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PROFESSIONALS

BETTER
BUSINESS
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QUALITY COUNTS

CONTINUED INVESTMENT IN EQUIPMENT
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SMALL-LINE
SPECIALIST

SERVICE NICHE HELPS CONTRACTOR
GROW CUSTOMER BASE / 46



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PROfile

NuFlow Certified Contractor

Mike Lomonaco became a NuFlow Certified Contractor in November 2020. After one year with NuFlow, his business has doubled in revenue.

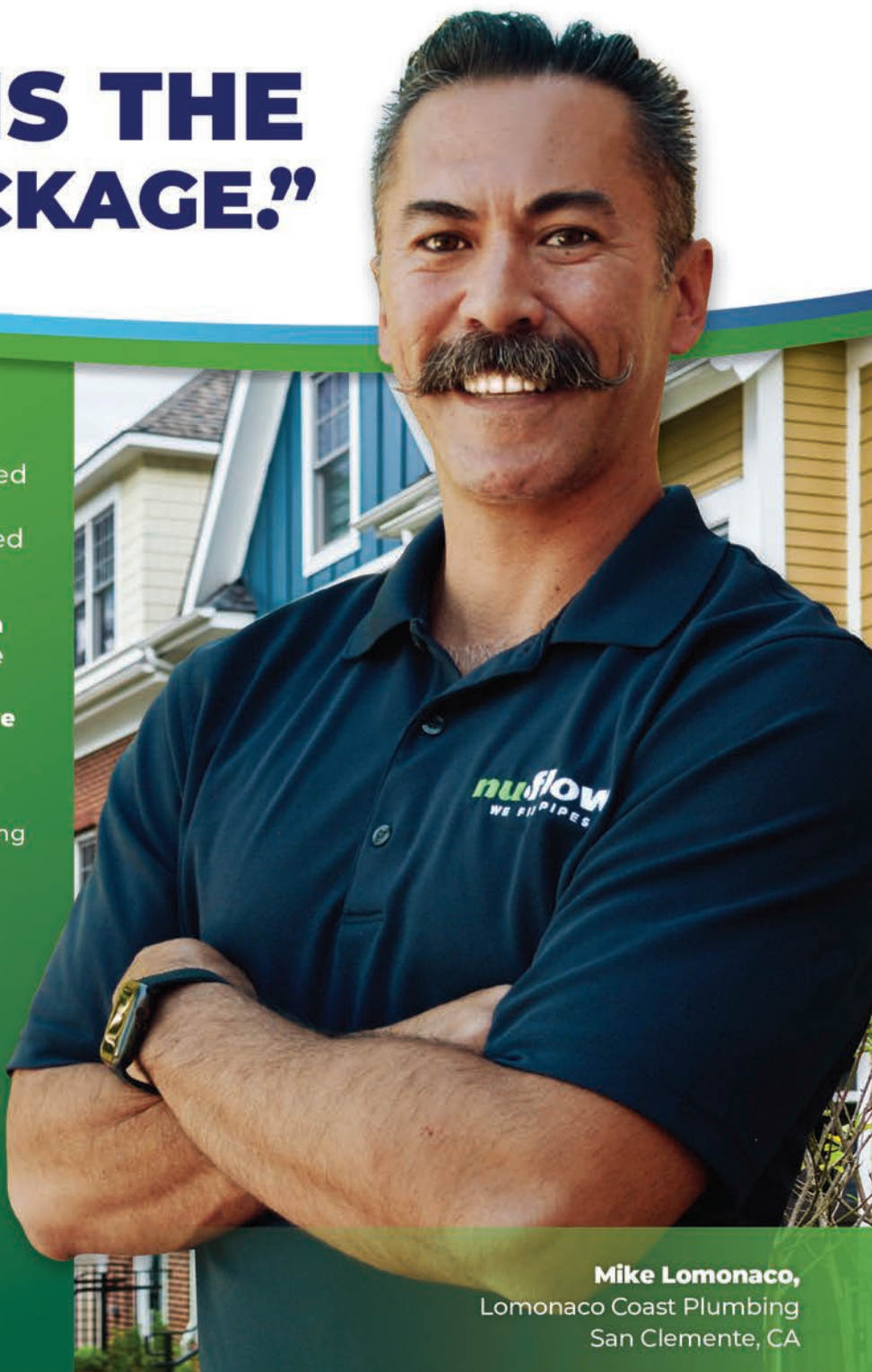
“We more than double our monthly revenue on a regular basis, sometimes up to quadruple revenue versus just plumbing work alone. Instead of subbing out lining work, now we are getting calls from other contractors to do the work.”

Mike did his homework and evaluated many lining companies before choosing NuFlow.

“NuFlow’s product and the process are the best available. It is really hands-on, I like that you can double check your work and verify tie-ins.”

Mike’s team has taken advantage of NuFlow’s comprehensive training. They’ve completed their initial certification and are already working through advanced training.

“The technical support and family atmosphere at NuFlow are really valuable. Being able to call the team and get a response right away is so helpful. NuFlow is the whole package.”



Mike Lomonaco,
Lomonaco Coast Plumbing
San Clemente, CA

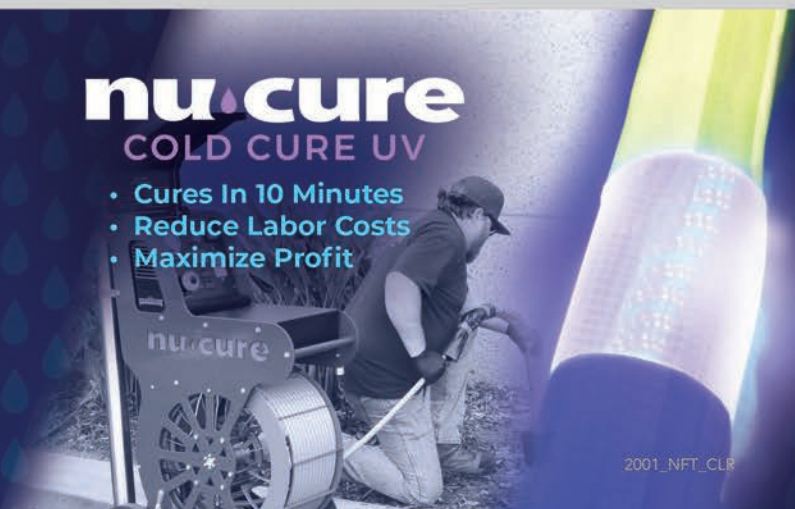
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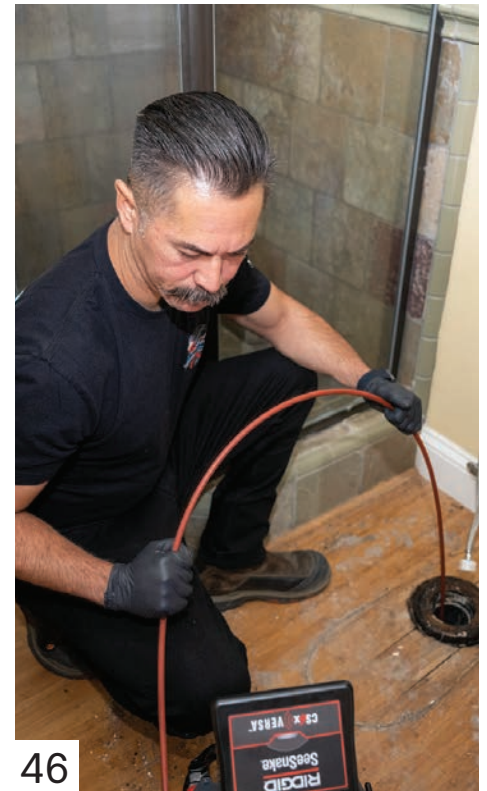
ON THE COVER // When Rick Hedge graduated from college and wasn't sure what career he wanted to pursue, his father, Dick Hedge, gifted him a drain cleaning machine. His father's company didn't have enough work for them both, so he set out to build his own customer base. Hedge's determination paid off and he eventually led the company, now called The Plumber's Plumber, to focus on pipe bursting and lining. His instincts about trenchless pipeline repair were correct, and now The Plumber's Plumber is one of the leading trenchless pipe rehab companies in southern Florida. (Photography by Steven Martine)



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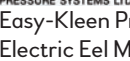
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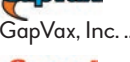


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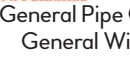
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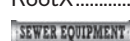
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Cleaner

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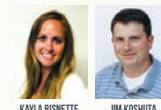
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WHAT'S YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY?

Take a look at what content you're spending time on and whether it's paying off



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

HOW BIG A ROLE does social media play in your marketing and growth strategies for your business? What is your objective when you share content to your social media channels?

In the past several years, as social media has become more important to businesses, we pretty routinely post articles on our publication websites about creating online content — a blog on your website, YouTube videos, Instagram posts — and how to use that content to reach customers.

You, our readers, serve a specific niche that is often misunderstood and underappreciated by customers. So I would assume that one of the biggest reasons for sharing on social media is to educate your current and potential customers about your services.

There are many other reasons to create and share content on social channels and your own website: brand recognition and visibility; to introduce customers to new services you're adding; to announce special discounts or company news; and to connect with others in the industry. I know several contractors who made legitimate friendships via Instagram — sharing tips and why they like their favorite equipment, discussing jobs and giving encouragement. We've featured a contractor who was hired for hydroexcavation jobs after posting a comment about his equipment's capabilities. Felix Delgadillo, the owner of Drain Guys Chicago who was featured in the April 2022 issue of *Cleaner*, even found an employee via Instagram. He routinely posts photos of his work, and an interested young man messaged him about it, and he ended up with a hardworking, promising assistant.

Not everyone will find the next generation of employees on Instagram or Facebook. But putting out more information about the kind of work you do and why you enjoy it raises the profile of the industry, and that in itself is a good reason to participate on social channels.

Whether you've been doing it for years or are just starting to add social media content to your marketing, take a moment to think about your true objective. Think about the demographics and whom you're trying to reach. Are you using the right platforms for your area? Facebook users are trending older these days, while TikTok is the opposite. Think about where you should focus the most time and energy in order to reach your intended audience. If you mostly want to connect with others in the industry, Instagram is probably the way to go. If you're currently focused on customer education, YouTube is a good place to start.

I'd like to learn more about your strategy on social media — what kind of posts you create, where you post most often, the kind of responses and success you've seen, what channel has been most worth your time, etc. Use the feedback form at cleaner.com/suggestions, or email me at editor@cleaner.com.

If there's a certain topic you'd like to see us cover, let us know. I hope you enjoy this month's issue. **c**

The advertisement features a blue and yellow banner at the top with the NTS logo and the text "NATIONAL TRENCH SAFETY WHERE SERVICE MEETS EXPERTISE." Below the banner is a photograph of a trench with shoring equipment. At the bottom, the text reads "WHERE SERVICE MEETS EXPERTISE. GETTING IT RIGHT 24/7 888.234.9244 • WWW.NTSAFETY.COM".

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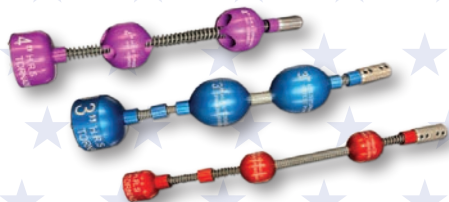
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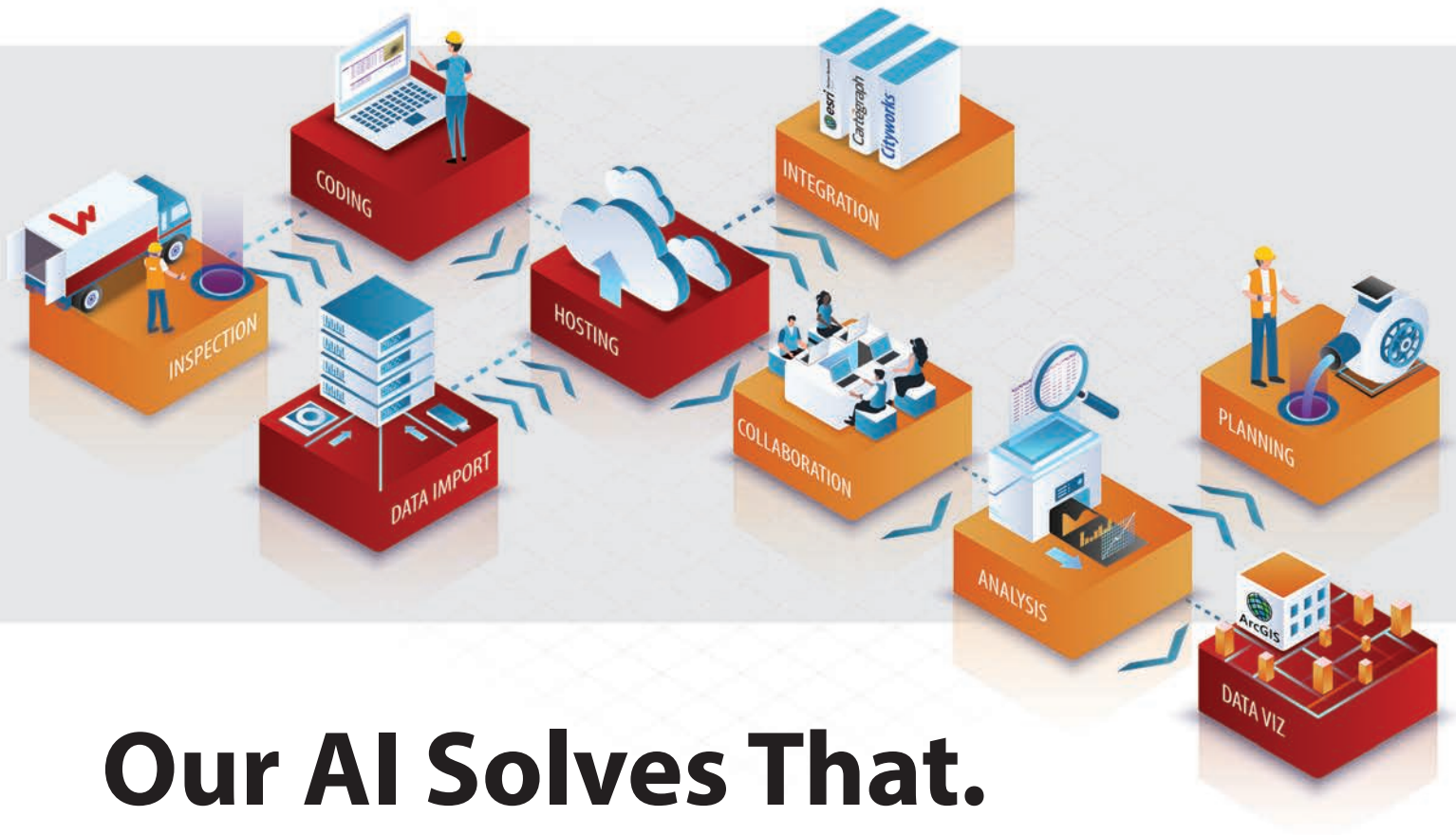


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INSPECTION SURPRISES Snake Caught on Camera

There's plenty that you expect to see when performing a pipe inspection — various pipe defects, the source of a blockage, possibly a cross-bore. But there can also be surprises. Check out this video from a recent inspection job undertaken by Ground Penetrating Radar Systems of Toledo, Ohio.

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CLASS OF 2022 Hiring the New Batch of Young Workers

In this online exclusive, Scot Barsony, a plumbing instructor at the Burlington County Institute of Technology in New Jersey, provides some insights about his former students who are now entering the workforce. If you want to attract and ultimately retain these people as employees, consider Barsony's advice.

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SAFETY

Staying Hydrated on the Job Site

In physically demanding jobs, hydration is essential to not only worker productivity but also safety. This is especially true in the summer months when the heat index in some places climbs above 100 degrees F. Here are some guidelines to keep in mind for yourself and your workers during these warm-weather months. >> cleaner.com/featured

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QUALITY COUNTS

CONTINUED INVESTMENT IN EQUIPMENT HELPS THE PLUMBER'S PLUMBER FOCUS ON DELIVERING THE BEST POSSIBLE SERVICE TO ITS CUSTOMERS

// By Ken Wysocky



WHEN RICK HEDGE, THE OWNER OF THE PLUMBER'S PLUMBER IN FORT MYERS, FLORIDA, GRADUATED FROM COLLEGE WITH A DEGREE IN REAL ESTATE AND FINANCE, HE WASN'T SURE WHERE HIS CAREER WAS HEADED.

But his father, Dick Hedge — a drain cleaner and plumber — gave him a unique graduation gift that left no doubt what he thought his son should do: a PipeHunter Lil Boss drain cleaning machine.

"I didn't know what I wanted to do," he recalls. "But I know I didn't want to answer to other people. My dad always told me that working for yourself allows you to create your own destiny. I didn't know what that meant back then, but I sure do now."

So Hedge, who already had worked for his father for years, accepted the challenge and opted to give drain cleaning a shot. But his father, who owned a company called Econo-Rooter in Fort Myers, Florida, didn't have enough work at the time to keep both of them busy.

So Hedge had to figure out how to build a customer base on his own. Despite his experience, it was no cakewalk.

"It was hard at first," he says. "But I knew that if this was where my life was going, I needed to figure it out. So I made up flyers and started to grab something for myself."

« Rick Hedge was inspired by his father to pursue a career in drain cleaning, and now owns The Plumber's Plumber in North Fort Myers, Florida.



« Head lining technicians Jonah Yerian and Cayden Pegg monitor the inversion machine as they install a liner on a pipeline rehabilitation job.

Photography by Steven Martine

His will to succeed and strong work ethic served Hedge well. He eventually steered the company into trenchless pipeline repair a little more than 20 years ago, sensing that pipe bursting and pipe lining — technologies that were in their infancy back then — were the future of the industry.

His instincts were correct. Today the company, now called The Plumber's Plumber, is one of the leading trenchless pipeline rehab companies in southern Florida. And Hedge no longer worries about finding new customers.

INFLUENTIAL MENTOR

Hedge says his father has been instrumental to both the company's success and Hedge's professional development.

"He's been the biggest influence in my life and he's the best guy ever," Hedge says of his father, who handed over control of the company to his son in 2018 but still comes to work every day. "He's an upstanding, respectable guy — old-school tough.



The Plumber's Plumber

NORTH FORT MYERS, FLORIDA

OWNER Rick Hedge

FOUNDED 1980

EMPLOYEES 9

SERVICES Plumbing, drain cleaning, sewer cleaning and inspections, trenchless pipeline repair

SERVICE AREA South Florida

WEBSITE www.theplumbersplumber.com

And he did pretty well in creating a rock-solid foundation for the business."

The company's roots date back to 1980, when Dick Hedge bought a company called Econo-Rooter for \$4,000. He still



NEW STRATEGIES

Two strategies primarily spurred the company's growth: price increases and an emphasis on continually reinvesting in new technology. And his father's experiences played a role in formulating those strategies.

For years, Hedge had watched his father clean residential drainlines, then repeatedly return for profit-eroding free callbacks when the drains continued to clog.

"It wasn't his fault the backups continued," Hedge explains. "It's just that the pipes were bad. But his mindset was to always take care of customers and make them happy. He never cared much about money.

"But I was more aggressive and motivated. I have four kids and a wife that want nice things. That motivated me, but he didn't need all that."

To stop the callbacks, Hedge made an important investment in equipment: a RIDGID SeeSnake inspection camera.

"That camera changed our business," he says. "From then on, we could show customers what the problem was and tell them the

« Cayden Pegg (left) and Jonah Yerian prepare epoxy for a lining job.

» Pegg (left) and Yerian use a roller to finish wetting out a liner.

"WE'RE NOT SAYING WE'RE BETTER THAN OTHER PLUMBERS, WE JUST DO THINGS DIFFERENTLY."

RICK HEDGE

holds the plumbing license for the company, which has changed names a couple times over the years, and mostly coaches and trains young employees.

At the start, the business focused mostly on drain cleaning and minor plumbing repairs. But in 2001, they changed the name of the business to Trenchless Solutions to better reflect its new direction: pipe bursting with a TRIC Tools system.

But at the time, few people knew about trenchless technology. So in 2008, the company name changed again, this time to The Plumber's Plumber.

"I was brainstorming names with a group of guys who had plumbing businesses," Hedge says. "And one of them said, 'You work with other plumbers and do the jobs they don't want to do. You're the plumber's plumber.' And the name stuck.

"We're not saying we're better than other plumbers; we just do things differently."



pipes would keep on clogging unless they were fixed. It put us in a completely different frame of mind and things took off after that.”

Hedge also pushed to raise prices, something his father was reluctant to do.

“We started pushing up prices hard and charging what the market would bear,” he says. “I learned from mentors that if about 30% or less of your customers don’t complain about your prices, then you’re not charging enough.”

Hedge’s father warned him that the company might lose some business by raising prices. And he was right, Hedge says.

“But we lost the bad customers and gained better customers. And we had more money to buy better tools, drain machines and cameras, as well as attract customers that were less concerned with prices and more concerned with quality workmanship.”

Today, about 60% of the company’s revenue comes from trenchless drainline repairs, typically 2- to 4-inch-diameter cast iron pipes buried in slabs under homes. Drain cleaning contributes another 25% and the rest is generated by minor plumbing repairs and fixing waterline breaks, Hedge says.



“The drain cleaning is critical because it leads to trenchless repair jobs.”

EQUIPMENT FUELS GROWTH

The company’s roster of equipment reflects the Hedge’s philosophy of continually reinvesting in revenue-enhancing equipment. For drain cleaning, the company relies on PipeHunter Lil Boss and Big Boss trailer-mounted water jetters (24 gpm at 4,000 psi and 35 gpm at 3,000 psi, respectively); a Brute propane-powered jetter from Jetters Northwest (9 gpm at 4,000 psi); a

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NEW TECHNOLOGIES OPEN NEW MARKETS

Rick Hedge learned a lot during the decades he's worked with his father, Dick Hedge, who started the company that the younger Hedge now owns, The Plumber's Plumber in Fort Myers, Florida.

One of the most valuable lessons was to keep reinvesting company profits into machines and technology that not only improve productivity, profitability and customer satisfaction, but that can open up new markets for growth, too.

A good example of the company's technology-centric mindset is the recent investment in a ROVER X crawler pipeline inspection camera from Envirosight.

The camera cost \$70,000 — a considerable investment. But Hedge believes it will more than pay for itself by serving as a steppingstone into a new market for the company: trenchless repair of larger-diameter pipes than the company typically fixes.

"Our specialty is rehabbing small-diameter, 2- and 4-inch cast-iron residential lines," Hedge explains. "But this camera will help us establish a new division that will handle 6- to 8-inch-diameter pipes.

"My plan is to make \$1,500 a month with it and pay the camera off in five years. But if we can find someone to run the camera full-time, it'll pay for itself in a year; we'll get there fast. The potential is unlimited."

Hedge also points to a Brute 4009 propane gas-powered portable water jetter (9 gpm at 4,000 psi), built by Jetters Northwest, as another good investment. The machine expanded the company's drain cleaning capabilities and market because it can be operated inside buildings, an attractive option for customers that would rather not have a dirty jetter hose meandering through their businesses.

"I paid about \$12,000 for that machine around two years ago, then landed a contract to flush the deli drains at three stores in a grocery chain at \$5,000 a store," Hedge explains. "So it paid for itself right away.

"They think it's awesome that we can bring in the Brute, put it right over a drain and go after it without a greasy, 300-foot-long hose snaking through the produce aisle and past the registers."



RIDGID drain machine; an Electric Eel cable machine; a RotoMidi milling machine from Boldan Pipe Technologies; Mini and Maxi Millers from Picote Solutions; and a milling machine built by Renssi Finland Oy.

The company also relies on a variety of inspection cameras, including push cameras from Forbest Products, Rothenberger Werkzeuge GmbH, RIDGID and CamTronics (a brand distributed by EPL Solutions); and a ROVER X crawler camera system carried on a Polaris Ranger all-terrain vehicle. It also owns a Superior smoke detection machine from Superior Signal.

The company also owns a MidiCoater pipe coating system from Spraypoxy Oy in Sweden. In addition, it has invested in pipe lining equipment made by Renssi and Sacpro and uses T-liners from Repiper AB in Sweden and felt Brawoliner liners from Brawo Systems GmbH.

"We mix and match the best technologies from all over the world," Hedge explains. "I got beat up real bad

when we first started lining pipes, but I kept getting back up, and found the best products in the world and put them all together to create our own systems.

"I'm a reflection of what I learned at places like Picote, Sacpro, Boldan and Renssi. They taught me what I preach every day. They're all awesome, top-notch, amazing companies."

Hedge firmly believes that requiring certification for companies that do pipe lining would be good for the industry. For starters, it would ensure a certain standard of quality workmanship for customers. And on a larger level, it would be good for the industry because it would eliminate contractors that do poor work, he says.

"Some places want to outlaw pipe lining because of liner failures," he says. "I'm not big on more regulation. But we have to make sure consumers get quality workmanship so it doesn't hurt the overall pipe lining industry.

"Pipe lining is great technology — when it's done right," he adds. "But not enough guys do it right and customers



➤ Hedge believes his investment in the ROVER X crawler inspection system from EnviroSight will more than pay for itself by opening a new market for the company: trenchless repair of large-diameter pipes.

➤ Hedge lowers a ROVER X inspection camera into a manhole to inspect a sewer line.

don't realize if they're getting bad work or quality work."

Hedge also advocates for a higher level of training and education for pipe liners to create quality tradesmen for the industry.

EMBRACING OVERSEAS TECHNOLOGY

Hedge praises the technology coming from Europe, where pipes are even older than in the United States and installation standards are more rigorous. For example, independent inspectors must examine lining work to ensure it meets certain standards before contractors get paid.

As such, there's less emphasis on speed and profitability and more emphasis on workmanship and quality, Hedge says.

"I've built our reputation on being different from everyone else. We strive to achieve European standards. In our early years, we aimed for speed. But now we work toward thoroughness, cleanliness, perfection, quality and longevity, with money as the lowest priority. And we still make a good living. We're really good at what we do and I'm very proud of that."

One key to the company's success is its tight-knit crew, led by Cayden Pegg.


"I LEARNED FROM MENTORS THAT IF ABOUT 30% OR LESS OF YOUR CUSTOMERS DON'T COMPLAIN ABOUT YOUR PRICES, THEN YOU'RE NOT CHARGING ENOUGH."

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RICK HEDGE

"I've taught him everything I know," Hedge says. "He's been very receptive and has embraced this industry and technology. He's my No. 1 man and he's only 25 years old."

Rounding out the crew are Pegg's right-hand man, Jonah Yerian; Jerry Swanson; Pegg's cousins, Joey Retherford and Corey Parzyck; lead plumber Josh Ricks; and Hedge's wife, April.

"We've got a pretty good little team and I'm real proud of them," Hedge says. "They make it fun because they want to learn and they realize how good this industry is and how much potential it has — and how much potential they have."

"Basically, the sky is the limit for their future in this industry."

SLOW-GROWTH MODE

Looking ahead, Hedge eventually would like to slow down and have someone else manage the business. But in the meantime, he's not keen on rapid growth that could diminish quality control and decrease customer satisfaction.

"We not trying to grow," he says. "In fact, it's easier not to because finding good employees is so difficult. We do very well with what we have. You're not going to see 20 or 30 guys in this company. I want a small group of guys who are awesome workers and employees, and that's exactly what we have right now."

"So we'll keep paying them well, treating them well and giving them what they need in terms of tools and equipment. If you take good care of employees, they'll take good care of you." **c**

« Technician Joey Retherford uses a RIDGID locator to mark a line.



▲ Hedge feeds hose from a PipeHunter jetter into a sewer line.



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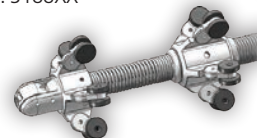
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AN ELEGANT SOLUTION

A trenchless culvert rehab system speeds up projects and minimizes traffic disruption and road replacement // By Ken Wysocky

REPLACING RUSTED-OUT CULVERTS can be quite a project. To start, there's the excavation. Then demolishing and rebuilding any headwalls. Major traffic disruptions. And possibly replacing nearby sidewalks and pavement damaged by the excavation work.

But thanks to a product called Storm Seal, fixing failing culverts isn't a hassle for Nashville-based C. K. Masonry Co., which primarily does culvert and manhole rehabilitation work throughout Tennessee, plus pipe lining and grouting. The cementitious lining product from The Strong Company enables C. K. Masonry to take the easy way out — in the best possible sense.

"With Storm Seal, we can fix culverts at a fraction of the cost of digging it up and replacing it," says company owner Kurt Koehn. "It requires no road or headwall replacement or traffic disruption.

"In fact, we can rehabilitate pipes while people are driving over the culvert. This product solves problems and saves money at the same time."

Made with Portland cement, Storm Seal is a specially formulated, fiber-reinforced cementitious mixture that effectively forms a pipe within a pipe. It can also be used to rehab concrete pipes, catch basins and other stormwater structures.

The product features a compressive strength of 9,000 psi, a tensile strength of 800 psi and a flexural strength of 1,200 psi. Moreover, it's resistant to freeze/thaw cycles and is suitable for a variety of structure shapes.



C. K. MASONRY CO. INC.

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

OWNER Kurt Koehn

PRODUCT Storm Seal cementitious pipe lining system

FUNCTION Trenchless rehab of culvert and concrete pipes, manholes and other stormwater infrastructures

FEATURES Portland cement-based, fiber-reinforced product with compressive strength of 9,000 psi, tensile strength of 800 psi, flexural strength of 1,200 psi; resistant to freeze/thaw cycles; suitable for a variety of structure shapes; applied manually or with winch-driven, programmable centrifugal spin-casting machine.

COST About \$200,000

WEBSITE www.ckmasonry.com

« A Nashville-based C.K. Masonry Co. technician sends an inspection camera through a culvert that the company lined with Storm Seal, a specially formulated, fiber-reinforced cementitious mixture.

SHINING EXAMPLE

A good example of the convenience and efficiency benefits Storm Seal offers occurred in 2015, when the company was hired to replace a 60-inch-diameter, 65-foot-long corrugated pipe that ran under McGavock Pike, a busy Nashville thoroughfare.

"The pipe was collapsing and as a result, the roadbed above it was, too," Koehn explains. "Digging it out would've been difficult because there also was a gas line, a waterline and a fiber optic cable running on top of the pipe and below the road surface, plus sidewalks and headwalls that would need to be rebuilt.

"Plus, McGavock Pike is a pretty big artery in Nashville and we didn't want to create traffic problems for days on end. So we used Storm Seal and saved the city a lot of money and aggravation. And it's held up quite well, too."

Storm Seal can be either centrifugally cast using the Strong-Seal Systems mixer, pump and spinner or sprayed onto structures manually.

"You effectively use the pipe as your (concrete) form," he says. "After you apply the Storm Seal, you really don't need the outer pipe anymore. But it still provides additional strength."

SYSTEMATIC PROCESS

The first step in applying Storm Seal is cleaning the culvert walls with a strong pressure washer. And if the culvert invert is rusted out, Koehn says his company uses another Strong Company product, Grout 12,000, to rebuild it prior to Storm Seal application.

The spin-casting machine is pulled by a winch connected to a control panel. The speed at which the winch travels and how much product it dispenses depends on factors such as the diameter of the pipe and the load the culvert was designed to carry; an operator uses tables supplied by the manufacturer to determine those calculations and input them

"WE CAN REHABILITATE PIPES WHILE PEOPLE ARE DRIVING OVER THE CULVERT. THIS PRODUCT SOLVES PROBLEMS AND SAVES MONEY AT THE SAME TIME."

KURT KOEHN



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into the control unit, he says.

The Storm Seal is applied in 1/4-inch-thick layers with the spin-casting unit, with four to five passes required per job; the layers are about 1/2 inch thick per pass when done with manual spraying.

“When we do it manually, we like to fill between the (corrugated) ridges and then put about another inch on top of that,” Koehn says.

“When you spin-cast it, there’s no troweling or brushing required. The machine provides the finish, though you sometimes have to do a little bit of finishing if it goes on too thick and sags a bit.

“You can get picky and find a few warts here and there — it doesn’t look like a shiny new nickel. But it’ll last a long time.”

It typically takes about eight hours to dry.

SOLID INVESTMENT

C. K. Masonry crews can typically apply Storm Seal at about half a foot per minute, so a 50-foot section of culvert would take about 100 minutes for each pass. At that rate most culvert pipes can be repaired in four days: one day to clean it, one day to re-

establish a rusted-out invert and about two days to apply the Storm Seal, Koehn says.

The Storm Seal system costs about \$200,000, but Koehn says it’s been a great acquisition with a solid return on investment.

“It’s a very practical alternative (to culvert replacements) — an elegant solution that saves customers a lot of money. It’s self-supporting, engineered to work in various applications and avoids traffic and utility line disruptions and conflicts. And it can improve the hydraulics of pipes, too.”

Looking ahead, Koehn sees even more market potential for the product because many culvert pipes have already exceeded their life cycles.

“Most culvert pipes are good for about 30 years and a lot of them are 60 years old or older,” he says. “Our biggest market for Storm Seal is failing corrugated metal pipes.

“We probably do one or two a month and we expect the business to continue to grow. Right now, I think we’re only at the tip of a very large iceberg.” **c**

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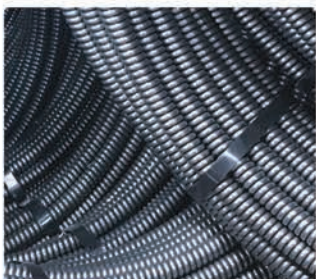
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CHOOSE THE RIGHT TECH

Personality can trump training when it comes to the success of inspection technicians

// By James Careless

THE SAYING “Good help is hard to find” has never been more true. Nevertheless, companies that perform pipeline inspections such as Great Lakes TV Seal in Green Bay, Wisconsin, and PipeView Services based in Lehi, Utah, still need to find, train and retain the best inspection technicians.

Not many people know what pipeline inspection entails, let alone consider this job as a lifelong career. This is why Brett Healy, Great Lakes TV Seal’s co-owner and engineer, pulls out all the stops when looking for new help.

THE RIGHT PEOPLE

“We put advertisements online that get shown when people do job searches on sites like Indeed.com,” Healy says. “As well, there are a lot of high schools around here. They hold career fairs where we actually exhibit just like we would for an industrial seminar. I’m

also active in the technical schools here in Wisconsin. I put our name out into programs they have that might be similar to what we do — utility programs, even welding programs — and I hire through there.”

Joseph Turley is owner and president of PipeView Services. He too does whatever he can to attract new help, and he doesn’t mind if potential applicants lack job experience. “We’ve always trained them ourselves, with very, very few exceptions,” Turley says.

“Ninety-nine percent of the time they’re not going to have experience,” Healy adds. “So I just expect that, for everybody that comes in here, I will be training them.”

THE RIGHT TRAITS

Not everyone who applies to be an inspection technician is suited to the task, but there are some specific traits to look for in candidates for the job.

“Being patient and detail-oriented is good, along with being organized, self-directed and a good communicator,” Turley says. “They also have to have maturity and the ability to accept responsibility in order to do this job successfully. In particular, good communication is essential when you’re a pipe inspector, because you’re constantly communicating with clients, the laborers that are working with you, and the general contractor that hired you. This is why it’s easier to find the right personality that’s untrained and train them to be a pipeline inspector, than to find a trained person with the wrong personality who doesn’t fit in your company.”

«Patience and attention to detail are two skills that inspection technicians need. Many companies prefer to find people with the personality traits and soft skills they’re looking for and train them up, rather than finding experienced technicians who may not be the perfect fit for the company culture. (Photos courtesy of PipeView Services)



In addition to the skills listed above, Healy looks for applicants who are confident and mentally adept. “I try to test them during the interview on problem-solving,” he says. “Utmost and foremost, I want this person to be able to go out and make wise decisions on their pipeline inspections. Good communication skills tie into this: I want them to be able to communicate effectively with the customer. They can write out on paper if need be, but if they can’t communicate it in a fashion that somebody can understand it at the end result of the deliverable, it’s no good.”

Keeping up with the paperwork associated with pipeline inspections also matters. “During their training period, I’m watching their daily reports come in,” Healy says. “I’m watching how their timecards are filled out. And if I don’t see things that are indicative of a good pipeline inspector, then we just put it on hold.”

THE RIGHT TRAINING

Both companies use on-the-job training to educate their inspection techs. Prospective candidates start out as general laborers assisting veteran technicians, working their way up the ladder over a year’s time (or longer, if needed) as they gain skills and experience.

“We only extend this training to new employees who are invested in staying with the company, rather than people only looking for a paycheck,” Turley says. “Over the year, our trainees learn all the ins-and-outs of the pipeline inspection process, from assembling the camera and placing it within the pipeline to assisting with all other elements of the job.”

“If somebody commits to being a pipeline inspector,” Healy says, “we’ll put them out with a crew with a mentor — another foreman — for about a year. If after six months I know that they’re stable and going to stick around, I will enroll them in NASSCO’s Pipeline Assessment Certification program.”

To help these students learn, Great Lakes TV Seal provides them with DVDs/jump drives loaded with videos shot inside pipelines. “We

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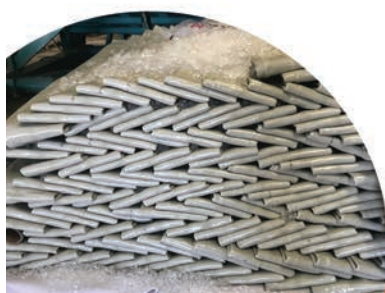
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TECH PERSPECTIVE

» For training, new technicians generally start out as laborers assisting veteran technicians to gain experience and learn the ins and outs of the company's inspection process.

put them in a classroom with a computer, they play the video and they code what they're seeing, starting with real easy PVC pipes," Healy says. "I then review their work, make corrections if necessary, then move onto something more difficult.

"When they can correctly diagnose a pipeline that is truly old and full of ridiculous defects, then they go back out with their foreman and they switch roles. The foreman becomes the laborer and the new inspector starts running the truck. When the student pipeline inspector can do this with confidence, and I get that reported back to me by the original foreman, then we buy him a truck and out he goes."



Keeping skilled pipeline inspectors is a smart move for companies, given the time and money required to train them, and the shortage of skilled replacements standing outside the front door waiting to take their place.

As in any other part of the job market, money talks. To keep their technicians, companies have to offer them competitive wages and benefits. Otherwise someone else eventually will.

"My philosophy is, if you take care of the employees, the employees will take care of the company," Turley says. "This is why we offer competitive wages and benefits, based on a survey done each year by the Associated General Contractors of Utah, to which we belong. I get the results of that survey later on in the year, and it guides us on what we pay."

"We do have good pay and benefits," Healy says. "And we also have bonus programs where our guys get a percentage of the profits they make for us. It puts them in the business. We even fill in a job ledger for every job: The guys know all the credits and debits for every job they have done, including where the money went. I think that adds to the family feel of Great Lakes Seal TV for our people. They actually feel like they're part of it."

It's also important to treat employees with respect and to create positive working environments free from harassment and emotional drama. But at the end of the day, choosing the right people to train as inspection technicians makes the most difference in retaining them, while also keeping customers happy. "If they like what they're doing, even if it's putting a camera through a sewer pipe, and they're problem-solvers, then they tend to stick around," Turley says.


Even in today's tight labor market, it is possible to find, train and retain the right kind of people as inspection technicians. It just requires effort and attention to details by the companies who hire them. **c**

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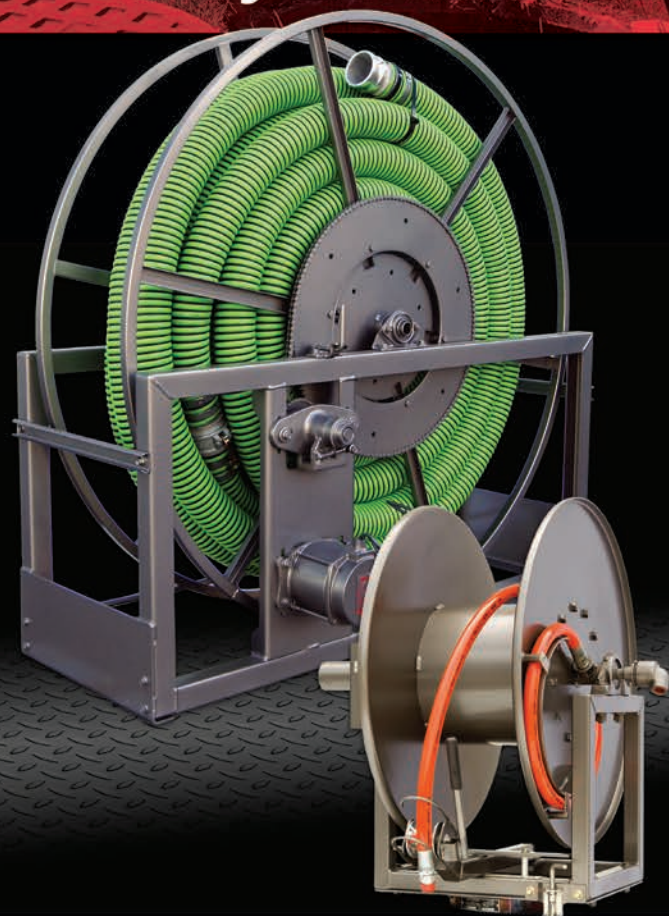


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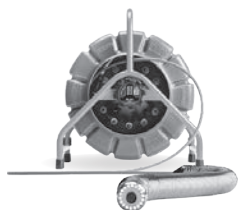
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The Pumps with Nine Lives



Joan Koehne

NO GRAY AREA

Written, black-and-white sexual harassment policies and training protect both your employees and your business // By Joan Koehne

FAILING TO PREVENT AND ADDRESS sexual harassment on the job can have serious consequences. A Florida septic company learned that lesson in 2021. In a same-sex sexual harassment and retaliation lawsuit, a male employee reported being sexually harassed by the company's owner. After reporting the harassment to authorities, the employee was fired in retaliation.

In addition to an \$82,500 settlement, the court ordered the septic company to develop and distribute a written antidiscrimination policy, conduct antidiscrimination training, post a notice about the lawsuit at its work site, and submit biannual written reports to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

"ONE OF THE BIGGEST MISTAKES AN EMPLOYER CAN MAKE IS WAITING TOO LONG TO INVESTIGATE A SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMPLAINT."

JODI LABS

Sexual harassment incidents aren't just about the time and money spent resolving a complaint. They're also about treating employees with the respect and concern they deserve. The Florida court case underlines the importance of creating and implementing a sexual harassment policy.

"No matter the size of the business, having a written sexual harassment policy in place protects employees and a company's bottom line," says attorney Jodi Labs, of the law firm of Conway, Olejniczak & Jerry S.C. in Green Bay, Wisconsin. "The liability for sexual harassment claims isn't based on the employer's size or number of employees."

All employers may be found liable for their supervisors' or employees' actions involving sexual harassment. Owners of small businesses stand to lose as much as large businesses, and maybe more if a lawsuit and settlement are costly or damage the company's reputation.

The work environment at a small business may be less formal than a large corporation, and this friendly nature makes it essential to have a sexual harassment policy.

"Employees sometimes become too comfortable with each other, perhaps making jests that may be perceived as simple ribbing but may, in fact, be offensive to one or more individuals," Labs says.

ESTABLISHING POLICY

An effective policy helps employees understand what behaviors are appropriate in the workplace and ensures consistent and fair treatment of employees.

When developing a sexual harassment policy, Labs recommends these six provisions:

1. A definition of sexual harassment — this is a must-have
2. Examples of sexual harassment
3. Details about the company's complaint mechanisms (e.g., duty to report by both the victim and witnesses; timely and accurate report to appropriate management authority or HR department; and several avenues for an employee to report sexual harassment so that the employee can bypass his or her supervisor who might be the alleged harasser)
4. An overview of the investigation and disciplinary processes
5. A confidentiality provision (this will maintain confidentiality to the extent the company can but cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality)
6. An antiretaliation provision

Because sexual harassment in the workplace has so many potential "gray" areas, Labs recommends a stark black-and-white, zero-tolerance policy.

"Also, a sexual harassment policy is only effective if the employer makes clear that unacceptable conduct will not be tolerated, provides recourse to victims of harassment, and applies appropriate corrective action against perpetrators, up to and including termination of employment," she says.

TRAINING

Once completed, a sexual harassment policy should be posted at the workplace, distributed to all employees, and included in the employee handbook. Next, the focus shifts to training.

“It is not enough to provide employees with a written sexual harassment policy and assume they will be aware of their role in creating a harassment-free workplace. Rather, such policy must be followed by a strong and active training program,” Labs says.

Some states require companies to conduct sexual harassment training. Even if it’s not required, annual training is advised. In addition to companywide training, supervisors and managers should participate in separate sessions to learn how to prevent, recognize and report sexual harassment.

All employees should be aware of the company’s complaint procedure.

“To be compliant with EEOC’s requirements for asserting a potential defense against liability, a complaint procedure must encourage employees to come forward with allegations of sexual harassment,” Labs says.

It takes courage for employees to come forward and assert their rights, so companies should do everything they can to show compassion and a sincere desire to help.

“It is also important that companies treat each allegation with the respect and concern it deserves. It is incredibly important to refrain from pre-judging or downplaying the situation,” Labs says.

Here are two key aspects of a sexual harassment complaint procedure:

- Employees have the option to bring a complaint to different people, such as a supervisor, manager, business owner or human resources official.
- Employees are reassured that their allegations will be promptly and thoroughly investigated, without retaliation of any kind.

According to the EEOC, a complaint triggers the need for an investigation, whether the employee asks for one or not. Each

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allegation should be treated with the respect and concern it deserves. Prior to a harassment investigation, employers should take these actions:

- Designate both men and women as investigators because an employee might feel more comfortable reporting harassment to someone of the same sex.
- Handle complaints as discreetly as possible.
- Use comforting language with the accuser and assure the employee of help.
- Investigate reports promptly; this is a legal obligation.

“One of the biggest mistakes an employer can make is waiting too long to investigate a sexual harassment complaint,” Labs says. By acting quickly, an employer collects key information while it’s fresh. Delaying an investigation can be a sign that the company is trying to ignore or cover up the complaint, which can result in greater liability.

“The actions an employer takes, or fails to take, after an employee files a complaint can either protect the company from liability and bad press or make its problems worse,” Labs says. “When a formal charge of sexual harassment is filed with the EEOC or a state regulatory agency, or a sexual harassment lawsuit is brought in federal or state court, one primary issue will be what, if anything, the employer did to prevent or stop the harassment.”

COMPANY LIABILITY

An employer’s liability for sexual harassment claims depends on a variety of factors, including the type of harassment and the accused person’s role in the company. Sometimes, an employer will not be held accountable for sexual harassment, even if an employee has evidence of the conduct. Other times, an employer faces expensive legal fees and other monetary consequences.

Employers may be liable for paying the victim’s lost wages or future lost wages, plus compensatory damages for future earning capacity, medical treatment and any other out-of-pocket expenses related to the harm sustained by the victim. If a court finds substantial evidence that an employer willfully or intentionally violated employment sexual harassment laws, the court might impose punitive damages designed to punish the employer.

The victim may also receive noneconomic damages, which tend to cover injuries that are not quantifiable, like pain and suffering, emotional distress, loss of enjoyment of life activities and loss concerning the reputation of the injured party.

Lastly, a victim may be awarded equitable relief which may reinstate the victim to his or her job or give the victim a promotion. Equitable relief may also include mandatory amendments of workplace policies and reinstatement of job benefits if the victim was terminated prior to the lawsuit.

As you can see, settling a sexual harassment lawsuit can be costly. Thus, prevention is a smart alternative. A clearly written, effective sexual harassment policy, followed up with employee training, helps to create a harassment-free workplace where every member of the team is respected. Taking sexual harassment seriously is a reflection of a company’s corporate culture and the support the company provides to employees. **c**



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SMALL-LINE SPECIALIST

EXPERTISE IN SMALL-DIAMETER PIPE CLEANING AND LINING
IS HELPING LOMONACO COAST PLUMBING GROW

// By Giles Lambertson

Photography by Ed Carreon

S

ometimes continually expanding services is needed for business growth. For Mike Lomonaco, a more narrow focus on a specialty service is quickly becoming his company's key to successful growth.

The owner of Lomonaco Coast Plumbing is developing expertise in small-diameter pipe cleaning and lining, a niche that's letting him build out his customer base.

Over the last decade, the San Clemente business has grown its footprint from the 18 square miles of the city to offer plumbing and cleaning services throughout surrounding Orange County. "We developed into a No. 1 company in the city and are aiming to do the same in the county," Lomonaco says.

Small leaking pipes — many of them cast iron — are spurring the expansion.

A NEW FOCUS

Lomonaco got into plumbing and pipe work by default. He grew up around construction, his father being a general contractor. As a young man, he gravitated to framing houses. However, the economy and home construction in particular took a major hit when the recession struck in 2008.

The developer for whom Lomonaco was framing houses had a suggestion: Talk to the plumbing company that works with us. Lomonaco could be successful as a plumber, the developer said. "And it's more recession-proof," which particularly sounded good at that moment.

So, Lomonaco enrolled in a Long Beach trade school. Upon graduation, he worked for a plumbing firm for a short while before opening Lomonaco Coast Plumbing in 2011.

« The Lomonaco Coast Plumbing crew includes (from left) technician Eric Sanchez, supervisor Antoine Price, lead technician Matt Robertson, owner Mike Lomonaco, technician Timm Hudzinski, lead lineman Orlando Alvarado, lead technician Roger Fowler and lineman Fred Pichay.

» Mike Lomonaco, owner of Lomonaco Coast Plumbing in San Clemente, California, (standing) oversees his inspection crew while they locate a plumbing issue for a homeowner.




Lomonaco Coast Plumbing
SAN CLEMENTE, CALIFORNIA

OWNER	Mike Lomonaco
FOUNDED	2011
EMPLOYEES	8
SERVICES	Plumbing, sewer cleaning, drain cleaning, jetting, trenchless pipe lining, and camera inspections
SERVICE AREA	San Clemente and Orange County
WEBSITE	www.lomonacocoast.com



▲ Mike Lomonaco uses a RIDGID SeeSnake CS6X to inspect a toilet drain at a residence in San Clemente, California.

“THERE ARE NOT TOO MANY COMPANIES WORKING ON SMALLER PIPES, AND WE’RE TOP-NOTCH IN WORKING ON THOSE LINES.”

MIKE LOMONACO

Lomonaco says the pull-in method of inserting the liner appealed to him, versus the alternative inversion method of introducing a liner. “The way the whole application proceeds, I think it’s the best option for a customer.”

Pipes suspected of needing repair because of failure to contain the water or sewage moving through them are first inspected using a RIDGID camera system. If they are blocked or obstructed, they are then cleared using Spartan Tool drain machines. If they are encrusted with scale, Picote descaling tools are employed to ream them.

Then the scrubbed pipes are blasted clean using a US Jetting model 4018 jetter that can pump 18 gpm into the line at 4,000 psi. “It’s one of my favorite tools to use,” Lomonaco says. Cleared and cleaned, a pipe is ready to receive a liner. Lomonaco reduces the entire process to a mantra: “Snaking, jetting, lining.”

SMALL-LINE SERVICE

Pipe as large as 3 feet in diameter can be lined using the NuFlow process, but Lomonaco Coast Plumbing specializes in rehabbing smaller diameter pipe. “We’ll do storm sewers or sewer lines manhole to manhole, but the smaller applications are our specialty.”

Therein lies market opportunity. “There are not too many companies working on smaller pipes, and we’re top-notch in working on those lines,” he says. “Kitchen lines. Shower lines. It can be difficult to get into them and clean and line them, but that’s where our training and experience come into play.”

The company’s reputation for small-line work landed it a job rehabbing pipe in a \$20 million vacation home overlooking a southern California beach. The structure had walls of marble and stone, which the owners were disinclined to rip apart to get at leaking pipe.

“We couldn’t open up anything,” Lomonaco recalls. His crew worked for a month and half at the home, upgrading nearly every 2-, 3- and 4-inch line serving the residence, a total of nearly 500 feet of pipe.

In the beginning, Lomonaco Coast Plumbing took on everything a plumber might be called to do: residential and light commercial plumbing, property management contracts, new construction projects and remodeling work. Today, the mix is a bit different, with new construction work being a low priority.

“I am trying to get us out of new construction plumbing jobs,” Lomonaco says. “It’s not what it used to be. There always are communication problems and difficulty getting the last paycheck from the builder. It’s just not worth it anymore.”

Residential customers are the focus of the firm’s plumbing work. However, plumbing accounts for only half of the overall business. Today, trenchless pipe repair and drain cleaning constitute most of the remaining work and are the faster growing parts of the business. “I got into NuFlow trenchless work and am focusing on that and drain cleaning. That’s where we are headed in the future.”

Of the NuFlow technologies, the company uses the NuDrain pipe lining system. It involves an epoxy-saturated liner being pulled into a pipe, a bladder inflated to press the liner against the pipe’s interior walls and the bladder deflated and extracted after the liner dries in place, resulting in like-new pipe walls.



San Clemente has a long history, dating from the 1700s, and the city's sewer and storm sewer systems have some age on them. Lomonaco says systems by and large are "pretty old. We have some *really* old systems, including quite a lot of Orangeburg pipe and a lot of cast iron and clay pipe that's beginning to break down. It's job security for sure." Many of the properties near the coast have some of the oldest housing stock, so the pipes serving them are among the ones most needing repair.

Copper pipe is not at all uncommon in the region and the area's hard water produces pinholes in the copper. Lomonaco Coast Plumbing pushes PEX as the replacement pipe in repairing sections of copper lines. "It's a more resistant material than copper and copper is super expensive now."

SATISFYING WORK

Lomonaco's eight plumbers and techs are skilled employees, but only partly cross-trained because Lomonaco has consciously divided the crew into two specialty divisions: service and repair, and lining and drain cleaning.



Lead lineman Orlando Alvarado prepares a pipe for a new fitting.

"WE HAVE SOME *REALLY* OLD SYSTEMS, INCLUDING QUITE A LOT OF ORANGEBURG PIPE AND A LOT OF CAST IRON AND CLAY PIPE THAT'S BEGINNING TO BREAK DOWN. IT'S JOB SECURITY FOR SURE."

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In-house training in all of these skills and technologies is constant. When Lomonaco comes across old sections of pipe, for example, he carries them back to the shop and uses them for his descaling and lining crews to practice on “above ground.”

While some jobs are more difficult than others, “every job is super satisfying. To see a pipe transformed from scaly and corroded to nice and blue like brand-new is really satisfying. Any lining job that turns out well is satisfying.”

While he might especially enjoy jetting and other specific tasks, Lomonaco now spends most of his workdays dealing with customers, some of whom seek him out from previous good work experiences. He also manages large property accounts and secures new contracts. He says the company’s mix of property management clients and mom-and-pop customers has proven a surer way of riding out economic ups and downs.

« Lomonaco and technician Eric Sanchez watch the monitor on a RIDGID SeeSnake inspection system as they inspect a pipe.

A GOOD PROVIDER

Mike Lomonaco has a unique personal incentive program in building out his company. Some executives are spurred by the challenge of establishing a company. Others find impetus in pushing a new product to a dominant position in the market. Lomonaco does it for the kids.

It started for him when he graduated from a tech school in Long Beach, California, and went to work for a plumbing company. Then he and his wife, Sierra, were expecting their first child, a daughter, Gianna.

“I went to the boss and asked for a raise,” Lomonaco recalls. “He said he was sorry but that I was topped out on salary. So, I shook his hand and said I appreciated the opportunity but that I was going to start my own company across the street from him. I just needed to do more for me and my family. I took the initiative and went for it. Sink or swim.”

Thus Lomonaco Coast Plumbing was born in 2011 and incorporated in 2014. When his son Vincenzo was born a few years later, Lomonaco decided he should start taking on employees and move the company to the next level. Then another daughter, Isabella, was born to the couple. Lomonaco responded by introducing and pushing the NuFlow trenchless repair and drain cleaning part of his company’s business, which he sees as the future of it.

“I’m just trying to move the company up to the next level,” he says of his periodic innovations in the lineup of company services. He’s not sure what the future holds. “I’m hoping maybe we won’t have any more children and I won’t have to take the business to yet another level.”

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«Lomonaco opened Lomonaco Coast Plumbing in 2011 and used to do residential, commercial, new construction and remodeling plumbing work. He's since shifted the business to focus more on trenchless pipe repair and drain cleaning, and the company has established a reputation for small-line pipe replacement work.

✓Lomonaco leads a brief morning meeting with his crew to go over the work they have planned for the day.



“TO SEE A PIPE TRANSFORMED FROM SCALY AND
CORRODED TO NICE AND BLUE LIKE
BRAND-NEW IS REALLY SATISFYING.”

MIKE LOMONACO

He is an advocate of camera inspection work in real estate transactions. The company does a lot of second-opinion camera work and performs sewer inspections to determine the condition of infrastructure.

One facet of the business that has slowed are after-hours emergency service calls on drains and plumbing fixtures — which is OK with Lomonaco. “We still take the calls, 24-7, but mostly our customers are willing to wait until morning for us to come out.” Earning customer trust and confidence can pay off.

So Lomonaco Coast Plumbing continues to expand its customer base through top-notch small-diameter pipe lining, expert handling of traditional plumbing problems and ever-increasing proficiency with trenchless pipe systems. The company goal: conquer Orange County.

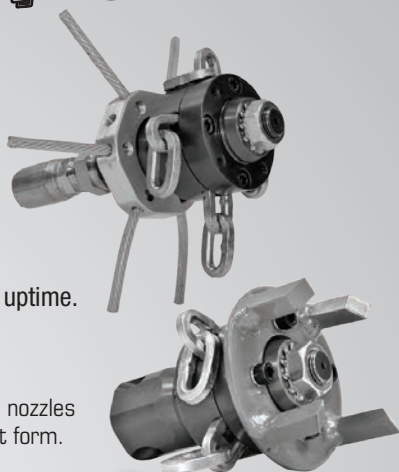
“In the next five years, I want to expand more and more into the county,” Lomonaco says. “I want to become top-notch in taking on bigger pipe lining accounts. That’s my focus. I think we are No. 1 in what we always have done, plumbing, and I want us to be No. 1 in trenchless work, too.” **c**

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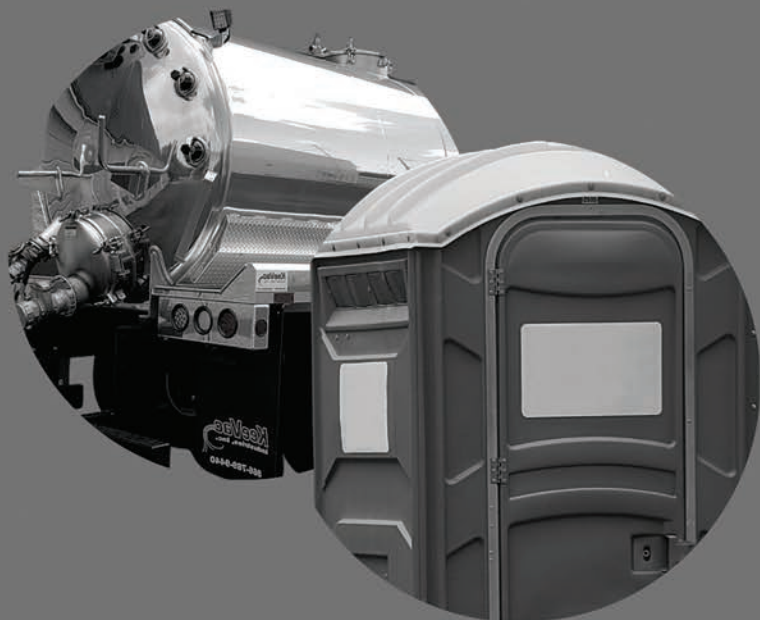
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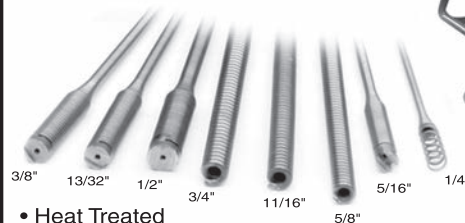
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Kate Zabriskie

THE POWER OF POTENTIAL

Connecting employees to opportunities and roles that fit their strengths makes your company more productive // By Kate Zabriskie

WHEN I NEEDED SOMEONE to head the new crew, I immediately thought of you, Tom. You learn quickly, you work hard, and you're good at bringing a team together. These next few months are going to be a heavy lift, and I can't think of anyone else better suited to the task.

Like gardeners planting seeds, people who spot potential can help others produce results they may never have imagined for themselves. By following a few steps, anyone can learn to see the future success in others.

1. START WITH STRENGTHS

Pay attention to what's special. Everyone has talents, and great potential spotters zero in on those gifts. Is someone organized, great with people, quick to pick on new activities or mechanically inclined?

AN AVERAGE PERFORMER MAY BECOME EXCEPTIONAL WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM THE POWER OF SUGGESTION.

2. LOOK IN LESS OBVIOUS AREAS

Once you've identified the visible strengths, start looking in less obvious places. You may uncover a hidden talent. An average performer may become exceptional with a little help from the power of suggestion.

3. STICK WITH SINCERITY

It's one thing to recognize a spark before you see it. It's another to tell people they're good at something when there is significant evidence to the contrary. Most people can spot insincerity from a mile away, so it's important to remain sincere.

4. IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES

In addition to recognizing possibility, great potential spotters are on the lookout for the places where others can shine. They know opportunities come in all shapes and sizes: Sometimes the opportunity is a task or project. Other times it's a new position or some other responsibility.

5. BRING THE PERSON AND THE OPPORTUNITY TOGETHER IN THE RIGHT PLACE

Great potential spotters understand not only who and what to pair, but how to introduce the opportunity. Sometimes these conversations are casual, and other times they are formal meetings. The type of communication largely depends on the person and the task. And because every circumstance is different, it's important to be deliberate. If the task is part of routine work, a short conversation held in public may be appropriate. Conversely, when presenting a large project or new position, a formal meeting might be a better option.

6. CONNECT WHAT AND WHY

Potential spotters follow a formula. They recognize a person's strength, how it fits with the opportunity, and why the match makes sense. For example:

Ben, I've been watching you work. You know how to follow the SOP, and now I think you're ready to increase your speed. You're diligent in your approach to what you do, and your attitude is certainly one of "can do." I'd like to get you some additional time on the lining crew this week. I know you could be one of our top performers with some practice.

7. PREPARE FOR A RANGE OF REACTIONS

People react to these discussions of their potential in a range of ways. Some embrace what they're told and look forward to tackling whatever opportunity the spotter highlights. Others get bogged down in self-doubt and require additional reassurance. And from time to time, the spotter is met with rejection when the person

with the potential does not immediately — or ever — embrace the opportunity. A good potential spotter is prepared for any of these outcomes.

8. SET THE STAGE FOR SUCCESS

Sometimes people with great potential fail because of factors that have nothing to do with the person or the opportunity. Exceptional managers keep this in mind. And to the extent they can, they pave the way for success with training, exposure to information, time to practice new skills and other appropriate resources.

9. EMBRACE ALL RESULTS

When people meet with success, potential spotters acknowledge it, and they're well on their way toward finding additional opportunities to build on what's been achieved. On the other hand, when people and opportunities don't come together well, a good manager takes the situation in stride and find other avenues for people to thrive.

10. MAKE TIME FOR SPOTTING

Potential spotting can happen organically, but it can happen more often when you set aside time to think about it. Scheduling time to observe your team in action can yield great results. Great potential is in everyone, and when it's unleashed, it compounds. Success builds success.

Imagine if everyone in your company realized even half of his or her potential. What could people achieve alone and together? Probably more than they do now. So, whose potential do you need to spot today? **c**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kate Zabriskie is the president of Business Training Works, a Maryland-based talent development firm. She and her team provide on-site and virtual soft-skills training courses and workshops to clients in the United States and internationally. For more information, visit www.businesstrainingworks.com.



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Aries expands its network in Kentucky

Aries Industries announced it has added Kentucky-based 502 Equipment to its dealer network. Based in Louisville, 502 Equipment distributes durable, high-performing brands for pipe cleaning, pipeline rehabilitation and hydroexcavation. The five-year-old dealership's team serves Kentucky, Indiana and Tennessee.

Vortex and IMS Robotics Group sign distribution agreement

Vortex Co. and IMS Robotics Group announced that Vortex is the exclusive North and South American distributor of IMS' mainline UV curing systems and products. The agreement allows Vortex to distribute the Hurricane Trenchless Technologie CityLight UV Curing System, designed for large interceptor sewers or projects with longer pipe segments. Hurricane Trenchless Technologie is an IMS affiliate.



Milwaukee Tool opens office in Chicago

Milwaukee Tool opened a new office in Chicago. The location will serve as an engineering design and innovation space to accommodate the company's continued investments in new technology. Over the last decade the company has experienced double-digit growth globally and currently employs more than 10,000 people in the U.S. Chicago's pool of technical talent is one of many reasons Milwaukee chose to expand to the city. **c**

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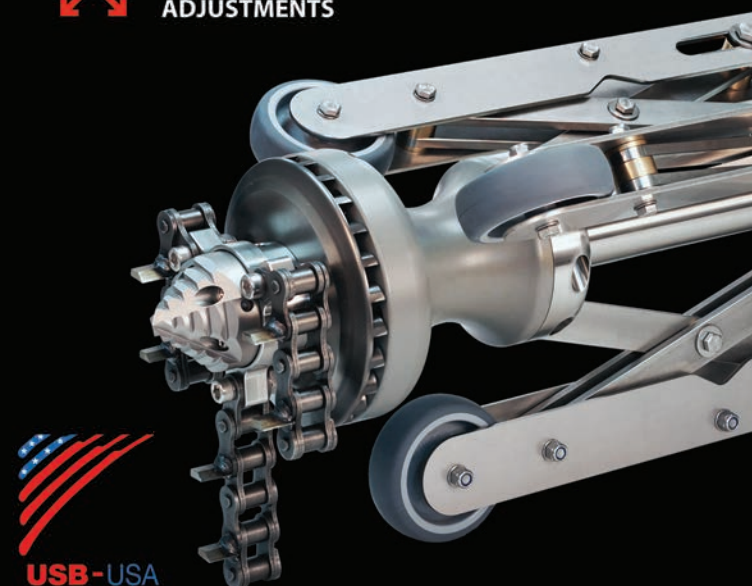
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PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

CIPP LINING MATERIAL ELIMINATES NOXIOUS INSTALLATION ODORS

By Tim Dobbins

Applied Felts set out to develop a product that would remove the unwanted odors and emissions associated with CIPP lining with styrene-based resins. The result is EnviroCure liners, a heat-cured styrene impermeable polymer coating.

“The proprietary multilayer felt liner coated with a styrene barrier vastly reduces, if not eliminates, styrene odors and emissions on the job site before, during and after CIPP installations,” says Gil Carroll, director of business development for the Rawson Group, which includes Applied Felts, Max Liner and FerraTex Solutions. “EnviroCure provides a safer and inexpensive option for using styrene resin systems for mainline CIPP installs.”

EnviroCure liners are a polyester felt with multilayering coating containing polyamide and can be used with pipe bends up to 45 degrees. To accommodate the requirement for liners of varying thickness, multiple layers of polyester felt can be used.

The liners feature a welded or stitched seam with stitched liners available up to 24 inches in diameter. Welded seam liners offer diameter ranges from 6 to 120 inches for hot cure inversion and 6 to 72 inches for hot cure drag-in. Hot cure inversion can be done in any length while hot cure drag-in is limited up to 300 feet.

Manufacturing of EnviroCure liners didn’t happen overnight, but rather took years of planning and research. “Over five years of development and extensive resources were dedicated to this initiative,” Carroll says.



Not only was research conducted by the company, outside sources also tested the liners for emission output. “In October 2021, Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis tested the EnviroCure liner and concluded that it reduces on-site styrene emissions to less than 1 ppb,” Carroll says. “Further installation tests and studies have shown similar results.”

Carroll also says the biggest benefits reported include the air monitors registering styrene levels well below the 20 ppb acceptable thresholds. “Our sense of smell is even more acute and sensitive, and job site feedback has told us there aren’t any detectable odors in refrigerated transport trucks when doors are opened, or in steam flumes or manholes.”

Liners are manufactured to internal standard or customer specifications and each one is tested for density distribution and gauge at various pressures, resistance to stretch, coating adhesion and ability to weld, weld strengths and sealing tape weld strength before shipping to customers. 276-656-1904; www.appliedfelts.com

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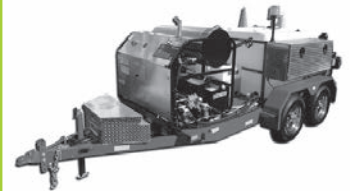
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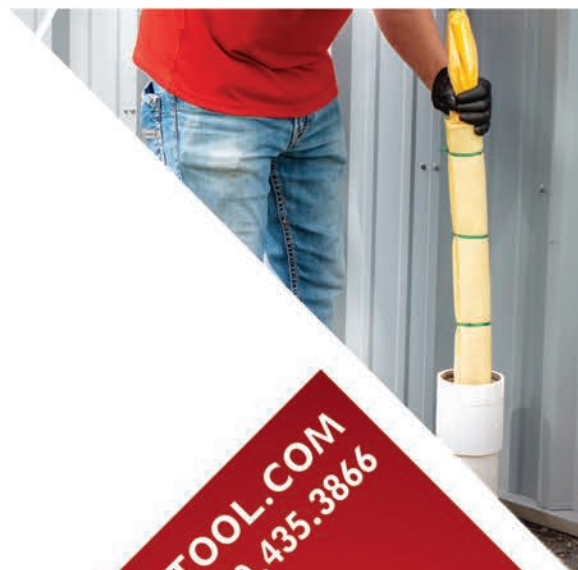
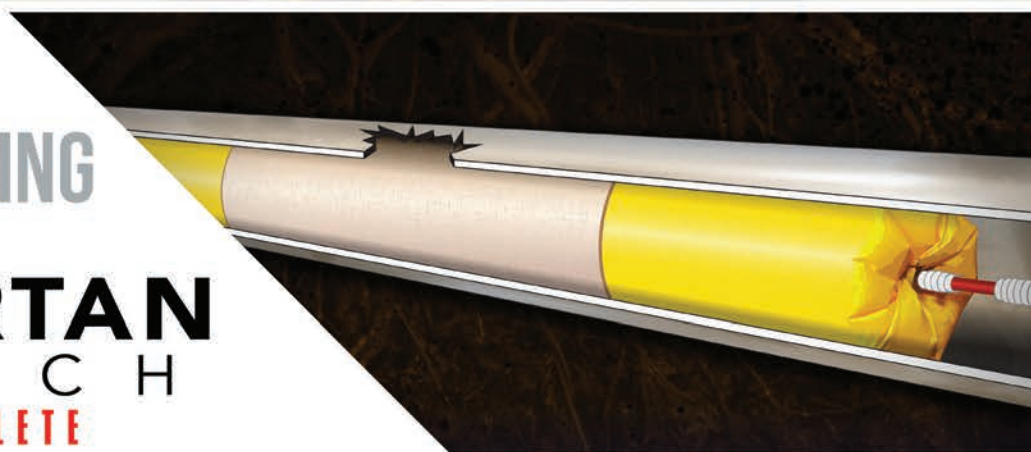
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