminder of that. You may know it all, but are you executing all those things the way you want to be?

If you're an old pro, I hope you don't immediately dismiss those "basic" articles. There might be something included that you've forgotten about, and brushing up on the basics never hurts.

We also welcome suggestions for stories, so if there is a topic you'd like to learn more about, feel free to send requests to editor@cleaner.com.

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





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New Jersey's Pipe Works Services found numerous operational efficiencies by embracing an automated customer-service software option. Read more about the ways it has benefited the company in this online exclusive.

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OVERHEARD ONLINE

"Running a company without a vision is like laying sewer line without knowing where the connection is." - Aligning Daily Operations With a Long-Term Vision

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EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

Reshaping Your Workplace Culture

There's a lot of emphasis these days on building a great workplace culture. But actually accomplishing that is easier said than done. The keys to success are fairly simple, but improvement requires real and concerted action, as this online exclusive explains in further detail.

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COST CONTROL

Making Equipment Buying or Renting Decisions

Rising equipment costs are a challenge for many companies. An aspect of this is making the determination on whether to buy a piece of equipment or rent it. In this online exclusive, an industry expert offers some tips that can help with making that key decision.

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INSOLUTIONS

CONTRACTOR BUILDS HIS BUSINESS AROUND ALWAYS HAVING THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT TO HANDLE ANY JOB

// By Ken Wysocky

O'HARE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, A VETERANS HOSPITAL IN MILWAUKEE AND THE WISCONSIN STATE CAPITOL DON'T APPEAR TO HAVE ANYTHING IN COMMON.

But one thing connects them all: They're among the more than 1,000 clients that have hired American Trenchless Technologies to fix serious pipeline problems with minimal disruption or downtime — and for significantly less money compared to conventional opencut repairs.

In just the three years since Mark Carpenter and his brother, Chris, founded the company in DeKalb, located about 65 miles west of downtown Chicago, they've amassed a considerable array of trenchless rehab equipment, including systems for lining, bursting and coating leaking drainlines.

The investments have been significant. Mark Carpenter estimates the company has bought about half a million dollars' worth of equipment. But the return on those investments has been substantial. And with so many technologies available, the company is equipped to offer customers a variety of cost-effective solutions, he says.

"After all, the name of our company is American Trenchless Technologies. So we'd better offer more than one technology. It's better when you can offer people different solutions."





➤ Richardson clamps together a freshly glued calibration tube where the liner ends inside



HIGH RETURNS

Some contractors shy away from big investments in new technology because of the high upfront cost. But it's not unusual for Carpenter to buy new equipment for one job if it's the best solution for the customer. The key: Charge a price that recoups most, if not all, of the initial cost.

"You can even let the customer know that you're passing the cost onto them," he says. "And in many cases, you can still do the job for half the price of conventional techniques, which are very disruptive. Most times the customer is willing to pay a higher price just so you can get in and get out quickly, with minimal disruption."

Furthermore, that piece of equipment then allows the company to offer a new service and enter different markets, he adds.

A good example is the Quik-Coating System the company purchased in 2018 from Pipe Lining Supply. It was the best solution for repairing a system of leaking pipes in the 24-story Old Republic Building, a landmark classical revival-style building built in downtown Chicago in 1924.

Replacing the pipes would have required tearing down ornate plaster ceilings. In addition, it would've been difficult to get pipe lining equipment to the building's roof, which was the logical access point for repairs. Lining the pipes would also require numerous line reinstatements for a large number of branch connections to the main drainlines, as well as negotiating numerous 90-degree bends.

The Quik-Coating system removes those factors from the equation. It uses a round, rotating brush to apply as many microthin layers of polyurea-based resin as the repair requires. The coating cures in five minutes.

>>> Ron Richardson prepares a two-part mixture of Perma-Liner epoxy resin.

"We bought the system just for that job," Carpenter says. "It cost about \$30,000. But it paid for itself on that job. And we still came in at a much lower price than other companies."

Furthermore, the company now has another technological arrow in its quiver that's available the next time a similar need arises.

EXPLORING OPTIONS

In another instance, the company was called to fix about a 90-foot-long, 4-inchdiameter section of old Orangeburg pipe at a residence in DeKalb. The pipe ran under a large tree that the homeowners, a retired couple, had planted when they got married. Excavating to replace the pipe wasn't an option.

"MOST TIMES THE CUSTOMER IS WILLING TO PAY A HIGHER PRICE JUST SO YOU CAN GET IN AND GET OUT QUICKLY, WITH MINIMAL DISRUPTION."

MARK CARPENTER

"The building inspector wouldn't let us do pipe lining because it was Orangeburg pipe," Carpenter says. "So I called HammerHead Trenchless Equipment to talk about pipe bursting as an option."

HammerHead provided training and also let the company rent a pipe bursting system. That allowed Carpenter to get a feel for the technology without making a significant upfront investment. He says many manufacturers are willing to do the same thing to improve product acceptance in the field.

"I was amazed at how well it worked out," he says. "We got the job done and saved their tree and their landscaping."

A NEW PATH

Carpenter started his career in the propane gas industry, installing storage tanks and gas lines with his father, Jack. In 2002, he bought an HVAC/plumbing franchise with his brother, which they ran for 15 years.







American Trenchless Technologies, based in DeKalb, Illinois.

While attending a drain cleaning class, he heard about pipe lining technologies. "I didn't even know this technology existed," he recalls. "I remember thinking to myself, 'Wow, what an interesting concept."

This discovery sent Carpenter down a different career path. When the franchise agreement expired, Carpenter realized he was more interested in lining pipes than plumbing services, so the brothers agreed to start a pipe lining company and plumbing/ HVAC company, with his brother managing the latter's operation.

"Nothing satisfied me like the lining business," he says. "First of all, it's a necessary service. When people have sewage coming into their home or business, they need it taken care of quickly.

"And when you show up and take care of their problems without any disruption no tearing up their house, basement, patio, yard, driveway or whatever — you're their hero. You become instant friends with people. It's very satisfying."

Early on, the company got business from plumbing and excavation companies that didn't do pipe lining — and still does today. But Carpenter eventually steered toward a niche market: smaller jobs involving larger-diameter pipes, ranging from 8 to 18 inches in diameter.

"I found that bigger companies don't want to do smaller jobs," he says. "Bigger companies want municipal contracts for rehabbing miles of pipe, so we focus on smaller runs — jobs we can do in a day or two.

"It's just a different ballgame than the larger companies play. Customers just couldn't get larger companies to do shorter runs, which created opportunities for us."

The company also found success by serving all kinds of customers, from municipalities, airports and military facilities to homes, hospitals and schools to industrial clients, he says. C O N T | N U E D >>

CREATIVE APPROACH

ne thing Mark Carpenter loves about trenchless pipeline rehab is helping customers avoid the extreme disruption and high cost of traditional sewer line repairs. But another factor trips his trigger, too: He enjoys a good challenge.

That's exactly what the co-owner of American Trenchless Technologies ran into several years ago when a customer in Geneva, Illinois, called with a big problem: a sewer line so badly broken that employees dubbed it "the impossible trenchless repair."

The customer had torn down an old home and was building a larger new one. But before connecting the home to an existing sewer lateral, it had to be inspected, according to city regulations. The inspection revealed a severely deteriorated, roughly 50-foot-long section of 6-inchdiameter clay pipe. (A video of the inspection posted on YouTube has almost 475,000 views.)

"The line was almost fully clogged with mud and broken pieces of clay tile," Carpenter says. "Parts of the top and side were busted out. We looked at the video and wondered how we would ever be able to line it, because using a water jetter to clear the line would collapse the whole thing."

To make it worse, the sewer line ran under a two-lane state highway, with the mainline on the far side of the roadway. That meant Carpenter would need to get a permit from the Illinois Department of Transportation to dig up the highway — a process that can take months. Carpenter estimates that excavating to replace the section of pipe would cost \$30,000 or more.

The dilemma spurred Carpenter into Mac-Gyver mode. Instead of using a water jetter, he affixed a "fire nozzle" to a 1-inch-diameter PEX pipe and went to work. The nozzle created a spray pattern wide enough and just powerful enough to move debris forward, while the PEX was stiff enough to push the nozzle through, he says.

It took about two days of delicate maneuvering to clear the debris. Then he used a lining machine from Perma-Liner Industries to shoot a structural felt liner through the damaged section of pipe, under the highway and into the mainline.

The total lining time was a matter of minutes, not including ambient-curing time. The total cost rang in between \$6,000 and \$7,000. Customer satisfaction? Off the charts, he says.

"Things come up every day in this business and you've got to be able to figure them out. Sometimes you definitely need to be creative. Every job is a little different, just like snowflakes. But that's what my guys and I like about it."

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>>> Ron Richardson and Devin Snyder attach a loaded cál tube bladder to a Perma-Liner inversion drum.

> Moreover, as the company earned a reputation for thinking outside the box, it started lining more than just typical drainlines. The company also has lined swimming pool drains, electrical conduit, air ducts, sump pits, basins, downspouts and even a spillway outlet for a dam.

> "We've had some jobs where I look back and say, 'How did we even do that?' But if it's lineable, we're not afraid to try to line it."

"WE'VE HAD SOME JOBS WHERE I LOOK BACK AND SAY. HOW DID WE EVEN DO THAT?' BUT IF IT'S LINEABLE, WE'RE NOT AFRAID TO TRY TO LINE IT."

MARK CARPENTER

TECHNOLOGY-DRIVEN SOLUTIONS

American Trenchless now owns a considerable roster of equipment. For pipe lining, the company relies on systems made by Alkota Cleaning Systems, CIPP Services, NuFlow, Perma-Liner Industries, Pipe Lining Supply and RapidAir Products.

The company also owns eight drain machines built by Spartan Tool and RIDGID; cart water jetters made by MyTana (3,000 psi at 8 gpm) and Spartan (3,000 psi at

12 gpm); a Badger TR 3100 mainline inspection camera manufactured by Aries Industries; five RIDGID SeeSnake and one SeeSnake Mini pipeline inspection cameras; and an IMS Micro Automatic Plus robotic cutter from Pipeline Renewal Technologies.

In addition, the company has invested in a Maxi Miller drain machine from Picote Solutions; a Clog Dog drain machine from the Clog Squad; and a Ditch Witch FX60 trailer vacuum system. The company also does

> pipe grouting; it uses grout and related products made by Avanti and a pump built by Graco.

> Of course, it's had to know what to buy without keeping up with the latest in technological developments, so Carpenter attends trade shows, reads trade

magazines and attends training seminars sponsored by manufacturers.

"Plus I just talk to people," he says. "You have to stay up on things because more and more people enter the market each year. I like to differentiate myself by staying a step ahead. I want to be one of the smarter, more wellinformed people in the industry.

"Sometimes customers say to me, 'No one else told me about that technology.' That's because they didn't



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Tel: (562) 944-3060 Fax: (562) 944-7630 know about it. You've got to have a thirst for knowledge in this industry. And it moves fast, so it's not easy to keep up with it all."

A PLAN FOR GROWTH

As Carpenter pauses to look at how American Trenchless has grown since its inception in 2017, he's proud of what he and his brother have accomplished.

"Someone who mentored me once said I should find something I like to do and become the best at doing it. That always stuck with me and that's what I've tried to do."

Looking ahead, Carpenter says he's developing a business plan aimed at tripling the company's revenue in five years, to between \$5 million and \$6 million. That will require more technicians, salespeople and project coordinators, among other things.

Part of that growth could come from further expansion of existing services to new customers and possibly adding more services that complement existing ones, such as lining water-service lines as well as sewer lines, he explains.

But even as competition in trenchless pipe



≈ Richardson wets out the liner in a calibration tube with a two-part epoxy resin.

rehab grows, he's not concerned, noting that there's plenty of work available for everyone.

"The infrastructure is aging every year and it's not going to fix itself. There's quite a bit of opportunity out there." **c**

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1776 Heavy Duty

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• Patented Design: U.S. Patent #: D802,241

• Pulsation Valve • 13" Flat Free Tires

Audible battery alarm

Motor: 23 hp Briggs & Stratton V-Twin Fuel: Gas / Propane

Frame & Reel: 100% Stainless Steel

Pump / Pressure: 11 GPM Pump @ 3,600 PSI

•Electric / Remote Start •Hour / Battery Gauge

Winch mount for easy loading and unloading

• High Quality Stainless Steel & Brass Fittings

•Removable Top handle for easy storage

Hose: 300' of 3/8" Piranha Jetter Hose - (5k PSI Max, 12k Burst)

Dimensions: 55"H (with handle), 431/2" (without handle), 38"L x 25"W

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1776 Standard Edition



- Patented Design: U.S. Patent #: D802,241
- Electric / Remote Start Hour / Battery Gauge
- Pulsation Valve Safety Relief Valve
- •13" Flat Free Tires •Audible battery alarm
- · Winch mount for easy loading and unloading
- High Quality Stainless Steel & Brass Fittings
- Removable Top handle for easy storage

Motor: 23 hp Briggs & Stratton V-Twin Fuel: Gas / Propane

Pump / Pressure: 6 GPM Pump @ 4,000 PSI Frame & Reel: 100% Stainless Steel

Hose: 300' of 3/8" Piranha Jetter Hose – (5k PSI Max, 12k Burst)

Weight: 275 lbs

Dimensions: 54"H (with handle), 43" (without handle), 38"L x 23"W

1808 Madison Mini Jetter



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- •Generates 1,600 PSI @ 1.3 GPM and only draws 13 amps
- Pulsation helps hose go through tight bends and further down line
- Heavy Duty Hose Reel with 100' of 1/8" Piranha Hose
- 3 piece nozzle kit, custom designed for 1808 Madison Mini Jetter
- •25' of pressure washer hose, wand, and turbo nozzle to clean up any job site messes

Motor: 13 Amp Electric Motor Pump: Axial Cam Pressure: 1,600 PSI Flow: 1.3 GPM

Hose Capacity: 100 feet of 1/8" hose Weight: 15 lbs (without hose & reel) Dimensions: 17"L x 12.5"W x 8.5"H

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Patriot -Micro Rod

Weight: 341 lbs

Push Rod Exterior Jacket: Polypropylene Push Rod Interior: Fiberglass Push Rod Diameter: .27 Conductor Wires: 6 Conductor Wire Size: 28 AWG Length: 100

Made in USA. Call to see if compatible with your sewer camera



Patriot -Mini Rod

Push Rod Exterior Jacket: Polypropylene Push Rod Interior: Fiberglass Push Rod Diameter: .37 Conductor Wires: 6 Conductor Wire Size: 20 AWG Lengths: 100', 200'

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Patriot -Standard Rod

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WELL IN HAND

An easily maneuverable, dolly-mounted jetter gets to the root of tough drain problems // By Ken Wysocky

HERE WAS A TIME when Guillermo Alvarez was socking away money to buy a trailer-mounted water jetter so his company, Rooter Warrior Plumbing & Drain Cleaning, could someday clean larger drainlines.

But that plan changed dramatically after he invested in a Patriot 1776 HD dolly-mounted jetting machine, manufactured by Patriot Sewer Equipment & Repair.

"I figured we'd use it for a year or two, then build up enough capital to move up into a trailer jetter," says Alvarez, who established the company in 2018 in Riverside, California, about 55 miles east of downtown Los Angeles. "But now I can't see spending that kind of money when this jetter keeps up with everything we need to do.

"I'll admit I was a little doubtful at first," adds Alvarez, who runs four service vehicles and employs six people. "The only jetters I'd ever run before were trailer jetters, and I didn't see how this smaller machine would work as well. But after I watched a demo, I put an order in right away."

Furthermore, the price tag was about \$13,000 — significantly less than what a trailer jetter would cost.

"Being a younger company, I didn't want a big expenditure like a trailer jetter," he explains. "But I still needed a jetter to handle different kinds of jobs. We have a lot of terra cotta and clay pipes around here, so there are a lot of root intrusions, which a jetter handles better."

ROOTER WARRIOR PLUMBING & DRAIN CLEANING INC.

RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA

OWNER Guillermo Alvarez

MACHINE

Patriot 1776 HD water jetter from Patriot Sewer Equipment & Repair

FUNCTION Clearing 11/2- to 8-inch drainlines

FEATURES 23 hp Briggs & Stratton engine; water pump made by Comet Pumps (3,500 psi at up to 11 gpm); stainless steel frame, lines, fittings and hose reel; 300 feet of 3/8-inchdiameter hose made by Piranha Hose Products; remotecontrol start/stop; pulsation setting; rechargeable lithium battery; weighs 345 pounds; dolly with flat-free tires and removable/stowable handle; measures 55 inches tall (43 1/2 inches without handle), 38 inches long and 25 inches wide

COST Approximately \$13,000

www.rooterwarriorplumbing.com

BRINGING THE MUSCLE

The chief attraction for Alvarez was the jetter's combination of portability and power. Its compact design (55 inches tall with the dolly handle, 43 1/2 inches without it, 38 inches long and 25 inches wide) makes it easy to maneuver.

The machine weighs 345 pounds, so Alvarez uses a winch to load and unload it. But the dolly — which features solid, 13-inchdiameter, flat-free polyurethane-foam tires - makes it easy to move the jetter around and access places a trailer jetter can't. Moreover, the handle comes off and self-stows on the machine, which makes it easier to store in service vehicles.

"In the neighborhoods where we work the most, a lot of drainlines run through easements at the rear of properties," Alvarez says. "So with a trailer jetter, we'd need 400 feet of hose to be able to jet, versus just rolling the dolly to the back of a yard where you can't take a trailer."

For smaller jobs, Alvarez hooks up the machine directly to a faucet. But to clean larger lines that demand more water flow than a hose can provide, he breaks out the machine's secret weapon: A portable, 100-gallon bladder that acts as a water reservoir.





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MONEY



"THIS MACHINE IS ENGINEERED WITH DRAIN CLEANERS IN MIND. THE GUYS AT PATRIOT GREW UP WITH DRAIN CLEANING EQUIPMENT, SO EVERYTHING IS WELL THOUGHT OUT AND INTENDED TO MAKE IT POWERFUL AND EASY TO RUN."

GUILLERMO ALVAREZ

A standard hose connects the bladder to a faucet, while a 2-inch hose connects the bladder to the machine. The bladder provides enough continuous water volume to use a jetting nozzle; the machines come with a Reaper nozzle made by Hydra-Flex and Alvarez also uses Warthog nozzles built by StoneAge.

WELL-ENGINEERED MACHINE

The 1776 HD is designed to clean lines from 1 1/2 to 8 inches in diameter. A 23 hp Briggs & Stratton gasoline engine powers a water pump made by Comet Industrial Pumps; it generates 3,500 psi at up to 11 gpm. A propane engine is available also.

≪ Guillermo Alvarez, owner of Rooter Warrior, with his Patriot 1776 HD portable jetting machine from Patriot Sewer Equipment & Repair. Alvarez assumed he'd need a trailer jetter in order to clean larger lines and take care of root intrusion, but this "Mighty Mouse of jetters" more than meets his expectations.

The unit features a frame, reel, lines and fittings made of stainless steel; 300 feet of 3/8-inch-diameter hose made by Piranha Hose Products; remote-control capability for one-man operation; pulsation setting; easily accessible oil, air and fuel filters for easy maintenance; and a lithium battery that powers electronics and the remote control.

"This machine is engineered with drain cleaners in mind," Alvarez says. "The guys at Patriot grew up with drain cleaning equipment, so everything is well thought out and intended to make it powerful and easy to run."

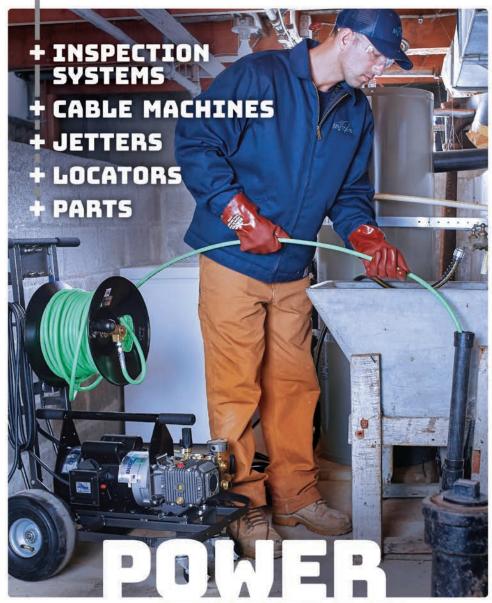
Any concerns Alvarez had about the machine's power disappeared after he cleaned a roughly 250-foot-long, 4-inchdiameter clay drainline that included two 90-degree turns. He estimates there were root intrusions in about 80% of the joints.

"The biggest challenge was that as we cut out the roots, they kept getting stuck on those hard turns and water kept backing up," he explains. "It felt like we weren't getting anywhere. We went at it for about 2 1/2 to 3 1/2 hours. I didn't think we were going to get it open, but eventually we cleared the line.

"After we were done, I told one of my guys, 'If we can clear this, we can clear any line.' I used to think that the bigger the jetter, the more powerful it is. But this machine is like Mighty Mouse." c

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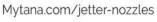


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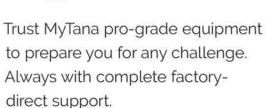
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SHYK-1 NEW Puma Standard Kit

Puma Kit comes with HD 3/16" thick concave saws and skids for 6" - 12" lines. Cutter holds flows 40 - 80 GPM and pressures 1500 - 3000 PSI. It is rated up to 225 ftlb. of torque, and 195 ftlb. of continuous torque. Kit comes with SHYM-1 Puma Motor; 1" Hub; 6", 8", 10", 12" HD Concave Saw Blade; 6", 8" Cage Skid Single Size; New Set Of 10" and 12" Fin



S-906M1-AK Advance Kinetics Root Cutter Motor For Recyclers

This motor is built for the same platform as the standard S-906M motor but has an infusion process at the cellular level applied to the internal parts that make it silky smooth to turn and ideal for recycler units, which improves hydraulic performance and almost eliminates internal corrosion it also reduces drag, saves water and increases productivity. Designed for flow 40 - 170 gpm and pressure to 3000 psi.The motor is rated to 288 lbs. of torque and 220 lbs. continuous



SRRK-1H Super Red Hot Kit

New improved larger front steel bearing on the Red Hot Motor increases life, reduces maintenance and makes this motor able to withstand the shock produced by heavy cleaning. Round profile of this cutter allows it to enter lines from 4" and up. 40 - 80 GPM and pressures 2000 - 3000 PSI. Produces 225 ftlb. of torque, and 175 ftlb. continuous. Kit comes with SRRC-1H Red Hot Motor; 1" Saw Blade Hub; 6", 8", 10", 12" HD Concave Saw Blade; 6", 8" Cage Skid Single Size; new Set of 10" & 12" Fins



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 0f 10" & 12" Fins. Motor fits Green wheeled skids you may have.



SRRK-4-15W Super Green Meanie Citizen Kit

Large Range Kit gives you saws and skids for 4" to 15" pipe sizes. Cutter handles flows 40 - 80 GPM and pressures 2000 - 3000 PSI. Rated up to maximum 235 ftlb. of torque, and 175 ftlb. of continuous torque. Kit comes with SRRC-1P Super Green Motor; 1" Saw Blade Hub; 4", 6", 8", 10", 12", 15" HD Concave Saw Blade; Set of 4" Steel Rings; 6" Cage Skid; 8"-10" Adjustable Wheel Skid; 12"-15" Adjustable Wheel Skid; Allen Wrench and Screws

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MONEY MANAGER



Peter Bellotti

GET BACK TO FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT BASICS

This advice may seem elementary at first, but small companies can always benefit from a review of foundational business principles // By Peter Bellotti

ANY OWNERS OF small- and medium-sized businesses face a simple dilemma on a daily basis: They are really good at providing the service their business sells, but they don't have the knowledge to be good money managers.

Unlike larger corporations, these smaller businesses often face the challenge of money management on their own, or at least without the help of a huge team of financial professionals. As a result, money management can be pushed to the side as an ancillary thing instead of a focal point of the business.

No matter what their financial background, all business owners know there's more to running a successful business than just selling. To stay in business, you must be able to collect payments to create cash flow and manage all your accounts in the proper fashion.

Money management is simply the processes you follow to handle business finances. This includes setting goals, tracking your expenses and income, and budgeting. A good money management plan will help you make sure your business will churn out a profit, and also avoid time periods of negative cash flow.

Certain aspects of money management will also keep your business on sound financial ground, so you can pay all your bills on time and be well prepared for months of lower income, such as during seasonal downturns.

Let's take a look at some best practices for money management and six tips to help you on your way:

1. CREATE A BUDGET

Step one of any money management plan is creating a budget. On this budget should be a list of all your expected income and all your expected profit. A business budget should be projected as accurately as possible for an entire calendar year, and then broken down by quarter, month and even week. Plug essential services into the budget, as well as a forecast of your anticipated income.

Creating a budget will allow you to see times of the year when you might have extra money on hand to invest in new equipment, for example, or periods when money might be tight and purchasing might not be a good idea. Having a budget for the entire year will also allow you to make larger adjustments to your operations if need be so you avoid financial pitfalls.

2. KNOW WHEN BILLS ARE DUE

After creating a budget, it's time to know when all your bills are due. Create a chart, spreadsheet or any other form of tracking to know the due dates and amounts of all your recurring expenses. This could include business loans, credit cards and charges for services such as internet and phone. It's important to pay bills on time to avoid late charges, extra fees and potentially even having essential services shut off.

HAVING A BUDGET FOR THE ENTIRE YEAR WILL ALSO ALLOW YOU TO MAKE LARGER ADJUSTMENTS TO YOUR OPERATIONS IF NEED BE SO YOU AVOID FINANCIAL PITFALLS.

3. KEEP AN EYE ON SPENDING

It's easy to swipe a credit card or pull from a line of credit when you need to make a purchase to support your business. And while this isn't necessarily a bad thing, it's easy to get overwhelmed and break your budget if you're not tracking all spending.

Every time you incur an expense, record it as a new line item. Even if the purchase is for \$10, it's still important that you get in the habit of tracking it. By staying on top of all expenses, you'll have a better grasp on your business finances and avoid overspending.

4. MANAGE AND TRACK EMPLOYEE COSTS

Employees represent one of your biggest expenses. It's important to keep the cost of your workforce as low as you can - without sacrificing quality, of course. In addition, it's essential to have a good

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Peter Bellotti specializes in business administration, big data and cloud software implementation as sales manager at workforce management software company Mitrefinch USA. Learn more at www.mitrefinch.com.

handle on all of your labor costs. The best way to do this is through a time and attendance tracking system. Appropriate software programs will ensure accurate employee tracking, making sure you pay out only what you should.

5. STAY ON TOP OF RECEIVABLES

Landing a new customer is great, but if you don't collect the money associated with the job, was it even worth it? While the volume of work can be a good indicator of how well your company is doing, you only reach a profit if you actually collect on the invoice you mailed or left behind with the customer.

That's why it's so essential to track and stay on top of your accounts receivable. You should aim to keep the number of days you collect money from your customers as close to when you issued the invoice as possible.

There are plenty of accounts receivable tracking tools available. No matter how you decide to track it, you should ensure that none of your customers fall too behind on their accounts, and you should vigilantly pursue the money you're owed.

6. HAVE EXTRA CASH ON HAND

No doubt there are periods when your business isn't performing as well as it did at another point in the year. There are also times when you'll fall short of the anticipated workload and collection expectations. When this happens, you might find yourself in a little bit of a pickle if you haven't planned properly.

It's good to have a reserve of cash on hand to use when the money isn't flowing in as quickly as you need it to. Think of this as your rainy day fund. This extra cash reserve can help cover payroll and other expenses if you're behind on collections, or cover the cost of an emergency expense, such as broken equipment in need of repair or replacement. You should always plan for the unexpected and be able to weather the storm. c



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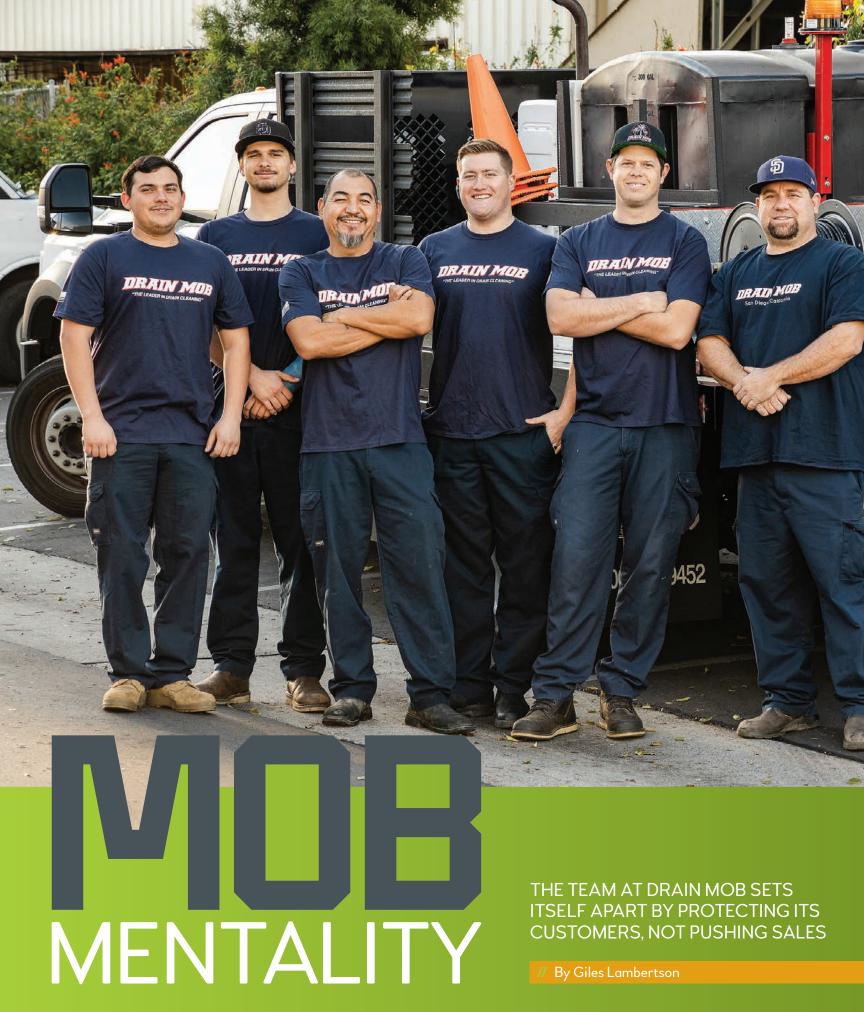
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Photography by Matt Dayka

Mob is there to push back.

The San Diego-based Drain Mob crew includes (from left) Eddie Zamudio, Andrew Castle, Ruben Zamudio, Cody Worbington, Jacob Kemble, Billy Teeter, Joey Flores and Ryan Cascante.

rain Mob" might conjure up images of menacing thugs straight out of The Godfather. But the San Diego, California-based Drain Mob is a different kind of crew. The company focuses primarily on drain

work. "We have a plumbing license, but we don't do plumbing except for repairing underground lines. We don't do gas lines or water heaters or faucets," says co-owner Billy Teeter. One of two addresses to the company's website is a no-nonsense www.wedodrains.com.

The "Mob" part of the name is intended to convey that the company is there to protect vulnerable customers from sweet-talking service reps who show up at their door. The

"I came up with the name at the old company," Teeter says. "Some of us always called ourselves 'the drain mob' to set us apart from the plumbers out there who are geared toward sales. I'm not out to badmouth anybody, but we all see too many guys who go out to sell, sell, sell. They take advantage of homeowners. We want to take care of people, to protect them."

This is not to suggest Drain Mob isn't interested in selling its services. The company simply draws the line at "overselling customers something they don't need."

Drain Mob

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

OWNERS

Billy Teeter and Jacob Kemble

EMPLOYEES

12, plus office staff

SERVICES

Drain cleaning (residential, commercial, storm), jetting, camera inspections, descaling, smoke testing, drain system preventive maintenance

SERVICE AREA

San Diego area, 4,500-plus square miles

WEBSITE

www.drainmob.com and www.wedodrains.com



ス Technician Joey Flores (left) uses a US Jetting 4018 trailer jetter to clear a drainline while co-owner Jacob Kemble watches a CS6X Versa monitor connected to RIDGID SeeSnake inspection camera.

>>> Technician Ruben Zamudio guides a Picote Maxi Miller into a residential drainline and uses a RIDGID SeeSnake RM200 camera with CS12x monitor to verify his progress.

"I'M NOT OUT TO BADMOUTH ANYBODY, BUT WE ALL SEE TOO MANY GUYS WHO GO OUT TO SELL, SELL, SELL. ... WE WANT TO TAKE CARE OF PEOPLE, TO PROTECT THEM."

BILLY TEETER

Teeter picked up this philosophy at Affordable Drain Service in San Diego, where he worked for a total of 15 years starting at age 20. "It is a great company, an awesome company. I owe them a lot. The best drain cleaning guys in this area came from that company. Craig Post gave us all a great opportunity and taught us a great trade."

MOVING ON

When he decided to start his own drain cleaning business in June 2017, he brought on a partner, his neighbor Jacob Kemble. "Jacob moved in next door in 2014 and we became friends. He knew I was going to start my own company. I knew him pretty well and knew he would be a good fit. I didn't want to do everything myself and I knew I could trust him."

Kemble was working at an insurance company, putting to use his bachelor's degree in business administration from California State University San Marcos. He had previously worked in construction before the market crashed in 2007-08.

"I was just tired of working for corporations and all that goes along with that," Kemble says. "I knew Billy was a great guy and a hard, hard worker. He's hard to keep up with. I admired his work ethic and skill set. It was the right fit for me."

Teeter says he quit his job at Affordable Drain Service one day and started Drain Mob the next. Kemble came on board the following month. For the first year, they worked out of Kemble's garage where Kemble answered phones and worked up invoices. Before long, Teeter took his partner on service calls, too.

"It is unbelievable how quickly he learns," Teeter says. "He isn't scared to get his hands dirty and to learn new stuff. He quickly found his niche."

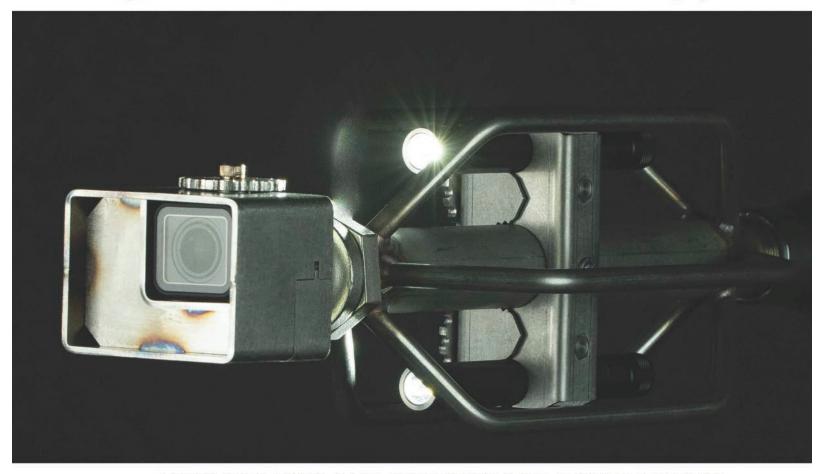
So did the company, and business boomed. Teeter hired his first employee within six months of launching the company. Kemble says it grew almost faster than they could keep up with. Teeter's network of old customers and people in the industry coupled with his outgoing personality channeled business his way. "I knew it would work," he says matter-of-factly. C O N T | N U E D >>



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MAKING ADJUSTMENTS

The company's service area ranges across the entire San Diego County area, including dozens of communities on the coast and inland from Bonita to Rancho Santa Fe to University City. It is a congested area, to say the least — which, of course, means lots of potential customers, though getting to them can be challenging on a bad traffic day.

"The traffic morning and afternoon is so brutal," Kemble says. That was one silver lining of the COVID-19 pandemic: People staying at home reduced traffic jams for people like Drain Mob technicians who still had to go to work. "It's helped us from 4 to 6 in the afternoon. It used to take us 45 minutes to go 15 miles. Now we can go 10 miles in 15 minutes. We haven't had hard traffic since spring."

The impact of the virus on the company has otherwise been mixed. People are home more hours a day "using their facilities," as Teeter says, so more residential drain problems have cropped up for Drain Mob to address. On the other hand, some restaurant customers

"WE TRY TO HELP OUT SMALL, FAMILY-OWNED BUSINESSES. IF OUR GUYS GET A SLOW DAY, WE'LL SEND THEM OVER TO A RESTAURANT TO CABLE OUT THEIR KEY DRAINS."

BILLY TEETER

have closed and others are struggling. The company's response has been compassionate.

"We try to help out small, family-owned businesses," Teeter says. "If our guys get a slow day, we'll send them over to a restaurant to cable out their key drains. They appreciate it. They stuck with us and now they're going through a hard time."

The owners have spent thousands of dollars on personal protection equipment for their service techs and office employees, according to Teeter. "We ordered so many masks, spent ridiculous amounts of money for PPE, 10 times the price we would have paid later; but we didn't know how long it was going to go on and we wanted to protect the guys out there."

Teeter and Kemble laid off some of their office staff when the virus first struck but have since rehired them. The first week was "kind of weird," Teeter says, but business activity has stabilized, with a greater proportion of residential customers, and additional help has been brought on to keep up with service calls.

TRYING NEW METHODS

A perk of drain work in San Diego is that most homes don't have basements and the generally warm climate allows for sewer lines to be laid relatively close to the surface. All of that means accessing and working on clogged drains is easier and faster than in areas of the





BEST Test Plugs Better!"

» Drain Mob co-owner Billy Teeter (left) oversees Joey Flores while he inspects a line at a residence in Lemon Grove, California.

country where basements are the norm. Generally, the drains are old stock — many dating from the 1950s but some going back to the late 19th century.

Drain Mob has a variety of tools that techs carry to remedy a customer's complaint. Spartan 300 cable machines are used to clear mainlines, with DCD Valor drum machines rolled out for 1 1/2- to 2-inch lines. A Milwaukee M12 cordless drill machine is employed for bathroom tubs, showers and sinks.

"We also keep it old school sometimes," Teeter says, "using an Erickson hand-crank cleaning machine with a drophead cable for the difficult bathtubs."



The Lansas 5-Line



To jet a line, the company calls on US Jetting equipment — four of the jetters are trailer-mounted, one rides in a truck. To inspect lines before and after, Drain Mob depends on a variety of RIDGID cameras.

Those were the services offered by the company when it started in 2017. Jetting remains its most in-demand service, but Teeter credits Picote specialty equipment with dramatically boosting business. The company calls on Picote the process from American Pipelining Supplies, which involves pneumatically propelling a nontoxic solution through corroded pipes, breaking down and removing the corrosion and following up with a potable water-safe epoxy that's flowed into place and cured.

Another APS product — the Versapatch — is getting a workout at Drain Mob. Versapatch is designed for spot repairs less than 6 feet in length. It can be



Joey Flores fires up a US Jetting 4018 trailer jetter to clean out a drainline on a residential job site.

Maxi Millers, Mini Millers, a Super Midi and a minicleaner for drain cleaning. Tech Reuben Zamudio has a box truck full of Picote equipment and solely devotes himself to grinding out old liners, descaling and otherwise restoring lines rather than replacing them.

"Picote loves Reuben," Teeter says. "He uses their equipment more than anyone else I know in the U.S." Teeter travels often to the new Picote facility in Arizona to check out new equipment.

The company does smoke testing and recently began pipe lining — specifically, inserted up to 100 feet into a pipe and affixed to a pipe's walls.

Kemble has taken a particular interest in the lining projects. "I like new equipment and new methods of doing things. A lot of guys know about the patch but prefer traditional ways to repairing pipe. I decided, let's see what we can do with this."

In general, Teeter advocates for putting quality above price in selecting tools. "You buy the good stuff one time instead of going with cheap stuff and replacing it. It can cost more money, sure, but that's the

NO GIMMICKS.

ow does a new drain cleaning company draw attention to itself as it works to establish its share of the market? One seemingly counterintuitive idea is to work incognito.

The San Diego-based Drain Mob does 20% of the company's jobs involve work for plumbers who don't have the necessary drain equipment.

The four-year-old company lets the work speak for itself when a crew is on a site as a subcontractor. Technicians arrive in plain, unmarked white vans or box trucks. "We don't brand them, so when we show up, we represent the contractor instead of ourselves," says co-owner Billy Teeter. "We will even change our shirts and put on RIDGID or Milwaukee shirts instead."

For jobs on which they're the primary contractor, techs wear Drain Mob or www. wedodrains.com T-shirts, but the trucks still are unbranded and no gimmicky uniforms are in evidence. "We come to do the work, to clear the drain and get the hell out of there," Teeter says.

Even though not all of Drain Mob's work is subcontracting, that professional courtesy is important. The plumbers who hire them appreciate it and it earns them repeat business.

problem when it comes to drumming up other work. Relying pretty much on Yelp reviews, Instagram videos — Teeter enjoys posting videos of jobs and also uses the industry — and, most important, word-ofmouth recommendations, the company is growing steadily.

Teeter has a straightforward explanation for why Drain Mob is successful and it has nothing to do with advertising or branding. "Why do they come to Drain Mob? Because there's no bull. We'll take care of them.



"YOU BUY THE GOOD STUFF ONE TIME INSTEAD OF GOING WITH CHEAP STUFF AND REPLACING IT. IT CAN COST MORE MONEY, SURE, BUT THAT'S THE WAY TO GO."

BILLY TEETER

way to go. Picote is a game-changer for anyone who will invest in it."

THE RIGHT BALANCE

The crew of techs generally is cross-trained, with new hires riding along with veteran techs for up to six months to learn what is expected of a member of the Drain Mob — that is, protecting customers rather than pressuring them, and doing it skillfully. Also, crew members benefit from Teeter's aversion to working too many hours.

"I was burned out so bad before, I want to make it comfortable for my guys. We answer calls five days a week, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., and don't work Sundays," he says. "If someone wants to, they can work Saturdays. We get calls at night but usually refer them to Affordable Drain Service. There is so much work out there."

The co-owners appear to be a good team. Kemble calls Teeter "the best drain guy in San Diego" and one who is a problem-solver. "Billy likes the tough jobs. He likes a good

challenge." For his part, Teeter praises his partner's superior communication skills. "Jacob is the nice guy. When guys have a problem, they call him. I am hard on people sometimes. I take it so seriously, trying to get everything just right."

Together, the Drain Mob team sees continued success in their business venture, partly because they are willing to change with the times as new drain cleaning products appear. "We are open to evolving with the industry," Kemble says, which could mean eventually opening satellite offices or other expansion possibilities. "If we find the right person, we might open an office in another city. But it will have to be the right person for the Mob. He will have to have the same mindset as us." c

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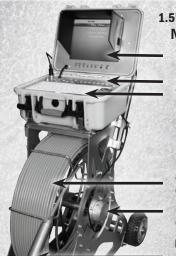
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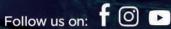
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BEHIND THE GEAR

FAMILY MATTERS

General Pipe Cleaners has been dedicated to the drain cleaning industry for four generations // By Kim Peterson

ENERAL PIPE CLEANERS has been a fixture of the drain cleaning industry for nearly a century. A division of General Wire Spring, the family business first began creating drain cleaning tools in the 1940s, and continued to add new machines, including recording-capable inspection systems, throughout the following years.

The company recently celebrated 90 years in business and has started welcoming in the fourth-generation of workers to the fold.

Cleaner recently spoke with Marty Silverman, vice president of marketing at General Pipe Cleaners, about the many machines General has developed over the years and the company's incredible longevity.

CLEANER: Tell us a little about the history of General Pipe Cleaners and its products.

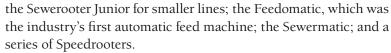
Silverman: In 1930, my grandfather, Abe Silverman, stepped out on his own from his uncle Frank's Rapid Wire Spring Company to found General Wire Spring Company.

We started as a manufacturer of custom springs — we made springs for anything from elevators to oven doors to pool covers to highway construction signs. We even made custom springs for

a hot air balloonist attempting to fly around the world.

When a guy asked my grandfather to make a drain snake, he agreed. In the 1940s, working to make a more durable snake, he patented a process of wrapping spring wire tightly around a braided wire core. He called the heavy-duty design "Flexicore cable." It has remained the core of our business ever since.

Our first drain cleaning machine was introduced soon afterward: the Sewerooter. The Sewerooter evolved to



In the following decades General continued to innovate and produced more drain machines, a line of water jets, and portable video pipe inspection systems with built-in recording devices.

As we complete our 90th year in business, a monumental task for a family business, we have started to welcome in the fourth generation. More than 40% of General's workforce remains multigenerational, including some of the company's independent sales force. It's amazing to think that the grandfathers of some of our employees worked alongside my grandfather. My grandfather would be proud of the business he built for his family, and of generations of plumbing and drain cleaning contractors who use our products.

CLEANER: What differentiates your drain machines, jetters and inspection cameras from the competition?

Silverman: Our Flexicore cables are the heart and soul of our machines. After all, it's the cable that does all the work. All of our cable machines, from our Super-Vee hand-held sink machine to our popular Speedrooter for mainlines, include Flexicore cables.

Our jetters include features that help increase performance. For instance, our JM-1450 Jet-Set electric jet includes a unique Vibra-Pulse system that maintains the same pressure and flow rate whether the pulse is on or off. This makes a big difference with small electric jetters to help the hose glide around tight bends and farther down the line.

We were the first to introduce portable sewer camera systems with a built-in recording device. Back then it was a VCR. These days, our Gen-Eye inspection cameras offer recording on a flash drive. They also include a Wi-Fi transmitter to send the video to your smartphone or tablet. We also reduced the size and weight of our system from heavy monitors to all-in-one systems with the lightweight monitor, reel and camera in one compact package.



Abe Silverman



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

Silverman: General Pipe Cleaners equipment is known for its effectiveness and

Our equipment is purchased by a wide range of end users, but what they all have in common is a desire to diagnose and clear clogged drains. Sometimes the clog is in a small pipe with many twists and turns exiting a kitchen or bath. For this job, you could use one of the General cable machines specifically made for small drains, like a Super Vee or Power Vee. If the clog is in a connecting pipe between two baths, you could use the Mini Rooter Pro, which is designed for medium-sized indoor drains. When the drains in the whole building are backed up, the Speedrooter 92 would be best because it's engineered to remove roots and other tough clogs from laterals. If you believe that the stoppage is made of grease, one of the Jet-Set high-pressure water jetters would be the correct tool for the job. The Jet-Sets come in seven models, each specializing in small, medium or large pipe sizes. If the user needs a diagnostic camera device, they can use a Gen-Eye pipe inspection unit.

In the drain cleaning world, one size does not fit all. Specific machines are needed for specific problems, and because you never know exactly what you're in for when you answer a call about a clogged drain, you must have access to each type of machine to be effective. General manufactures a wide range of equipment designed to address any drain cleaning problem.

In addition, General's equipment is safe and durable. Our Flexicore cable is known for its toughness and longevity, and the machines that deliver that cable are engineered and manufactured in the U.S. to the highest standards.

As our motto says, we make 'The Toughest Tools Down the Line!'

CLEANER: What are some recommendations for customers shopping for inspection cameras?

Silverman: Video pipe inspection systems are available at a wide range of price points, and as a rule, you get what you pay for. If your inspection system spends most of its time in a repair shop, or waiting for parts, you will never recoup a return on your investment. Camera systems built with quality components tend to cost more, but end up saving money in the long run. Potential customers should get wordof-mouth reviews from their peers before investing in any inspection system.

Along with durability, customers should make sure that their camera system has enough features and accessories to meet their needs. For example, in most real-life situations, it's essential to be able to locate the camera head in the pipe after a problem is found. This requires the unit to come with a sonde or remote RF transmitter, as well as a separate locator device. Recording the inspection is often necessary, either as proof of performance or as a marketing tool for the next stage of the job. Recording devices range from using USB thumb drives or SD cards to recording on a smartphone or tablet app via Wi-Fi.

We recommend that customers first evaluate what they need, and then make sure that the equipment conforms to those requirements.

Purchasing a video pipe inspection system from General makes it easy. Our line of pipe inspection systems reflect the fact that we have learned what works and what doesn't, and we know what customers really need to be effective.

Second, third and fourth generation members of the General Pipe Cleaners team include (from left) Mike Silverman, Jeff Silverman, Steve Glick, Steve Silverman, Art Silverman, Marty Silverman, Bob Silverman, Lee Silverman, David Silverman, and Ethan Silverman.

➤ The lightweight Gen-Eye X-POD inspection system combines camera, reel and monitor into one compact package.





☆ General's toolbox-sized JM-1000 Mini-Jet weighs only 22 pounds but packs 1,500 psi of cleaning power, perfect for clearing small lines like clogged sinks and laundry drains.

THE GEAR

CLEANER: Your customer service team is known as the Drain Brains. What kind of support can customers expect for your team?

Silverman: Our Drain Brains customer support team has more than 250 years of combined experience in the industry. When you call with a question, you'll get real world experience, not someone reading from a script. General also has a contractor advisory group that can assist other contractors with difficult drain cleaning situations or questions.

CLEANER: How do you see the drain cleaning industry evolving?

Silverman: High-speed drain cleaners using flex shaft technology is the "next big thing" in drain cleaning. A flexible rod, like a speedometer cable, spins inside a sheath at 2,000 rpm. Traditional drum machines spin at 160 to 200 rpm, sectional machines spin at 400 to 700 rpm. High-speed flex shaft machines do a better job of cleaning pipes. They're also safer because operators aren't

grasping spinning drain cable. Watch for General's new Flexi-Rooter, scheduled for release in 2021.

CLEANER: What's new for General in 2021? What can customers expect out of General in the future?

Silverman: We are always looking at ways to improve systems and make a contractor's job easier. We have a number of product innovations and upgrades we are planning to introduce in 2021. Readers of *Cleaner* magazine will be the first to know.

CLEANER: What do you want your customers to think of when they hear the name General Pipe Cleaners?

Silverman: We're a 90-year-old, fourth-generation business located right here in the U.S. The No. 1 feature we try to build into all of our products is durability — starting with the strength of our Flexicore cables. You make your living with dependable tools. You can rely on General. c





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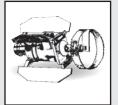
















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SAFETY

DON'T STAY SILENT

Not speaking up when you see safety violations perpetuates a cycle of behavior that puts the whole team at risk /// By Ken Wysocky

O YOU SEE A COLLEAGUE violating a safety procedure while operating a combo vac truck. Or breaking an office ethics protocol. Or doing something as simple as not wearing a mandated mask during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Given most people's propensity for avoiding conflict, it's undoubtedly tempting to just let things slide. After all, who wants to be perceived as that person on the office team or field crew — the one who thinks they're perfect and always calls out other people on the error of their ways?

Fortunately, you can have it both ways — as in, speak out and hold people accountable while still maintaining good workplace relationships. The trick is to do it with the right motivation and

"DON'T TURN IT INTO AN EGO MATCH OR A TEST OF WILLS. DELIVER THE MESSAGE, AND THEN LOOK OUT FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY."

JOSEPH GRENNY

attitude, and to hopefully work at a place where management builds a culture where accountability is prized, says Joseph Grenny, the co-founder and co-chairman of VitalSmarts, a national leadershiptraining organization.

If you're one of those people who finds speaking out is as difficult as cleaning a sewer line with a toothbrush, you're not alone, notes Grenny, who's also a four-time New York Times bestselling co-author of business books. (Titles include Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High; Crucial Accountability: Tools for Resolving Violated Expectations, Broken Commitments, and Bad Behavior; and Influencer: The New Science of Leading Change.)

"We've spent more than 30 years talking about the consequences of avoiding crucial conversations, which is absolutely ubiquitous in the workplace," he observes. "So many of the common complaints in our lives have roots in our inability to handle these crucial conversations."

IT'S NOT EASY

Why is speaking out so hard to do? Part of it stems from the way we've been hard-wired to think pessimistically about outcomes from confrontations. "That mentality served us well in prehistoric days when we were constantly faced with physical threats," he says. "But it doesn't serve us as well now, when we have to deal more with social challenges."

Moreover, the worst outcomes we can imagine rarely ever happen, he adds.

In other instances, employees feel like it's not their place to tell others what to do or how to act. Or they figure it won't do any good. Or they don't know what to say or how to say it without being offensive.

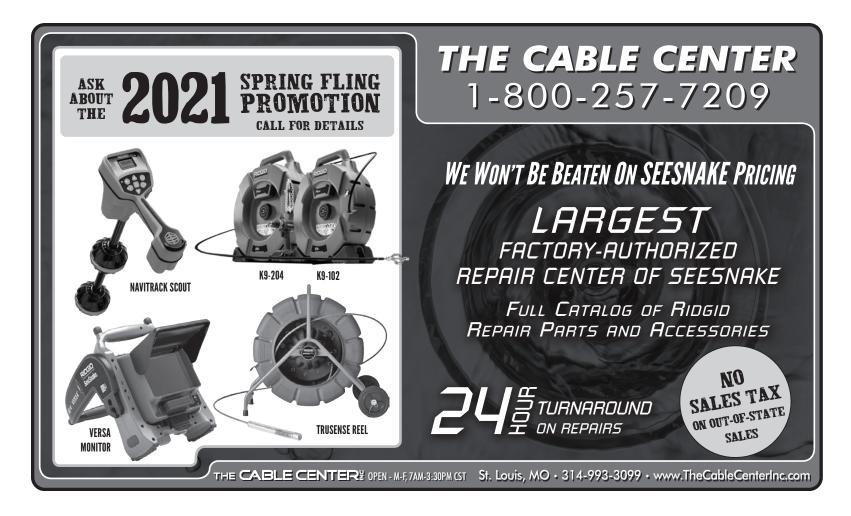
But in the long run, there are obvious downsides to ignoring such transgressions. For starters, if you don't talk things out, you'll probably act it out, creating a downward spiral of trust and repressed anger that can destroy team morale. "It all gets expressed one way or another through things like sarcasm and resentment," he says.

Second, problems avoided typically turn into recurring issues that can create damaging ripple effects in the workplace — which puts everyone's safety at risk. "It becomes a chronic problem through the unwitting consent of people around them who don't say anything," he notes.

Of course, there's always a chance things can go sideways when someone speaks out about something in the workplace. "But if you don't say anything at all, it never goes well either," Grenny says. "Things such as employee retention and strong engagement are all strongly tied to workplaces where people speak up about emotionally and politically risky things."

KIND REMINDERS

So how does one go about handling these delicate situations? First of all, don't wait and don't go to your boss first. Research performed by



VitalSmarts shows that in high-performance organizations, issues get handled at the moment they occur and between peers, Grenny says.

"Escalations (going to a supervisor) almost always end in failure," he explains. "They're unnecessary political and social behaviors that drag down the process of managing a fairly straightforward and logical process."

Also keep in mind that to achieve good results, it pays to ensure your motives are right — a mindset Grenny calls "kind to remind." In fact, Grenny says the best indicator of how a crucial conversation will go is the reason you want to have it in the first place. If you want to punish, belittle or prove you're right, expect it to go badly.

"Too often we behave in ways that prevent the outcome we want," he says.

On the other hand, good things happen when you speak from a sense of kindness. "Positive intent is a huge indicator of how well things will go," he explains. "Before you open your mouth, you need to pause and think about what you really want. If it's a legitimate concern, ask yourself what you want for the other person so you're not coming from a selfish place."

ACCEPT COMPLAINTS GRACEFULLY

If you're on the receiving end of the criticism, it's crucial to assume what Grenny calls an "attitude of gratitude." In other words, politely accept any reminders to follow certain safety rules and assume they're being expressed with good intent.

Companies can help enforce this mindset by creating a culture

of accountability — a place where it's the norm to say, "OK, thanks for the reminder," whenever someone speaks out about a safety violation.

"When such a response becomes a cultural norm, it reduces the emotional stakes involved," Grenny explains. "It's not hard to create such a social contract, but very few organizations do it. It takes training and presentations and leaders who are willing to reinforce and model it.

"It's kind of like getting a train started. It requires enormous energy at the beginning to get it started. But after that, it's easy to sustain."

Last but not least, after people speak up, they then need to let things go, understanding that they cannot control the colleague's response. "Don't turn it into an ego match or a test of wills," he advises. "Deliver the message, and then look out for your own safety.

"Most of us in those moments attach our self-worth to whether or not the other person agrees with us or complies. But we don't need to do that. Just do what you're supposed to do in a graceful way and let them handle it how they handle it."

If this approach doesn't work, then it's OK to take the matter up the ladder to a supervisor or someone in human resources or a safety department — whoever has responsibility for the respective issue.

In the long run, inaction is not the best option. When handled the right way, speaking out trumps silence. As Grenny points out, "The inability to do so adversely affects every workplace outcome we care about." c

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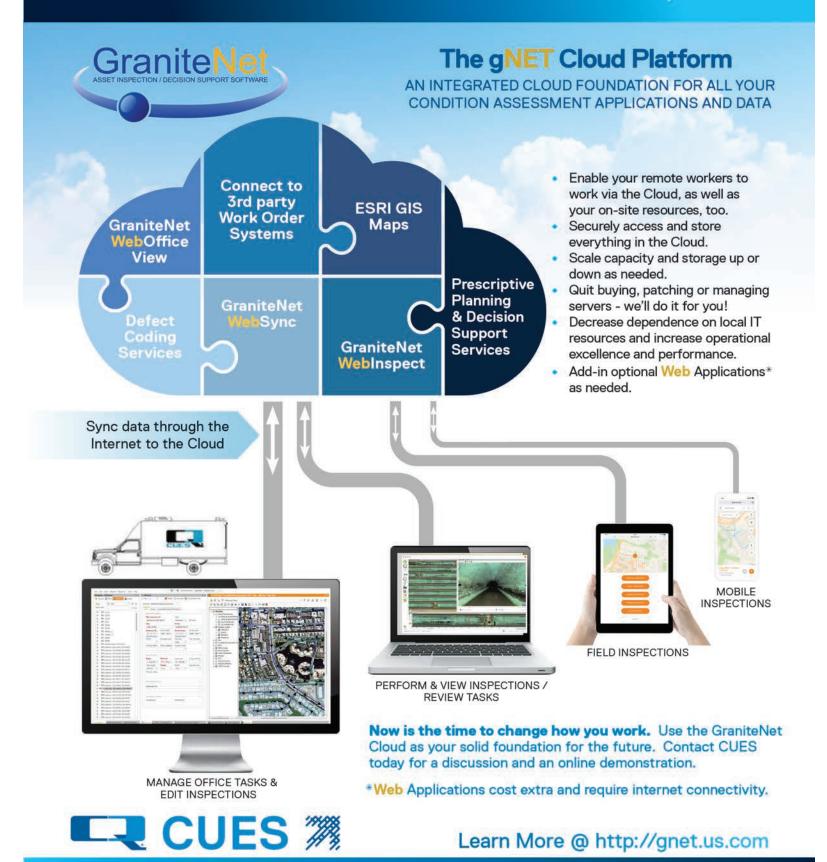


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The HotJet USA Vac 'n Jet Series of vacuum trailer jetters are rugged and compact; are engineered to haul equipment and spoils loads; can clean valve boxes and storm drains; and hydroexcavate and/or clean drainlines and sewer lines. They offer hot- and/or cold-water operation with a choice of engine options ranging from 13 to 66 hp and gas or diesel operation. They are equipped with premium triplex pumps, a 500-gallon spoils tank, 200-gallon water tank, Gardner Denver vac/blowers, 4-ton hydraulic dump and centri-clean filter system. They can also be custom engineered and designed to meet specifications. 800-624-8186; www.hotjetusa.com

6 // HYDRA-FLEX MACHETE

The Machete hydroexcavating nozzle from Hydra-Flex channels water in an oscillating motion, creating a small spray angle and a direct stream with a forceful impact. This premium penetration will allow faster digging and more precise trenching capabilities. Its durable, replaceable cover allows for quick change while increasing the nozzle's life span. It is available in three sizes, with operating pressure ranges from 1,000 to 3,200 psi and a heat rating of 180 degrees F. It will last in excess of 500 hours, improving digging times and replacement costs. 952-808-3640; www.hydraflexinc.com

7 // RIVAL HYDROVAC T7 TANDEM

The T7 Tandem hydrovac from Rival Hydrovac was designed primarily to be loaded with debris and driven within legislated road limits with most types of debris on board. The unit comes standard with a scale that reads real-time weights both in the cab and on the wireless remote to confirm weights prior to travel. It is operator friendly, and the operating system is engaged through one PTO switch. The remainder of the operation occurs from the rear panel or the wireless remote. 403-550-7997; www.rivalhydrovac.com

8 // SOIL SURGEON HYDROEXCAVATING TOOL

The Soil Surgeon hydroexcavating tool fits any sewer combination truck equipped with a telescoping 6- or 8-inch boom. The tool has a 1-inch water connection. The operator controls water pressure and power through truck controls. It has a 6-foot Tuff Tube with handles to guide the unit down for potholing or side to side for trenching. Six jets boring inward cut the soil, while six boring outward bring the tube down. 949-363-1401; www.soilsurgeoninc.com

9 // SUPER PRODUCTS MUD DOG

The Mud Dog vacuum excavator from Super Products provides a safe and efficient alternative to traditional digging. It is designed for operator convenience and consistent performance even in the harshest environments. Units come standard as hydroexcavators with an optional air excavation package, which allows an operator to always choose the best application, water or air, for the job. It is available with 12- or 16-yard debris capacity and has a 1,500- to 2,000-gallon water tank capacity. Each model comes standard with tilt-ejection unloading, and a rear-mounted boom that reaches 27 feet, has 335-degree rotation and can move in a 45-degree upward and 25-degree downward pivot. This allows for versatility within dig areas so that units do not need to be constantly readjusted into position. 800-837-9711; www.superproductsllc.com

PRODUCT FOCUS

10 // TORNADO GLOBAL HYDROVACS F4 ECOLITE

The F4 ECOLITE from Tornado Global Hydrovacs has a 12-cubic-yard mud tank and holds 1,550 gallons of freshwater. The unit is more than 7,000 pounds lighter than the company's older models and offers more than double the payload. The boom has a 342-degree rotation and 26-foot reach. The smaller F3 ECOLITE is a 10-cubic-yard, 1,250-gallon tandem-axle unit that more than doubles older payload capacities. It features an 8-inch boom and 3,800 cfm blower. 877-340-8141; www.tornadotrucks.com



11 // TRUVAC BY VACTOR PARADIGM

Designed for utility, municipal and contractor customers involved in the installation, maintenance and repair of underground water, sewer, gas, electric and telecommunications lines, the Paradigm subcompact vacuum excavator from TRUVAC by Vactor can dig holes with water or air; vacuum, contain and dispose of drill mud; power pneumatic, hydraulic or electrical tools; and provide transport and storage of replacement parts, equipment and tools. The truck's Parkn-Dig design minimizes time between job site arrival and excavation, including the ability to dig up to 6 feet without additional pipe and hose. The air compressor powers utility tools such as jackhammers and tampers. The truck offers tool storage space, including a long-handle toolbox. The truck can tow up to 20,000 pounds. 800-627-3171; www.truvac.com



12 // VAC-CON X-CAVATOR

The X-Cavator hydrovac from Vac-Con includes a cold-weather enclosure for the water systems and control panel, as well as an interior area for operator seating and workspace. Unit filtration is based off the Titan combination machine, with a single-cyclone design and final cartridge-style filter. The redesigned boom is lightweight and flexible, rotating 310 degrees around the unit and moving plus 45 degrees and negative 22 degrees vertically. The durable rubber hose material can withstand harsh environments and has a reach of 26 feet. 904-284-4200; www.vac-con.com



13 // VACALL ALLEXCAVATE

AllExcavate models from Vacall efficiently remove dirt around utility lines, as well as foundations where mass excavation is not practical. Water pumps generate 24.5 to 120 gpm and pressures to 3,000 psi. The water system, wand, control panel, tools and worker apparel are protected in a heated compartment. Its standard AllSmartFlow CANbus intelligent control system has a programmable LCD display that monitors engine, water flow and vacuum performance, allowing for precise boom and reel adjustments. Aluminum water tanks carry 1,000 to 1,300 gallons. Options include a remote control high-dump system that raises the debris tank 76 inches and then slides it back 21 inches for dumping into roll-off containers. 800-382-8302; www.vacall.com

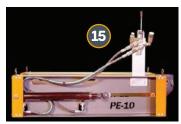


>>> PIPE BURSTING TOOLS

14 // HAMMERHEAD TRENCHLESS HYDROBURST 100XT

Underground contractors can use HammerHead Trenchless HydroBurst 100XT static pipe bursting equipment as an effective method to replace existing water mains, gas pipelines and sewer lines. Pipe bursting follows the path of the existing utilities, reducing utility strike risks and eliminating up to 85% of excavation work compared to opencut methods. Offering a tethered remote control, the streamlined unit pays out rod quickly due to its automated rod spinning assembly and the design of its hydraulic cylinders. The unit weighs just 3,200 pounds and is only 39 inches high by 30 inches wide. 800-331-6653; www.hammerheadtrenchless.com













15 // PE EQUIPMENT PE-10

The PE-10 from PE Equipment is a modularly designed system, providing the ability to interchange multiple machines on the same chassis. When using the pipe bursting module, it can replace service lines from 3/4 up to 3 inches, with cable pull lengths up to 150 feet. Cable pull-back speed is up to 13 feet per minute. Using the mountable pipe splitter, it is possible to remove the pipe from the cable as it enters the unit. Using the cable guide, the cable is automatically routed vertically out of a trench or pit, increasing efficiency for a small crew or one-person operation. Its four-blade designed pre-splitter can be repeatedly re-sharpened, increasing efficiency while lowering replacement costs. 406-499-8136; www.pe-equipment.com

16 // POW-R MOLE TRENCHLESS SOLUTIONS PD-33M

The PD-33M pipe bursting machine from Pow-R Mole Trenchless Solutions is designed to replace existing underground pipes 2 to 6 inches in diameter. Its nonslip, cylinder-activated jaws prevent cable damage while providing 60,000 pounds of pulling force. It offers a cost-effective alternative to opencut excavation, reducing customer disruption and increasing company profits. The process replaces the existing pipe with a fused HDPE pipe, which eliminates all joints, and allows the operator to pull through bends such as 45-degree fittings. This system is modular and can be easily disassembled and reassembled for manhole and basement applications. With a compact design and very small footprint of only 20 by 20 inches, this unit can be used in tight locations. 800-344-6653; www.powrmole.com

17 // RODDIE R8

The R8 pipe bursting system from RODDIE is easy to use, lightweight, can be set up vertically or horizontally, and can also be adjusted to use three different size cables. This unit can replace 1-, 2-, 3-, 4-, 6and 8-inch pipes with ease and speed. Inexpensive cable grabbing inserts last 70 to 120 jobs, which reduces costs. High-quality tool steels on articulating bursting heads promote rare resistance for long lasting service. The pulling rate is 8 feet per minute and is hydraulically powered from your tractor, providing a pulling force of 30 tons. The wireless remote system is reliable and has a signal strength that moves through any cellar wall. Maintaining the system is simple, as the user only needs to rinse off and re-grease six zerk fittings. 888-406-3821; www.roddieunderground.com

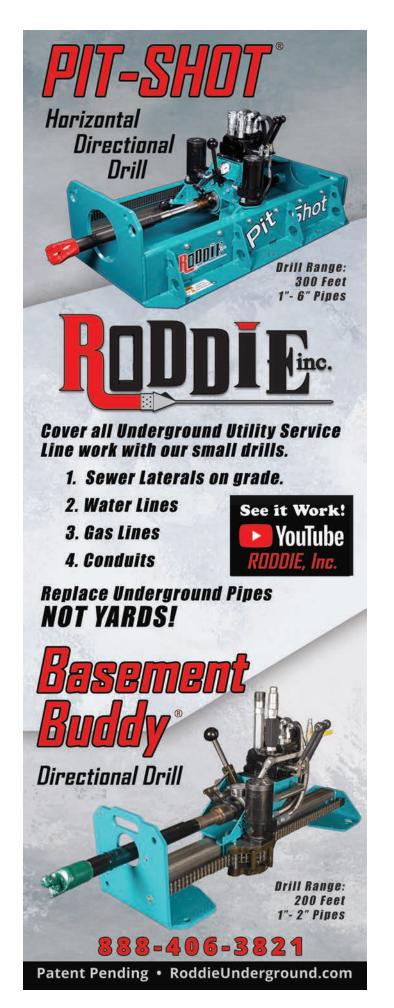
18 // TRIC TOOLS X30

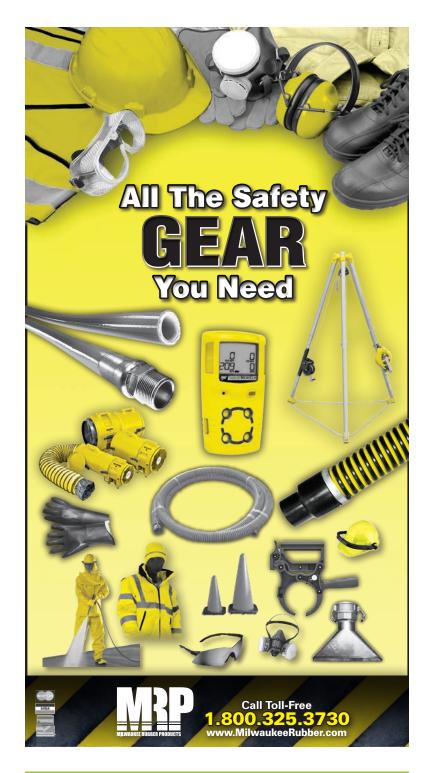
The redesigned X30 puller from TRIC Tools includes a new top bridge (the piece with the upper grippers and the handle) that is reshaped to maximize strength and minimize weight, thereby reducing production cost. The end result is a pulling unit that is lighter by at least 10 pounds (75 versus 85 pounds), stronger where it needs to be, and less expensive overall. 888-883-8742; www.trictools.com

>>> PIPE CUTTERS

19 // REED HPC8+ GUILLOTINE PIPE CUTTERS

HPC8+ Guillotine Pipe Cutters from Reed cut square on medium- and high-density PE pipe. Manual cutters slice smoothly through PE. Accurate cuts mean no facing is needed for electrofusion, and only minimal facing for butt fusion joints. All-aluminum construction results in lighter tool weight and greater rigidity, with a 22%+ weight reduction over the prior HPC8 model. The tool has greater pipe capacity, with up to 9.06 inches outside diameter, so it fits true 8-inch DIPS and IPS for PE. Aluminum rails and a crosshead with a hard anodized finish reduce wear on sliding surfaces. Its durable coated blade produces many square cuts with no chips to clog valves and small openings. A slight taper on the blade allows for an unchallenging start to the cut, and it holds form for an impressive, straight cut. The blades are straightforward to sharpen or replace. 800-666-3691; www.reedmfgco.com c







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PRODUCT NEWS



PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

STAIR TREADS MAKE HEAVY DRUM **MACHINE EASILY PORTABLE**

By Craiq Mandli

Every drain cleaner knows that not all jobs are easily accessible. Often a drain needs to be accessed from the basement, which can mean wear and tear on your equipment and your body to get your heavy drum machine up and down stairs. However, Milwaukee Tool has a solution that simplifies those calls — the MX FUEL Sewer Drum Machine with POWERTREDZ Lift Assist technology, which makes it easier for one person to transport the machine up and down stairs, as well as in and out of service vans. In addition, the machine has the power to clear roots 200 feet out, while containing the mess with a fully enclosed drum.

"Imagine the strain of hauling a 200-pound sewer machine up an entire flight of stairs or pulling it up into a van," says Kathleen Keegan, product manager for Milwaukee Tool. "Unfortunately, this is a daily situation for many professionals on sewer calls — and in order to avoid throwing out their backs, or worse, they'll often have to bring an extra person just to help with transportation of the machine."

While mobility is one of the largest frustrations with these jobs, the MX FUEL Sewer Drum Machine is designed around increasing productivity from the moment the user arrives on site, until the job is complete and the machine is loaded back into the van, according to Keegan. "It's the first solution that allows for one-person transportation of these heavy sewer lateral machines through the implementation of our POWERTREDZ Lift Assist technology, reducing the strain of lifting a 200-pound machine and improving overall productivity and safety for users," she says.



The unit's POWERSTATE brushless motor provides full power at the maximum capacity of the machine, allowing users to clear roots up to 200 feet out in 3- to 8-inch sewer lateral lines. REDLINK PLUS Intelligence improves control with an integrated drum brake, and the MX FUEL REDLITHIUM battery pack powers through multiple jobs on a single charge. The elimination of extension cords enhances user safety due to trip hazards or cords near standing water.

Its CABLE DRIVE automatic feed and retract reduces user fatigue by eliminating the need to manually pull back the heavy cable from pipes. The RAPID STOP button quickly releases the CABLE DRIVE bearings to help prevent the cable from binding. The fully enclosed drum eliminates contact between the user and the spinning drum, and contains the mess coming back through the pipe. 800-729-3878; www.milwaukeetool.com

1 // COXREELS SWIVEL OPTIONS FOR THE 1125 SERIES

Coxreels offers two upgraded swivel options for the 1125 Series cable reels. The mediumpressure (up to 4,000 psi) and high-pressure (up to 5,000 psi) can both be factory installed on the standard 1125 Series. The medium-pressure swivel is precision machined from solid brass and features upgraded wall thickness and upgraded seals and backup rings. The highpressure swivel is machined from high-strength steel and nickel plated for corrosion resistance. This ball bearing swivel features maximum flow and enhanced load-bearing capabilities. 800-269-7335; www.coxreels.com



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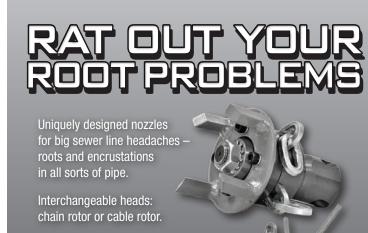
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INDUSTRY **NEWS**

Restoration 1 and bluefrog Plumbing + Drain recap 2020

Waco, Texas-based brands Restoration 1 and bluefrog Plumbing + Drain capped off 2020 filled with expansion, new programs, awards and more, underscoring the essential demand for both companies. Restoration 1 awarded 40 new locations, expanded into West Virginia, Utah, South Dakota and the District of Columbia, and ended the year awarding 350 locations to date across 43 states. bluefrog Plumbing + Drain awarded six new locations, entered Virginia, and is now servicing eight states. Additional 2020 highlights included Restoration 1's naming Sherry Rose as COO and bluefrog Plumbing + Drain naming Mike Mushinski as president.

Draincables Direct is now DCD

Starting in January, Draincables Direct underwent a name change and is now known as DCD. The company has expanded its product line to include larger drain cleaning machines known as the Valor Series, as well as offering drain cleaning replacement parts, blades, cutters, video inspection equipment, and jetter hoses and nozzles. DCD will continue to provide the same product and services, direct from the manufacturer.

CLADLINER brand transitions to Epoxytec

Effective Jan. 1, Epoxytec's management will offer CLADLINER branded products with the following name changes and Epoxytec's branding: CLADLINER transitioning to Epoxytec Mortartec Cladliner, CLADSTOP 1 transitioning to Epoxytec Hydrxx-1, CLADSTOP 3 transitioning to Epoxytec Hydrxx-3, and CLADRESTORE transitioning to Epoxytec Mortartec Silicate. Also, CLADSEAL will transition to Epoxytec Uroseal 45V, and once transitioned to the Uroseal 45V, it will be available in grey only. The transition period is expected to take months to complete. Until all inventory is gone, there may be occurrences when the CLADLINER brand will still be sold.

InfoSense approved vendor through Texas cooperative

InfoSense is now an approved H-GACBuy vendor through the Houston-Galveston Area Council Cooperative Purchasing Program. This allows participating member cities, counties and other local government agencies to eliminate the bidding process and save time and cost associated with placing bids. H-GAC vendors must go through the competitive procurement process and abide by competitive procurement laws to be approved. **c**





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JET VACS



2013 Aquatech B10-Jet Vac on IH 5900 CHASSIS: 77,363 miles (1,242 hours as of 4/20), Uraca pump-125 gpm/2,000 psi, 23' boom, Roots 827 blower, tank vibrator, 1,000' x 1 1/4" hose capacity reel, catwalk over power deck, PLUS many extras! PRICED TO SELL \$125,000.

Contact Rick 440-585-5757, OH rickm@lakecountysewer.com



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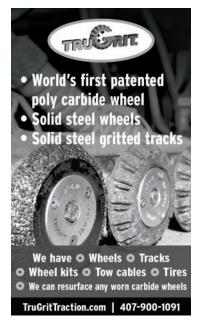
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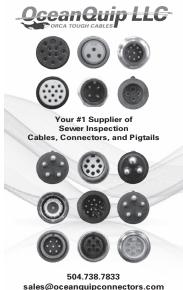
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Linda Hudek, LH Plumbing Services, LLC of Fairfield, OH