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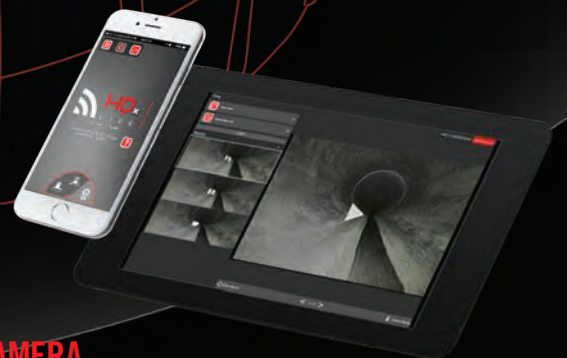
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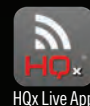
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## A BRIGHT FUTURE

INVESTING IN A UV-CURE CIPP LINING SYSTEM  
OPENS NEW AVENUES FOR SACRAMENTO-BASED  
HALL'S PLUMBING / 36

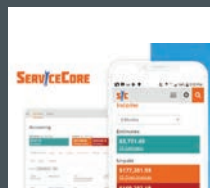
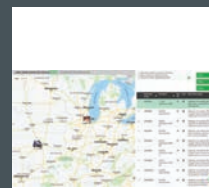
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## Profile

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// By Ken Wysocky

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**ON THE COVER //** Chris Reynolds and his wife Jennifer purchased Hall's Plumbing about five years ago, after essentially managing the business for seven years. Now that he's running things, Reynolds has expanded beyond traditional plumbing services to become a major player in trenchless pipeline work in the Sacramento, California, area. Investing in the new service has opened doors for the company, which has grown to 24 employees, but Reynolds still keeps focused on providing quality work and a high standard of service on every job. (Photography by Fred Greaves)



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coming next month: March 2022  
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## Cleaner

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## BIG BUSINESS DECISIONS

Keep learning and honing your instincts to make the right choices for your business

**WE MAKE DECISIONS** all day long. Every day. As a business owner, you make even more decisions than the average person, and have arguably more riding on the outcomes as well.

How do you prepare to make decisions for your company? There's no one answer. So much of business ownership is just learning as you go. New problems will crop up all the time and you have to rely on past experiences and your instincts to figure them out.

Hopefully you have a good support network and maybe some experienced employees to serve as a sounding board when you're figuring things out. If you feel like you're on your own, *Cleaner* is here to help. We strive to bring you stories that help you solve problems, make your business stronger and help you along the path to success, whatever that means to you.

In this issue, the Money Manager column demonstrates a different way of tracking business revenue and expenses that gives you a real-time snapshot of the health of your business. This spreadsheet can help you spot gaps in your spending versus revenue, which makes it easy to know whether you can go ahead with hiring a new employee or upgrading some equipment and when you should hold back and shore up your savings.

The Tech Perspective article discusses some benefits of converting your fleet to natural gas or electric vehicles. This sort of change is a big decision with lots of factors to consider — not least of which is: Do you have fueling stations near enough for this to make sense? If you do, you can save money while being more environmentally friendly, which can make a big difference for many consumers.

Hall's Plumbing owner Chris Reynolds, featured in one of this month's profile stories, made a decision at age 22 that changed the whole trajectory of his career. He was running a small painting business, and one day a homeowner, impressed with his work ethic, offered him a job at a plumbing company. By the age of 26, Reynolds was essentially running that company, as the co-owners health made it impossible for him to continue as he had been. Reynolds now owns the company with his wife and has turned it into one of the biggest pipe lining firms in the Sacramento area.

Not every decision you make will end up changing your life in such a big way. But little changes can still make a big impact on your business, so it's smart to use all the tools available to try to make the right ones.

Running your own business will always be a challenge, but we're here to help. Hopefully you find inspiration in these pages to keep learning and making good decisions to grow your business. Good things come to those who work hard.

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

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## GOOD DEEDS

### Community-Minded Efforts Can Help Attract Customers

Above all else, community service is simply the right thing to do. But as North Carolina's E.R. Plumbing Services shows in this online exclusive, it can also have the side benefit of pulling in customers. >> [cleaner.com/featured](https://cleaner.com/featured)



## SURPRISE FIND

### Plumber Awarded \$20,000 For On-the-Job Discovery

Imagine being on a routine service job, suddenly discovering evidence from a 7-year-old crime, and then scoring a \$20,000 reward from Crime Stoppers for the find. That's what happened to one Houston plumber. Read more about it in this online exclusive.

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## HANDLE WITH CARE

### Extend the Life of Workwear, PPE

Good performance workwear and personal protective equipment is an investment. You wear these every day for hours on end and trust the workwear to protect you and offer the comfort and flexibility you need on the job. This online exclusive provides some tips for keeping uniforms and PPE lasting longer so that you can avoid excessive replacement costs. >> [cleaner.com/featured](https://cleaner.com/featured)

## OVERHEARD ONLINE

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# THE FIGHTER

JORDAN BOWLES' PASSION AND POSITIVE ATTITUDE HAVE PUSHED HIS DRAIN CLEANING BUSINESS UP THE RANKS // By Ken Wysocky



▲ Jordan Bowles, owner of Drain Savers in Grand Forks, North Dakota, cleans and inspects a drain at the American Legion across the river in East Grand Forks, Minnesota.

Jordan Bowles operates a fairly small outfit.

The owner of Drain Savers, located in Grand Forks, North Dakota, has just two employees, four drain machines and two pipeline inspection cameras. But the young entrepreneur brings something big to the table: A deep passion for drain work and customer service.

“I’m definitely all-in on drain cleaning,” says Bowles, age 26, who established Drain Savers in 2019. When he’s not unclogging drains and earning five-star online reviews for customer service, Bowles spends hours and hours doing research on everything from drain cleaning equipment to marketing strategies, as well as exchanging ideas and sharing business and drain-cleaning tips with industry colleagues on online forums.

“Anyone can buy a good snake, but there’s more to cleaning a drain than just putting it down into a pipe,” he says. “To be truly good at drain cleaning, you have to completely understand all the details — the physics of what’s happening inside the pipe.

“I spend a lot of time online doing research on plumbing and drain cleaning forums, learning from other peoples’ experiences and mistakes. Knowledge is power.”



» Jordan Bowles established his own company, Drain Savers, in 2019.



So far, the passion and energy for self-education and customer service has yielded solid results. After what Bowles calls a decent first year, the company's gross revenue rose more than 200% in 2021, compared to 2020.

Bowles attributes part of that growth to increased skills in online marketing. But strong word-of-mouth referrals also played a role, not to mention his passion and upbeat attitude, which he attributes to studying Brazilian jiu-jitsu.

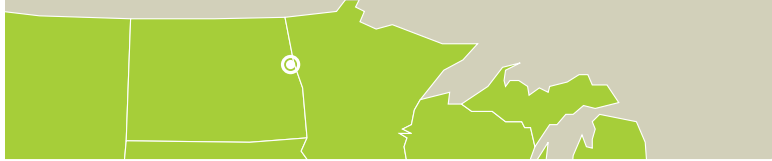
"People love my passion for the work," he explains. "I view challenges as opportunities. Every day is an opportunity — a door waiting for you to walk through. I operate with utmost positivity."

## BOLD MOVE

Establishing a company as a 24-year-old entrepreneur with just two years of professional drain cleaning experience takes courage.

"But I was not ignorant," he points out. "I've always been a numbers guy and I did a lot of research [about running a business]. But ultimately, you never know until you're in it."

Furthermore, Bowles loves a good challenge and that, coupled with the confidence built by cleaning thousands of drains for a prior employer, made the move seem less daunting.

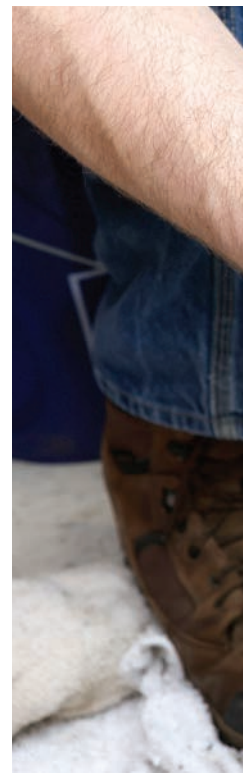


Drain Savers LLC	
GRAND FORKS, NORTH DAKOTA	
OWNER	Jordan Bowles
FOUNDED	2019
EMPLOYEES	3
SERVICE	Drain cleaning
SERVICE AREA	30-mile radius around Grand Forks
WEBSITE	www.drainsaversllc.com

"A big part of the job is learning how to be as confident as possible," explains Bowles, who takes an almost Zen-like approach to business. "The best way to learn is to take a beating and then figure out how to get better. I call it the champion's attitude, which helps you face any situation."

"The more hard things you do, the easier hard things get. That's why I don't see any job we do as hard anymore — I've seen so many. Hard jobs just become the norm."





This passion and confidence also pay dividends when customers see a 20-something-year-old drain cleaner arrive at their doors.

"People often call us because they're at their wits end," he says. "They've usually had the same issue over and over and now are trying us out to see if we can fix what others couldn't."

"Then I walk in the door and they see a 26-year-old when they expected an older, more experienced plumber. You can tell sometimes when people doubt what I'm saying, but at the end of the job, they understand."

### FINDING HIS WAY

After high school, Bowles worked at a factory for a while, but he hated it. "I felt just like a cog in a machine," he says.

Then a friend of his hooked him up with a job as a drain cleaner for a local franchise operation. And something clicked for Bowles.

"As service technicians, we were the face of the company," he recalls. "I absolutely loved it. It was not at all a chore for me to do good work and have good interactions with customers."

After about two years of constantly striving to tackle the

toughest drain jobs and learning everything he could about the business, Bowles decided to channel his passion for drain cleaning into something he could call his own.

So he decided to form his own company. And after some brainstorming, he and his wife, Shelby, came up with the name Drain Savers.

"I wanted a name that would tell people what we do, but that also was catchy and easy to say."

Bowles says his wife has been very instrumental to the company's success. She handles just about everything other than the actual drain cleaning and even designed the company's logo.

### ALL IN

A variety of RIDGID drain cleaning equipment forms the backbone of Drain Savers.

"I wanted to start out with machines I know about and can rely on," says Bowles, noting that he worked with RIDGID machinery before starting his company. "I knew how to work on RIDGID machines, which is important because I always want to be able to fix them if they break down."

"They're pretty straight-forward in terms of engineering, nothing too crazy."



◀ Bowles monitors the camera feed on his smartphone while inspecting a drainline.

✔ Bowles wipes down the camera head after an inspection.



Bowles owns a K-7500 drum cable machine, designed to clean drainlines from 4 to 10 inches in diameter; two K3800 cable drain machines, designed for 3/4- to 4-inch-diameter drainlines; and a K9-204 FlexShaft drain machine, for use on 2- to 4-inch-diameter pipes.

“Every one of these machines has a place on the truck,” he says. “They all give us a great deal of versatility, which is what I aim for.

“The drum machines are very reliable and get jobs done. But sometimes the FlexShaft machine is better for certain applications, such as descaling or removing roots in 6-inch lines, which helps us provide a higher level of service to our customers.”

But the K-7500 is Bowles’ favorite machine.

“It’s a tried-and-true machine. I’ve never encountered a blockage that was too hard for that machine to drill through. And its profile is narrow enough that it fits through bathroom doors.”

“TO BE TRULY GOOD AT DRAIN CLEANING, YOU HAVE TO COMPLETELY UNDERSTAND ALL THE DETAILS — THE PHYSICS OF WHAT’S HAPPENING INSIDE THE PIPE.”

JORDAN BOWLES

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« Bowles adjusts a connector before attaching it to a cable machine to clear roots in a lateral.

### VERSATILITY IS KEY

To increase the company's versatility, Bowles recently invested in a RIDGID K-60 sectional machine, designed to handle lines that are 1 1/4 to 4 inches in diameter.

"It's a lightweight machine that enables us to work in tight places, such as crawl spaces where we have to clean long runs of pipe," he says. "There are many times where you just can't disassemble a drum machine and get it to where you need it in a crawl space, then reassemble it.

"THE MORE HARD THINGS YOU DO, THE EASIER HARD THINGS GET. THAT'S WHY I DON'T SEE ANY JOB WE DO AS HARD ANYMORE — I'VE SEEN SO MANY. HARD JOBS JUST BECOME THE NORM."

JORDAN BOWLES

"Versatility is critical because if one machine doesn't work, you can try different things. I'm more than willing to invest time and money to learn about new machines that can benefit both the company and our customers."

The company also owns a RIDGID SeeSnake microReel inspection camera and a Milwaukee Tool M18 camera.

"We always offer customers a camera inspection at the end of a job. I see it as more part of the job, not an add-on, so we don't charge extra for it."

In addition, to unclog frozen drainlines — a common occurrence during harsh North Dakota winters — Bowles invested in an Arctic Blaster, made by Alberta, Canada-based Arctic Blasters. In a nutshell, the units boils water to create pressurized steam that thaw pipes.

CONTINUED >>

## BETTER EVERY DAY

While going through some difficult times, Jordan Bowles — the owner of Drain Savers in Grand Forks, North Dakota — was searching for something that could restore some balance to his life. The young entrepreneur found just what he was looking for in Brazilian jiu-jitsu, a form of martial arts designed to give smaller people a fighting chance.

The practice has been an asset for Bowles — who says he's about 5 feet 11 inches tall and weighs about 155 pounds — as well as his small business. Embracing jiu-jitsu principles helps him compete without fear against larger companies and tackle tough jobs with confidence, he says.

"It's definitely been instrumental to my success," Bowles says. "I never thought it would be applicable to running a business, but it has become a huge part of me and how I handle my life, both personally and professionally."

Jiu-jitsu taught Bowles valuable skills that serve him well every day, such as discipline, dedication, patience and staying calm, especially during high-stress situations.

"They call jiu-jitsu the gentle art," he explains. "It's designed to give little guys a fighting chance. It's not about brute force, it's about technique and leverage — and developing a champion's attitude.

"And if you develop a champion's attitude, you can face any situation. Jiu-jitsu teaches you to handle stressful situations by breathing and relaxing, which allows you to think clearly.

"I frequently find myself in tough situations, but I just step back, take a deep breath and figure out my course of action."

Bowles started studying Brazilian jiu-jitsu when he was 20 years old. He says he'd always been interested in trying martial arts. He first tried taekwondo, but didn't like it.

Then he switched to jiu-jitsu. "I loved it more than I ever thought I would," he says.

Unfortunately, Bowles says he hasn't had time to practice much jiu-jitsu since he started his business in 2019.

"I haven't had a day off in two years and I'm on call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year," he says. "So it's hard to find mat time."

Nonetheless, jiu-jitsu still informs much of what Bowles does every day, he says, especially in terms of attitude — maintaining a more philosophical and spiritual view of work and life.

"My goal is to learn something new from every experience and get 1% better every day. Then after a year, you're four times better.

"We all should strive for that — just get a little better every day."



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## OFFERING GREAT SERVICE

Grand Forks isn't a large city, so there's a fair amount of competitors in the area. Bowles says his passion for drain cleaning and the level of customer service he provides differentiate Drain Savers from other companies.



▲ Bowles feeds cable into a drainline to clear an obstruction.

"I try to pass down my values for customer service to my technicians and then onto the customers," he says. "A big consideration for me is balancing the perspective between our business and the customer. Technicians have to understand what's going on in the customers' heads to help them convey the right message."

"The way I see it, customers spend good money with us, so we're going to do a good job. I try to encourage the guys to always think from a customer service point of view, especially during hard jobs where you feel like throwing down your tools and walking away."

Bowles says he also emphasizes that technicians must treat customers with respect and leave work sites cleaner than how they found them.

"We're a necessary evil," he says. "No one wants a clogged drain at 2 a.m. And no one wants to call a drain cleaner and spend money."

"So we can't afford to treat people any less than the best. Our job to make the customers' experience as good as possible."

"A BIG CONSIDERATION FOR ME IS BALANCING THE PERSPECTIVE BETWEEN OUR BUSINESS AND THE CUSTOMER. TECHNICIANS HAVE TO UNDERSTAND WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE CUSTOMERS' HEADS TO HELP THEM CONVEY THE RIGHT MESSAGE."

JORDAN BOWLES

That means owning up to mistakes, too.

"I operate with brutal honesty," he says.

"When we make a mistake, I own up to it totally. That's important because in general, people have a hard time trusting contractors."

So far, Bowles' approach seems to be working; the company gets nothing but five-star reviews on platforms like Google, Facebook and HomeAdvisors.

"I really enjoy leaving customers happy," he says. "It's one of the things I enjoy most about my job."

Looking ahead, Bowles says that in the next five years, he'd like to grow the company enough to warrant hiring a few more technicians and running a few more service vehicles. He's also interested in diversifying Drain Savers' services by providing sewer line repairs and perhaps investing in pipe lining technology.

"I'd also like to keep buying more equipment," he says.

Until then, however, Bowles is focused intently on customer service and maintaining that grueling schedule that many small-business owners must maintain to survive.

"Honestly, the pace is tough," he concedes. "But I know I can't slow down now. I have to keep that champion's attitude — take the hardest things and turn them into something better." c

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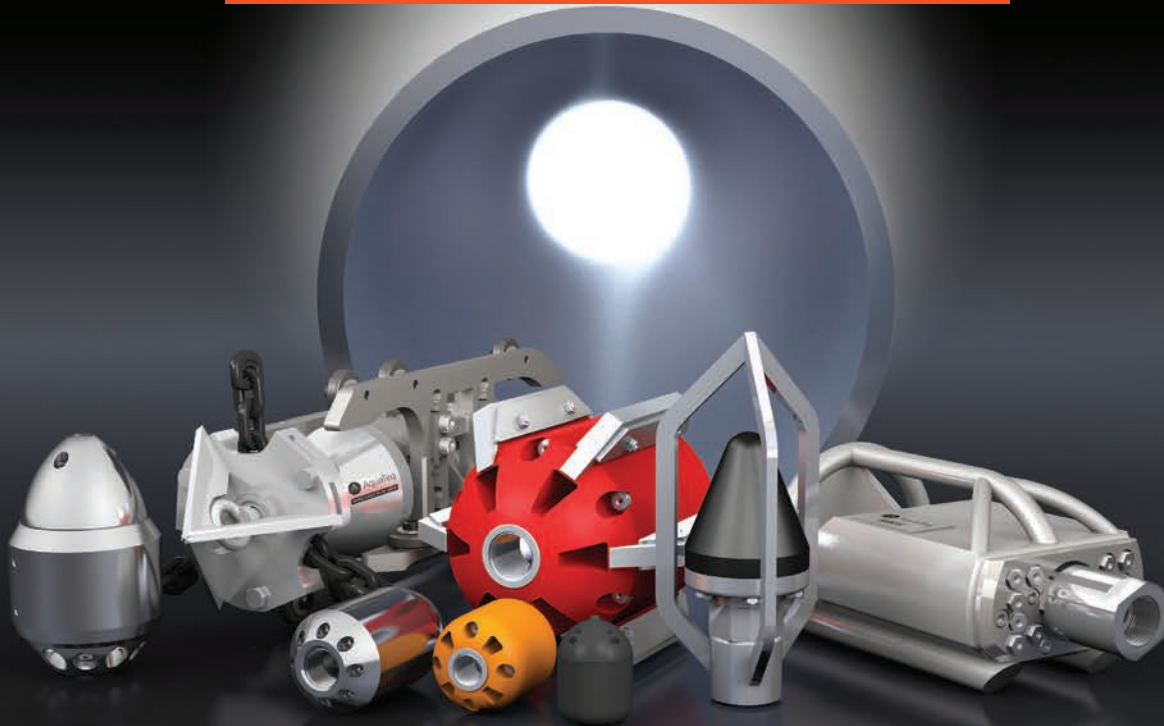
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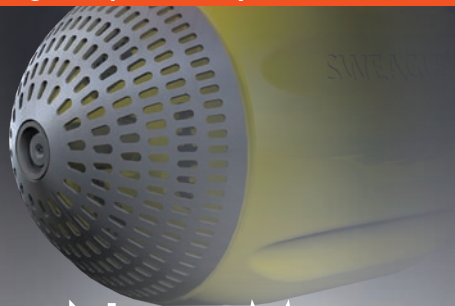


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## FLEXIBILITY UNDER PRESSURE

Smaller custom vac trucks with built-in pressure washers are an efficient, cost-effective option on jobs where maneuverability is key // By Ken Wysocky

**C**HRIS BIELLIER CALLS his small, custom-made vacuum trucks “mini-vacs.” But while they’re small in stature compared to a conventional vac truck, they nonetheless provide a big boost in areas that matter a lot to Biellier, the vice president of the environmental and waste solutions divisions of Seneca Cos.: opening up new markets, better productivity and increased revenue.

The custom-designed trucks cost about \$150,000 each. Cusco Fabricators (a brand owned by Wastequip) built three of the trucks on Ford F-750 chassis and Keith Huber Corp. fabricated the other three on Kenworth chassis, he says.

Along with chassis that are much smaller than conventional industrial vacuum trucks, the units also feature smaller 1,400- to 1,500-gallon stainless steel debris tanks, capable of carrying hazardous waste. The mini-vacs help expand the Seneca customer base because they can get into and maneuver inside plants and factories that the company couldn’t service before with just its larger trucks, Biellier says.

“We took what’s historically a larger truck and shrank it — made it more compact while still maintaining similar functionality. A lot of the plants we work in have very tight aisles. But with their smaller footprint, these trucks have tighter turning radiuses and more maneuverability.

» Waste Solution Services commissioned several smaller vac trucks to work inside plants and factories where maneuverability is crucial. The Cusco-built trucks feature a Ford F-750 chassis; a 1,400-gallon stainless steel debris tank; a 100-gallon water tank; an air-cooled PM80 vacuum pump made by Moro USA; and a hydraulic pressure washer.

### WASTE SOLUTIONS SERVICES INC. (A DIVISION OF SENECA COMPANIES)

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**OWNER** Chris Risewick

**MACHINES** Mini-vac trucks built by Cusco Fabricators (a brand owned by Wastequip) and Keith Huber Corp.

**FUNCTION** Smaller-scale industrial cleaning

**FEATURES** Ford F-750 and Kenworth chassis; 1,400- and 1,500-gallon stainless steel debris tanks made by Cusco and Keith Huber; 100-gallon water tanks; vacuum pumps made by Moro USA and National Vacuum Equipment; Hannay hose reels; tile beds; and built-in pressure washers (5.6 gpm at 3,500 psi)

**COST** About \$150,000

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CHRIS BIELLIER

"They're much more nimble ... and they allow us to do jobs we couldn't do before. They also help us be more competitive on cost because many of our competitors use larger equipment for small applications, which costs the customer more money."

The trucks are primarily used for applications such as emergency chemical spills and emptying and/or cleaning tanks, vessels, pits, vaults and the like. "We use them anywhere there's material that customers want removed," he says. "It's great when you send out a truck that's sized to the job it needs to perform."

The trucks also cost substantially less than a conventional vacuum truck, while providing similar capabilities, Biellier adds.

#### MADE TO ORDER

The Cusco-built trucks feature a Ford F-750 chassis; a 1,400-gallon stainless steel debris tank; a 100-gallon water tank; an air-cooled PM80 vacuum pump (350 cfm) made by Moro USA; and a hydraulic pressure washer (5.6 gpm at 3,500 psi). Cusco built the tanks.

The Keith Huber trucks feature Kenworth chassis; a 1,500-gallon stainless steel debris tank built by Keith Huber with an integrated 100-gallon water tank compartment; a Challenger 887 vacuum pump (532 cfm) manufactured by National Vacuum Equipment; a retractable hose reel made by Hannay Reels; and a pressure washer (5.6 gpm at 3,500 psi).

All of the trucks also include tilt beds for easier dumping and washout at waste disposal facilities, as well as automatic transmissions; the latter make it easier to attract drivers, which are hard to find these days. The Keith Huber trucks feature larger vacuum pumps

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because certain applications require more power, Biellier says.

"In some plants, truck operators still need to put out a lot of hose to get the job done," he explains. "So we spec'd the same vacuum pumps for these three trucks that we use on our larger vac trucks, to compensate for the pressure lost on longer hose runs."

The trucks' built-in pressure washers allow for more competitive pricing because they reduce manpower needs per job, he says.

"Instead of sending two employees out to jobs, one in the vac truck and the other with a pickup truck towing a pressure washer, we can send just one person out and still do jobs safely."

The built-in pressure washers also provide operators with more flexibility. For example, when called to a small petroleum spill in, say, a parking lot where there might not be water available, the trucks can both clean the parking lot as well as vacuum up the liquids.

"It's much more efficient and cost-effective for our customers."

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Keith Huber also built custom, smaller vac trucks for the company, featuring Kenworth chassis; a 1,500-gallon stainless steel debris tank built by Keith Huber with an integrated 100-gallon water tank compartment; a Challenger 887 vacuum pump manufactured by NVE; a retractable hose reel made by Hannay Reels; and a pressure washer.

## RIGHT TRUCKS FOR THE JOB

Seneca owns a large fleet of vacuum trucks and tankers that serve customers in 16 states. The fleet includes 24 liquid-vacuum trucks made by Cusco, Presvac Systems and Keith Huber and four wet/dry-vacuum trucks built by Guzzler Mfg., Super Products and Keith Huber.

Owning a fleet of vacuum trucks with a wide range of tank sizes allows the company to serve more customers and as a result, boosts revenue, too. For example, before Seneca invested in the mini-vacs, the company occasionally might've been forced to turn down a larger and more lucrative industrial cleaning job because its large vac trucks were already busy handling smaller, less profitable service calls.

"The companies that are most successful are those that adapt to customer or specific market needs," Biellier says. "We pride ourselves on right-sizing our equipment to fit the jobs we need to perform, which is important because jobs vary in size from day to day."

"Not all companies have that flexibility. But I'm sure glad we do. These mini-vacs are perfect for us." c



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## A 'GREEN' FLEET BOOSTS YOUR BRAND

CNG and electric vehicles impress customers and give drain cleaners an environmental edge

// By Tim Dobbins

**IF YOU'RE CONSIDERING** taking your business on an eco-friendly path, your vehicle fleet is a good place to start.

Embracing fuel-efficient drain cleaning and plumbing standards is great for your brand name by showing existing and potential new customers that you value sustainable work practices. But it not only can boost your brand, it can also be great for your bottom line and lead to increased productivity.

Technological advancements have provided amazing opportunities to progress the industry. Compressed natural gas vehicles are now commonly seen cruising the highways and deliver a chance to embrace technological change for the advancement of your business.

About five years ago Chris Roseland, owner of Backlund Plumbing, saw the high fuel prices, decided it was time for a change and purchased the companies first fleet of CNG service vans. Since then, his fleet has grown considerably. Backlund Plumbing now utilizes approximately five Ford Transits with a bi-fuel option of CNG or gasoline, 10 Ford E-250 Econoline vans, two Freightliner pump trucks, three Freightliner service body trucks and a Peterbilt crane truck that all operate with dedicated CNG motors.

"Immediately, the first two years we were saving well over \$1 per gallon," Roseland says. "I feel like in the first two years we probably paid off most of the investment." According to Ford, the equipment and conversion cost from gasoline to CNG will run owners approximately \$7,500 to \$9,500, depending on options selected.

Other manufactures like Chevrolet's Express vans and Chrysler's Ram 2500 heavy-duty pickups are also able to convert to CNG so an existing fleet can be used without starting completely over.

"THE CUSTOMER RESPONSE WAS GREAT ONCE YOU EDUCATED THEM. ONCE WE LETTERED OUR VEHICLES WITH CNG AND THEY FOUND OUT OUR VEHICLES ONLY RUN ON NATURAL GAS, IT WAS LIKE ICING ON THE CAKE FOR US."

CHRIS ROSELAND



Backlund Plumbing, located in Omaha, Nebraska, saw savings well over \$1 per gallon in the first two years since switching over to CNG from gasoline.

Roseland also says that teaming up with local utility gas companies is something to look into to help cover the expense of converting. "The initial rebates were probably the biggest help for us to get it done," he says. "It was close to a 50% match on the conversion of the vehicle. Along with a very low interest loan from our state agency for air quality."

### REFUELING CONSIDERATIONS

"Down the road I am way more interested in converting our larger trucks versus our everyday service vehicles," Roseland says. His reasoning behind that comes down to miles per gallon. "Those smaller vehicles are already getting 20-25 miles per gallon."



» Backlund Plumbing uses approximately five Ford Transits with a bi-fuel option of CNG or gasoline, 10 Ford E-250 Econoline vans, two Freightliner pump trucks, three Freightliner service body trucks and a Peterbilt crane truck that all operate with dedicated CNG motors.



The larger municipal trucks for utility work that only get 3-4 mpg can become quite expensive to run when going through 50 gallons a day or more, especially when the cost of fuel is high.

One important consideration before CNG conversion is refueling options. Backlund Plumbing is located in Omaha, Nebraska, and fortunately, their plumbing shop is centrally positioned between two of 12 large natural-gas filling stations across the city. For them, this makes filling trucks as easy as driving to a conventional gas station, but depending where your business is located, it may not be so simple. Some companies that rely heavily on CNG vehicles have made the investment to install their own filling stations to ensure fuel supply at their facility.

With that in mind, even if you are located near a filling station or have one at your shop, it's smart practice to make sure the tank is full before leaving for the day. "Sometimes we have to fill up to go somewhere far to make sure we are able to get back. You can't just go fill up wherever you want," Roseland says.

#### OTHER GREEN OPTIONS

Roseland adds that he is definitely interested in looking into electric vehicles in the future as more options become available.

Precision Plumbing, Heating, Cooling and Electric, in Boulder, Colorado, is currently relying on electric power to propel its service truck. The electric vehicle they purchased in 2012 was Boulder Electric Vehicle's first order made in an effort to do their part in energy conservation.

Ford also has plans to reveal a brand-new E-Transit in 2022 offering the first all-electric cargo van from a full-line automaker in the U.S. The E-Transit will be available in chassis cab, cutaway and cargo van models and come in three length choices and roof heights giving contractors yet another option for a green initiative.

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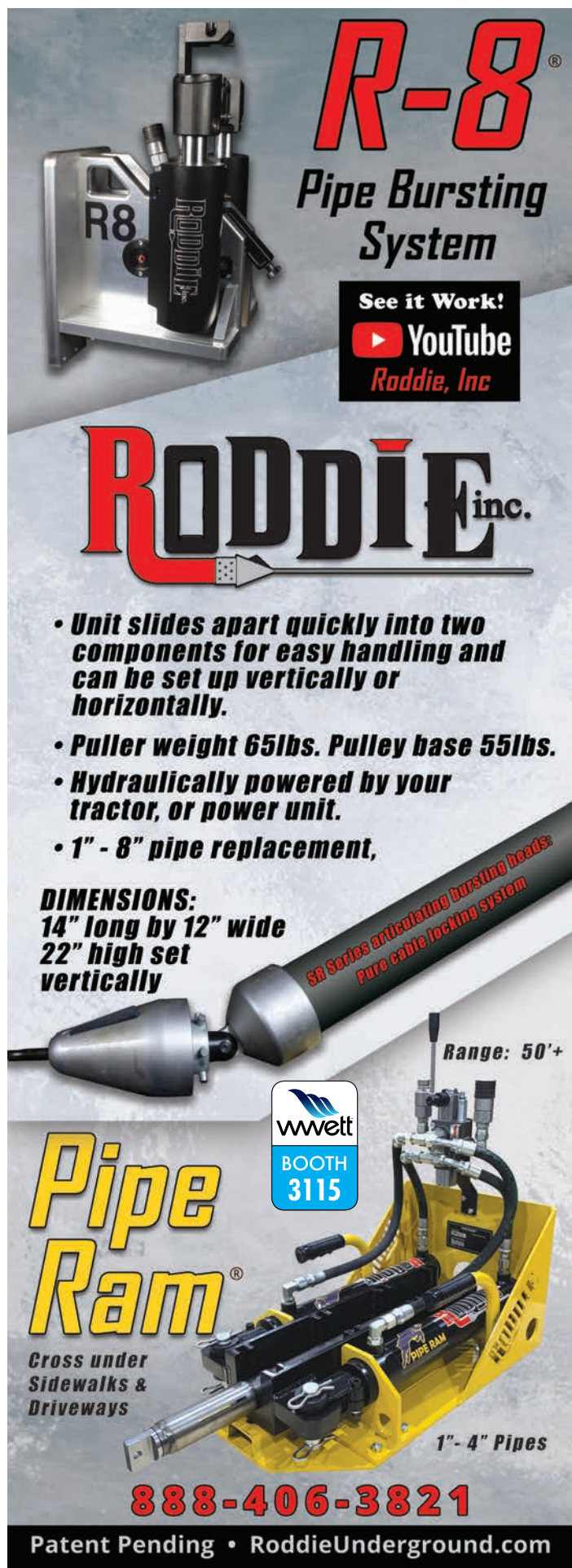
## TECH PERSPECTIVE

Eco-friendly trucks and vans can even increase efficiency on the road in many areas. Certain states allow hybrid and electric vehicles to travel in the high-occupancy vehicle lane, so drivers have less chance of getting stuck in traffic.

Don't forget one of the biggest gains of going green with your fleet: the publicity. Turning over a new eco-friendly leaf is a great marketing tool for your business.

"The customer response was great once you educated them. Once we lettered our vehicles with CNG and they found out our vehicles only run on natural gas, it was like icing on the cake for us," Roseland says. "When you do everything right plus you show up in a green vehicle, you're their go-to."

Environmentally friendly vehicles are definitely something to consider when shopping for a new fleet or single service truck. Not only are they a clean means of transportation, but they can also lower fuel costs and boost your brand name. **c**



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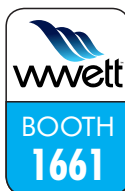


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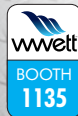
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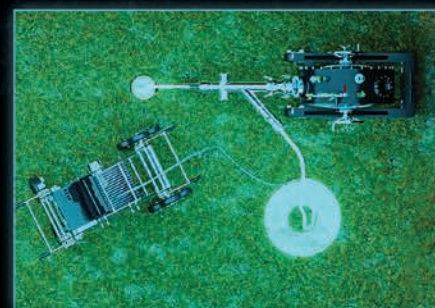
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✓ Hall's Plumbing foreman Joe Garin and technicians John Kim and David Montoya (from left) prepare equipment for a pipelining job.

# A BRIGHT FUTURE

INVESTING IN A UV-CURE CIPP LINING SYSTEM OPENS NEW AVENUES FOR SACRAMENTO-BASED HALL'S PLUMBING // By Giles Lambertson

## METROPOLITAN AREAS WITH LARGE POPULATIONS AND DIVERSE

economic bases present plenty of opportunities for a plumbing company. Chris Reynolds, owner of Sacramento-based Hall's Plumbing, is trying to capitalize on as many of them as he can.

To do so, Reynolds has expanded beyond traditional plumbing services and become a major player in trenchless pipeline work.

"We're still mostly doing traditional plumbing," he says, "but now with pipelining, we can help people save money when pipes fail and we're starting to see a whole new income stream."

## NEW AVENUES

Hall's Plumbing was launched in 1995 by Bill Dantzler and his brother-in-law Leroy Hall, after some years of working for other plumbing companies. The two-person plumbing shop at first heavily targeted new construction and remodeling customers but evolved into primarily offering plumbing services to homeowners and businesses.

"WE'RE STILL MOSTLY DOING TRADITIONAL PLUMBING, BUT NOW WITH PIPELINING, WE CAN HELP PEOPLE SAVE MONEY WHEN PIPES FAIL AND WE'RE STARTING TO SEE A WHOLE NEW INCOME STREAM."

CHRIS REYNOLDS



✔ Technicians John Kim and David Montoya make adjustments to the Perma-Liner inversion machine during a lining job.

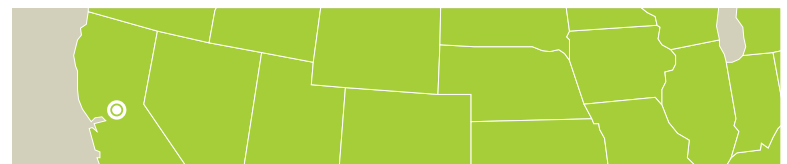


Photography by Fred Greaves

Reynolds got involved by chance 16 years ago. He was running a small painting company and was hired to paint Dantzler's house. Dantzler liked 22-year-old Reynolds' work ethic and offered him a career change. Reynolds signed on. When Dantzler's health began to fail, Reynolds shouldered more and more responsibility until, at age 26, he essentially was running the company. He continued in that role for seven more years.

Five years ago last June, Reynolds and his wife Jennifer purchased Hall's Plumbing. Today, the company continues to focus on serving homeowners and businesses, as the economic vagaries that bedevil remodeling and new construction make them unreliable customer bases. "Plumbing services never grow old, because people are constantly flushing toilets and taking showers."

Yet it's cleaning and restoring pipelines that propel the business to new levels. Though plumbing services remain



## Hall's Plumbing

WOODLAND, CALIFORNIA

### OWNER

Chris Reynolds

### EMPLOYEES

24

### SERVICES

Full-service plumbing including jetting lines, water heater repair and replacement; drain cleaning, video inspections, natural gas line repairs, and pipeline replacement; trenchless sewer repairs including coating, lining or bursting

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CHRIS REYNOLDS



▲ The Hall's Plumbing lining crew prepares to shoot a liner into a residential lateral line.



strong, trenchless sewer line repair, cleaning and descaling has boosted the company's revenue.

"When we took over the company, right out of the box, we did \$1.1 million in annual business volume," Reynolds says. "This year, we're going to break \$5 million. High-speed cleaning and descaling have seen explosive growth."

The company's partnership with Perma-Liner Industries illustrates how far and fast the company has moved into trenchless repair work. In mid-2020 — "right in the middle of the pandemic" — Hall's invested in a \$300,000 Perma-Liner-equipped trailer and began to infiltrate the market.

A year and a half later, he says, "We are one of the biggest liners in the area." In October, Reynolds and his crew leaders traveled to Anaheim to be trained on Perma-Liner's newest technology in curing of lining — UV light. They were introduced to a system that features 50-foot light trains emitting UV light from dual strands with proprietary hardware that can navigate 90-degree turns in a pipe.

The system targets small-diameter pipe — 3-, 4- and 6-inch lines — and reduces the curing time for a CIPP liner to 10 minutes. "Before this method, there was the ambient cure where you just leave it there until it eventually cures, a steam cure that cut down the time and a hot-water cure. But this UV cure reduces time dramatically."

Hall's Plumbing was among the first 10 Perma-Liner clients in the world to offer the UV solution. "Perma-Liner sees our potential and what we are doing," Reynolds says. "Now they are





John Kim measures and prepares the liner sleeve.

Hall's Plumbing technicians prep a liner and seal it to a section of pipe to guide it into the sewer line.

considering certifying us so we can help with Perma-Liner training.”

### MONEYMAKERS

Hall's Plumbing is headquartered in Woodland, a little southwest of the state capital in the Sacramento Valley. It's a propitious location. Besides all the state government infrastructure in Sacramento that needs servicing, nearby is the University of California, Davis campus. A 60-year-old agricultural company, Grow West, also is headquartered in Woodland, with rice, peach, plum and tomato production on farms throughout the valley.

Consequently, although 60% of Hall's customer base is residential plumbing, some of the company's biggest clients are the warehousing and manufacturing facilities, rice mills and fertilizer plants that constitute the other 40%. The service area of Hall's Plumbing ranges across 900 square miles, though the bulk of it is within a 15-mile radius in and around Woodland.

“We just got back from Los Angeles where we went to help a friend with a line,” Reynolds says. “Before that, we were at Strawberry Valley up on the mountain for a spot patch repair in a

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▲ The crew at Hall's Plumbing has continued to grow since Chris Reynolds and his wife Jennifer purchased the company about five years ago. They now employ 24 people.

24-inch line. We'll go wherever the money is and people need help."

The company has two locations in Woodland, a 6,600-square-foot office on one side of town and a multi-acre warehouse and equipment facility on the other. The

Perma-Liner equipment is there along with an old piece of trenchless repair equipment that predates Reynolds' involvement with the company: an 18-year-old Pipe Genie pipe bursting machine that still works beautifully, so Reynolds keeps working it.

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Newer pieces of equipment include wheeled 727 Spartan jettors plus a trailered model. The latter was hauled to a tomato farm where a clogged 24-inch waterline seriously jeopardized a tomato crop. After two hours of work, Reynolds says, the jetter blasted through, much to the relief of the crop grower.

The company relies exclusively on Vivax-Microtech cameras for drain and sewer inspections. When a line is shown to have failed, Hall's has Bobcat and Yanmar mini-excavators to remove the soil for a spot repair. The excavation units are used sparingly — 98% of the company's pipeline work is trenchless. In the future, "I'm thinking about getting a Ditch Witch trailered hydrovac. Probably will buy one pretty soon," Reynolds says.

The company turns to IMS Robotics for equipment to inspect old pipes, then clean and smooth the pipe interiors, reinstating the infrastructure to a condition that will facilitate lining instead of replacement, and at much lower cost. "It allows old pipe to keep draining."

The pipeline division of Hall's Plumbing specializes in delicate and difficult tasks. In one example, a restaurant in a building dating from the 1800s was to be shut down for a week so its historic old flooring could be cut away and its thick concrete subfloor jackhammered

## GROWING AS A FAMILY

Chris Reynolds became an employee of Hall's Plumbing 16 years ago and essentially ran it for a decade before he and his wife Jennifer bought it outright five years ago. Since then, extended Reynolds family members have joined Chris in the business.

"Shortly after I took over, company employees were me, my brother Jason and his friend Troy," Reynolds recalls. "Today, we have 24 employees and 11 of them are family, including cousins and in-laws."

Reynolds is a big believer in employee training to establish a level of competence across his workforce, but also to establish a standard of excellence that he wants the company to represent. So, while he may have brought in some people closest to him to do the work, he hasn't cut them any slack. Expectations remain high.

For example, his brother Jason came in mostly with pizza delivery experience. Jason's friend Troy was a waiter. After 13 years, Jason has become a company mainstay. "My brother can do everything," Reynolds says. "My cousin Joe and I run the lining crew. My brother-in-law Ryan runs the pipe bursting crew."

Reynolds has a strong work ethic but he says it's his mind, not his labor, that differentiates him from some tradespeople. "I have a well-developed sense of curiosity. I educate myself. I remember when I was learning plumbing, I would go home at night and study till midnight. What I know about the industry today has all been from on-the-job learning and studying."

He believes that approaching work in that way — which he also tries to train his employees to do — gives a person the best chance to make good decisions on the job.

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➤ Montoya holds the liner while foreman Joe Garin pours in the epoxy.

➤ Garin, Montoya and Kim position the liner and prepare to invert it into the line.



to reach a faltering pipe. Instead, Reynolds and his crew came in, dug an access hole in an alley, robotically roamed the pipe and reinstated problematic sections using Picote descalers and lined the pipe. The project was completed in little more than a day.

The company's longest lining success was a 172-foot shot under an apartment complex. "Perma-Liner people said that was pushing the limits," Reynolds recalls. He got some pointers from a friend in the industry — Raymond Gray of A1 Total Service Plumbing — and undertook it anyway. Once again, the robotic units were called upon to smooth out the interior so the line could be successfully lined.

"I WANT TO SHOW YOUNG PEOPLE THAT THE TRADES CAN BE A GREAT AVENUE FOR A CAREER, SHOW THEM THE SATISFACTION THAT COMES FROM TAKING CARE OF PEOPLE, SOLVING PROBLEMS FOR THEM AND HELPING THEM NAVIGATE THROUGH STRESSFUL TIMES."

CHRIS REYNOLDS

### TRAINING FOR A CAREER

Hall's Plumbing has 24 employees, up from half a dozen when Reynolds began working for the former company owner. "And we could use another three or four." It's been difficult to attract and retain new hires at a time when tradespeople are at a premium.

Reynolds says he hires experienced professional help when they are available. Generally, however, they aren't experienced, and when they are their salaries are inflated.

To bring new, less experienced hires up to speed, he came up with a training program. His crews meet three times a week for sales and trade training. At the equipment warehouse, he constructed a service tech training platform with plumbing fixtures. There, new employees can learn how to work on faucets and water heaters and other plumbing fixtures instead of learning at the expense of customers.

"I always have four to six trainees working. We're always training. Right now, I'm training five guys under 23 years of age." The mentoring and training come easily for him because Reynolds calls himself "a people person. My number one passion is helping people and training people. I want to show young people that the trades can be a great avenue for a career, show them the satisfaction that comes from taking care of people, solving problems for them and helping them navigate through stressful times."

His crews essentially work in separate teams. He split them to reduce the number of people working together, a response to the coronavirus pandemic, but the framework has continued as a way to specialize crew members. "When I hire someone, I ask them if they want to do this or that and then I put them with the people already doing what they want to do. They can focus



For more about the work Hall's Plumbing is doing, check out another story in the Spring issue of I&I magazine, at [iandimag.com](http://iandimag.com)



on certain kinds of work and get proficient more quickly that way and then we can cross-train them as needed.”

## HIGH STANDARDS

The gregarious company owner appears in most of the company’s Facebook videos where he discusses products and projects, usually mentioning nicknamed employees working alongside him. Postings on the Facebook page are frequent — sometimes daily. While Facebook and other social media outlets constitute most of the company’s marketing, Reynolds looks to Morgan Dietsch, owner of Trenchless Innovation, for additional marketing and graphics help. Company vans are brightly and dramatically wrapped with Dietsch’s designs.

“But the majority of our customer traffic is organic and word or mouth,” says Reynolds. “We have a huge snowball of customers, that’s the biggest thing. We win the Best in Yolo

County Award every year. Our reviewers all give us about five stars.”

The future seems bright for Hall’s Plumbing, a future that Reynolds says includes expansion and possibly franchising. “We believe that our quality of work is beyond what most of the competitors offer. We are trying to bring back that old standard of service where you fix something like you said you were going to fix it. It’s about giving a customer what he deserves — hard, fast and quality work.” **c**

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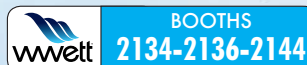
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Jeff Haden

## KNOW WHERE YOU STAND

Logging real-time revenue and expenses helps you know when to hold the line on spending and when to invest in your company's growth // By Jeff Haden

**IMAGINE YOU COULD** run a 200-employee business with millions of dollars of revenue with one simple spreadsheet. If you're like many small-business owners in the drain cleaning industry, that probably sounds great.

While booking sales and revenue can be fun, logging expenses, calculating depreciation, creating reports, preparing for tax season, that all seems tedious at best. And, if you're like me, it's easy to put off those tasks until another day. In part, that's because bookkeeping and accounting functions tend to focus on the past. Profit-and-loss reports, balance sheets and so on record what has already happened.

While understanding the past is undoubtedly important, when you're running a business, you need tools that allow you to make smart decisions about the future.

That's why Pini Yakuel and Shachar Cohen used one spreadsheet to launch — and for six years, manage — their startup Optimove, an artificial intelligence-driven relationship management platform. Their business now has over 200 employees and serves customers like Sephora, Family Dollar, and Dollar Shave Club.

### FOUR NUMBERS

Early on, Yakuel and Cohen kept their day jobs while taking consulting gigs on the side and investing revenue back into the business. “We had a plan in place for making money,” Yakuel says, “[but] our business was growing and changing rapidly. Creating an annual forecast or measuring estimated versus actual spending wouldn't have told us much about our business.”

Instead, they set up a spreadsheet to track four key numbers:

- Costs by month: Rent, supplies, salaries — *every* cost
- Revenue by month: Services, products sold, subscriptions, etc.
- Revenue gap: The difference, positive or negative, between costs and revenues
- Cash buffer: Money in the bank

While that might sound like basic accounting, the next point is vital: The company logged expenses and revenue not just after they occurred, but before.

If a contract was signed that would start generating revenue next month, that figure gets logged into the spreadsheet. If a freelancer was hired to work on a project next month, that figure was logged into the spreadsheet.

Unlike cash basis accounting, where expenses are only logged when a bill is actually paid, and accrual accounting, which recognizes costs when billed, the spreadsheet resulted in a hybrid method of financial planning.

By always knowing — in real time — the amount of cash on hand and what would be spent and earned in the coming months, Optimove could use that snapshot to make smart decisions about where to invest the company's money.

### SPEND WHERE NEEDED

Yakuel explains: “For instance, we would add a new hire's salary to our calculation of monthly costs, even if their start date wasn't for another 90 days. Similarly, we added new client revenue as soon as the contract was signed.

“We could always see the amount we had available to invest back into the business. When this gap became substantial enough — for instance, after signing a new client — we would invest in the most immediate bottleneck, whether it was engineering talent, a bigger marketing budget or customer support resources.”

That approach allowed the co-founders to bootstrap their business, using the revenue to fuel growth. Instead of borrowing money or taking on investors to fund initiatives, they waited until their cash buffer allowed them to expand service and product offerings, to hire employees, to build out infrastructure and more.

It worked so well that six years later, Optimove took a \$20 million investment that valued the company at approximately \$100 million. The spreadsheet also worked so well that the co-founders didn't need to spend time evaluating estimated sales versus actual sales. They didn't create sales forecasts. They didn't develop sales projections.

Yakuel and Cohen focused solely on the snapshot of the “present.”

In time, when their software had undergone six iterations and



Optimove served hundreds of clients, the company's finances had expanded dramatically. Revenues and expenses were up considerably. And so was the company's cash buffer. When the founders eventually decided to take a \$20 million growth investment, their cash buffer stood at \$3 million.

"The fact that this financial model served us through years of growth attests to how well it embodied our [operating principle]: iterate quickly and invest every dollar back into the business," Yakuel says.

#### MAKE IT WORK FOR YOU

For a business like my media company, the one spreadsheet tool is simple to use. Unlike, say, a retail business, I have relatively few customers. Day-to-day fluctuations in sales and revenue don't really exist.

But what if you run a service-based business? Sure, history can give you a sense of future sales, but you never really know how a day will go until the end of that day. In that case, spend a few minutes every day updating your spreadsheet in real time. Log daily revenue. Log any daily expenses that are outside expectations or "business as usual."

Keeping the spreadsheet up to date will allow you to keep making smart decisions about the future. If sales double expectations today, great. That larger revenue gap and additional cash buffer might enable you to pull the trigger on a new project.

If sales are significantly down today, that's not so great. But knowing your business's financial health in real time can help you decide where and when to cut spending proactively.

For example, say you're a niche company in the sewer and drain industry. You want to hire a new employee to expand your service territory, but you hesitate to do so until you have a six-month salary buffer to bridge the revenue gap while you attract new customers. Your spreadsheet will cut through the accounting clutter and tell you when to pull the hiring trigger.

CONTINUED >>

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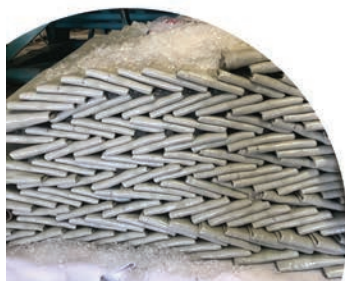
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### ANOTHER TOOL

While you won't be able to predict the future, you will know exactly where you stand and what you can afford to prioritize so you can keep your business moving forward.

The key is to see your spreadsheet as an additional tool, not a replacement for traditional bookkeeping and accounting. You'll still need to track inventory, manage payables and receivables, track sales and costs, manage payroll — all the financial nuts and bolts of operating a business.

So in that sense, yes, keeping a simple spreadsheet is extra work. But that's OK because your spreadsheet will be a dashboard that lets you see, in real time, exactly where you stand in terms of revenue gap. You'll know ahead of time whether you need to cut costs, or if you can afford to invest in efforts that will help you grow your business.

But you'll have to stay disciplined. If you agree to a service contract that won't start for 60 days, still log it now. If you sign a contract to service a new client on a monthly basis, but you won't start receiving revenue for 60 days, still log it now. That way, you can make decisions in real time, not after the fact.

After all, the best decisions are proactive. And when you're building a business, that's precisely what you need to be. **c**

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jeff Haden is a contributing editor for Inc.com and a LinkedIn Influencer.



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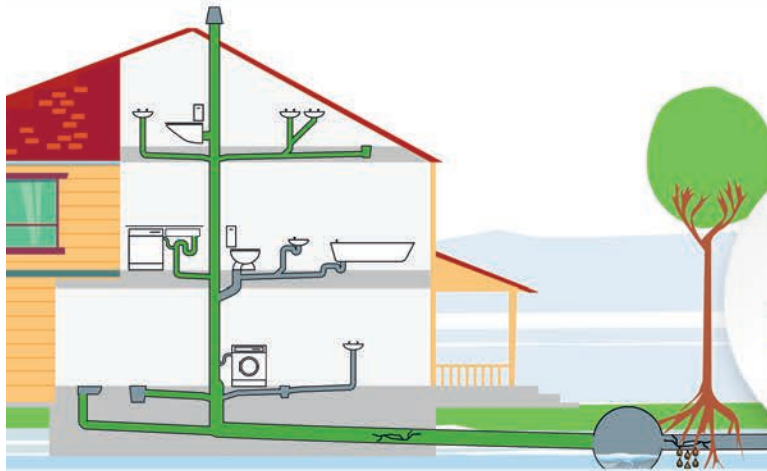
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# BUILT TO DELIVER

RIDGID tools are created with the professional in mind and stand the test of time

// By Kim Peterson

**P**RODUCTIVITY IS ALWAYS top of mind for service contractors. And the tools they use need to be reliable and durable to stand up to whatever a tough job throws at them.

RIDGID is a company that has been delivering dependable tools for nearly 100 years. From its first pipe wrench in 1923 to its FlexShaft technology in 2019, RIDGID maintains its commitment to solving problems in the field by creating tools that are a complete solution.

Wyatt Kilmartin, RIDGID's vice president of underground technologies, has worked with RIDGID for 15-plus years and served many different roles. Kilmartin joined Emerson in 2003 and shortly after started with RIDGID in brand marketing. After several years in Asia working in business development, about three years ago he came back to the states to run the Underground Technologies division, including drain cleaning, locating and inspection.

*Cleaner* recently spoke with Kilmartin about RIDGID's history, its innovation and development of drain cleaning tools, and where the company is headed.

» RIDGID knows that when it comes to drain cleaning, driving productivity is critical. The K9-102 FlexShaft drain cleaning machine quickly and efficiently works to clear 1 1/4- to 4-inch residential and commercial pipes up to 70 feet.



**CLEANER:** Tell us a little about the history of RIDGID.

**Kilmartin:** I love the story of our founding because it reinforces our commitment to the professional trades. In the 1920s, it was a challenge to find a reliable tool to make or loosen tough pipe connections, as the wrenches of that era often broke or slipped off the pipe under heavy load. In 1923, our company launched its first product, the RIDGID pipe wrench, to solve this issue. It was built to solve the durability issues of prior products and it's a product that is still used today.

Nearly 100 years later, we're a leading manufacturer of dependable, rugged tools trusted around the world. More important, we still believe in the idea of field-driven innovation. Our tools are developed and tested on job sites, purpose-built to deliver a better way to work. Our customers know that RIDGID tools stand up to the toughest challenges.

**CLEANER:** What differentiates your drain cleaning equipment and tools from the competition?

**Kilmartin:** Visibility, flexibility and durability. Durability is so critically important — you've got to be able to drag drain cleaning and inspection equipment out of a truck, down the stairs or up a ladder, and pull them out of lines again and again. Not only are our machines designed to handle these rugged conditions but the technology we build into the machines is also just as durable.

For example, we launched our cameras with TruSense technology in 2019, adding clearer imaging and more data capabilities to the RIDGID SeeSnake. With TruSense, you get two big benefits. The first is high dynamic range for a better image. Contractors can see





» Ideal for large-scale commercial and residential jobs, the RIDGID K9-306 FlexShaft drain cleaning machine cleans 3- to 6-inch diameter drainlines up to 125 feet.

a greater level of detail in a picture that's crystal clear and vibrant. The second is our TiltSense technology. It identifies gradual camera head pitch changes that are difficult to identify with the naked eye and gives the contractor the best chance at a proper diagnosis of the problem.

Our solutions are also built with flexibility and ease of use in mind. Our SeeSnake CSx Via provides a convenient means to stream, capture and share inspection images and has multi-reel compatibility. Our CS12x Digital Reporting Monitor is also designed to help users work smarter. It has dual battery power for maximum runtime on the job site and a large 12.1-inch display with 1024x768 resolution for crisp, clear and readable images even in heavy daylight.

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

**Kilmartin:** When it comes to drain cleaning, driving productivity is critical. Locating an issue, cleaning it without multiple trips back to the truck, and being able to carry less equipment are big wins. That is where RIDGID FlexShaft drain machines shine. They feature an enclosed cable so our RIDGID SeeSnake cameras are able to go into the pipe simultaneously. You can put your camera down next to the chain knocker so you can see what you're doing. It saves you time since you can do it all in one trip.

Our K-5208 sectional machine is also designed to enhance efficiency. It features infield clutch serviceability to minimize downtime, an enclosed cable carrier and cable feeder for faster cleanup, and an optional transport cart for easier job site maneuvering and storage.

**CLEANER: You seem to be always coming out with new equipment. The FlexShaft machines come to mind. What's the philosophy behind development and innovation at RIDGID?**

**Kilmartin:** The response to our initial launch of RIDGID FlexShaft drain cleaning machines at WWETT 2019 was phenomenal, and in 2020 we expanded our FlexShaft line to address a request we heard often from our customers: the need for a machine that reached 125 feet. The K9-306 clears up to 125 feet in 3- to 6-inch pipes, making it ideal for large-scale commercial and residential jobs.

When developing new products, we always ask ourselves: what are some of the issues cleaners are dealing with in the field? How can we make things better or more productive for them? The RIDGID portfolio of drain cleaning and inspection tools provides a



strong breadth and depth of products to meet the toughest job site challenges. We're always excited to share these products firsthand at WWETT. At RIDGID we really value the people who use our products. Their feedback is essential in developing new products that are then rigorously tested by both our engineers and end users in the field.

**CLEANER: What are some recommendations for customers shopping for drain cleaning equipment and tools?**

**Kilmartin:** When it comes to drain cleaning, snakes and water jetters each have their place depending on the type of blockage. Advances in drain cleaning machines have made enclosed cables more common, like the durable nylon sheath that covers the cable in our RIDGID FlexShaft machines. Features like this help to contain messes and keep them off the job site floor; the cable can be easily wiped clean as it's pulled from the line. And while FlexShaft is ideal for clearing scale, grease, sludge, tree roots and soft blockages, jetters, drum and sectional machines are better suited to other types of blockages.

When it comes to locating equipment, the key to successfully locating lines is accuracy, reliability, visibility and trust in the machine's technology. Locating options continue to improve. For example, some locators can be paired with apps on smart devices to overlay water and other utility lines on a Google map. This mapping can be saved for future reference. Advancements like these will continue to improve job site safety, productivity and accuracy.

When considering cameras, durability is often the first factor. It's a harsh environment inside a pipe. However, once you are in the pipe it is important to get the best image for proper diagnosis of the problem. Features such as high dynamic range can balance the lighting to reduce dark and bright spots. A longer cable is also helpful to both go on farther runs and reterminate the cable if it happens to get kinked. Different cameras come with different cable stiffness. That matters a lot when going on longer straight runs or pushing through multiple bends.

When choosing a monitor you should generally look at durability, data storage, screen size or no screen at all when using a Wi-Fi-enabled camera controller. All RIDGID monitors and the CSx Via have the ability to stream directly to a device using the free HQx



## BEHIND THE GEAR

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**CLEANER: The past two years have been different for many contractors and manufacturers. How have things changed for RIDGID?**

**Kilmartin:** This was a challenging time for everyone — but this year's challenges highlighted how much our customers' work matters to their communities.

As a manufacturer we looked for new ways to support the efforts of our customers and launched JobSite Live, a virtual event series designed to put RIDGID experts in front of our customers using social media channels and live broadcasts. Viewers could ask questions and get immediate feedback. This new platform allowed us to create a feeling of community in a virtual space. It's a powerful way for us to have meaningful conversations with customers, giving them the educational resources and expertise they rely on from RIDGID. We missed being on the job site with our customers during the height of the pandemic, but our team did a great job adjusting.

**CLEANER: What's new for RIDGID in 2022?**

**Kilmartin:** We are very excited to get back out in the world in 2022. One of the events we always circle on the calendar is WWETT in Indianapolis. It is a great pulse on the entire industry. As always, we will have some exciting new product launches in multiple categories, including our smaller camera reels and new advanced drum machines, and welcome everyone to stop by the booth. We're also planning to release details about our 2022 RIDGID Experience during WWETT. It will be our fifth RIDGID Experience event, and it's become an exciting tradition for both us and the pros who participate.

**CLEANER: What do you want your customers to think of when they hear the name RIDGID?**

**Kilmartin:** Productivity and profits. Speed, skill and efficiency have become a competitive advantage. Before buying a new tool, our customers often ask: "How can this make my life easier?" It's important for us to be the brand cleaners choose because they trust us for the most demanding work conditions.

One way we're doing this is by integrating technology into our tools where there is a clear value to our customers. They're still as tough and rugged as our customers have come to expect, yet they're also smarter. **c**



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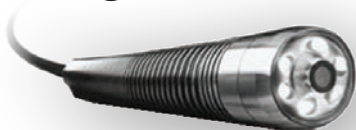
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## FIELD AND OFFICE TECHNOLOGY

By Craig Mandli

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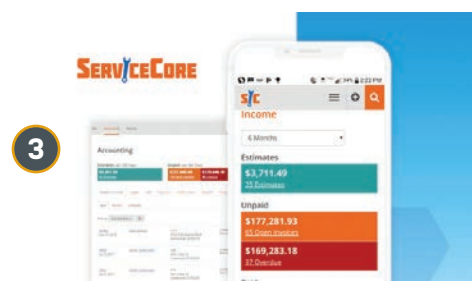
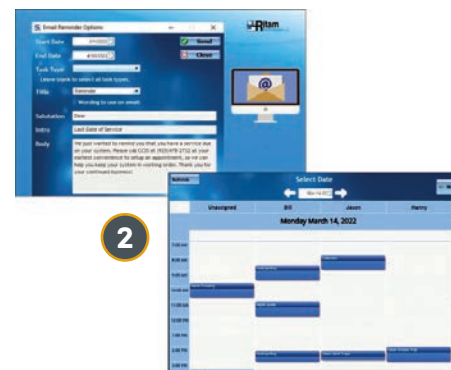
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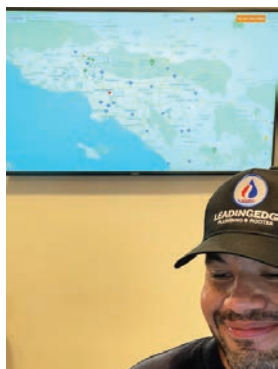




# FIELD AND OFFICE TECHNOLOGY

// By Craig Mandli

## GPS FLEET TRACKING HELPS PLUMBING COMPANY RECOVER STOLEN TRUCK



**PROBLEM** / LeadingEdge Plumbing & Rooter suffered a small-business nightmare: the theft of a company truck from a job site. It was the first time that had ever happened in the company's 20-year history. When police finally recovered it, the thief had managed to off-load all of the expensive tools and equipment onboard — which the company never recovered.

**SOLUTION** / Immediately after this theft, LeadingEdge Plumbing realized it was critical to know where its trucks and expensive equipment were at all times. After extensive research, the company chose ClearPathGPS based on the top star ratings on review sites like TrustPilot and Capterra, along with the ability to get up and running quickly and the flexible month-to-month service contract.

**RESULT** / LeadingEdge got the chance to learn firsthand just how smart the decision was to equip its fleet with GPS tracking units when another company vehicle was stolen from a job site. "But this time," explained the owner, "we were able to call the cops right away, and using ClearPathGPS' live map view of the truck's movements, we guided police right to it." Soon after, the police stopped the vehicle, apprehended the thieves, and recovered the truck and equipment worth about \$100,000. Other results achieved include better dispatching and service as well as more accuracy with job durations and timecards. 888-734-0384; [www.clearpathgps.com](http://www.clearpathgps.com)

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**PROBLEM** / Padre Dam Municipal Water District in Santee, California, has roughly 170 miles of sewer mains, over 15,500 total wastewater connections and a population of more than 70,000 people. With so much ground to cover, its team needed a way for operators to transfer data to each other from different manholes. This would allow them to avoid over-flushing manholes and pipe sections, creating better time management and productivity.

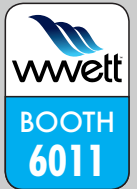
**SOLUTION** / In collaboration with Padre Dam, WinCan created a custom flushing application that allowed the municipality to update maintenance data in real time.

**RESULT** / "When the two operators are cleaning the same section, they won't have to call each other," says wastewater collections supervisor Rich Schultz. "Data will auto-populate up to the minute — helping to ensure they're not over-flushing the area. It's going to help minimize potential human errors, opposing numbers and incorrect upstream/downstream manhole numbers." In addition to this custom application, WinCan VX enables Padre Dam to visualize data through Esri's ArcGIS, using an integration that has expedited their workflow by prioritizing different manholes. "They open ArcMap and they code it with sections from a given work order that have already been CCTV'd, sections that still need to be done, and any section that hasn't been inspected in two years," Schultz says. With free-flowing manhole and pipe data from WinCan and Esri, Padre Dam was not only able to solve the problem with manhole-to-manhole communication, but they also improved the completion time and quality of inspections across the municipality. 877-626-8386; [www.wincan.com](http://www.wincan.com) **c**



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## PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

### PORTABLE SECTIONAL MACHINE PROVIDES HIGH POWER

By Craig Mandli

Drain cleaning machines offering portability and power are highly sought after by cleaners looking to clear 1 1/4- to 6-inch drainlines. The M18 FUEL Sectional Machine for 5/8- and 7/8-inch cable from Milwaukee Tool is designed to hit those marks, delivering the power to clear heavy roots up to 150 feet out.

“As the lightest weight and most compact machine in its class, this sectional machine can seamlessly transition between outdoor use and the tightest indoor applications,” according to a spokesperson from Milwaukee Tool. The unit also includes a carry strap for hands-free transportation onto rooftop jobs.

The M18 FUEL Sectional Machine for 5/8- and 7/8-inch cable combines three Milwaukee-branded innovations: a POWERSTATE brushless motor, REDLINK PLUS intelligence and a REDLITHIUM battery pack. The POWERSTATE brushless motor provides a high level of clearing power for tough root clogs. Whether the clog is only 15 feet down the line or 150 feet out, users can be confident they have the power they need to get the job done.

“This machine’s power exceeds many corded options, and remains consistent throughout the job, allowing users to maintain power when they hit clogs rather than experiencing heavy bog-down,” according to Milwaukee Tool. Additionally, most sectional machines for 5/8- and 7/8-inch cable available are only rated to clear up to 4-inch lines, while the M18 FUEL Sectional Machine is capable of clearing up to 6-inch lines.



REDLINK PLUS Intelligence enables full-circle communication between the tool and battery, ensuring maximum performance under load. When these motor and intelligence technologies are combined with an M18 REDLITHIUM HIGH OUTPUT 12.0 battery, this sectional machine tackles multiple jobs on one charge, regularly completing a full day’s work without the need to stop to recharge or swap batteries. “In addition, the elimination of cords means users won’t have to search for outlets or extension cords and enhances safety due to the reduction of trip hazards or cords near standing water,” according to Milwaukee Tool.

This machine also features ONE-KEY inventory management capability so it can be wirelessly tracked, managed and secured. The unit is fully compatible with the entire M18 battery-powered line, offering more than 200 power tool products. 800-729-3878; [www.milwaukeetool.com](http://www.milwaukeetool.com)

## 1 // HAMMERHEAD TRENCHLESS 100XTR RADIO REMOTE SYSTEM

The HydroBurst 100XTR by HammerHead Trenchless has a 100-ton capability rated for up to 16 inches in diameter, yet it is compact enough for use on pipe down to 4 inches. It comes with an easy-to-learn, easy-to-use radio remote control, freeing operators from the pit to position themselves for the best view of a bursting operation. Lightweight, heat-treated alloy rods feature an API-style joint that resists buckling under the greater thrust loads required by longer burst runs, sweeping bends and encrusted and collapsed lines. Operators can swap power for speed by switching to its 50-ton mode, working up to twice as fast depending on the job’s requirements. Hydraulic leveling jacks allow for making adjustments on the fly as needed, keeping the machine on-grade without interrupting bursting operations. 800-331-6653; [www.hammerheadtrenchless.com](http://www.hammerheadtrenchless.com)







## 2 // GENERAL JM-1450 ELECTRIC WATER JET

The compact, powerful JM-1450 Jet-Set water jet from General Pipe Cleaners uses high-pressure water to clear drainlines clogged with grease, sand, sludge and ice. Overall height of the water jet is 34 inches, and removing the easily detachable hose reel drops the height to 14 1/2 inches. The heavy-duty frame rides on two 8-inch semipneumatic tires, and the telescoping handle and removable hose reel make maneuvering easy. The JM-1450 is powered by a 1 1/2 hp sealed motor with a GFCI outlet that drives a 1,500 psi, 1.7 gpm triplex pump. On-demand Vibra-pulse technology helps propel hoses down long runs and around tight bends, even in small lines. Safety features include a thermal relief valve to protect the pump from heat damage, a backflow check valve and inlet filter. An optional spray wand is also available. 800-245-6200; [www.drainbrain.com](http://www.drainbrain.com)

## 3 // ENVIROSIGHT ROVER X SAT II ALL-IN-ONE LATERAL SYSTEM

Envirosight's new ROVER X SAT II lateral launch inspection crawler maneuvers around obstacles and challenging pipe geometries to rapidly detect gas line cross bores in sewers and other hard-to-reach defects. The crawler can travel as far as 984 feet down mainlines at speeds up to 98 feet per minute, then launch its camera probe as far as 147 feet down adjoining service connections, at up to 23 feet per minute. The ROVER X SAT II also features a belt-driven push mechanism that minimizes wear on the push rod while maximizing pushing force. The design, which is easy to clean and has field-replaceable belts, is intended to increase uptime and keep maintenance costs low. Steerable 8-wheel drive makes it easier to move past debris, roots, offsets and protruding taps. During launch, the pan/tilt lateral camera with detachable steering wand navigates through bends and branches in lateral lines. 866-936-8476; [www.envirosight.com](http://www.envirosight.com) c



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## Waterline Renewal Technologies acquires Pipe Lining Supply

Waterline Renewal Technologies completed the company's acquisition of Pipe Lining Supply. The terms of the purchase were not disclosed. Founded in 2004, Pipe Lining Supply's management team will continue to manage the company and assist Waterline Renewal Technologies with the integration. Pipe Lining Supply will maintain company-owned distribution centers in Anaheim, California and Springfield, Missouri, and it will remain a supplier of sewer pipe rehabilitation equipment and materials while continuing to deliver training and customer service.

## ServiceMax completes acquisition of LiquidFrameworks

ServiceMax announced the completion of the previously announced transaction to acquire LiquidFrameworks from Luminate Capital Partners, a private equity firm investing in growth and enterprise software companies. LiquidFrameworks' FieldFX is a cloud-based mobile field operations software suite designed to manage contracts, quotes, equipment, jobs and field tickets for service companies in the energy industry.

## Super Products appoints new vice president of rentals

Super Products has appointed Chris Gittens to take over as the new vice president of rentals after Randy Buening, the previous vice president of rentals, was promoted to president at the beginning of 2021. Gittens has an extensive background in equipment manufacturing and distribution. He comes to Super Products from Thermo King, where he was the director of dealer development. Prior to Thermo King, he held leadership positions at CLAAS of America and CNH Industrial where he gained experience in financial analysis, strategic planning, dealer development and commercial credit. Chris holds an MBA and MIA from Columbia University and earned his undergraduate degree from Washington University in St. Louis.



Chris Gittens

## WJTA announces officers, board of directors

Bill McClister, an industry consultant based in La Porte, Texas, has been elected the 2021-2023 chairman of the board of the WaterJet Technology Association. Also elected for the 2021-2023 term are President Jimmy Peck, general manager, MPW Industrial Services, Hebron, Ohio; Vice President Kerry Siggins, chief executive officer, StoneAge, Durango, Colorado; Secretary James Ashmead, research investigator, DuPont Specialty Products, Wilmington, Delaware; and Treasurer Drew Waltenbaugh, president and chief executive officer, NLB Corp., Wixom, Michigan.

Newly elected and re-elected board members are David Beckum, chief executive officer, Augusta Industrial Services, Augusta, Georgia; Jerry Carter, vice president of sales and chief commercial officer, SPIR STAR, Houston, Texas; Bradley Coble, hydroblasting specialist, Covestro, Baytown, Texas; Dee Green, vice president of operations, USA DeBusk, Houston; Bill Krupowicz, vice president and general manager, Jetstream of Houston; and Bill Shaw, vice president of employee development, Evergreen North America Industrial Services, La Porte. Luis Garcia, president — gulf coast region, Northern Safety and Industrial, also in La Porte, continues to serve a remaining term on the board of directors.

## Grout school registration open for March

Avanti Grout, CUES and Logiball are partnering together on March 23-24 for its annual two-day Municipal Sewer Grout School in Tavares, Florida. All levels of experience are welcome and can participate in each of the breakout and classroom sessions. An emphasis will be placed on grouting, safety, operating, testing and troubleshooting equipment, making sure the chemical grout mix has the right mixture, and how to determine how much grout is used per joint or lateral. The school will present technical information on lateral and mainline test and seal packer operation and maintenance, mixing and optimizing AV-100 acrylamide grout performance, review and demonstration of new NASSCO/ICGA grout specifications, and more. To register, go to [conta.cc/33uXg8d](https://conta.cc/33uXg8d) or contact Jessica Williams at 281-956-3111. **c**

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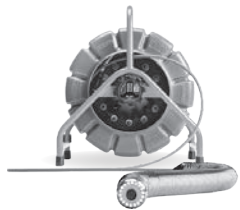
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C02



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**Keifer Hendry**

**[keifer@sewer technologies.com](mailto:keifer@sewer technologies.com)**  
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C03

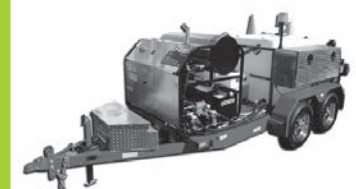
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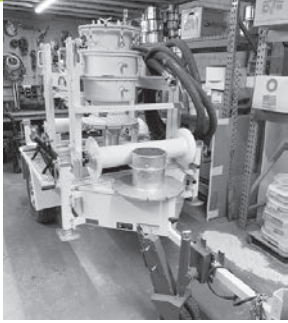
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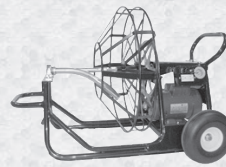
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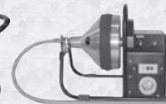
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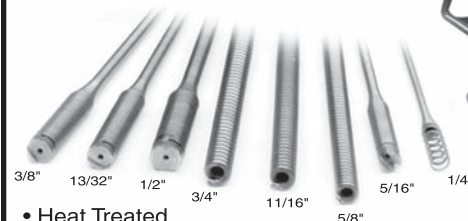


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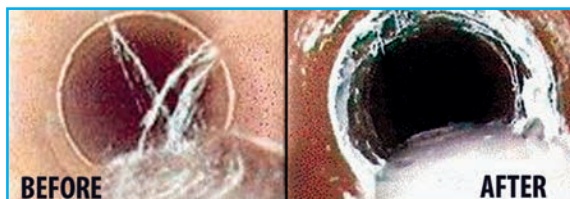
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# MUNICIPAL SEWER GROUT SCHOOL



Wednesday, March 23-24, 2022  
at 8:00 AM EDT

-to-  
Thursday, March 28, 2019  
at 4:00 PM EDT

City of Tavares, FL Utilities  
1000 Captain Haynes Road  
Tavares, FL 32778



## Who Should Attend:

- ♦ Public Works Authorities
- ♦ Collection System Managers
- ♦ Grout Truck Technicians
- ♦ City/Consulting Engineers
- ♦ Municipal Contractors
- ♦ Regulators & Inspectors

## REGISTER TODAY!



## Registration Contact:

Jessica Williams  
Avanti International  
281-956-3111  
marketing@avantigrout.com

## Municipal Sewer Grout School - Tavares, FL | March 23-24, 2022

The Municipal Sewer Grout School will help you understand how and why injection grouting stops groundwater infiltration into sewer collections. The two-day session will present technical information on:

- ♦ Lateral and mainline Test and Seal packer operation and maintenance
- ♦ Mixing and optimizing AV-100 Acrylamide Grout performance
- ♦ Review and demonstration of new NASSCO/ICGA grout specifications
- ♦ Live infiltration and grout sealing demos
- ♦ New grout testing and monitoring information and methods

## Attendees will receive:

- ♦ Credit for (10) Professional Development Hours (PDH) certified by CIGMAT
- ♦ SOPP certification (Safe Operating Practices Program)
- ♦ Training documentation and product manuals
- ♦ Personalized Certificate of Completion
- ♦ Breakfast and lunch both days and first evening networking event

## Cost:

\$585 for one registrant

\$485 for each additional registrant from the same company

\*All fees are US dollars.

## Speakers:

This class is presented by Avanti International, Cues and Logiball. These firms are active members of the Infiltration Control Grouting Committee (ICGC), which is affiliated with the National Association of Sewer Service Companies (NASSCO).

## Travel and Lodging Information:

Travel and accommodations are the responsibility of each registrant.

## Airport:

The nearest major airport is Orlando International Airport (MCO)

## Recommended Hotel:

Key West Resort on Lake Dora  
199 W. Ruby St.  
Tavares, FL 32778  
Tel: 352.508.5344 Ext. 2  
Tavares@staykeywesthotels.com

Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis. We are limited to the number of registrants we can accommodate, so register today!

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