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ON THE COVER // Austin Willetts grew up around drain cleaning and septic businesses, but he was unsure if he was meant for that line of work, which took him down the path of a decade-long career as the lead millwright for the largest hardwood plywood manufacturer on the West Coast. But he eventually returned, starting Roseburg Rooter & Drain Cleaning in Oregon in 2020. Now he's combining those decades of family experience in the industry with what he picked up during his previous career. Although still a one-person operation at the moment, he sees a lot of future opportunity for his company. "At the end of the day, I wouldn't trade what I am doing now for the world," Willetts says. (Photography by Richard Bacon)



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Published monthly by COLE Publishing, Inc. PO Box 220, Three Lakes, WI 54562

In U.S. or Canada call toll-free 800-257-7222 Mon- Fri., 7:30 a.m.-5 p.m. CST

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A BROKEN RECORD

Trench collapse deaths were at their highest level in years in 2022, making it appropriate to once again emphasize the importance of proper safety protocols

HE TOPIC OF THIS MONTH'S COLUMN, trench safety, is nothing new. It's been addressed before in the pages of this magazine and in numerous articles over the years on Cleaner.com.

But the need to bring it up again seemingly hasn't waned. As 2022 was coming to a close OSHA reported that there had been 35 worker fatalities due to trench collapses during the year, more than double the number of incidents in 2021 and the highest amount in at least a decade.

A cubic yard of soil can weigh as much as 3,000 pounds and all it



takes is mere seconds for a trench to cave in. There's no mystery behind how to prevent such incidents. Yet there are still a number of companies that choose to side-step the proper safety measures and put their employees at risk. Why? There isn't a good answer.

I'm often at a loss on how to broach this subject because what new information is there to present? We know how to make trenches safe to work in. All there is to do is continue to emphasize the importance of always following those safety procedures and not becoming complacent about it. You could be lackadaisical about proper trench safety and get away with it for a long time with no problems. But all it takes is one time, with the worst-case scenario being death.

As I'm writing this, I've come across several reports about the conclusions to OSHA investigations into incidents that caused worker deaths. They all read the same: Workers entered deep trenches with no shoring protection in place. There were no inspections done at the beginning of the work day. There was a cave-in. Worker or workers died. OSHA proposes hundreds of thousands of dollars in penalties to the responsible company.

There have been news items about more recent trench collapses, all across the country — Colorado, Maryland, Texas, Pennsylvania, Kansas. Some ended in tragedy. Others were simply a close call. Such stories are often vague about whether property safety measures were in place, only stating that an OSHA investigation is underway. I'm sure I can guess what those investigations will discover.

In another recent news story, I read about the signing of a new state law in New York that significantly raises the minimum penalties for companies receiving criminal convictions for worker deaths or serious injuries. The law is named after Carlos Moncayo, a man who died in a trench collapse in 2015. I guess the potential for loss of life isn't enough for some companies and they need the threat of considerable monetary penalties in order to follow basic safety protocols to protect their employees.

I hope all of you readers aren't like some of the companies overlooking proper safety procedures I've seen highlighted in these recent news stories. I know it's easy and tempting to ignore some safety items, especially if you've never had a bad incident. But it's not worth it. All it takes is once.

Enjoy this month's issue. c



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WISE INVESTMENT Pipe Lining Pays Off

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SHIFTING GEARS

AFTER A DECADE OF WORKING IN OREGON'S TIMBER INDUSTRY, AUSTIN WILLETTS FOUND SUCCESS RETURNING TO HIS FAMILY'S ROOTS IN SEPTIC AND DRAIN CLEANING **# By Giles Lambertson**

ustin Willetts could have followed his father or uncle and stepped into a familyowned septic or drain cleaning business right out of high school. Instead, the Roseburg, Oregon, native opted to establish himself in another trade in town.

For a decade he worked at Roseburg Forest Products doing machine and facility maintenance, accumulating a whole other set of skills. But he eventually ended up transferring those skills to the industry he grew up around, starting his own septic and drain cleaning venture in 2020.

"Looking back, it was scary. It was the scariest thing I've done in my life," Willetts says. "To quit my job after 10 years as a lead millwright for the largest hardwood plywood manufacturer on the West Coast, to give up job security and just say, 'I'm done' and walk away — that leap was huge."

But he landed safely.

"It also is by far the most rewarding thing I have ever done," Willetts says. "It gave me a whole different perspective on life. At the end of the day, I wouldn't trade what I am doing now for the world."

A RETURN TO ROOTS

This whole scenario played out in the Douglas County seat of Roseburg, a city of about 25,000 people in the west-central part of Oregon. Trees dominate the landscape and the economy. The city once dubbed itself the nation's "Timber Capital."

Willetts' first career was wedded to the timber industry. Specifically, he worked in the Roseburg Forest Products mill for a decade, earning his journeyman millwright certification, which meant that he helped maintain the mill's heavy equipment and systems that turn timber into lumber. Austin Willetts spent a decade working as a lead millwright for Roseburg Forest Products before shifting focus to septic and drain cleaning in 2020.



After a decade at the mill, Willetts became dissatisfied with management and did what any reasonable married man would at that point: He had a serious talk with his wife, Kara, a nurse in the intensive care unit of the local hospital. More to the point, she is Willetts' personal business consultant.

"She is a driving force in her support of the company. I couldn't do it without her," Willetts says.

The couple agreed that it was time for Willetts to get back to his roots, to move from helping manufacture wood products to ripping out tree roots that invade septic systems and drainpipes. They started the company as a part-time venture at first while Willetts remained at the mill. He began to solicit customers for the new company, Roseburg Rooter & Drain Cleaning, and things looked promising. Willetts soon quit the mill and went all in.

The year was 2020, the same year that the COVID-19 pandemic fully arrived on the scene.



"The first year, we didn't know what to expect," Willetts says. "As soon as I went full time, boom, there was the pandemic. It got scary for a little bit."

But what Willetts soon realized — as did others in the industry — is that the pandemic's disrupted work routines and



"AT THE END OF THE DAY, I WOULDN'T TRADE WHAT I AM DOING NOW FOR THE WORLD." AUSTIN WILLETTS

subsequent public policies actually benefited septic and drain cleaning businesses in certain ways. Because people were staying at home for longer periods and utilizing their home plumbing systems more hours in the day, the frequency of clogged pipes and full septic tanks increased.

"The pandemic drove business up for me," Willetts says. "Today, the pandemic is not as big of an issue, but business never leveled out or dove back down. We got busier."

FAMILY GUIDANCE

Willetts is a one-man operation at this stage, so "busier" means longer days and frequent emergency runs on weekends and after hours. His day begins stocking the truck and checking to ensure his various machines are ready to run. He is usually on a first job by 8:30 a.m. and calls it a day 11 to 12 hours later.

"Scheduling is the toughest part," Willetts says. "You don't know for sure how long a job is going to take. I might have six snaking jobs a day and they will take all day. Another day, six jobs might only take till 11 a.m."

He's learned to be flexible.

The earlier generations of Willettses in the industry were his

≪ Willetts uses the Jetters Northwest Model Brute 20/20 inspection camera on a job.

➤ Willetts removes a Spartan Tool Model 300 cable machine from his work truck.



father, Kevin, who from 1998 until retirement in 2017 operated the largest drain cleaning business in the area. Willetts started riding to jobs with his father at age 8 and eventually worked alongside him as a teenager.

An uncle, Brian, owned the largest septic tank pumping company in Douglas County, dating to the early 1990s. He sold the company two years ago. Growing up, Willetts periodically worked for his uncle, learning the pumping side of things.

Willetts says he always saw the potential of both businesses — drain cleaning and septic — yet was undecided as a younger man if it was for him.

"At that point, they were happy just maintaining the level of their business activity," Willetts says of his father and uncle. "Me, I saw so many things they could do to grow the business by upping their game. I just saw more opportunity."

So he decided to work at the Roseburg Forest Products mill instead.

When Willetts finally returned to the drain cleaning and septic industries, both relatives "wholeheartedly

supported him" in the new venture. They talked about the difference between working for someone else and working for himself.

"We've definitely had lots of talks about that," Willetts says. "It's a 24-hours-a-day deal."

Today, he still looks to his father and uncle for guidance.

"If I have questions or need help with something, I have 60 years of experience a phone call away," Willetts says.

EQUIPMENT LINEUP

The initial equipment for Roseburg Rooter & Drain Cleaning was a utility box service truck stuffed with tools of the trade. That included Spartan and RIDGID cable and sink machines and a MyTana electric jetter for quiet indoor operation. For inspecting pipe, Willetts has a Jetters Northwest Brute 20/20 push camera system that works well in pipe 3 to 8 inches in diameter, as well as a smaller SECON unit. He also packs a ProtoTek Linefinder 2000, a 512 Hz pipe locator that he uses in conjunction with his push camera to establish the path of a pipe.

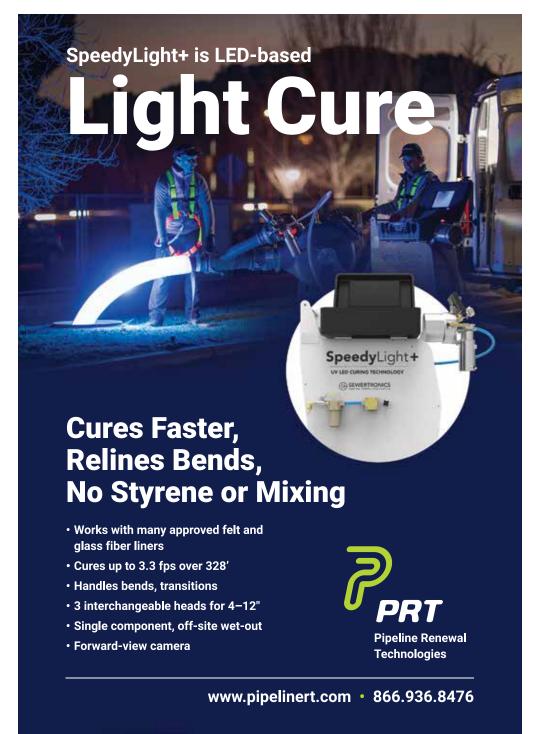
"People sometimes buy homes with septic tanks without having lines visually inspected and then start having issues," Willetts says. "Sometimes they don't even know where the tank is. That's where the locator and camera come in."

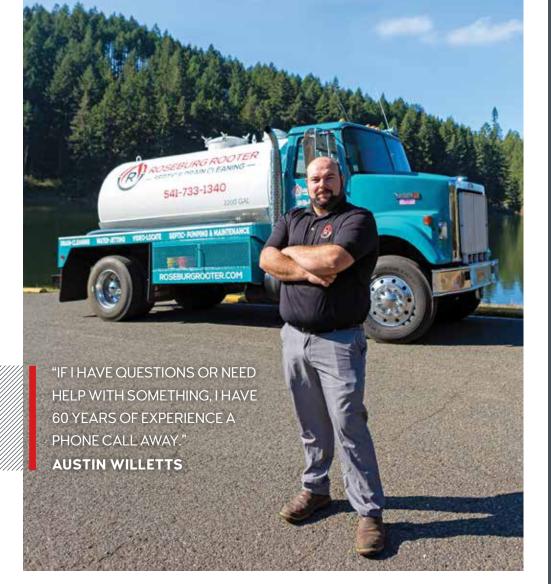
In 2022, when he expanded his septic maintenance work to include pumping, he bought an older model Autocar chassis with a 2,200-gallon tank and a National Vacuum Equipment pump. Willetts says the unit has proven to be a "workhorse." He averages 10 septic tank pumpouts a week.

Willetts also has a self-fabricated jetter, a unit he built utilizing the talents he developed at the mill. He installed it in a 4-by-6-foot trailer with a 125-gallon water tank, 250 feet of jetter line on a reel, 150 feet of water supply hose on another reel, and a Cat pump powered by a Honda GX390 engine.

"I knew what I wanted. To go out and buy it was going to cost me \$20,000 to \$30,000," Willetts says. "I decided there was no need for that. Having the background that I do definitely has helped me."

He also built and installed on his truck a pivoting arm and winch system to help move heavy equipment and supplies.





Although Willetts is only a few years into running his business, he has a lot of past experience in the septic and drain cleaning industries. His father operated a drain cleaning business, and his uncle owned a septic company. Willetts periodically worked for both men while growing up.

"They wanted two grand for one of those. I built one for a few hundred dollars," he says.

CARING FOR CUSTOMERS

The trucks and trailer roll to rural Douglas County septic tank service calls and to drain cleaning calls inside Roseburg. The company's service area is an 80-milesquare segment within the county. Willetts says he determined that going farther out than that would not be cost-effective nor competitive. Rural clients include a couple of wineries, of which there are several in the county. Roseburg customers are residences as well as various commercial properties, including Walmart, In-N-Out Burger and shopping malls.

One septic service the company offers is installing risers on tanks to provide

easier access for pumping. The capped openings are often below the surface of the ground and risers make them more accessible. Willetts has an interesting way of encouraging the purchase of risers.

"Customers sometimes dig out the access openings themselves. I let them," he says. "If you can get customers to dig them out themselves, we then can offer to put in risers so they don't have to find them and dig them out again. They often opt to go with a riser."

Willetts says he enjoys the pumping and drainline work because he enjoys the people for whom he's doing it.

"You get to go into all these homes and sometimes I meet some incredible people. I enjoy meeting and helping them," he says. "Douglas County sort of has two ends of the spectrum — wealthy people

WITNESSING THE NEW AND OLD IN THE SEPTIC WORLD

esidents and businesses in Roseburg, Oregon, are served by a sewer authority with some 11,000 sewer connections. But most of surrounding Douglas County is rural and residences there are served by individual septic tanks.

Austin Willetts estimates there are two or three times more rural residences with septic tanks than there are houses and businesses connected to the city's sewer authority. Clearly, Willetts' Roseburg Rooter & Drain Cleaning has a solid base of potential customers.

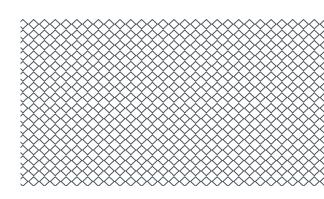
"The tanks now are pretty much all hauled in," he says. "Pretty much all pre-fabricated tanks."

A standard tank for a three-bedroom home holds 1,000 gallons of effluent. A fourbedroom home requires a 1,500-gallon tank or larger. The tanks are higher tech now, of course, Willetts says, such as Orenco's AdvanTex septic tank treatment system that reduces effluent to a clear liquid.

"You see a lot of those in the ground now. It's a pretty amazing system," he says.

But low-tech solutions have worked pretty well, too. Willetts says he has encountered buried cars turned into septic tanks.

"On one job, there was this old big boat of a car," he says. "Its windows were welded shut with steel plates. The sewer pipe ran into the car at one end and out the other end to lines in a makeshift drainfield. It was in the ground for 40 years and worked pretty well. Just when you think you've seen it all."



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and not-so-wealthy people. It humbles me sometimes to realize what I have. Helping people is a huge drive for me in doing what I do."

Willetts says he recognizes that people call because they need help — it's not a social call — so he makes it a point to always answer the phone as much as possible.

"I try to answer the phone immediately, at least 90% of the time," Willetts says. "Even if I have to tell them I won't be able to get to them till tomorrow or something, they appreciate me picking up. That's one of the biggest things my dad drummed into me: You have to answer the phone."

LOOKING AHEAD

What's in Willetts' future? Some help, he hopes. He's working on hiring his first employee.

Willetts is going to need the help. In 2023, he is going after two markets in particular. One is grease traps at restaurants where cooking oils and liquids accumulate. Currently, some companies travel from town to town along Interstate 5, including Roseburg, cleaning grease traps. They focus on the easy work, Willetts says. ♥ In 2022, when Willetts added septic pumping to his services, he bought an older model Autocar chassis with a 2,200-gallon tank and a National Vacuum Equipment pump. Willetts says the unit has proven to be a "workhorse." He averages 10 septic tank pumpouts a week.

"IT HUMBLES ME SOMETIMES TO REALIZE WHAT I HAVE. HELPING PEOPLE IS A HUGE DRIVE FOR ME IN DOING WHAT I DO." AUSTIN WILLETTS

"I'm going to offer the restaurants not only tank pumping but also the cleaning of lines running from the kitchen as well as tank maintenance," he says. "We're going to offer to maintain a whole system. I've already talked to a couple of restaurant owners here in town."

The other slice of business Willetts wants to develop further is apartment complex drain cleaning.

"We've contracted a ton of work with property managers," he says. "Some managers have 3,000 or 4,000 units apiece and we're going to go after them. Those alone will keep work pretty steady."

Willetts is convinced both the pumping and drain cleaning sides of the business have equal growth potential. He just needs to get the trucks and personnel, maintain the professional image he's thus far cultivated, and continue to attract five-star customer reviews on Google.

"We're going to stay the course we're on and do it with integrity," Willetts says. ${\bf c}$

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THE SECOND SECON

KENTUCKY FIRM ASPIRES TO UPEND PEOPLE'S STEREOTYPES ABOUT WHAT PLUMBING AND DRAIN CLEANING COMPANIES LOOK AND FEEL LIKE // By Ken Wysocky

IT'S EASY TO IMAGINE THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS JUST ANOTHER DAY AT THE OFFICE AT JOLLY PLUMBING, DRAINS, HEATING & AIR.

The company's modern, industrial-chic headquarters in Wilder, Kentucky — just across the Ohio River from Cincinnati — is much more than just an office building. It's also a recruiting tool. A branding vehicle. A community engagement center. Also a great place for a game of H-O-R-S-E, thanks to the full-size basketball court in the middle of the 18,000-square-foot former warehouse/office facility.

And on a much broader level, the renovated building reflects owner Brady Jolly's aspirations to upend people's notions and stereotypes about what plumbing and drain cleaning companies look and feel like.

"When you walk into our offices, you'd never think it's a plumbing company," says Jolly, a former basketball star at a local high school who also played hoops at nearby Northern Kentucky University. "It's sharp and sleek — more like a tech company than a plumbing company."

The company invites local basketball teams to practice on the court, which also is used for basketball leagues and to host community events. In all, about 35,000 people a year visit the building for various events and functions, which provides an opportunity to expose them to the company culture and values, he says.

"It's a big part of our recruiting process," Jolly says. "The first thing we do with job recruits is tour the facility. And if the door is open to my office, which sits at half-court, I usually can hear people's comments when they see the court. They say they've never seen anything like this before. I wanted to do something a little over-the-top and next-level to recruit people. I wanted to put our money where our mouth is when we say this is more than just a place to punch a clock."

MAKING THE TRANSITION

Barry Jolly, Brady's father, founded the company in 1979. The elder Jolly did everything from plumbing for remodeling and new construction to service and repair work to replacing water and sewer lines. FILLUSH BEATS A

THE RIGHT THING, HOUT COMPROMISE

"He'd do whatever plumbing customers needed," Jolly says.

Jolly worked for his father as a part-time employee while growing up. Shortly after he earned a degree in entrepreneurship from Northern Kentucky University in 2014, he became general manager of the family company at age 22. His father retired in 2017 and Jolly bought the company soon after that.

At that point, the company's growth had been relatively flat for six or seven years.

"So it was a really great opportunity for me," Jolly says. "My dad did an incredible job of building a great company to that point and it was set up for more growth. All it needed was someone to put their foot on the gas pedal and take the business to the next level."

NEW BUSINESS MODEL

Jolly did just that. The first step: A dramatic shift from commercial to residential service and repair.

"Before, about 80% of our revenue was from commercial work," he says. "Now it's about 80% residential."

Why the switch? Jolly says residential service and repair is a much better fit for the company's customer-centric business philosophy.

"We're a high-value, high-touch service company," he says. "All the training we do is centered on how to make the customer experience the best it can be. When you do remodeling and new construction work, the service part doesn't seem to matter as much because oftentimes the people receiving the service — general contractors or maintenance companies, for example — aren't the ones experiencing the service. We prefer to work directly for the people that experience our service; our entire infrastructure is based on providing quality service." Brady Jolly took over ownership of his family's company after his father retired in 2017.





Technicians Andrew White, left, and Austin Wilburn look over an iPad as they do repair work at a residential property. The company uses the tablets to give customers quotes, as well as for job tracking and scheduling.

➢ Wilburn puts the finishing touches on a hose bib replacement.

"I WANTED TO DO SOMETHING A LITTLE OVER-THE-TOP AND NEXT-LEVEL TO RECRUIT PEOPLE. I WANTED TO PUT OUR MONEY WHERE OUR MOUTH IS WHEN WE SAY THIS IS MORE THAN JUST A PLACE TO PUNCH A CLOCK." BRADY JOLLY

The new approach has yielded impressive results. Revenue from plumbing and HVAC services has more than tripled since Jolly started managing the company in 2014. And revenue from residential work has increased about 1,500% since he bought the company.

How did Jolly's father feel about the changes? Unlike some family situations where fathers and sons butt heads, Barry Jolly had no problem with the new direction.

"I'm so lucky," Jolly says. "The (father-son) dynamic between us has always been great. My dad was winding down his career. So many of the things we've done I'm sure he would've done if he had the appetite to do them."

DRAIN CLEANING SPECIALISTS

A couple years ago, the company also created a team of technicians only dedicated to drain cleaning.

"Most plumbing technicians don't want to do drain cleaning," Jolly says, explaining the move. "And it's much easier to train someone to clean drains than to train a service technician."

Drain technicians receive three months of training. The idea



is to get them into a truck as fast as possible so they can learn soft skills related to customer service and communication, then promote them to apprentice plumbers within a year, he says.

Deploying technicians that are dedicated to just drain cleaning also leads to more large drain projects, such as replacing sewer laterals. Instead of just unclogging lines, the technicians are trained to look for the cause of persistent drain issues and refer leads to a sewer sales consultant — something that wasn't always a priority for harried plumbing technicians, Jolly says.

>> Keeping track of where technicians are going and scheduling work are the employees in the Jolly Plumbing call center at headquarters in Wilder, Kentucky, like Britney Johnson, left, and Laura Fielding.

To clean drains, technicians rely on RIDGID K-1500 and K-60 sectional drain machines and a Soldier trailer-mounted water jetter from Spartan Tool (4,000 psi at 10 gpm). To inspect lines, they use standard RIDGID SeeSnake cameras and an M18 pipeline inspection camera from Milwaukee Tool.

The company runs about 30 service vehicles, mostly Nissan NV2500 box vans and Nissan NV 200 compact cargo vans. Sewer repair crews drive Dodge RAM 3500 pickup trucks equipped with utility bodies from Reading Truck. The crews also rely on four Caterpillar 304E2 mini-excavators and a Bobcat skid-steer.

EXPANDING SERVICES

Customer requests for HVAC services spurred the company to add heating and airconditioning to its repertoire in April 2021.

"We felt like the processes we built for plumbing are very repeatable," Jolly says. "The business models work the same way as it does with drain cleaning. The HVAC service technicians pass on job leads to an HVAC sales guy and then to an installer."

HVAC is an attractive add-on service because it complements plumbing, plus it's easier to scale up in volume than plumbing.

"Because the jobs are more expensive, you only need half as many HVAC customers to generate the same revenue as twice as many plumbing customers," Jolly explains, noting the difference between replacing a heating system and fixing a faucet. "If you can get all of your plumbing customers to also use your HVAC service, you could theoretically generate twice as much revenue as plumbing."

That hasn't happened so far. Jolly says he thought it would be relatively easy to convert plumbing customers into HVAC customers. But as it turns out, the company's plumbing customers are just as loyal to their HVAC providers as they are to the Jolly Plumbing for plumbing services.

"It's been more difficult than we anticipated," he says.



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"MY DAD DID AN INCREDIBLE JOB OF BUILDING A GREAT COMPANY TO THAT POINT AND IT WAS SET UP FOR MORE GROWTH. ALL IT NEEDED WAS SOMEONE TO PUT THEIR FOOT ON THE GAS PEDAL AND TAKE THE BUSINESS TO THE NEXT LEVEL." BRADY JOLLY

« Wilburn solders copper pipe while doing a hose bib replacement job.

Nonetheless, the company generated about \$2.5 million in HVAC revenue in 2022, Jolly says.

MORE GROWTH EXPECTED

Looking ahead, Jolly intends to apply a full-court press for further growth. Because the company already has a sizable local market share, much of the expected growth will probably come from the metro Cincinnati area, Jolly says.

"Only 30% of our work is in Cincinnati, so there's a ton of growth potential there," he says. "We've spent significant time, effort and capital on building the back end of our business in preparation for growth, gearing up our call center and dispatchers to handle more leads. We're now at a point where we can proactively search for leads and not reactively go crazy trying to service everyone."

To better navigate a tight labor market, the company also hired a full-time recruiter. And part of that role also includes establishing a formal apprenticeship program so the company can "build techs from the ground up," Jolly says.



BUSINESS COACHING GROUP AMPS UP COMPANY'S GROWTH

hen Brady Jolly took over the management of Jolly Plumbing in 2014, the company generated a little more than \$2 million in gross revenue. In 2022, the company reached \$14 million — a 600% increase.

How does a company achieve that kind of growth? Jolly gives a lot of credit to his father, Barry Jolly, who founded the company in 1979 and was an invaluable mentor. Expanding the company's services also helped.

But Jolly also credits the Nexstar Network, a business development, training and coaching organization with more than 1,000 members in the residential services industry.

"I definitely made a whole bunch of mistakes in the first three or four years after I bought the company," Jolly says. "A lot of what I learned was trial by fire. Then we joined Nexstar about four years ago. They've been huge in terms of showing us other ways of doing things, rather than just doing things because that's the way we've always done them. Nexstar was instrumental in helping us develop sound processes for our plumbing business as well as launch our heating and air business."

Based on Nexstar training and recommendations, the company switched to an upfront pricing model, which provides customers with price transparency.

"Nexstar helped us build a price book for flat-rate pricing," Jolly says. "Since then, we've had far fewer price complaints. We also raised our price a little bit, but we didn't have many complaints because customers know the price up front."

Nexstar also provides valuable networking opportunities with fellow members. For example, advice from other contractors led the company to establish a formal process for handling potential leads for larger jobs that plumbing and drain technicians can't handle. Before, if drain technicians found a larger problem while cleaning a drain — think broken sewer line, for example — there wasn't a good process for getting that job lead to an estimator, Jolly explains.

"The process had a lot of holes in it and wasn't managed very well at the time," he says. "But we implemented a process we learned from Nexstar members, which has very much been a factor in driving revenue and profit increases."

The company's Jolly Home Plan, a customer service retention program that gives customers a full slate of value-added benefits for a \$14.99-a-month membership fee, also came from a Nexstar peer, he says.

In addition, Nexstar members get discounts and rebates when they purchase products and services from selected vendors. Jolly says the rebates the company earns almost pay for the annual Nexstar fee.

"So many good things in our business have come from people at Nexstar," he says. "They've been tremendous business partners."

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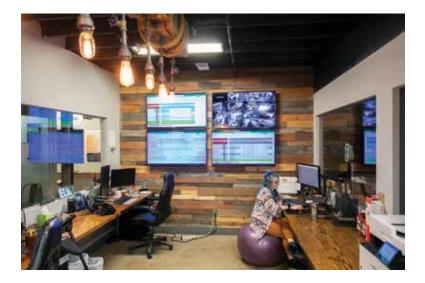
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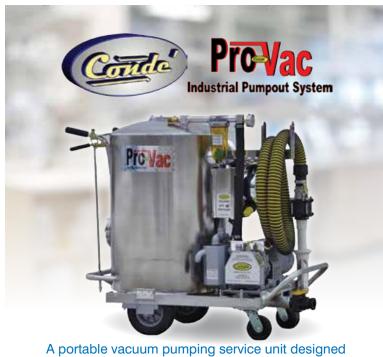
"IT'S BETTER FOR US TO HIRE PEOPLE WE CAN GROW AND MOLD INTO OUR SYSTEM. SOME OF OUR BEST GUYS CAME HERE AS GREEN AS COULD BE, NOT KNOWING ANYTHING ABOUT THE TRADES." BRADY JOLLY





Sarry Jolly, left, who started the company in 1979, and his son and current owner Brady Jolly pose for a photo at the company's headquarters in Wilder, Kentucky. The company has an indoor basketball court at its headquarters that both the staff and community members use.

≪ Jolly Plumbing's 18,000-square-foot office goes against typical industry stereotypes. "When you walk into our offices, you'd never think it's a plumbing company," says Brady Jolly. "It's sharp and sleek — more like a tech company than a plumbing company."



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westmoorltd.com • Westmoor Ltd., Sherrill, NY orders@westmoorltd.com • 1-800-367-0972 "It's far easier to find people with good attitudes and that appreciate our core values, even if they don't have much experience," he says. "It took me a long time to realize that it's better for us to hire people we can grow and mold into our system. Some of our best guys came here as green as could be, not knowing anything about the trades."

TEAM EFFORT

As Jolly looks back at the company's dynamic growth during the past nine years, he says he's very proud of his team and what's been accomplished — and grateful for what his father built.

"I feel really blessed to take over a company like this," he says. "It was an incredible opportunity and I'm grateful for my parents' trust in me. We have an awesome team, too, with a lot of people that I'm very close to. I love coming to work every day and that feels pretty cool. And in a way, I feel like we're just getting started." **c**

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SAFETY FIRST

ESTABLISHING SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

We should all take on the responsibility for our coworkers' safety and well-being /// By Ronnie Freeman

AYBE YOU HAVE HEARD of the phrase "situational awareness" recently. It has been used here and there in different settings and maybe you understand what it refers to, but do you know what it means?

Situational awareness can be useful in many areas of our lives. From going out shopping, being on vacation, being at the airport, driving our cars, walking in our neighborhoods, going to the park and answering an unexpected knock at the door. We can get complacent when nothing in our lives ever seems to be out of place. This is where employing situational awareness can be a great benefit in preventing incidents from happening whether at work or in our daily lives.

The definition of situational awareness has three parts: (1) perception of the elements in the environment, (2) comprehension of the situation and (3) projection of future status.

Perception - What information do I need?

Comprehension – What does this information mean to me?

Projection – What do I think could happen next?

Situational awareness has been recognized as a critical, yet often elusive, foundation for successful decision-making across a broad range of situations, many of which involve the protection of life and property. In the workplace, situational awareness is a great tool in injury prevention.

Simply put, situational awareness is knowing what is going on around us. What are the hazards? Understanding the consequences of our actions. Knowing how to respond should a critical situation arise. Knowing how to work safely in the environment we find ourselves in each day, whether it be in the office or in the field excavating a trench.

Simplifying the term situational awareness a little further, the following color codes give us a guideline so we know what state of situational awareness we might be in:

White — The lowest level. You are basically unaware of what is going on around you and you are not ready for anything to happen.

Reasons affecting your status could be fatigue, stress, distractions or apathy.

Yellow — You are alert and aware yet relaxed. You are familiar with your surroundings and the employees and visitors who are in your area. You know where the emergency response equipment is located just in case, and you are prepared if needed to respond.

Orange — You are in a state of heightened awareness. You sense something is not right. This is the time to make important decisions in case something must be done. This is also the time to mitigate the situation if needed.

Red — Something has happened! You are taking decisive and immediate action. You recognize a threat is ongoing and you are responding to limit the damage done and promote recovery.

Black — Something is happening and you are now in panic mode because you are unprepared and do not know how to respond.

WHEN HAZARDOUS SITUATIONS ARISE, WE ARE "SHOCKED" AND EITHER DO NOT KNOW WHAT TO DO OR PANIC AND DO NOTHING AT ALL.

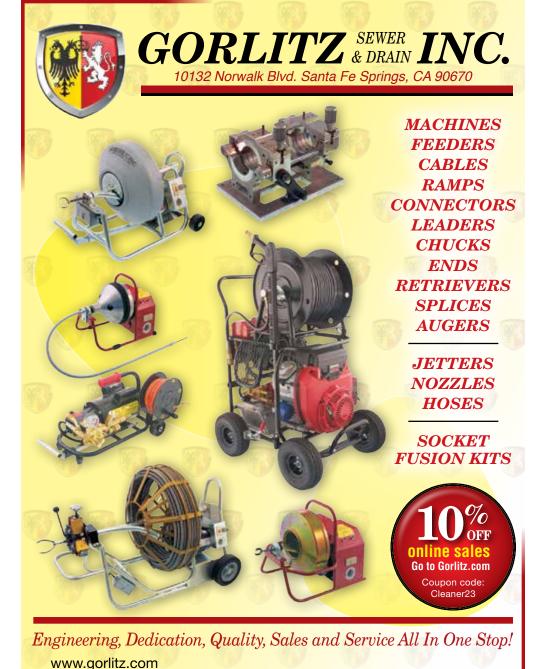
There is a breakdown of mental and physical performance.

Sadly, too many of us live in the "white" status far too often. We have become so comfortable in our everyday lives that we tend to go through the motions of daily living whether it is at work or at home or in our communities. Therefore, when hazardous situations arise, we are "shocked" and either do not know what to do or panic and do nothing at all.

Situational awareness should be important to all of us, and it is important that we are aware of the potential hazards in our work environment. We all should take on the responsibility for each other's safety and wellbeing while at work and when we are out in public and at home as well.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ronnie Freeman is safety director for Mount Pleasant Waterworks and safety committee chair for the Water Environmental Association of South Carolina.



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WAYS TO IMPROVE SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

- 1. Do not allow yourself to be distracted. When you allow yourself to become distracted, you take away any chance at a proper response. Any response is then delayed and, in some cases, too late. Keep your phone someplace where it is not a distraction or temptation to constantly look at.
- 2. Have a plan, just in case. Always ask the "What if?" questions regarding your work situation and tasks at hand. What if the trench collapses? What if another employee passes out in a confined space? Have you been trained in the proper response to these major incidents?
- 3. Scan your area. Be alert and stay alert to what could potentially be a hazardous situation. Look for things that are out of the ordinary or just not right. An unusual loud noise in your equipment could be an early warning sign that failure is about to occur.
- 4. Have a designated escape route. If there is the potential for a situation to go bad, always have a plan of escape to minimize the danger and/or damage.
- 5. Train and practice being situationally aware. Safety training does not do anyone any good if it is ignored or just so routine employees doze off during the training and do not hear important information. Practice helps employees retain the training. **c**

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BEHIND THE GEAR

PLUGGING ALONG

Since 1981, Real-Tite has focused on providing the industry easy-to-use, leakproof expansion plugs // By Kyle Rogers

AROL THOLEN LINS MAY HAVE grown up the daughter of a plumber, but her experience in the industry was limited. She instead built a successful career in business and pharmaceutical marketing, sales and auditing.

That changed in 2006, when her father's failing health caused her to take over his company, Real-Tite Inc., a manufacturer and distributor of plumbing expansion plugs.

Since then she's worked hard to continue his legacy and build on Real-Tite's reputation for making expansion plugs that are easy to install and remove, while still producing a leakproof seal.

Cleaner recently spoke with Tholen Lins about the company's history and what differentiates its expansion plugs in the market.

CLEANER: Tell us a little about the history of Real-Tite.

Tholen Lins: My father, James Tholen, saw a problem in the field when his employees were struggling with removing brass and iron clean-out covers that over time had become fused together by rust and corrosion. This process of removal involves a heavy hammer, chisel and sawzall and leaves the clean-out hub with damaged threads. It requires extra time for the tech to remove it, not to mention replacing it with another plug. Time is money. This observation led to the engineering of the Real-Tite Plug, the patenting process and the marketing. The first marketing opportunity to reach a wide plumbing audience was by participating in a COLE Publishing trade show in the early 1980s, which served as a successful launching pad for the Real-Tite Plug.

Shortly after, Real-Tite was spun off into an entity of its own, gaining market share with wholesalers and contractors.

I was presented with the opportunity to purchase the company in 2005 when my father realized that his health was failing and his time was limited. My husband Bob and I made a life-changing decision to purchase the company to continue the legacy of my father and continue to serve the plumbing and drain cleaning industry. We felt that we both had acquired the necessary skills in both the sales world and business development fields to take on the task. Bob in national sales for Nestlé Foods and myself, an entrepreneur at heart, having started and sold two small companies and at the time working in the pharmaceutical industry, living "the life" in Montana. We headed to Minneapolis to spend time with my father and get reacquainted with my large family.

We closed on the business on Feb. 23, 2006. In March, my father's health started failing quickly and on April 23, 2006, he passed away. My desire of



CAROL THOLEN LINS President and CEO of Real-Tite Inc. YEARS IN THE INDUSTRY: 17 YEARS WITH COMPANY: 17

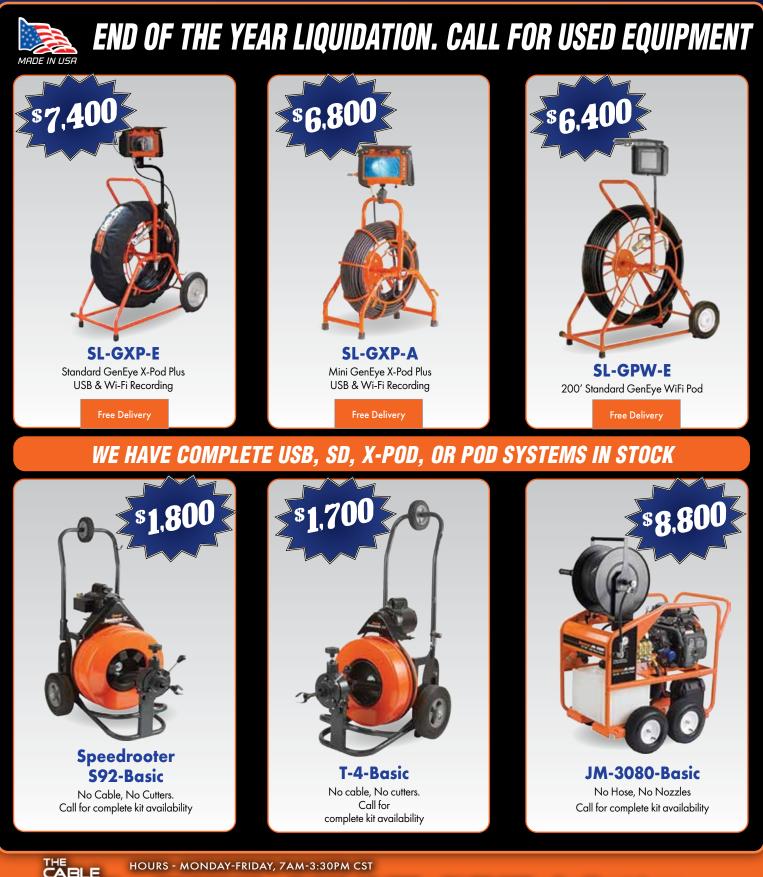
spending quality time with my father lasted a short 60 days.

At this time, I rolled up my sleeves and dug into this new adventure. Admittedly, the only thing this plumber's daughter knew was how to flush the toilet and turn on the shower. But I had a strong work ethic and a passion for a challenge. I knew that if my goal for the company was expansion, I had to begin the process of building upon the solid foundation my father had started.

CLEANER: What differentiates Real-Tite Plugs from the competition?

Tholen Lins: Real-Tite Plugs are unique in several ways. They are the only plug that incorporates a one-piece design with a fully enclosed stainless steel stop bolt so they cannot become disassembled, preventing loss of plug parts into the opening. They are the only expansion plug available in 12-gauge stainless steel tops for use in driveways and parking lots and available in a private label with the customer's call-back information for marketing

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Real-Tite Plugs are the only plug that incorporates a one-piece design with a fully enclosed stainless steel stop bolt so they cannot become disassembled, preventing loss of plug parts into the opening.

While Real-Tite still largely focuses on the plumbing and drain cleaning sector, today the company has expanded into many other areas, including new construction, data centers and distribution centers, power dams and wind turbines — any area that needs quick access for a point of entry, fast and ready to re-seal tightly.

"WHEN COMPARING UNIT COST KEEP IN MIND WHAT THE PLUG IS CONTAINING IN THE PIPE. DON'T ALWAYS GO FOR THE MOST INEXPENSIVE PLUG AVAILABLE IF YOU ARE EXPECTING A LEAK-PROOF SEAL." CAROL THOLEN LINS

purposes. Unlike traditional expansion plugs, Real-Tite Plugs have a flush finish with no bulky wingnut, making them perfect for installing in floors or under carpet. Most expansion plugs seal behind or over the threads of an opening. Real-Tite Plugs have an oversized gasket that seals three ways, behind the threads, over the threads and utilizing a shoulder seal for triple protection against leaks. Real-Tite Plugs are available in 1 1/2-inch to 4-inch sizes in 1/2-inch increments, even the hard to find 2 1/2-inch size. They can be used in straight pipe, saving cost by eliminating an adapter or fitting. A 5/32-inch Allen wrench is used to install and remove, making them tamper-resistant.

CLEANER: What's the most common problem you see your customers facing?

Tholen Lins: There are actually two common problems customers face. Sealing smooth or threaded openings or openings with damaged threads and finding the correct size plug to provide a leakproof seal for the opening.

CLEANER: What are some recommendations for customers shopping for expansion plugs?

Tholen Lins: I would recommend customers consider the plug location and look for an expansion plug with a large gasket and no exposed metal on the backside of the plug that can rust or corrode. When comparing unit cost keep in mind what the plug is containing in the pipe. Don't always go for the most inexpensive plug available if you are expecting a leakproof seal.

CLEANER: What's new for Real-Tite in 2023? What can customers expect in the future?

Tholen Lins: Today, the company has national and international sales and serves many different industries. While our bread and butter is still the plumbing and drain cleaning sector, the Real-Tite Plug has expanded into areas of new construction, data centers and distribution centers, power dams and wind turbines. Basically, any area that needs quick access for a point of entry, fast and ready to re-seal tightly. Our stainless steel expansion plugs are the only product on the market designed to withstand





heavy industrial traffic and we have re-engineered our product to serve correctional facilities and institutions with tamper-resistant security clean-out plugs.

We have launched a "smart solutions" database of thousands of customers, which offers targeted emails in a "problem, solution, result" format, and have quickly become a go-to resource for our industry. We have developed our Facebook page with the goal of connecting our customers to one another and offer networking opportunities and problem-solving discussions across the country.

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MONEY Machines

DUAL FUNCTION

Combo jetter/inspection camera boosts efficiency and customer satisfaction // By Ken Wysocky

LEANING AND INSPECTING a clogged sewer line simultaneously may sound as improbable as an old clay-pipe lateral with no offsets. But it's an everyday reality for technicians at Stokes Plumbing & Trenchless thanks to the Viper combination camera and jetter from Envirobot. Technicians can use the jetting

function to easily steer the unit into one or multiple branch lines, which improves productivity, says Wesley Stokes, owner of the Florence, South Carolina, company. "I first saw the Viper at the Water & Wastewater Equipment,

Treatment & Transport (WWETT) Show," says Stokes, who established his company in 2008. "We thought it would be a great addition mainly because it's basically steerable. When you get to a junction, you can steer it one way or another. You can also jet a line while televising it — guys can see what they're doing while they're working on a clog. And we can provide customers with a video of the line that shows what's causing the clog. It's a really good deliverable to give to our customers at the end of a job."

Unclogging drainlines doesn't always require an inspection, Stokes notes. But when an inspection is required, the Viper can eliminate the usual painstaking cycle of insert camera, insert jetter, insert camera again and insert jetter again.

"There is some time and labor savings there when you can consolidate those steps," Stokes says.

TECHNOLOGY SPURS GROWTH

Stokes bought his first Viper, a Long Range model, about 12 years ago. (Envirobot also offers Viper Compact and Viper Light models.) Now Stokes Plumbing — which has about 40 full-time employees, runs around 25 service vehicles and does commercial and industrial plumbing and repair work for customers nationwide — owns 10 Viper Long Range machines, which is a testament to their value, Stokes says.

To use a Viper, contractors need a water jetter that generates at least 1,600 psi of pressure and 8 gpm of flow. Stokes Plumbing



Mason Powell, a technician for Stokes Plumbing & Trenchless, uses a Viper combination camera and jetter to inspect and clean a 36-inch-diameter stormwater sewer at a business in Georgia.

relies on water jetters made by Harben (a subsidiary of Flowplant Group Ltd.) and Mongoose (a brand owned by Sewer Equipment).

The company primarily uses the Vipers to clean sanitary sewer and stormwater lines, Stokes says.

STOKES PLUMBING & TRENCHLESS

FLORENCE, SOUTH CAROLINA

MACHINES

WEBSITE

OWNER Wesley Stokes

COST About \$80,000 each

www.envirobot.com

Viper Long Range combination jetters/inspection cameras from Envirobot

FUNCTION Simultaneously cleaning and inspecting drainlines

FEATURES Weighs 139 pounds; measures 23 inches wide by 25 inches deep by 28 inches high (with the telescoping handle retracted); 265 feet of 3/8-inch-diameter hose; ergonomically designed, two-wheel handcart; camera cable integrated into the hose jacket; designed for pipes from 3 to 16 inches in diameter; high-resolution, stainless steel camera with digital-zoom capability, a 160-degree wide-angle lens and dimmable LED lights.

Investing in newer, productivity-enhancing technology like the Vipers has been instrumental to the company's growth, which has come through landing large national and regional accounts.

"Serving big national customers absolutely makes it important to keep investing in advanced equipment," Stokes says. "They want to do business with companies that have well-trained, wellequipped guys that do jobs right and charge a fair price. And those kinds of companies are hard to find in today's market.

"Once these large accounts find a company that comes in and does exactly what they say they're going to do, they really appreciate it. And they're willing to pay a little bit of a premium because we figure out what's causing a clog and we don't leave until the problem is resolved."

It also pays dividends when businesses like Stokes Plumbing offer diversified services because it's more cost-effective to pay one company to clean and inspect a line — then repair it if needed than it is to hire a company to clean and camera a line and then

"THERE IS SOME TIME AND LABOR SAVINGS THERE WHEN YOU CAN CONSOLIDATE THOSE STEPS." WESLEY STOKES

hire another company to perform repairs, Stokes says.

The company also does pipe lining with a system from Perma-Liner Industries.

STEERING TOWARD PROFITABILITY

The portable Viper Long Range weighs about 139 pounds and measures 23 inches wide by 25 inches deep by 28 inches high (with a telescoping handle retracted). It comes with 265 feet of 3/8-inchdiameter hose and features an ergonomically designed, two-wheel handcart.

The Viper's camera cable is integrated into the jacket of the high-pressure hose, which optimizes handling and protects against damage. The machines are designed to work in pipes from 3 to 16 inches in diameter and the camera and nozzle can pass through 45-degree bends in pipes 3 inches in diameter or larger and 90-degree bends in pipes that are 4 inches in diameter or larger.

The high-resolution, stainless steel camera features digitalzoom capability and a 160-degree, wide-angle lens; dimmable LED lights; a sensor that indicates inclination and direction; and a locator sonde.

To steer the unit, the operator rotates the hose in the desired direction.

GOOD ROI

The Vipers cost about \$80,000 each these days, but Stokes says they pay for themselves in two to three years through improved productivity, not to mention enhanced client retention that stems from providing great service.

"Any piece of equipment that pays for itself in two to three years and lasts more than 10 years, like our older Vipers have, is a pretty good investment," Stokes says. "I like them, our guys like them and our clients like them. It's a win-win-win situation." **c**

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Jason Bradshaw

FOCUS ON THE EXPERIENCE

A simple pathway to success is consistently delivering on the promise you make to customers and employees // By Jason Bradshaw

S A BUSY BUSINESS OWNER, you are faced with a seemingly endless list of things to do to keep your company operating and an ever-increasing list of ideas on how to improve it.

It can be overwhelming, so perhaps consider throwing out the hundred plus to-do items and ideas. Instead, focus on the experience you deliver to customers and your employees. Start with these three fundamental steps:

- 1. Define the promise
- 2. Measure the gaps
- 3. Share the stories

Before unpacking these steps, let's clarify a couple of important elements.

First, the term experience. In this context it means customer experiences, employee experiences, the experiences that you promise, and ultimately, the ones you deliver. You may even make experience promises about your brand and products. For now, we're going to focus on customer and employee experiences. Also, the singular experience — the transaction — is just as important as the plural, collective experiences.

INVESTING IN IMPROVING YOUR EMPLOYEES' EXPERIENCE WILL RESULT IN INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY AND IMPROVED CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES.

Finally, let's be clear that the customer and employee experience does not mean hugging your haters, nor does it mean surprising your customers/employees with champagne and caviar.

Each of these steps applies to customers and employees equally. If you don't know where to start, begin with your employees' experiences. Investing in improving your employees' experience will result in increased productivity and improved customer experiences.

STEP 1: DEFINE THE PROMISE

This step comes in two parts. It starts with defining what you mean by the words "customer/employee experience." It is crucial to define what you mean by the term to ensure that every team member understands it. Part two is defining what you promise to deliver for your customers/employees.

Every day people check in to two-star hotels and fly low-fare airlines, while at the same time people also check in to five-star hotels and fly first class. In both instances, there are companies that make a profit and those that don't. The difference is clear. Some companies compete on price, and others — who win — do so by delivering consistently on the experience that their ideal customers are drawn to and are willing to pay for.

Don't be afraid of defining your promise and sharing it broadly. There are customers who will choose your company, and your promise, over your competitors if you deliver on that promise consistently.

Beyond prospective customers being drawn to your promise, the superpower of defining your promise is that every team member will understand that above all else their priority is to deliver on the promise.

STEP 2: MEASURE THE GAPS

After you've defined what you promise to deliver, it is time to measure the gap between the promises and the reality. To get started, just measure the gap between one of your promises. Your main promise.

For example, if you promise to deliver service within 24 hours, start measuring how often you actually deliver within 24 hours. If you 100% of the time deliver within the promise, then start measuring the gap of the next promise.

However, if you aren't delivering on your main promise, then

your mission is to focus on closing the gap, every day being 1% closer.

STEP 3: SHARE THE STORIES

Companies send out surveys to measure the gap. But don't be one of those companies that sends out surveys and then keeps all the data locked up.

The power of the third step is in sharing with your team and celebrating the impact of delivering on your promise. The celebration of delivering on your promise reinforces what great looks like and the behaviors required to achieve success.

However, it is also important to share, just as broadly, the stories and the impact on customers when you fail to deliver on your promise. This not only reinforces the value of delivering on the promise, it provides a clear coaching point. An opportunity to identify, and fix, what processes, systems or tasks create the break in delivering on your promise. c

A R O II T T H F A II T H O R

For the past three decades, Jason Bradshaw has worked with some of the world's most recognizable brands, improving the experience to transform the business. He is a best-selling author and an expert on customer experience and experience management. Visit www.jasonbradshaw.com.

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PRODUCT FOCUS

PIPE BURSTING METHODS AND PROJECTS

By Craig Mandli

>> HYDROEXCAVATION 1 // DITCH WITCH HXT LINE

Contractors looking for the efficiency and payload capacity of a truck-mounted vacuum excavator can turn to **Ditch Witch's HXT Line** of vacuum excavators. The HXT50 and HXT75 are powered by Kubota engines with 50 and 75 hp, respectively, for optimal suction power. The HXT50 has a 1,005 cfm blower and 3,000 psi of water pressure. Both units are available with 500-, 800- and 1,200-gallon spoils tank configurations, allowing contractors the freedom to stay on a job site longer and avoid repeated spoils disposal and water refilling. The 500-gallon configuration is designed to be under commercial driver's license requirements, allowing contractors to transport the machine without a CDL driver on staff. The HXT75 offers 1,315 cfm and up to 5.5 gpm water pump flow. They are designed with a spoils tank door that can be controlled curbside or remotely to keep operators clean during spoils disposal. Both come with a multifunction remote control option for the boom, allowing operators to more easily control the vacuum hose. **580-336-4402; www.ditchwitch.com**

2 // DYNABLAST HV590FLS-12VRED

The HV590FLS-12VRED hydrovac water heater from Dynablast produces 590,000 Btus with an output temperature of 175 degrees F at 7 gpm. An optional electronic 12-volt thermostat can hold a more precise water temperature. The unit is suitable for colder climates and improves digging in clay-filled areas. It enables fuel savings of 3/4 gph and a weight reduction of 250 pounds over the current 690,000 Btu model. It comes with ETL certification for safety, which also includes certification on the coil for higher efficiency and heat transfer, stainless steel target plate for increased coil life and serviceability with momentary override control. 905-867-4642; www.dynablast.ca

3 // ENZ USA CB RANGE

The CB (Cutting Ball) Range from Enz USA is equipped with a carbide root knife or penetrator blade for pipes that are clogged by more than 50%. The CB90, CB70 and CB50 work without impact, but are equipped with a plug that can be removed, which creates a vibration in the tool when rotating (except the CB50). The cutters on the side are self-sharpening and maintain their sharpness over their entire service life. The area of application of the cutting ball is diverse. Due to their spherical shape they can easily navigate bends without damaging the pipe. Moreover, the proven braking system ensures for a lower rotation speed. The CB90, CB70 and CB50 are leakage-free and can be operated with recycling water. They are particularly suitable for roots in seepage pipes, mineral deposits and limescale. All are supplied in a case. 877-369-8721; www.enz.com









4 // GAPVAX VHX SERIES

The GapVax VHX Series hydrovac is designed to deliver optimal weight distribution, improved safety features and increased performance. The debris body is 7.5 cubic yards, offering a 15,000-pound payload. The low profile (12 feet, 2 inches) makes it suitable for allaround hydroexcavation projects. The vacuum system with single mode wet/dry filtration is quiet, reliable and simple, according to the maker. It includes a 4,000 cfm positive displacement blower, 600 hp transfer case with air-shift engagement and ultra-quiet air injection, and discharge silencers. This filtration design includes a top-loading debris tank, 14-inch stainless steel float-ball shut-off, efficient centrifugal cyclone separators and long-lasting filter bags. It is equipped with a 12 gpm, 3,000 psi water system with optional 200 cfm air compressor system. A full-tilting debris body, over 45-degree dump angle and full-opening tailgate allow for fast unloading and easy cleanout. The 8-inch telescoping VHX boom offers a 22-foot reach with 15-degree downward pivot. 888-442-7829; www.gapvax.com



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PRODUCT FOCUS

5 // HI-VAC X-13 HYDRO EXCAVATOR

The Hi-Vac X-13 Hydro Excavator was created to maximize productivity and ROI and minimize downtime by eliminating high-maintenance components. A modular design provides clean and intuitive controls and simple, planned maintenance accessibility for all critical systems. It is ideal when on-site dumping is required and for off-highway applications that require the maximum legal payload. A 13-cubic-yard debris tank, up to 24,500-pound payload capacity and 1,140-gallon freshwater capacity result in fewer costly job site trips. A 5,800 cfm 27-inch Hg high-performance blower and a run-dry water pump that delivers 20 gpm at 2,500 psi provide power. The top-mounted, 360-degree boom ensures accessibility in all directions and a heavy-duty, hydraulic vibrator facilitates fast and efficient unloading of the debris body. A severe-duty boiler safely heats water for frozen ground applications. **800-752-2400; www.x-vac.com**

6 // HOTJET USA VAC 'N JET SERIES

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





7 // HYDRA-FLEX MACHETE

The Machete from Hydra-Flex is a linear oscillating hydroexcavation nozzle that combines the penetration of a straight tip with the movement of a rotating tip. Its long stream and powerful slicing motion dig faster and deeper through compact soil and is suitable for trenching, sloping, and bell holing. Its zero-degree straight-water stream oscillates to create a 15-degree wedge that efficiently digs the deepest distances. Its oscillating stream means less movement, better ergonomics, and less wear and tear on operators. Its premium components protect the nozzle, users, and utilities, and are engineered to be field-repairable to extend the nozzle's life. **952-808-3640; www.hydraflexinc.com**

8 // PACIFIC TEK PV500 POWER VAC

The PV500 POWER VAC from Pacific Tek is used widely in the construction, utilities and rehabilitation/remediation industries. The company manufactures nine different sizes from the PV66 up to the PV1200, all of which can be supplied as skid-mounted, trailer- or truck-bed-mounted complete systems with vacuum, high-pressure washing, sewer jetter skids, manual or hydraulic vacuum hose support booms, and custom safety lighting. Power drives include standard output gas engines to propane or hydraulic motors to diesel high-output models. Low-profile skid and trailer models are available for large parking structure maintenance and mining dewatering applications. 800-884-5551; www.pacific-tek.com









9 // RIVAL HYDROVAC T7 TANDEM AND T10

The T7 Tandem from Rival Hydrovac was designed primarily to be a unit that could be loaded with debris and drive within legislated road limits with most types of debris on board. The unit comes standard with a scale that reads real-time weights both in the cab and on the wireless remote to confirm weight prior to travel. The T10 is built with the same features and operating system, but with larger capacities and components. It is popular with clients who do both utility and industrial work. It is available in three chassis layouts to meet weight restrictions in a given area. An air compressor option allows for excavating with air when required, while a truck-mounted coring system allows for removal of hard surfaces prior to nondestructive excavating. **403-550-7997; www.rivalhydrovac.com**

10 // SEWERPROSHOP RAVEN

The **Raven** hydroexcavation nozzle from **SewerProShop** has been precision engineered by Intersewer and manufactured to the highest technical standards of ISO 9001:2008 certification in Germany. The weight has the purpose to counteract the high-pressure kickback of the wand. It is constructed from high-grade stainless steel, is threaded and includes a replaceable ceramic nozzle insert with forward water jet angled at zero degrees or a fan jet. It is rated for 18 gpm at 4,000 psi up to 80 gpm at 2,500 psi. It includes a 1/2- to 1-inch sewer hose connection. It is operator-friendly with no maintenance required. **877-864-9394; www.sewerproshop.com**



PRODUCT FOCUS

11 // SOIL SURGEON HYDROEXCAVATING TOOL

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

12 // SUPER PRODUCTS MUD DOG 700

Mud Dog 700 vacuum excavators from Super Products are designed for operator convenience and consistent performance to meet the challenges of compact, urban projects to large-scale excavation. Regardless of the task, the vacuum excavators offer versatility as well as safety and productivity on the job site, according to the maker. They offer a compact footprint for excavation in urban environments while maximizing payload and are designed to maintain the power and precision of larger units. The unit features a 7-yard debris body and 600-gallon water tank. This model comes standard as a dump body with an electric vibrator offering a 50-degree dump angle with the capability of dumping into a 48-inch container. It is equipped with a rear-mounted, extendable, 8-inch-diameter boom that reaches 18 feet, has 270-degree rotation and pivots 10 degrees downward to minimize job site restoration and traffic congestion near roads. 800-837-9711; www.superproducts.com

13 // TORNADO GLOBAL HYDROVACS F3 ECO-LITE

Tornado Global Hydrovacs engineered the F3 ECO-LITE to have big functionality in a mid-sized platform. It was made specifically to legally haul large payloads in urban environments with a debris capacity of 10 cubic yards and a water capacity of 1,250 gallons. A float-style indicator is positioned on the outside of the debris tank for easy monitoring of volume. It comes with a boom capable of reaching to 26 feet with 342 degrees of rotation and an 8-inch boom hose. The truck uses a 3,800 cfm Robuschi 125 blower, a Pratissoli KT28 water pump and a Dynablast 740,000 Btu burner. A hydraulic dump door measuring 48 by 52 inches is mounted on the back of the tank and sits 42 inches high for easy use over bins. 877-340-8141; www.tornadotrucks.com

14 // TRUVAC FLXX

The TRUVAC FLXX is a vacuum excavator built to perform for utilities and contractors installing, replacing and repairing underground infrastructure, utilizing both air and hydroexcavation options for all conditions. This machine offers more power and maneuverability to work in tight urban settings where street excavation jobs can include supporting, repairing and installing a city's water, sewer, power and telecommunications infrastructure. It has the highest legal payload capacity in a mid-size truck with a 10-cubic-yard debris body. In addition, it offers Park-n-Dig, an always-connected water source; safe and precise digging with the DigRight one-touch flow control technology; a water heater to dig in all types of weather/material conditions; a 22-foot boom reach with 340-degree rotation; and a DigFast option to maintain peak vacuuming performance and a clear airstream in the vacuum tube. **800-627-3171; www.truvac.com**

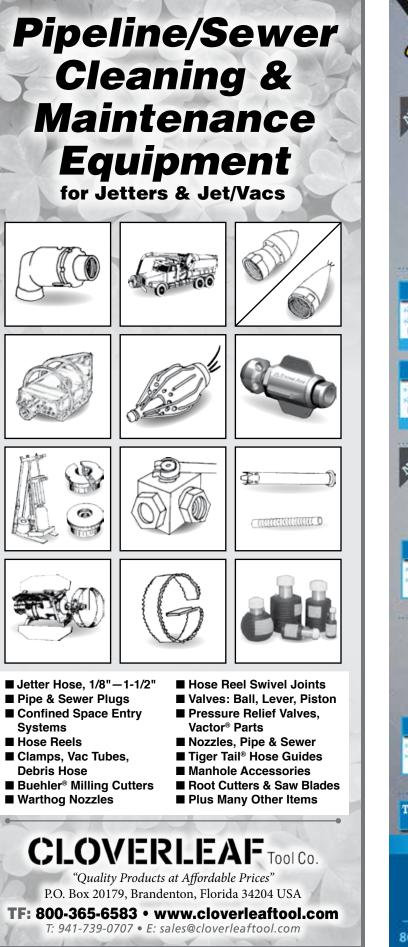
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PRODUCT FOCUS

15 // VAC-CON MUDSLINGER MS800

The **Mudslinger MS800** trailer-mounted hydrovac from Vac-Con is designed to provide the same power, suction and capacity of a truck hydroexcavator on a portable, pull-behind trailer. It includes the choice of Tier 4 diesel or gas engine options providing up to 1,190 cfm and 16 inches Hg with a PD blower and 325 gallons of water. It has an 845-gallon debris tank and a 9-foot boom with 24 inches of hydraulic extension providing a full range of motion. It is designed to be a standalone unit, but can also provide support to construction, HDD and public utility fleets. A variety of applications includes daylighting, potholing, culvert and manhole cleaning, and utility locating. **904-284-4200; www.vac-con.com**



16 // VACALL ALLEXCAVATE AND ALLEXCAVATE2

Standard intelligent controls and easy startup and operation set Vacall AllExcavate and AllExcavate2 machines apart. Both models efficiently remove dirt around utility lines and foundations. Water pumps generate 24.5 to 120 gpm and pressures to 3,000 psi. The AE2 model adds air excavation at 185 cfm and dual psi of 110 and 150. Water system, wand, control panel, tools and worker apparel are protected in a heated compartment. An AllSmartFlow CAN bus intelligent control system features a programmable LCD display that monitors engine, water flow, air pressure and vacuum performance for precise boom and reel adjustments. Aluminum water tanks with lifetime warranty carry 1,000 to 1,300 gallons. Galvanized debris tanks have a supreme finish, and are available with 8-, 10- and 13-cubicyard capacities. They use one engine to power the chassis and excavation functions, reducing service and operation costs. 800-382-8302; www.vacall.com

>> PIPE BURSTING TOOLS

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

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

18 // TRIC TOOLS E24

The E24 revisits the essential TRIC Tools 4-inch lateral bursting package that created the industry of trenchless home sewer replacement decades ago. Redesigned with economy and practicality in mind, it is geared primarily toward residential bursting jobs up to 4 inches in diameter. The standard system includes a portable and reliable 10,000 psi electric pump, plus lightweight 5/8-inch compact swaged cable. It is suitable for indoor use, difficult backyard easements, and very tight spaces with limited access. 888-883-8742; www.trictools.com c





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PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT ROBOTIC REINSTATEMENT CUTTER OFFERS FLEXIBILITY TO CONTRACTORS

By Craig Mandli

Opening reinstatements in a lined pipe with several 90-degree bends was once impossible. That isn't the case anymore though, as the DC Super Flex 50 Meter, distributed in the U.S. by Dancutter USA and select distributors, including APEX CIPP Solutions, is a powerful answer for cutting, milling and grinding pipes and liners 3 to 6 inches in diameter, regardless of material or whether the pipe is straight or has bends.

"The DC Super Flex can go through several 90-degree bends in 4-inch and open reinstatements in 3-inch pipe," says Craig Underwood, general manager of APEX CIPP Solutions. "Our research showed that the market demanded a product that was flexible, user-friendly and could quickly be set up and put away when the job was finished."

According to Underwood, the unit only takes a few minutes to set up: The wheeled stainless steel frame — holding the supply hoses, control unit and cutter — is driven up to the work site. The cutter is already connected to the supply hose, and air and power are connected to the system. The cutter is inserted into the pipe up to its working position. The hose has a reach of approximately 164 feet. It is easy to operate using the two joysticks on the frame-mounted



control unit. A 12.1-inch color display is built into the control unit's lid, providing a sharp, precise image of the cutter's position. The milling motor's rotation and functions — such as raising, lowering and running back and forth — are operated from the control unit. The cutter is also equipped with a built-in slip ring that enables the cutter to work freely in a continuous 360-degree rotation.

"Input from our customers also gave us the inspiration to develop the 360-degree continuous head rotation and to keep the cutter's different hoses for air and sprinkler fluid protected inside one larger hose," Underwood says.

The purchase of a DC Super Flex includes a two-day training at the customer's location or at APEX CIPP Solution's Florida headquarters

for up to four people. According to Underwood, once crews are trained, the unit leads to valuable additional business.

"This cutter is a true workhorse in the field," she says. "Not only can it make dozens of reinstatements in a single shift, it can also remove a failed liner or grind out a metal nail. Our customers can't wait to tell us that their teams are more productive, saving precious time and money." **855-997-0524; www.apexcipp.com c**

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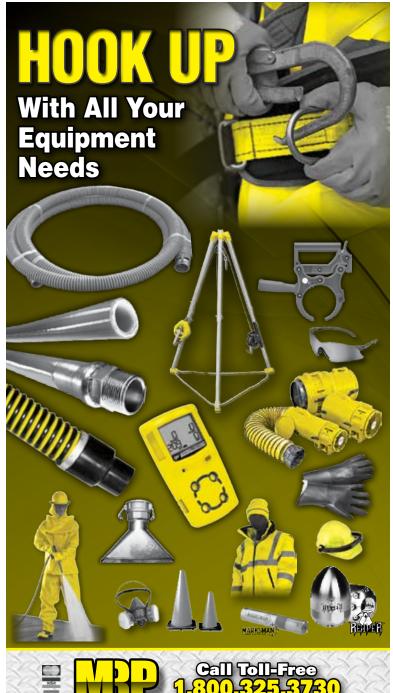
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Epoxytec launches new website

Epoxytec launched its new and improved website, www. epoxytec.com. The website features a user-friendly experience in the water and wastewater coatings world where owners, engineers and contractors can research and select the best interior coatings for projects. Customers can navigate the technology behind created coatings, view all products and connect with Epoxytec's support team and coating experts for more information on how to get started.

ProPulse celebrates 25 years

Twenty-five years ago, Schieffer Co. International opened in Peosta, Iowa with six employees in a 12,000-square-foot facility. In the two and a half decades since, the hose manufacturer has changed its name and expanded exponentially. In 2021, ProPulse added a 20,000-squarefoot manufacturing space to the production facility. Now known as ProPulse, a Schieffer Co., it employs 130, utilizes 130,000 square feet of space, and celebrated its silver anniversary in March.

IRC announces company acquisitions

Infrastructure Renewal Co. acquired Insta-Pipe and IPI. Dennis Smith, the founder of both Insta-Pipe and IPI, will remain active with both organizations as a consultant and strategic partner. The official announcement was made in Phoenix in January. Jason Walborn, recently appointed CEO of Insta-Pipe, and Kent Jordan, president of IPI, will continue their roles, respectively, in addition to holding executive positions as officers within IRC. c

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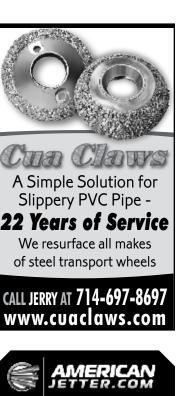














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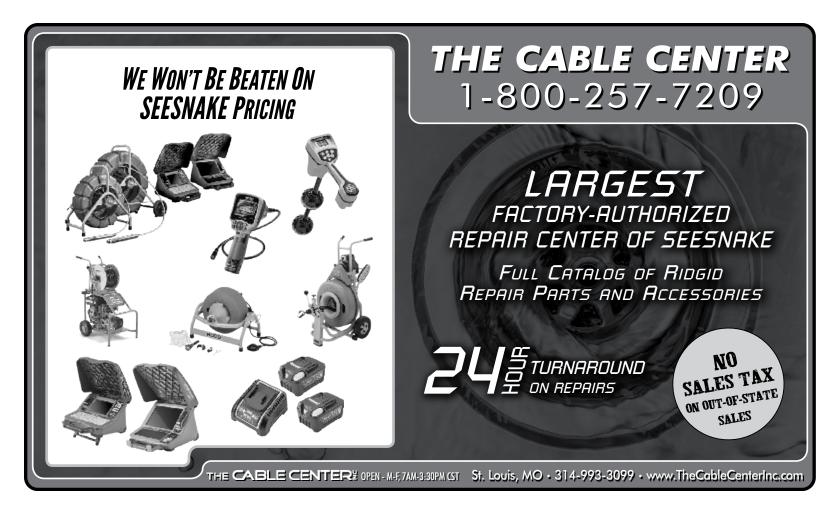


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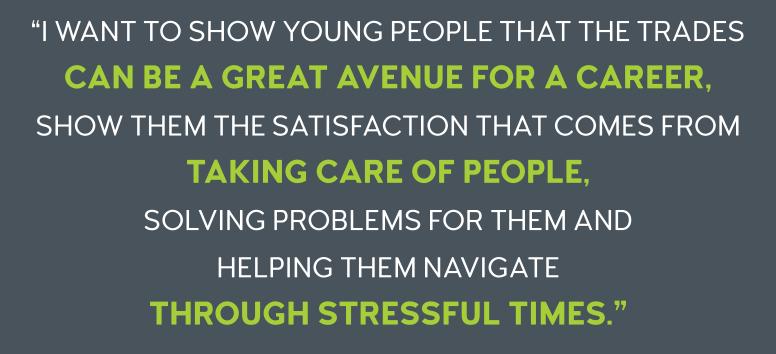


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