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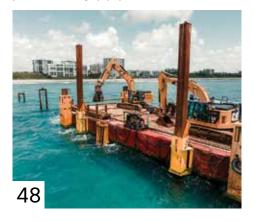
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#### DECEMBER 2023



ON THE COVER // Tom Drexler Plumbing, Air & Electric in Louisville, Kentucky, started — as so many have — as a one-man shop. Over four decades, it has grown tremendously and today has over 300 employees. A key part of maintaining that level of staffing has been developing its own training school, Drexler Academy, which the company launched a few years ago. It is advertised as a no-tuition, earn-while-you-learn trade school. And it's been successful at creating a recruiting pipeline for the company. "Half of our licensed plumbers have come from Drexler Academy. We wouldn't even be close to where we are today in our staffing without the academy," says Terry Henson, company president. (Photography by AJ Mast)







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## THE EDITOR

// Kyle Rogers

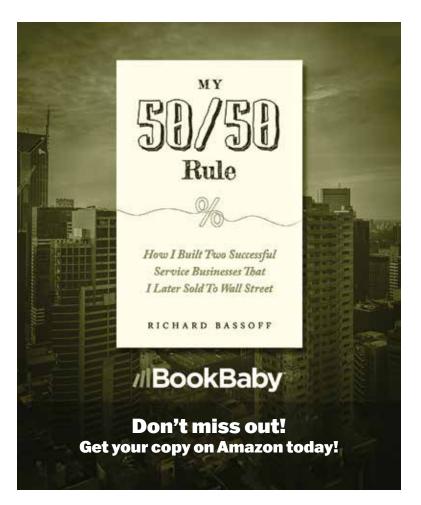
## TIME FOR SOME REFLECTION

As we prepare to close the book on 2023, take a step back to look at your business' big picture and determine if any changes — small or large — are in store



E'RE IN THE FINAL MONTH of the calendar year. You can probably guess where this is going. What lies in wait for you in 2024?

If it's been some time since you did a thorough audit of where your business stands in relation to your goals, now is as good a time as any to step back and take a look at your big picture. It can be easy to get trapped in the groove of your daily operations for long stretches of time, with little consideration of whether you're actually on the correct path for achieving longterm plans.



Is everything on track? Or are some tweaks warranted? Or maybe the business goals you initially had have completely shifted?

Think about those questions as you read this month's issue. December's editorial theme is diversification, so naturally we've profiled a couple of companies that aren't shy about making changes to service offerings or operations as necessary to meet their objectives.

Take Bulldog Contractors out of Jefferson, Texas. It started in 1978 as a home building and remodeling contractor. Today the company handles plumbing, drain cleaning, septic pumping, septic system repair and installation, and electrical work. It's a result of the company continually assessing how to meet two main goals — provide a high level of customer service and work efficiently. Like the company's decision to expand into septic service in 2004. Septic systems are common in Bulldog's rural area and the company found that when customers called with plumbing issues, the odds were about 50/50 that the problem was actually a septic issue, says Jeff Keller, Bulldog's general manager.

"We started pumping and repairing septic systems to better serve our customers and add another service feather to our hat," he says. "Plus it made us more efficient than having to rely on a subcontractor to come out for a septic system problem."

Or consider the company's decision several years ago to stop offering free estimates. Bulldog charges anywhere from \$95 to \$125 for service calls, depending on the person's location. But the charge then gets waived if Bulldog ends up getting hired for the work. Keller took a step back and realized that the free estimate policy was producing a lot of wasted time. A small operational tweak that has since produced big dividends.

"It's one of the best things I ever did," Keller says. "What it does is pre-qualify customers to make sure they're serious. There are too many tire-kickers out there. There were days when I'd literally drive around all day long, doing estimates and not get a single job. You end up wasting so much time dealing with bottom-feeders who only are concerned about the price. You have to value your time."

So take a little time as the year comes to close and think about where you are versus where you want to be and assess whether the things you're doing are helping you get there.

Enjoy this month's issue and the rest of the year. See you in 2024. c

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"The best workers look for great companies to work for, not just a paycheck.... Before you even start to hire, you might want to look at your business and leadership and ask if it would qualify as a business that A-players on a dream team would want to be part of." - 3 Things to Master if You're Looking to Grow Your Business

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#### SAFETY SAVVY

#### Trench Rescue Training Facility Opens in Iowa

Realistic training for first responders is required to achieve successful trench rescues. That was the idea behind a new training facility that opened in October in Urbandale, Iowa, with support from the National Utility Contractors Association. Read more about it in this online exclusive. >> cleaner.com/featured



#### EXTRA, EXTRA

#### Bonus Coverage of October's Profiled Contractors

Check out these extra online-only articles about the two companies featured recently in the October issue, New York's Dr. Rooter and California's Hansen's Plumbing. Read about Dr. Rooter owner Dave Ferrier recalling one of the worst drain cleaning jobs he's ever faced, as well as Hansen's Plumbing owner Cary Hansen highlighting one of his company's most valuable tools. >> cleaner.com/featured

#### MONSTER CLOG **Excavator Needed** to Clear Massive Root Infestation

A root cluster found in a sewer in South Australia provides a good showcase for the importance of staying on top of root control. Read more about what it took for crews

from utility SA Water to remove the blockage. >> cleaner.com/featured



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# WHENOPPORTUNITY HALLOW CONTROLL HENOPPORTUNITY HEN

BULLDOG CONTRACTORS HASN'T SHIED AWAY FROM SHIFTING GEARS OVER THE YEARS, RESPONDING TO WHATEVER CUSTOMER NEEDS ARISE IN ITS RURAL TEXAS SERVICE AREA // By Ken Wysocky



# ADAPTING TO CHANGING BUSINESS CONDITIONS IS NOTHING NEW TO BULLDOG CONTRACTORS, A COMPANY IN JEFFERSON, TEXAS, THAT'S BEEN AS TENACIOUS AS THE DOG BREED AFTER WHICH IT'S NAMED.

The business started out 45 years ago as a home building and remodeling contractor, then morphed into a plumbing and drain cleaning company in the early 2000s. Soon after that, the company expanded into septic tank pumping and septic system repairs and installations, then went on to add electrical contracting to its repertoire.

Part of this evolution of services stemmed from the company's remote location in northeast Texas, near the state's border with Louisiana, explains Jeff Keller, general manager for the business, established by his father, Carl, in 1978.

"We provide services to a very rural area, so you have to be diverse and be able to take care of a lot of things," says Keller, 35. "Customers love the one-stop shop aspect."

But the broad array of services also reflects the Kellers' ability to spot and capitalize on underserved market niches, as well as their willingness to make capital investments to serve those markets. It is also a testament to their desire to provide better customer service by avoiding reliance on subcontractors who aren't always available when needed.

The roster of services also opens the door to more business opportunities.



#### **UNEXPECTED BUSINESS DETOUR**

Keller's father founded Bulldog Contractors in 1978. Like many other businesses in the area, the company is named after the local high school's mascot.

"There are a lot of businesses around here with bulldog in the name," Keller says.

The shift toward plumbing occurred both randomly and unexpectedly when plumbers in a nearby town refused to do work on a remodeling project.

"They didn't like out-of-town contractors, so they all blackballed my father and wouldn't work for him," Keller explains.

That put the elder Keller into full bulldog mode, refusing to back down.

"My dad got so fed up and irritated that he went out and got his own plumbing license," Keller recalls. "And as it turns out, there's a lot of money in plumbing. Looking back, it was a good thing we made the change because it led to what we are today. It was 100% a blessing in disguise."

**Bulldog Contractors** JEFFERSON, TEXAS **OWNER** Carl Keller FOUNDED 1978 **EMPLOYEES** SERVICES Service and repair plumbing, drain cleaning, septic pumping, septic system repairs/installations, electrical work SERVICE AREA 20-mile radius around Jefferson WEBSITE www.builditlikebulldog.com

RIDGID SeeSnake pipeline inspection camera.



△ Jeff Keller uses a RIDGID FlexShaft machine on a drainline.

>> For plumbing and drain cleaning jobs, Bulldog Contractors owns a 2017 Chevrolet Express cutaway van with a 12-foot box body made by Supreme (a company owned by Wabash National) and storage and shelving units built by Hackney.

It also helped that there's only one other licensed plumber in Jefferson, Keller says.

#### LOGICAL EXTENSION OF SERVICES

The company expanded into septic services in 2004. The move made sense because septic systems are common in the rural area and when customers called with plumbing issues, the odds were about 50/50 that a septic system was the problem, Keller says.

"We started pumping and repairing septic systems to better serve our customers and add another service feather to our hat," he says. "Plus it made us more efficient than having to rely on a subcontractor to come out for a septic system problem."

Most of the time, the company sends out a plumbing service vehicle and a vacuum pump truck on service calls.

"Labor is expensive," Keller says. "So it's cheaper for me to run a second guy in a septic truck alongside me because many of our jobs are 17 to 20 miles away from the shop. It wastes too much

"WE PROVIDE SERVICES TO A VERY RURAL AREA, SO YOU HAVE TO BE DIVERSE AND BE ABLE TO TAKE CARE OF A LOT OF THINGS. CUSTOMERS LOVE THE ONE-STOP SHOP ASPECT." **JEFF KELLER** 



time to drive back and get a septic truck. It's all about efficiency."

To minimize startup costs, the company bought a used vacuum truck. The Kellers also opted to focus on septic system repairs and installations because the profit margins are better than for just pumping tanks.

"There's little money to be made in septic pumping," Keller says. "The money is in septic repairs and installations. So we dove in headfirst and obtained licenses for installs and repairs along with pumping. It made sense to offer everything, not just pumping."

In addition, pumping tanks often can lead to repairs or even installations if a system is failing, he says.

The business eventually added electrical contracting to its services because septic systems include pumps and controls powered by electricity. Once again, the Kellers decided they could better serve customers by not being tied down by the availability of electricians.

#### **KEYS TO SUCCESS**

Three keys to the company's success and longevity are prompt response times, reliability and communication with customers.

"A lot of our customers call us because other contractors don't return their phone calls or don't show up when they say they will," Keller says. "Without communication with customers, you have nothing. I can't tell you how many times I've gone on a service call and people say, 'Are you for real? You showed up when you said you would.' For us, that's the easy part, but I guess it's a difficult thing for a lot of contractors."

Keller also says flat-rate pricing, which the company started using several years ago, has enhanced customer service.

"Telling people the cost upfront puts their minds at ease because they're not sitting there watching the clock and wondering what the bill is going to be," he says. "Flat-rate pricing has been a game-changer for us and customers. We don't do a single job without upfront pricing."

#### **NO FREE JOB ESTIMATES**

To bolster profitability, the company doesn't offer free estimates. About 10 years ago, the company started charging \$95 for service calls in town and \$125 for out-of-town calls. The charge gets waived if customers hire Bulldog Contractors to do the work.

"It's one of the best things I ever did," Keller says. "What it does is prequalify customers to make sure they're serious. There are too many tire-kickers out there. There were days when I'd literally drive around all day long, doing estimates, and not get a single job. You end up wasting so much time dealing with bottomfeeders who only are concerned about the price. You have to value your time."

Isn't there some resistance from customers? "Some do," Keller says. "But I don't want customers like that anyway. If they can't value my time, I can't value theirs. I want to deal with customers who want a job done and done right."

To enhance cash flow, the company also requires customers to pay when jobs are completed.





#### $\mathsf{INVOIGING}$ INNOVATIONS

he pandemic made things difficult for many companies. But for Bulldog Contractors, it also spurred a beneficial change in business operations: the adoption of digital invoicing.

"We went digital during COVID," says Jeff Keller, general manager. "It seemed like everyone was scared of even touching a piece of paper."

The solution? Invoice2go, an app-based service that makes it easy for contractors to create professional-looking estimates and invoices; enables fast and efficient online payments via credit cards, debit cards, bank-account transfers or PayPal; stores customer work histories; and tracks the status of invoices.

A subscription-based service, Invoice2go also integrates with QuickBooks accounting software from Intuit.

"I didn't really want to go digital, but what a difference it makes," Keller says. "It eliminates so many hassles."

Keller says he uses the app to quickly create invoices on job sites, then send them to customers via text or email, along with a link they can download and use to pay with a credit card via their cellphones. That capability meshes well with the company's policy of requiring payment upon job completion, he notes.

Moreover, the system is easy to use, he says. "I didn't want anything complicated and this fits the bill," Keller says.

Gone are the days when technicians used credit card readers that had to be connected to cellphones, then required swiping customers' credit cards and emailing them receipts.

"We don't have to do any of that anymore," he says. "It saves maybe five minutes on every job, but that adds up to a lot of hours during the course of a year."

Invoice2go also helps the company create a nearly paperless system that improves efficiency.

"I don't have to keep up with all kinds of paperwork and I don't have to call the office anymore for customer information because it's all stored in the app," Keller says. "We have a separate folder for each customer, so their work histories are easy to find. Everything I need is right there in my hand.

"It's insane how much time it saves. If I would've known years ago what I know now, I would've done it much sooner. I guess sometimes we just don't like change."



🗢 Nathan Harrah and Jeff Keller use a RIDGID FlexShaft drain machine. The company also uses drain cleaning equipment from General Pipe Cleaners and Milwaukee Tool.

"I don't have time to chase people down for money," he says.

#### **EQUIPPED TO WORK**

As Bulldog Contractors grew, so did its roster of equipment. On the septic side of the business, the company relies on a 1996 International truck outfitted with a 1,650-gallon steel tank made by Lely Tank & Waste Solutions and a vacuum pump made by National Vacuum Equipment.

To do repairs and system installations (the company only installs a handful of new septic systems a year), as well as replace waterlines and sewer lines, the company also owns a JCB backhoe, a trencher made by Ditch

Witch and a 35-foot flatbed trailer made by McLendon Trailers.

For plumbing and drain cleaning, the company owns a 2017 Chevrolet Express cutaway van with a 12-foot box body made by Supreme (a company owned by Wabash National) and storage and shelving units built by Hackney. The company relies on power tools made by RIDGID and Milwaukee Tool.

For drain cleaning, the company invested in a cart-mounted JM-2900 water jetter (3,000 psi at 4 gpm) from General Pipe Cleaners; a RIDGID K-6200 drum machine (for 3- to 6-inchdiameter pipes); an M18 Drain Snake built by Milwaukee Tool; and a RIDGID FlexShaft drain machine.

"THE MONEY IS IN SEPTIC REPAIRS AND INSTALLATIONS. SO WE DOVE IN HEADFIRST AND OBTAINED LICENSES FOR INSTALLS AND REPAIRS ALONG WITH PUMPING, IT MADE SENSE TO OFFER EVERYTHING, NOT JUST PUMPING."



The company also relies on a RIDGID standard SeeSnake pipeline inspection camera, a SeeSnake microReel camera and a RIDGID SR-60 SeekTech pipeline locator.

#### **LOOKING AHEAD**

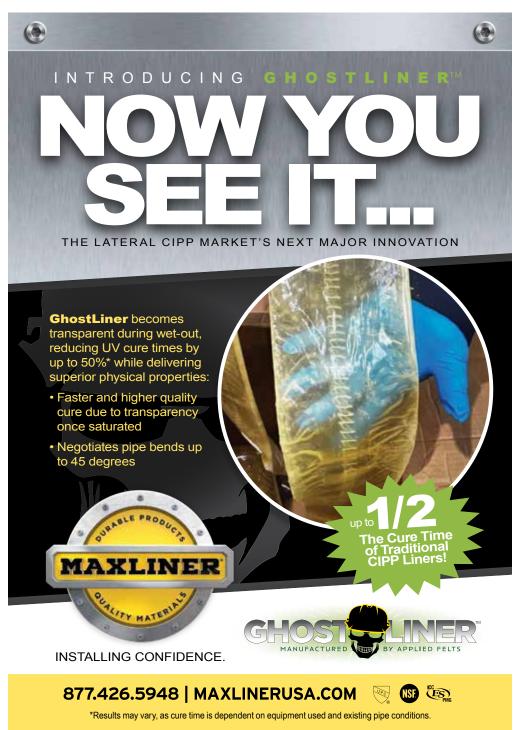
Keller doesn't anticipate much growth in the years ahead. More customers now are asking Bulldog to expand into heating and air conditioning work, but Keller says his small crew is too busy to consider such a move.

"If we ever would decide to expand into another trade service, HVAC would be it," he says. "But right now, we're not looking to grow. We're going to stay in our comfortable spot — it's a nice place to be."

As for Keller himself, who's never worked for anyone else except his father, he has no regrets about his career path. He'll eventually become the owner of Bulldog Contractors whenever his father decides to sell it.

"I absolutely love my job," he says. "I don't even look at it as a job.





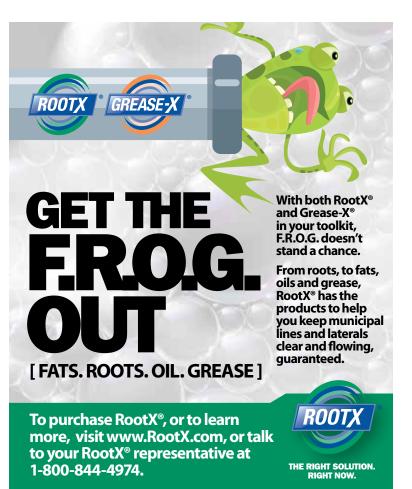


≪ Oftentimes one job for a customer leads to more jobs. "When I'm in front of customers, I always tell them about all of our services," Jeff Keller says. "When they find out we work in all these different trades, it often leads to other work.

"TELLING PEOPLE THE COST UPFRONT PUTS THEIR MINDS AT EASE BECAUSE THEY'RE NOT SITTING THERE WATCHING THE CLOCK AND WONDERING WHAT THE BILL IS GOING TO BE, FLAT-RATE PRICING HAS BEEN A GAME-CHANGER FOR US AND CUSTOMERS."

JEFF KELLER

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founder of Tom . Drexler Plumbing, Air & Electric, Kentucky.

# ANATURAL

OVER FOUR DECADES, KENTUCKY'S TOM DREXLER PLUMBING HAS EVOLVED FROM A ONE-MAN, ONE-TRUCK PLUMBING SHOP INTO A DIVERSIFIED TRADES SERVICE PROVIDER OPERATING IN MULTIPLE STATES WITH 225 TRUCKS HITTING THE ROAD DAILY

**//** By Giles Lambertson

#### IN THE BEGINNING, TOM DREXLER PLUMBING, AIR & ELECTRIC WAS JUST TOM DREXLER PLUMBING. MORE TO THE POINT. IT WAS JUST TOM DREXLER.

Yet when 23-year-old Drexler decided in 1982 that his hometown of Louisville, Kentucky, needed another plumbing shop, he was building on a legacy for he was a fourth-generation master plumber. Even so, he was the first Drexler to hang his name on a company. Today, his eponymous company sits astride the industry in Louisville and all of Kentucky, with customers only needing to remember his name to have his number — Dial 1-Tom-Drexler.

With company growth nowhere near topping out, the Tom Drexler Plumbing legacy continues to build. The one-man, onetruck plumbing shop in the Highlands neighborhood of Louisville has grown into a multistate, multitrades service company with 225 service trucks rolling out each day.

When the company founder opened a branch location in Elizabethtown in fall of 2022 — and Frankfort a few months later

— he talked about "the company's innovative vision for tomorrow's value-added service. Navigating the complexity of home service installation, repair and replacement can be challenging and stressful to homeowners and we aim to be a helpful resource."

A more succinct way to put it is, we are your one-stop shop. A plumbing outlet, yes, but it is, after all, Tom Drexler Plumbing, Air & Electric. And that list of services doesn't even mention something the firm has offered for 30 years — bathroom remodeling.

"PEOPLE WOULD TELL OUR SERVICE TECHS WHEN THEY WERE WORKING ON A LEAKING FAUCET, 'GEE, I WISH I COULD CHANGE THE COLOR OF A SINK OR UPGRADE A SHOWER.' AND SO WE GOT INTO THAT."

**TERRY HENSON** 



↑ Tom Drexler team members, from left, Lauren Nielsen, Justin Price and Justin Jaco talk about a toilet valve assembly in the company's training room. Half of the company's licensed plumbers have come through Tom Drexler's own training school, Drexler Academy.

Company President Terry Henson II says Tom Drexler Plumbing's vision for what services to offer its customers developed organically. What he calls "a natural progression."

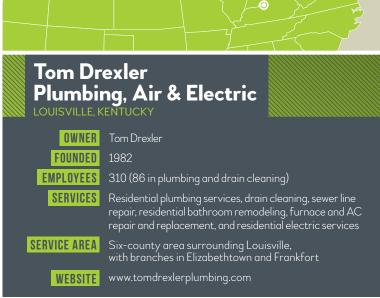
#### **ADDING SERVICES**

After starting his company, Tom Drexler for years operated just as a plumbing services provider before getting into drain and sewer cleaning. Adding those services was a no-brainer as service calls then and now about clogged home sinks or toilets often turn into unclogging drainlines or sewer lines outside the home.

Drexler took it one step further, though, when he began to remodel bathrooms.

"People would tell our service techs when they were working on a leaking faucet, 'Gee, I wish I could change the color of a sink or upgrade a shower.' And so we got into that. We used to do tile work, but we use the acrylic wall systems now," Henson says.

Today, the company has seven two-person remodeling crews upgrading bathrooms.



The next swerve into adjacent trades came about a decade ago when Drexler became involved in the best-practices business training and coaching association Nexstar Network.

"When Tom joined that, he was told that he really ought to offer HVAC services," Henson says, "A year later, he did."

Eventually, the erstwhile plumbing shop began to offer electrical service work. Explains Henson: "After we added HVAC, sometimes we had to add an electrical circuit or



♠ Tom Drexler addresses a class at the company's Drexler Academy. The company's basic plumbing training program can be completed in six months. Master plumber certification requires two more years.

>> Tony Hommrich, plumbing service install manager, looks at the control panel of a boiler system in the company's training facility.

something for a heating or cooling unit and it progressed from there."

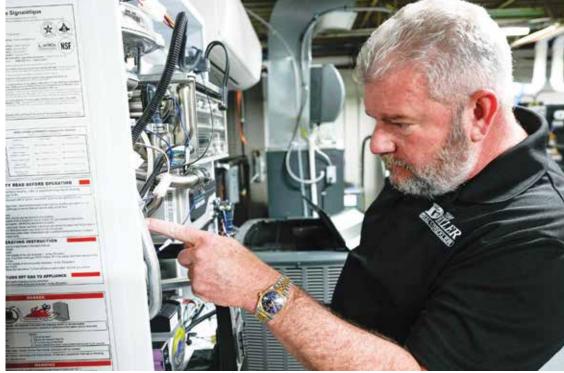
Today, about 40% of Tom Drexler Plumbing, Air & Electric is plumbing and drains. HVAC work constitutes another 40%, with electricity service and bathroom remodeling each pulling in about 10% of revenue. Of 310 employees at Drexler, 45 are field service plumbers, 20 are installation plumbers, 12 are drain techs and 18 work on sewers.

And who is calling for all these services? "99% are residential customers," Henson says. "We do a little light

commercial, but even that is, say, an attorney's office adding a shower or something. On the other hand, we do a lot of commercial HVAC work. We really go after that."

Every plumbing shop has its go-to brands for tools, appliances and fixtures. Drexler plumbers use RIDGID cable machines and cameras and RYOBI (The Home Depot) and Milwaukee power tools. Kohler and American Standard fixtures and Delta faucets are stocked. Bradford White and Navien water heaters are preferred.

Though most service calls are related to leaking pipes and



faucets, water heater installations generate more service call revenue, according to Henson. "We love those water heaters."

#### TRAINING THE NEXT GENERATION

Henson joined the company four years ago and today, as president, is mostly responsible for day-to-day operations. His background is in another home service trade, pest control. But despite Drexler's affinity for service diversification, there are no impending plans to branch out into pest control, Henson says with a laugh. Confined

#### ON THE MOVE

ompanies get bigger for a reason, or for several reasons. Growth doesn't just happen. If it is organic — as opposed to resulting from an acquisition or merger — the fundamentals must support it. Only increasing sales warrant expansion of a company's workforce or its footprint.

Tom Drexler Plumbing, Air & Electric is one such growing company. The leadership team of the Louisville, Kentucky, company has aggressively positioned it to take advantage of sales and customer satisfaction and push ahead toward new sales horizons.

"We are growing as fast as we can grow and having a good time while we're doing it," says Terry Hanson II, company president. "We want to be the biggest and best trade services provider in the Midwest. We already are that in Kentucky, the biggest player in the state."

Henson says the distinction of being the largest plumbing house in Kentucky was achieved about a decade ago. The company now has set its sights on Ohio. A few months ago, the company started operating in the Cincinnati market. Henson mentions the possibility of also opening locations in Indianapolis and Nashville.

Clearly, this is a company on the move. The impetus for the movement is the success Tom Drexler Plumbing, Air & Electric has experienced in Louisville. An indicator of that success is customer satisfaction, which can be measured partly in the number of Google five-star reviews given to the company — more than 11,000 to date.

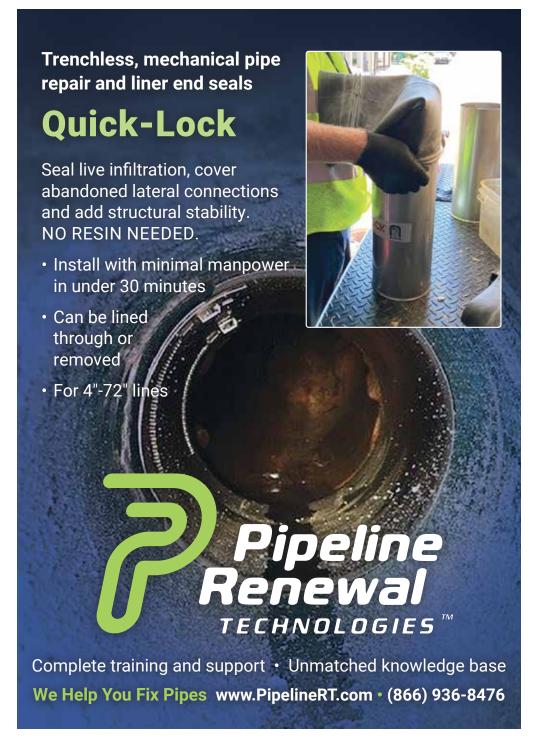
"We have more five-star reviews than all the other companies in Louisville combined," Henson says.

now mostly to the office overseeing company growth and other administrative aspects, Henson says he can't often visit customers' homes and he misses it.

"I don't get out into the field as much as I used to. I love it out there," he says.

However, Henson does try to meet every morning with service crews who are headed out to the field.

"EVERY DAY OF THE WEEK, ONE OF THE GROUPS OF TRADESMEN HAS A MORNING MEETING AT 7 A.M.... I TRY TO GET IN THERE EACH MORNING BECAUSE THAT'S WHERE YOU CAN GET THE PULSE OF THE BUSINESS." TERRY HENSON







K The management team at Tom Drexler Plumbing at company headquarters in Louisville, Kentucky. From left, Kaita Renwick, director of business development; Mike Wells, regional HVAC director; Heath Murray, Elizabethtown branch manager; Cody Webster, HVAC service assistant manager; Marvis Hall, director of customer service; Josh Toon, sales manager; Mike Fox, electric service manager; Tonya Bryant, warehouse supervisor; Justin Price, drains and camera manager; Lauren Nielsen, plumbing service manager; Tony Hommrich, plumbing service install manager; Rebecca Birchfield, install coordinator supervisor; Todd Ruxer, regional director of operations; Mike Birchfield, production manager; Scott Montgomery, electric service manager; Jason Frost, remodel install manager; Darren Batman, regional plumbing director; Mike Hall, HVAC service assistant manager; and Chris Hardin, HVAC install manager.

"Every day of the week, one of the groups of tradesmen has a morning meeting at 7 a.m. We do a lot of training there, celebrate good news, become more familiar with new equipment and review customer feedback. I try to get in there each morning because that's where you can get the pulse of the business."

While the morning training sessions are important, it is the company's apprenticeship programs that are notable. Tom Drexler heard of a Columbus, Ohio, in-house apprenticeship school operated by another multitrade service company, ECO Plumbers-Electrician-HVAC Technicians. He drove there, talked with company executives and returned to Louisville ready to open his own center.

"We didn't copy that program, but Tom's visit catapulted us into the thinking behind it," Henson says of the beginnings of what became Drexler Academy. The academy was a local response to the industry's ongoing struggle to attract and retain capable young technicians. The company's experience is typical for the industry.

"Our typical hiring routine at the time, about four years ago, was that we would look for a laborer, a warehouseman or someone, and hire him," Henson says. "He would work for six months, become an apprentice and then try to get a license. We were struggling to get applicants. We were overbooked for service calls and needed bodies."

The company used a workforce program developed by Nexstar called NexTech. It offers teaching modules and videos for classroom learning. For example, to teach how to install water heaters, the academy instructor would use the training module in the classroom. Academy students then would practice the procedure in-house before finally going out on a service call for an actual water heater installation — with a licensed plumber standing by.

On the second floor of the company facility in Louisville, a classroom was created and a Drexler service manager and master plumber, P.J. Hardin, became the academy's training manager. He built out a program that could be completed in six months. Master plumber certification requires two more years.

Henson says the company didn't know what to expect when it publicly announced the creation of Drexler Academy. It advertised the program as a no-tuition, earn-while-you-learn trade school and hoped for the best. The best happened. "When we opened enrollment, the very first day we had 82 applicants," Henson says.

Out of that first group, Tom Drexler Plumbing came away with 20 plumbers. Once a year — the fourth year of operation is



>> Justin Price works on an HVAC unit at the company's training facility.

"HALF OF OUR LICENSED PLUMBERS HAVE COME FROM DREXLER ACADEMY. WE WOULDN'T EVEN BE CLOSE TO WHERE WE ARE TODAY IN OUR STAFFING WITHOUT THE ACADEMY."

**TERRY HENSON** 

coming to a close — the academy enrolls more plumbing applicants. Eight more graduated in the most recent class. "Half of our licensed plumbers have come from Drexler Academy. We wouldn't even be close to where we are today in our staffing without the academy."

The company has managed to retain most of its plumbing graduates, though some have moved from residential plumbing to one of the other options. Six months after the inaugural class, an HVAC curriculum was offered. From all of the academy classes, about 80% of graduates are on the Drexler payroll.

The company's surrounding service area includes several counties across the Ohio River in Indiana. The cross-border character of the

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service calls could have been a complication for the academy because of differing state regulations on certification of plumbers. However, Indiana and Kentucky reciprocate on honoring trade certificates, so academy graduates can work anywhere in the service area.

#### A CHANGED COMPANY

Tom Drexler Plumbing, Air & Electric headquarters is just a couple miles down the street in Louisville from where Tom Drexler first set up his shop. But it is a whole different company now than it was in 1982 — a fuller-service company, turning out its own trade techs, operating in three locations and two states.

Pretty much all that the startup company has in common with the present one is its namesake — Tom Drexler. **c** 

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## BUSINESS



Kate Zabriskie

## LASTING LESSONS

Explore these three root causes why training doesn't stick with your crew and make some changes // By Kate Zabriskie

ACH YEAR, BUSINESSES waste thousands of dollars on training that doesn't deliver expected results. Consequently, many company owners or managers determine that either training has no value to their employees, the training facilitators don't know what they're doing, the program designers are out of touch with reality, or all three.

If only the root causes of training failures were as simple as those. Even with willing learners, great content and strong facilitation, a host of problems could keep you from realizing strong returns on those training investments. If your training isn't delivering what you think it should, you may be suffering from one of three major problems that plague organizations large and small.

#### **PROBLEM 1: TRAINING ISN'T PART OF A** LARGER LEARNING ECOSYSTEM

Just because people participate in a workshop, it doesn't mean they will change their behavior back on the job. In fact, even if while in class they demonstrate an ability and willingness to do whatever is being taught, all may be lost once participants exit the classroom.

Why does this happen? Good workshops usually fail to deliver because they are treated as a training solution instead of a component of one. In other words, a workshop isn't the answer in itself; rather, it should be part of a larger apparatus or ecosystem.

#### **SOLUTION**

Creating a strong learning ecosystem is an ongoing and often complex endeavor. It takes time to build a holistic structure that supports continuous development. That said, start small. For example, ask yourself:

- Prior to training, do managers explain to workers why they will attend a course and how they are expected to use what's learned after the session?
- Will someone with authority in your company (other than the facilitator) launch the session by explaining how the workshop ties into the bigger picture?

• Are there check-in opportunities after training to ensure that participants are implementing new behaviors?

If you answer "no" to any of those basics, do what you need to do to shift those answers to "yes."

Next, think about the incentives you can put in place to encourage behavior change and the barriers you need to remove to encourage success, and the corrective action you will take if what's happening in the classroom isn't replicated on the job.

Once you start thinking holistically and view courses and workshops as a component of learning versus learning in its entirety, you will have taken the first step in getting the most out of your training dollars.

REGARDLESS OF LEVEL, EVERY EMPLOYEE SHOULD HAVE A DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND SOME LEARNING AND GROWTH GOALS THAT CONNECT TO THE BIG PICTURE AND ENHANCE THEIR SKILLS.

#### **PROBLEM 2: CONTINUOUS LEARNING ISN'T PART OF THE CULTURE, AND TRAINING ISN'T TREATED AS A PRIORITY**

You have great content, you have a skilled facilitator in place, and half the people scheduled to attend the course don't attend because training isn't a priority.

When training occupies a position of "nice to have" and not "need to have," getting the most from it becomes problematic. This most often happens when people are in survival mode instead of on a growth trajectory. In other words, they are scrambling to get through the work instead of thinking mindfully about the work they're completing and how they're completing it.

In practical terms, if people are always putting out fires and don't regularly ask "What have we learned?" and "How can we improve?", then why should they care about learning new skills?



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

#### **SOLUTION**

Shifting from a reactive culture to one that is deliberate about its activities takes months or even years. However, it's not difficult to make big strides over time when you begin by asking the right questions up, down and across your workforce.

Start the improvement conversation at multiple levels and at different times. Frequently ask, "What have we learned?" "What do we need to do better next time?" "What do we wish we'd known earlier?" and other such questions after projects, meetings, presentations and so forth. In the rare instances when something goes perfectly, remember there are still questions to ask: "How can we replicate what we just did?" "Why did that work well?" "Is there any reason this approach won't work again in the future?" and so on.

When questioning becomes the norm, the solutions offered via training should have stronger importance and value. For example, if turnover is an issue, a learning organization wants to know why and may ask several questions: "Are we hiring the wrong people?" "Are we expecting too much?" "Is there something better for the same money somewhere else?" "Do our managers not manage well?" "Do

we need to provide people with better tools?" and so on.

Then, when learning and improvement are a priority, you'll hear such things as, "Today is a training day for me. I'll be unavailable until 4 p.m. If you have an emergency, please see my supervisor Melissa. The workshop I'm attending is of top importance and part of my effort to reduce the turnover."

Who can argue with that? The logic sounds right and ties into big-picture improvement goals.

To get larger returns from training, use questioning to drive improvement. The answers will help people connect the dots and understand why training is a priority and not just something they do because it's on the calendar.

#### **PROBLEM 3: FEW ANNUAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS EXIST**

The world doesn't stagnate, and your employees shouldn't either. If they're doing their work the same way they were five years ago, and nobody is encouraging or demanding change, why should they care about training or think you care about them?









#### **SOLUTION**

Regardless of level, every employee should have a development plan and some learning and growth goals that connect to the big picture and enhance their skills.

"I want to improve XYZ skill to drive ABC result, and 123 is how I plan to grow," is a quick and easy format to follow when setting development goals and three to five goals is a good number for most people.

Better still, if you can tie those goals to performance reviews, you'll be amazed at the interest people develop in improvement, training and implementing new skills.

As with the other two solutions, start small. If your company, for example, has no development plans, choose one area — such as service technicians — and pilot them.

#### **ACT NOW**

Whether you suffer from one, two or all three of the problems described, take action now. When thoughtful goals and development plans are put in place for workers, it is almost impossible not to realize a stronger return on your training dollars. c

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#### **DIVERSIFICATION**

## SEPTIC SMARTS

Talk to customers about the best type of water softener to use and how the discharge should be handled to protect their septic systems // By Sara Heger

**HLORIDE LEVELS IN** many surface waters are increasing and pose an emerging environmental concern, since elevated chloride levels are harmful to aquatic life in freshwater. Communities across the U.S. have observed surface waters with chloride water quality impairments, and chloride levels in groundwater are also increasing.

A major source of chloride is water softening, although depending on where you live road salt and fertilizers may be larger sources. In homes that have moderately to very hard water, many use water softeners. Water softeners remove hardness which causes scale buildup in pipes, appliances and water fixtures, and deposits on glassware. Ion-exchange water softeners use salt, usually sodium chloride, for recharging. In general, the less salt we are discharging to the environment the better, particularly if the discharge could reach fresh or groundwater.

#### FIRST QUESTION - IS A SOFTENER NEEDED?

Hardness less than 5-7 grains per gallon (gpg) typically does not need to be softened. With publicly supplied water, the water hardness can be obtained from the water utility or city. Some cities soften the water at the drinking water plant. If data is not available the water should be tested by a professional, or a property owner can buy a kit and test it themselves.

#### SECOND QUESTION - WHAT KIND OF SOFTENER?

There are two primary types of softeners — time or demand. Older/lower-cost softener regeneration cycles are time-clock

THE LESS SALT DISCHARGED FROM WATER SOFTENERS THE BETTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND OUR SEPTIC SYSTEM. WE SHOULD **ENCOURAGE PROPERTY OWNERS TO ONLY USE** ONE WHEN AND WHERE THEY NEED IT.

initiated, using electronic timers or clocks to recharge the resin at a preset time and day. This wastes salt and water because they regenerate whether or not it's necessary. Demand softeners use a more sophisticated method called demand-initiated regeneration where regeneration is based on the measured amount of water used. To reduce salt usage, high-efficiency softeners should be



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#### **DIVERSIFICATION**

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highlighted below:

With demand systems, if the owners are conservative in their water usage they will use less water and therefore less

salt. Also, not all water needs to be softened. Certainly water used outside the home should not be softened and some properties will only soften hot water or the water for specific appliances, such as water heaters or dishwashers. If the water in the home is high in iron content, it can clog the resin in the softener. A prefilter will



This is an example of an on-demand water softener. With demand systems, if the homeowners are conservative in their water usage, they will use less water and therefore less salt.

help cut down on salt usage. If the water supply has high chlorine due to being publicly supplied, a chlorine filter will also increase the efficiency of the softener.

The high efficiency softener should be set for the actual hardness of the water and serviced at the recommended frequency, which will also minimize salt usage and ensure the system is set appropriately and performing. There are other options on the market to reduce hardness and/or minimize scaling, but data about their performance is not yet conclusive.

#### **THIRD QUESTION - IS REGENERATION** WATER BAD FOR SEPTIC SYSTEMS?

The amount of brine/regeneration water is typically 30 to 80 gallons per cycle, and in some homes it may only run once or twice











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weekly. If the salt is kept to the minimum, the research to date is not conclusive whether problems will be caused. But as discussed, the less salt the better for the environment.

If the water softening system is not efficient or the unit is not operating properly, the amount of salt added to the system may be detrimental to microorganisms in the septic system. In these cases, the concerns include that the regeneration water may:

- Cause an increase in the amount of solid material staying suspended in the effluent of the septic tank. These solids may shorten the life of downstream components.
- Prevent the formation of scum layers (typically composed of fat, oil, grease and soaps) in septic tanks therefore causing more of these materials to travel to downstream components.
- Impact treatment in advanced treatment units such as media filters or aerobic treatment units. Many manufacturers do not allow the generation water to enter their units due to treatment concerns.



#### **FOURTH QUESTION - WHERE SHOULD** THE RECHARGE WATER GO?

In cities, the brine drains to the sanitary sewer where it travels to a wastewater treatment plant. Unfortunately, it isn't feasible for most WWTPs to remove chloride, which is dissolved in water. When the levels of chloride are high in the discharge to lakes, rivers and streams, upgrading softeners or removing hardness at the source with lime are typical solutions.

In areas served by septic systems the brine often discharges to the septic system, although this is not generally a recommended practice as large amounts of salt can be detrimental to the system. Since the regeneration water has not been contaminated by bacteria, viruses or organic material, it technically does not need treatment in the septic system. Before considering any of the options below, be sure to check with your local and state regulations to determine legal discharge options.

- The brine can be directed into the collections system of footing drains. This may require the installation of a sump to collect this water. This high salt content can be hard on vegetation.
- The brine can be day-lighted to the surface if it does not directly discharge into a water body.
- The brine can go into a drywell, an old abandoned drainfield, or a small separate section of drainfield with 20-50 feet typically sufficient (must have some separation to the water table).
- The brine may be rerouted directly to the primary soil treatment system to prevent agitation of the layers in the septic tank or the performance of an advanced treatment system.

#### **FINAL THOUGHTS**

Chloride in the softener discharge cannot be treated in a septic system and will eventually end up in surface or groundwater.

In general, the less salt discharged from water softeners the better for the environment and our septic system. We should encourage property owners to only use one when and where they need it, use and maintain an efficient demand-based unit, and route the brine out of the septic system when needed. **c** 

### ARDUT THE AUTHOR

Sara Heger, Ph.D., is a researcher and instructor with the Onsite Sewage Treatment Program in the Water Resources Center at the University of Minnesota. She is also a certified septic system designer and service provider.



# 

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## ONE BIG RIG

Challenging jobs don't faze this super-sized vac truck that's built to last // By Ken Wysocky

HRIS PODGURSKI CAN SUM up in only three words why he ordered a custom-built, supersized GapVax combo vacuum truck that he calls the "baddest machine around." Bigger is better.

"It's a monster of a truck," says Podgurski, owner of Podgurski Corp., a sewer and industrial cleaning and utility installation company based in Canton, Massachusetts, a southwest suburb of Boston. Founded in 1940 by his grandfather, the company employs 29 people, runs six vacuum trucks and serves customers throughout southern New England.

"The tires are bigger," Podgurski continues. "The blower is bigger. The brakes are bigger. The water pump is bigger. Virtually everything is bigger. And when you make things bigger, they last longer."

The company took delivery of the HV55 Series truck in January. The cost? A cool \$765,000.

"I did flinch a little," Podgurski says of the price tag. "But now we have customers that call us and specifically ask for that truck because it can move so much air. It differentiates us in our market, so it was worth the price."

#### **CAN-DO MACHINE**

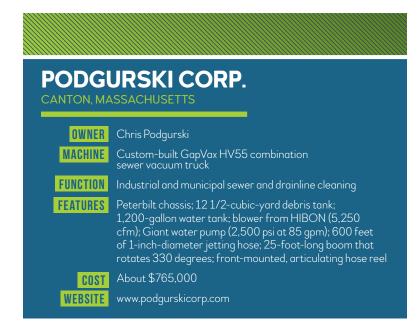
The truck is used in a variety of applications, from hydroexcavation and removing debris from sewer lines to vacuuming out industrial and commercial tanks to cleaning pipelines or components at municipal wastewater treatment plants.

"You name it, we do it — except for handling hazardous waste," Podgurski says.

The truck is especially valuable for its ability to work effectively and efficiently on deep, vertical cleaning jobs.

"High cfm rules in this industry," he says. "Whether we're doing wet or dry work, we can move so much more air, so our productivity is so much better. This truck is designed for long, deep and sustained pulls."

As an example, Podgurski cites drainage systems in Boston's



subway system that the company cleans periodically. The drainlines are 200 feet underground, but that depth doesn't pose a problem.

"With this truck, we're not afraid to tackle more challenging jobs that other companies can't do," Podgurski says.

Furthermore, it can do both wet and dry vacuuming work, which further enhances its versatility.

"I like to be able to do it all and this truck helps us do that because it can be used for so many different things," he says.

#### **BIG RED MACHINE**

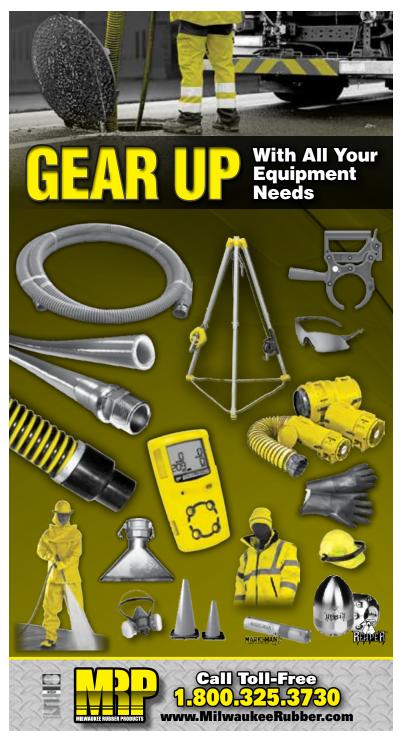
Built on a Peterbilt chassis, the truck features a 12 1/2-cubicyard debris tank; a 1,200-gallon water tank; a blower from HIBON (a brand owned by Ingersoll Rand) that generates 5,250 cfm of suction; a Giant high-pressure triplex water pump (2,500 psi at 85 gpm) for jetting; another water pump (2,500 psi at 47 gpm) for hydroexcavating; 600 feet of 1-inch-diameter jetting hose; a 25-foot-long,



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>>> Podgurski Corp. uses its GapVax HV55 combination machine for a variety of applications, from hydroexcavation and removing debris from sewer lines to vacuuming out industrial and commercial tanks to cleaning pipelines or components at municipal wastewater treatment plants.





front-mounted telescoping boom that rotates 330 degrees; and a front-mounted, articulating hose reel.

The truck — which employees have nicknamed "Big Red," a nod to both its size and its eye-catching, fire-engine-red paint job — also features two front steering axles, each with 22,000-pound weight capacity.

"The sheer weight of the truck, especially with the water system and the front-mounted hose reel, required a design with two front axles," Podgurski explains.

Other features also reflect the truck's heavy-duty design: a 565 Cummins diesel engine; a 55,000-pound rear-suspension system; and a stainless steel body and debris tank.

"I did that for longevity," he says. "This truck is not going to rust out, at least not on my watch. A vac truck we used to own was approaching 10 years old, and some of the carbon steel sheet metal was starting to show signs of wear. The stainless steel costs a lot more, but it's well worth it in the end."

#### PRODUCTIVITY AND REVENUE ENHANCER

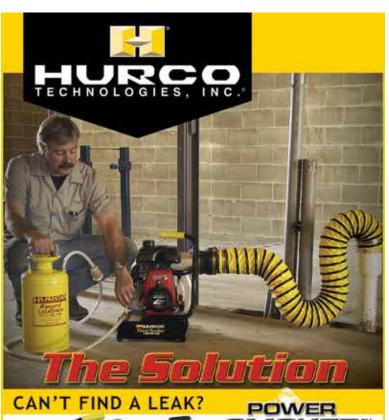
Podgurski believes that the truck eventually will pay for itself by expanding the company's markets and increasing productivity. It also decreases operating costs, which will help hasten a good return on investment.

"Now we can do both dry and wet vacuuming, which will generate more business," he says. "None of our other vac trucks are designed to do both."

The truck's ability to perform deep vertical runs also expands the company's market for vacuum services. At the same time, the blower system is designed to keep the blower cool, so there's none of the lost productivity typically incurred when operators have to stop and give the blower a break to keep it from overheating, Podgurski notes.

"The truck also features a full duty cycle," he says. "With the GapVax system, you literally can submerge the tube into waste and it'll keep pumping until the tank is full — no need to stop. That kind of productivity allows us to charge a premium rate for the truck. And it's another reason why customers keep asking for this truck.

"It's definitely a once-in-a-lifetime machine and I believe it will last long after I retire and my son is running the company." c





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## DIVERSIFICATION

## KOI POND PLUMBING

Designing and plumbing a koi pond requires careful thought and planning from both plumber and owner // By James Careless

FIRST GLANCE, plumbing a koi pond — a backyard body of water stocked with colorful fish — looks simple. You connect the pond, bottom drain(s), skimmer and filters together using pipes and pumps into a continuous closed loop system — just as you would a swimming pool.

Except, this isn't a swimming pool: The need to gravity-feed water from the pond to its mechanical and biological (beneficial bacteria) filters, and then return it to the pond, requires an approach to piping that minimizes friction at all costs. This is why the best koi pond designers use wide-diameter (4-inch or larger) PVC pipes with

no angle fittings, and when they need to turn corners, they use 90-degree sweeps or flex pipe.

The science behind designing a low-maintenance, reliably healthy koi pond is enough to fill a book, and much more information than a plumber needs to know. There are many different pond configurations out there, and there are many ways to filter the environment. But as long as the client or contractor has taken the time to select the pumps, filters and other equipment properly as part of an overall pond design — or hired a competent koi expert to do the job for them — all the plumber needs to know is how to connect everything to maximize water flow while minimizing friction.

That said, "I'm not going to lie: It is truly apples and oranges," says Joseph McAuley, a highly skilled, creative journeyman plumber in Ottawa, Canada. He was the one called to fix the plumbing disaster documented below. "In a house where you're doing plumbing, you deal with toilets, sinks and bathtubs and they all work under the



↑ The best koi pond designers use a wide-diameter pipe, like 4-inch or larger, with no angle fittings. If corners need to be made, they should be 90-degree sweeps or flex pipe. (Photos by James Careless)

same principle. But a pond is completely different. It's still plumbing, but it's like comparing city plumbing to rural plumbing. It's not the same thing."

#### WHAT NOT TO DO

The initial plumbing job in the koi pond (done by the general contractor who built the pond's concrete container) is a prime example of how not to plumb a koi pond. It was full of errors that drastically reduced the flow of water from the bottom drains to the filters. In a pond, filters remove debris and toxins from the water.

Even though koi ponds use pumps to move the water around, it is imperative to have an efficient gravity-fed system for the filtration process to work.

"This is why you want to create the most streamlined plumbing installation possible, while using the least amount of fittings," says Zac Penn, owner of Deepwater Koi Innovations. "You also want to use sweep fittings wherever possible to reduce the friction loss, while

>> In this photo of a koi pond under construction, the first contractor on the job laid the pipe with too many angles, which created friction and less movement of the water to filter the pond. A repipe was required.

using large-diameter pipes is a must because koi ponds need to have the filtration running 24/7 to keep healthy water." That's important; pools don't run 24/7, but ponds do.

McAuley followed all of these principles when he replumbed the koi pond, using minimal fittings and sweeps to maximize water flow. The result: The water management system of this 9,500-gallon koi pond has been working flawlessly for two years, with sufficient gravity-fed flow to keep all of the filters and pumps running optimally.

#### THE THREE KEYS

#### NO. 1 - SELECT THE RIGHT PIPE

In some cases, the client may leave it to the plumber to decide what type and size of pipe to use for their koi pond. If they do, be sure to choose PVC over ABS. PVC is stronger and more robust than ABS, which allows it to survive changing weather/ temperatures above ground and weight/pressure changes from the soil when buried underground.



"Rigid Schedule 40 PVC pipe is the best option available for koi pond plumbing," Penn says. "The inside wall of the pipe is



## DIVERSIFICATION

smooth for less friction, and the inside diameter of Schedule 40 pipe is the same as what the pipe is labeled."

As for deciding how to best lay the pipe and what diameter(s) to use?

"Most fitting manufacturers give you a coefficient of drags with respect to their products, which you can use to calculate flow rates," says Mike Swanson, owner of Koi Acres. "You use this data to do the math by factoring in the pond size by gallon and a desired turnover rate, namely how many gallons per hour that you want to move through the filters to keep the water healthy."

The recommended turnover rate is usually once/hour if your fish load is one fish/500 gallons.

#### NO. 2: REMEMBER HEAD PRESSURE

Unlike a house where water flows from top to bottom, water in a pond goes sideways. Filters are installed at or below the water level, and sometimes above. When water has to move up, it creates

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"IN A HOUSE WHERE YOU'RE DOING PLUMBING, YOU DEAL WITH TOILETS, SINKS, AND BATHTUBS AND THEY ALL WORK UNDER THE SAME PRINCIPLE. BUT A POND IS COMPLETELY DIFFERENT."

JOSEPH MCAULEY

head pressure that impedes the water flow, which has to be overcome by using pumps with sufficient gallons per hour capacity.

"For example, a 5-foot-high waterfall will add 5 feet of static head pressure," says Clayton Arnall, owner of Everything Ponds. "A pressurized filter might add 5 to 10 feet of head depending on how dirty the filter is. The pipe will also add pressure, which is why it's important to use the right size pipe."

Fortunately, Everything Koi has created an online tool to calculate head pressure in a pumped system, as well as the water speed in the pipe. It can be found at www.everything-ponds.com/ pond-head-pressure.html.

#### NO. 3: UNIONS ARE A MUST

When a house is plumbed, the connections are done and that's it, so gluing them in place isn't a problem. But a koi pond is different: PVC pipe unions are a must for every equipment connection. The reason?

"If we need to replace a pump, valve, or filter, we can unscrew the union and put a new one in place," say Eric Triplett and Leslie Triplett, owners of The Pond Digger.

#### **FINAL WORDS OF ADVICE**

For those plumbers willing to take the plunge, koi ponds can be an interesting and profitable venture, as long as they heed the following advice.

"Check your ego, be open-minded to the uniqueness of koi pond filtration and don't fly from the seat of your pants," Penn says. "And if you notice that something in the plans doesn't look right, then talk to the designer. If a change needs to be made, the pond designer should also be humble and admit that they didn't have the best idea originally."

At the same time, "keep it simple," McAuley says. "Otherwise, the friction loss created by all the extra fittings you put in won't allow the filters to work properly." c







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Model	Max GPM	Max L/Min	Max PSI	Max Bar	Power EBHP	BORE DIA MM	STROKE MM	CRANKSHAFT ID STAMP	WEIGHT LBS.	
RTD80-300	21.0	79.5	4350	300	65.0	32	42	4	128	
RTD100-200	25.0	94.6	2900	200	49.8	32	42	3	128	
RTD100-200SX	25.0	94.6	2900	200	49.8	32	42	3	128	
RTD130-160	32.0	121.1	2300	160	50.5	36	42	3	128	
RTD130-200H	34.5	115.0	2900	200	68.0	36	42	3	128	
RTD160-130	40.0	151.4	1850	130	50.8	40	42	3	128	

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Model	Max GPM	Max L/Min	Max PSI	Max Bar	Power EBHP	BORE DIA MM	STROKE MM	CRANKSHAFT ID STAMP	WEIGHT LBS.	
RTX30	8.0	30.3	4350	300	23.9	20	23	3	72	
RTX50	12.0	45.4	4350	300	35.8	25	23	3	72	
RTX60	14.0	53.0	4350	300	41.8	25	28	1	72	
RTX70	17.0	64.4	3000	200	33.8	30	23	3	72	
RTX85	21.0	85.0	2200	200	31.7	30	28	1	72	
RTX-HW85.150N*	21.0	85.0	2200	200	31.7	36	23	1	72	
RTX100	24.0	90.8	1800	124	29.8	36	23	3	72	
RTX150	39.6	150	1450	100	36.2	40	28	1	72	

\*HW = includes Hot Water Kit



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# TOUGH

## OUT TO SEA

Florida's Earth View takes on a directional drilling job with a wet exit to install seawater intake lines for a nature center's sea turtle habitat // By Kyle Rogers

**ARTH VIEW IS** accustomed to challenging directional drilling jobs. But no matter the obstacles a given job may present, typically the company has a bore with entry and exit pits on land.

So the circumstances were unique when Earth View took on a job for the Gumbo Limbo Nature Center in Boca Raton, Florida, installing new seawater intake lines for the center's sea turtle habitat. The bores began on land, but traveled 1,300 feet exiting offshore in the ocean.

"Most drilling jobs, even if you're doing a water crossing, you're still popping up on land," says Allison Murrell, Earth View's president. "Your entry and exit pits are both on land versus having your exit pit be on a barge out in the ocean. It's definitely very different from a typical job. A lot of the processes are still the same,

Earth View Boca Raton, Florida Directional drilling 2 parallel 1,300-foot-long seawater intake lines for the Gumbo Limbo Nature Center's sea turtle habitat EQUIPMENT American Augers 440 drilling rig, Cat 323 and Cat 336 excavators

but there are also a lot of different challenges to think about and overcome."

"The concept of completing the drill itself was pretty comparable to everything else we do," adds Joe Townsend, Earth View's drilling

> superintendent. "It was mostly about the location of the project and the challenges of the terrain and surrounding environment we had to deal with."

#### **GETTING THE JOB**

Earth View was founded in 2004 in Naples, Florida, and started out focusing on private utility locates. By 2016, recognizing the need for underground infrastructure solutions different from standard opencut methods, the company branched out into trenchless technologies. Directional drilling and other trenchless services now make up about 60% of Earth View's workload. It does a majority of its work in Florida but also takes on jobs throughout the Southeast U.S.



Two Caterpillar excavators, a Cat 323 and a 336, operated by Earth View sit on a jack-up barge off the ocean coast near Boca Raton, Florida.

>> One excavator was used to break the drill pipe joints loose and unscrew them from the drill string, while the other was used to pull on the drill pipe to maintain tension.

For the Gumbo Limbo Nature Center job, Earth View served as a subcontractor on the drilling work for its sister company Quality Enterprises, a large civil construction company that was awarded the job through a bidding process. That was in 2021, but work was put off until spring the following year to avoid hurricane season.

Toward the end of February 2022, Earth View began mobilizing and most of the work occurred in March.

"The whole thought process there was doing the drilling before hurricane season started back up just because we were going to have a barge and a lot of equipment out in the ocean," Murrell says.

"We were going to be right in the wave break so it was really weather permitting," adds Townsend.

#### **TIGHT QUARTERS**

The job called for two parallel 1,300-foot bores from the Gumbo Limbo Nature Center under a roadway and beach area, and out into the ocean where a jack-up barge was set up to house necessary equipment and serve as the exit pit. For the new seawater intake lines, 16-inch HDPE was installed. The challenges began immediately.

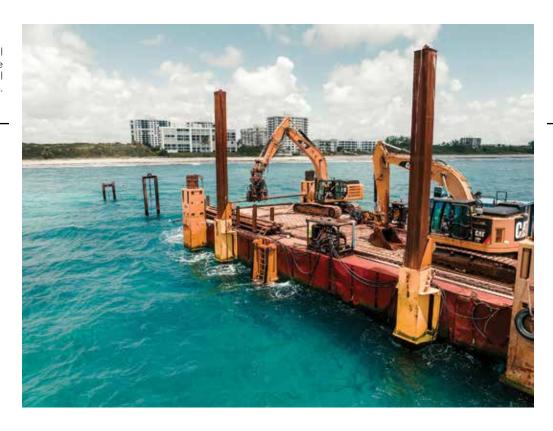
"Right off the bat it was a difficult project just getting mobilized into the site," Townsend says. "They had us rig up back behind the nature center, and it was pretty tight. It was a challenge moving all of our equipment into the area to get rigged up to even get started drilling our pilot hole."

Being right in the middle of a nature preserve, Earth View also had to always be conscious of the site's environmental sensitivity.

"We definitely had a limited laydown area to work with," Townsend says. "It takes a lot of support equipment for something like this, so looking at the site, we had to determine how small of an area we could fit all the equipment into."

#### **UTMOST PRECISION**

Using an American Augers 440 drilling rig, each bore took about two weeks from start to finish — completing the pilot bore and pulling in the HDPE pipe. There was little margin for error. The two lines ran parallel, about 20 feet apart out in the ocean to just 10 feet apart where they connected to the new pump station at Gumbo Limbo.



"THAT WAS ONE OF THE MOST CHALLENGING PARTS ABOUT THE PROJECT. WE HAD TO BE VERY PRECISE WITH OUR ELEVATIONS AND OUR HORIZONTAL DISTANCES IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO FIT THE LINES INTO THIS PRECAST PUMP STATION."

JOE TOWNSEND

"That was a concern, how close they had to be together with the tight location," Murrell says.

"That was one of the most challenging parts about the project," Townsend says. "We had to be very precise with our elevations and our horizontal distances in order to be able to fit the lines into this precast pump station. We have an in-house engineer that helped to design and profile these drills to fit what we needed them to do. There really was no room for error. The numbers had to be hit pretty much dead on otherwise we would've missed the elevation at the pump station. There were really tight combination radiuses where we were having to build up and left at the same time right out of the gate, right as soon as the drill started."

Earth View also had to account for varying formations along the drill path. Crews started the bores with a jetting assembly, but due to a hard layer of coral at the deepest points of the drill — about 48 feet — they had to switch the tooling mid-bore to a mud motor.

"We really didn't have any consistency to go off of," Townsend says. "It was really challenging for the driller to be able to change it up as he was drilling to hit the numbers he had to hit. But we had good steering equipment and the right tooling as far as when the decision was made to switch from the jetting assembly to the mud motor. That's how we were able to complete the bores in a timely manner."

# TOUGH

#### **OCEAN WORK**

The job required a lot of work offshore in the ocean itself, presenting unique challenges. A jack-up barge was installed to aid the oceanside portion of the job site.

"We had to pre-plan the length of the studs themselves for the jack-up barge, determining what the tide was going to be like," Townsend says.

On the barge were two excavators, a Cat 323 and a Cat 336. One excavator had an attachment on it that was used to break the joints of drill pipe loose and unscrew them from the drill string.

"We were push-reaming, so as we were push-reaming and opening this hole up, the drill pipe on the back end of the reamer needed to be broken loose in sections and layed off on a rack we had built on this barge," Townsend says. "That was so as we were drilling, all the drilling fluids would be going back to the entry pit and not out into the ocean."

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The other excavator was used to pull on the drill pipe and maintain tension.

"During push reamer processes, you can't do it all with the drill rig itself, so crews would screw a swivel onto the back of every joint of drill pipe, and that excavator would keep tension on the pipe and help keep that drill pipe in line to help keep the hole where it needed to be," Townsend says.

In addition to the 14 Earth View employees working on the project, there was a team of three divers to provide some assistance on certain aspects of the job. The divers retrieved the steering tooling on the pilot bores. They also helped on the pullback of the HDPE pipe.

"There was a 150-foot-long screen crews bolted to the back of the HDPE product and the screen was drug underneath the seafloor. That's what filters the seawater throughout," Townsend says. "The divers dove down to tell us when the back end of the screen was now going into the seafloor and that's where we would start our count. It was about 90 feet that we had to drag it underneath the seafloor to reach the proper elevation they wanted."

#### **MID-JOB ADJUSTMENT**

Although challenging, the Earth View crews didn't encounter any problems during the job that required a major audible. They did underestimate one aspect on the first bore though that had them make a change for the second bore.

"We didn't anticipate how difficult it would be to have 1,300 feet of pipe lined up with the barge and keeping it lined up while the drill was pulling the product into the ground," Murrell says. "The first time it was difficult having all the pipe floating out in the water. We realized that we had to bring in more support equipment for the second one just to make the process a little bit easier."

"It was challenging on both bores, but the first one especially was challenging because we really weren't prepared," Townsend adds. "We had all the equipment we needed. We just didn't anticipate the pipe wanting to float out as far as it did, so we had some difficulty there but we were able to keep it under control. Then on that next one we brought in and hooked up a couple more boats to it and kept it in line. It really worked out well." c



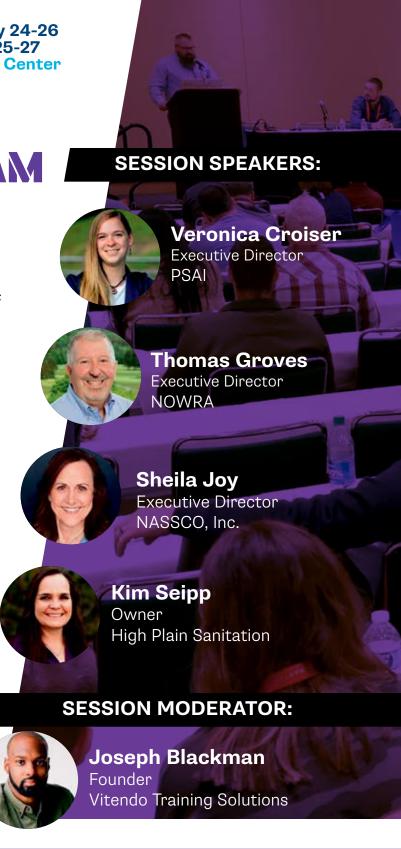
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## PRODUCT FOCUS



## **BUSINESS DIVERSIFICATION -**SEPTIC PUMPING - PLUMBING

By Craiq Mandli

#### >> CABLE DRAIN CLEANING MACHINES

#### 1 // DURACABLE DM30

The DM30 cable drain cleaning machine from Duracable can be used in a variety of situations. Suited for 2- to 6-inch lines in residential and light commercial settings, the durable machine provides flexibility with cable diameter and length. Machine packages come with 100 feet of DuraFlex 5/8-inch hollow-core cable, and it is easy to swap between 19- and 21inch reels. It is a midrange sled-style drain machine, powered by a 1/2 hp 200 rpm motor and onboard power cable feed and return. Getting it on site is no problem with its telescoping handle and wide wheels, which give it extra ground clearance and mobility to fit through a narrow 26-inch doorway. 800-247-4081; www.duracable.com



#### 2 // ELECTRIC EEL MODEL C

The Model C dual-cable sectional drain cleaner from Electric Eel runs up to 200 feet of 1 1/4-inch, self-feeding dual cable in 8- or 10-foot sections that require no handling when rotating. It spins cable at twice the revolutions per minute of a continuous cable machine for cleaning 3- to 10-inch lines for distances up to 200 feet. One-person operation means less time and labor expense. A heavy-duty, 1/2 hp motor comes standard, and 3/4 and 1 hp motors are also available. A custom-designed gearbox ensures higher quality, lower cost and parts availability. The heavy-duty, fully adjustable safety clutch keeps cable and tool breakage to a minimum and provides overload protection. A fold-down handle allows for easy transport, storage and use in crawl spaces. Its carry handle allows for balance and easy transport. 800-833-1212; www.electriceel.com



#### 3 // EPL SOLUTIONS SPEEDCUT

EPL Solutions designed the SpeedCut high-speed chain cutter to be a compact, lightweight machine that can reach tight spots while retaining power for tough jobs. It is narrow enough to fit through standard doorways and light enough to be maneuvered and operated by one person. Additional features include an anti-flip SpeedShaft cable designed specifically for drain cleaning, descaling and prepping 2- to 6-inch-diameter pipe for trenchless coating and lining. With its compact design, EPL Solutions uses a clutchless motor that allows the cable to rotate at higher speeds than many other available chain cutters. It only requires a 110-volt, 15-amp outlet for power, so a separate generator is not needed for jobs where electricity is available. The DC motor provides high torque and up to 3,200 rpm at less than 15 amps. It has been tested to run through harsh conditions, and it features variable-speed controls so operators can match the right speed for the job at hand. 714-453-9760; www.epls-usa.com











#### 4 // GORLITZ SEWER & DRAIN MODEL GO 68HD

The Model GO 68HD heavy-duty electric drain cleaning machine from Gorlitz Sewer & Drain is available in two different versions, either with an open steel reel or enclosed polyethylene drum, and it can be outfitted with an optional power feeder. Standard configuration is 150 feet of 11/16-inch hollow-core cable, which should reach most blockages with a single reel. Overall weight of the machine is 185 pounds. Adding a loading ramp and electric winch to any vehicle makes transportation quick and simple. It is designed to clean pipes 3 to 8 inches in diameter. 877-446-7548; www.gorlitz.com

#### 5 // MILWAUKEE TOOL M18 FUEL SEWER SECTIONAL MACHINE

Milwaukee Tool's M18 FUEL Sewer Sectional Machine with CABLE DRIVE Automatic Feed and Retract has the power to clear tough blockages in 2- to 8-inch sewer lateral lines. The POWERSTATE Brushless Motor and REDLINK PLUS Intelligence delivers the power to clear roots up to 200 feet out, providing full power at the maximum capacity of the machine. The sewer cable machine features the CABLE DRIVE Automatic Feed and Retract system. This system reduces user fatigue by eliminating the need to manually pull back the heavy cable from the pipes. An enclosed cable carrier ensures the best protection and mess containment during transportation and can be stacked for easier storage. The sewer sectional is compatible with ONE-KEY, so it can be wirelessly tracked, managed and secured. 800-728-3878; www.milwaukeetool.com

#### >> PLUMBING PRODUCTS

#### 6 // BRADFORD WHITE WATER HEATERS AEROTHERM SERIES

With 50-, 65- and 80-gallon capacity units available, the Bradford White Water Heaters Energy Star-certified AeroTherm Series offers value, efficiency and versatility. They are easy to install and maintain and feature an integrated smart control panel plus five operating modes (heat pump, hybrid, hybrid plus, electric and vacation). Units are fully compliant with California's Title 24 energy-efficiency standards and are eligible for many local and state utility rebates throughout North America. The series includes Vitraglas lining, an enamel formula that provides superior tank protection from the corrosive effects of hot water. 800-523-2931; www.bradfordwhite.com

#### 7 // CHERNE CLOG-BUSTER DRAIN FLUSHER

The Cherne Clog-Buster Drain Flusher unclogs drain pipes in seconds and can attach to a standard 3/4-inch garden hose fitting. Users can remove the aerator from the spigot of the faucet and attach the faucet adapter. When connected to a water source, it will pressurize the seal and deliver a blast of water to free a clog. This will help keep drainlines clean and clear of debris so water can flow freely. While using this product, insert the clog buster as far as possible into the drain and slowly turn on the cold water. This should almost immediately lead to the clog dislodging. The drain flusher also eliminates the need for using chemicals. It is available in three variations of sizes, ranging from 1-2 inch to 4-6 inch. 800-843-7584; www.cherneind.com

## PRODUCT FOCUS

#### 8 // OATEY HERCULES SEPTIC-FLOW

Oatey's Hercules Septic-Flow is a concentrated liquid designed to improve the overall efficiency of all types of septic and wastewater systems. Containing billions of super active organisms in each ounce, it has the capability to rapidly complete waste degradation. With the ability to perform under a wide variety of conditions, the product performance is not affected by temperature, pH variations and the presence of household cleaners or disinfectants. It is designed to be used on a regular basis to eliminate backups, odors and corrosion. It is available for purchase in 2-quart containers and can be used in septic tanks, cesspools, dry wells, leach tanks and drainfields. Ultimately, it is meant to extend the life of the entire septic system due to its growth characteristics that increase the rate of respiration of existing septic system bacteria, resulting in a faster reduction of organics in the septic tank, allowing for less frequent cleanings and carrythrough of specialized bacteria to better maintain a clean and proper flow in the drainage beds. Regular use allows for growth of sulfide-producing bacteria that slows the bacterial digestive process. 800-321-9532; www.oatey.com



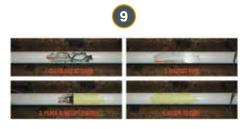
The RIDGID Pipe Patching System is an all-inclusive, start-to-finish solution for faster and simpler trenchless repairs. The versatile system can perform up to 6-foot fiberglass repairs in 2- to 6-inch pipe in straight sections, bends, transitions and P-traps. Easy to add on starter systems include all the basic equipment needed to begin pipe patching while patch kits include all required consumables for a single patch. The entire process can be completed in two hours or less, offers a fast return on investment and is easy to learn. Pipe patching is an efficient, durable repair solution that saves time and labor, while also providing minimal disturbance to landscaping and business productivity making it ideal for residential, commercial and industrial markets. 800-474-3443; www.ridgid.com

#### >>> PORTABLE JETTERS

#### 10 // GENERAL PIPE CLEANERS JM-1000 MINI-JET

The combination of General Pipe Cleaners' portable JM-1000 Mini-Jet and highperformance stainless steel braid jet hose offers drain cleaning power in a small package. The jetter is available with stainless steel braid hoses with Teflon core in a variety of lengths. The durable hose also works well with the JM-1450 electric jet. It can be used to clear grease, sand and ice from small lines, sinks, and laundry drains with high-pressure, wall-to-wall water spray. It packs 1,500 psi of cleaning power in a compact package, yet weighs only 23 pounds. Its rugged diamond-plate metal case safely shields the pump and motor assembly from common job site abuse. The stainless steel braid hose design smoothly slides the jet nozzle down 1 1/2- to 3-inch drainlines and more easily navigates tight bends. The 3/16-inch Teflon core also reduces flow resistance, further improving small-line cleaning power. 800-245-6200; www.drainbrain.com









#### 11 // JETTERS NORTHWEST DRAIN INVADER & DRAIN INVADER-X

The Drain Invader & Drain Invader-X from JETTERS NORTHWEST are handy and lightweight 115-volt electric jetters for cleaning small septic lines and indoor/outdoor drains up to 3 inches. They are very compact (about the size of a hand-carry generator) and easy to carry at only 18 pounds. The original Drain Invader is capable of 2,050 psi and 1.4 gpm and runs off a typical 15-amp outlet. The Drain Invader-X has a beefier and quieter brushless induction motor for up to 2,300 psi and 1.5 gpm and is 12 pounds heavier. The motor/pump only runs when the jetting valve is open; just close the valve to stop jetting, and the motor turns off. Open the valve and the jetter re-starts. Jetting hose size options include 50 feet of 1/8-inch poly hose, or UltraFlex 3/16-inch stainless steel jetting hose in 25-, 50-, 75- or 100-foot lengths (with an optional reel). They include three jetting-nozzles (a 1/8-inch Penetrator, Flusher and P-Trap Knucklehead) with a Pelican case, jetting on/off valve, pressure-wash kit with wand/hose/nozzles, a 25-foot power cord with GFI plug, two faucet adapters, and the ability to snap-connect onto an included 2-wheel mobile cart with built-in hose hanger. An optional snap-connect Wall-Mount Kit is available. 877-901-1936; shop.jettersnorthwest.com



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## PRODUCT FOCUS

#### **12 // MYTANA MV84**

The MV84 jetter from MyTana efficiently cleans and clears 3- to 10-inch lines. It has a robust 800 cc Honda engine that lets the super-duty triplex pump deliver 8 gpm at 4,000 psi. With a dual-cart design and remote throttle control, it lets you jet indoors or access hard-to-reach clean-outs. The jetter cart houses the engine, super-duty triplex pump and supply buffer tank. A separate hose cart is connected with a 50-foot jumper hose and has ball valve flow control. It comes fully equipped with 250 feet of 3/8-inch jetter hose. Attach a specialty nozzle and take on roots. It is easy to load, maneuver, maintain and use. 800-328-8170; www.mytana.com

#### >>> PUSH TV CAMERA SYSTEMS

#### 13 // CUES FLEXIPROBE C540C

The flexiprobe C540c portable pipeline inspection system from CUES simplifies operations by automatically creating a survey report, allowing you to concentrate on your inspection tasks. Share your reports quickly and easily via email or the Dropbox file sharing service. Systems consist of six reel configurations with two different cameras to choose from rated for withstanding water pressure of approximately 160 psi or over 300 feet underwater. Each system serves unique applications and a majority of inspection needs within the sewer industry today, from 1 1/2- up to 12-inch pipe. The system is managed by a powerful and intuitive controller with a quick boot-up, an intuitive user interface and a high-definition 10.1-inch TFT display. 800-327-7791; www.cuesinc.com



#### 14 // ENVIROSIGHT VERISIGHT PRO+

Envirosight's Verisight Pro+ smart push camera can be used to complete drain, lateral and cleanout inspections quickly and accurately. The stainless steel self-leveling camera captures up to 90 hours of color footage from pipes 2 inches in diameter and larger, regardless of material. It can snake through multiple bends for maximum range, and its integral tri-band sonde (33 kHz, 512 Hz, 640 Hz) works with almost any locator. The rugged welded-steel coiler comes with 130, 200 or 330 feet of pushrod. The entire system runs for 6 hours off internal rechargeable lithium-ion batteries, or off mains or vehicle power. Its controller offers an 8-inch LCD screen that displays footage in real time and a full QWERTY keyboard for recording observations. Easily navigate and review recorded inspections using the thumbnail gallery, then transfer them via SD card or USB drive. 866-838-3763; www.envirosight.com



#### 15 // ENZ USA CAMERA NOZZLE

The Enz USA Camera Nozzle has a modular design that allows universal use with all nozzle types, such as the eBomb or the eBulldog, and thus guarantees streak-free all-around cleaning in every application. The HD-ready resolution and 12 high-power LEDs deliver high-resolution video footage for quality control, documentation and preliminary inspection. Data management is fully integrated into the system through the Wi-Fi interface and connection to the Enz Cloud. All manholes and channels are automatically mapped on Google Maps with the videos. The nozzle, which is simple, fast and robust, increases productivity without any negative impact on the cleaning performance or quality. 877-369-8721; www.enz.com







#### 16 // HATHORN INSPECTION CAMERAS H12+ COMMAND MODULE

The H12+ Command Module from Hathorn Inspection Cameras comes equipped with a bright, daylight-readable 12-inch screen. Available with Wi-Fi or standard, it provides stunning picture quality, high contrast and 8X digital pan-and-zoom technology. It has menus in three languages (English, French and Spanish), compatibility with all Hathorn reels from 100 to 500 feet, an information bar with text overlay options, two sonde frequencies (512 and 640 Hz) and a large amount of file storage. It comes standard with a 128 GB hard drive which is upgradeable to 512 GB, allowing the user to save MPG videos and JPG screenshots to either the HDD or to a USB stick. Powered by 18V Milwaukee (or equivalent) batteries, it will run up to 4 hours on a single charge. Batteries are sold separately. 866-428-4676; www.hathorncorp.com

#### 17 // RAPIDVIEW IBAK NORTH AMERICA MICROLITE PUSHROD SYSTEM

The MicroLite Pushrod System from RapidView IBAK North America is a lightweight, smalldiameter push system with durable steel-frame construction that delivers a high-quality image for all contractors. Fitted with 100 feet of push cable, powerful LED lighting and an auto-uprighting camera, it is designed to inspect pipelines 2 to 4 inches in diameter. The entire system is powered by rechargeable batteries and is equipped with the positionable MicroLite Command Console, which includes a 10-inch touch-screen monitor, full Windows operating system, two USB connections and recording software. 800-656-4225; www.rapidview.com



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## PRODUCT FOCUS

#### 18 // RATECH ELECTRONICS PLUMBER'S HELPER JR.

The Plumber's Helper Jr. pipe inspection system from Ratech Electronics is based on a small-scale reel and comes with 100 feet of mini Gel Rod cable, a removable compact command module with 7.1-inch LCD, a built-in battery, and an SD recorder for digital images and video. This mini pipe inspection system is available with a full-spectrum, 1.375-inch, self-leveling color camera; a standard color camera; or any of the company's three micro camera heads — 5/8-, 3/4or 1-inch diameter. 905-660-7072; www.ratech-electronics.com

#### 19 // SECON EXTREME SERIES

Extreme Series cordless sewer mainline cameras from SECON come with two 20-volt DeWALT batteries and a charging station (Milwaukee upgrade available). An 18-volt power supply is included for plug-in operation. They have a Wi-Fi connection to view inspections in real time on personal smart devices as well as an SD card recorder (SD card included). The unit includes a 7-inch color LCD monitor, 512 Hz sonde/transmitter and a stainless steel camera head. They are available with 100 to 300 feet of push cable and are capable of viewing 3- to 12-inch pipe. 702-527-5100; www.seconv.com

#### 20 // SUBSITE ELECTRONICS PUSH CAMERA

When a transporter isn't an option because of pipe size or limited access, the Subsite Electronics Push Camera allows operators to complete inspections in the most challenging conditions. Ideal for pipes from 1.5 to 12 inches, it uses single conductor technology with a rigid 1/4-inch fiber pushrod covered with a durable Hytrel jacketing that allows operators to inspect up to 500 feet down the line. Additionally, the 1/4-inch-diameter single conductor cable provides added strength without weight concerns, allowing operators to complete significantly longer inspections without the cable getting twisted or warped. The 1545 camera with an inline 512Hz beacon allows the operator to easily locate damage and blockage in the pipe. The camera is controlled by a 1575 controller, which features a rugged, durable and reliable enclosure, enabling operators to inspect pipe in the toughest environmental conditions. 800-846-2713; www.subsite.com

#### 21 // VIVAX-METROTECH VCAMMX-2

The vCamMX-2 from Vivax-Metrotech is a portable all-in-one camera to inspect pipes between 1 1/2 and 4 inches. The control module's 8-inch daylight-viewable LCD screen shows the distance of deployed pushrod as well as the current time and date. Recordings are made in MP4 video and pictures in JPEG format directly to a USB thumb drive, then instantly backed up to an SD card. The internal microphone allows audio commentary over recorded video. The pushrod is traceable with the use of an external locator transmitter and is available in 100 or 150 feet. The 512 Hz frequency sonde is standard equipment. It comes with two interchangeable camera heads. The smaller D18-MX camera is fixed position and 0.70 inch in diameter, and the D26-MX is selfleveling and 1 inch in diameter. 800-446-3392; www.vivax-metrotech.com











#### >>> TRUCK/TRAILER JETTERS

#### 22 // AMERICAN JETTER 58 SERIES INFERNO BURNER HOT JETTER

The 58 Series Inferno Burner Hot Jetter from American Jetter offers up to 67% more efficient heat over traditional burners, according to the maker. This fuel-saving hot water system provides power for grease cutting and deicing, utilizing a 38 hp EFI Kohler gasoline engine with flows up to 20 gpm and pressure to 5,000 psi. The rear speed control reel provides precise cleaning speeds and easy access to the jet hose with the included hose guide. Lowwater shut-off stops the engine if the 220-gallon tank runs low. The optional 1-mile open range wireless remote has water ON/OFF, engine shutdown and hose reel control. The heavy-duty square tubing trailer has a 2-inch ball coupler and standard electric brakes. 866-944-3569; www.americanjetter.com



## PRODUCT FOCUS

#### 23 // CAM SPRAY STB3012H

The 3,000 psi STB3012H trailer-mounted drain jetter from Cam Spray includes a Honda 800 cc EFI gasoline engine with oil alert and hour meter, powering a gearbox-driven plunger pump with ceramic plungers, stainless steel valves, pressure gauge and 80-mesh water filter. The pump is protected by an unloader valve and secondary pop-off. The jetter has a power pulse feature for navigating longer runs and elbows. A DC-powered reel with jet hose has 2-1 clutch for perfect retraction speed and a foot switch for hands-free operation. The industrial coated trailer has 15-inch aluminum wheels, a 5,000-pound axle, electric brakes, 2-inch ball hitch, retractable tongue, rear-mounted lockable tool storage boxes, and a 50-foot washdown hose with pressure wash gun and nozzle. A safety strobe light, tiger tail, bullet and milling nozzle with storage box and tip cleaner, toolbox, safety vest, gloves, backflow preventer and safety glasses are included. 800-648-5011; www.camspray.com



#### 24 // GAPVAX G7 JETTER

The G7 Jetter from GapVax is built on a heavy-duty, contractor-grade NATM-certified trailer. Several engine choices, including Cummins diesel, are certified and sized appropriately for the water pump combinations. The unit's hose reel is hydraulically powered with a directdrive gearbox and variable-speed control. The hose reel offers a 3-foot (curbside) articulation from center of bearing, 180-degree rotation and a capacity of 800 feet of 3/4-inch jetter hose. The polyethylene plastic water tank is available in 300, 500, 600 or 700 gallons. The water pump is center-fed for optimum performance. The controller is interlocked with safety features that will show low fuel levels and low water, and is capable of a complete engine shutdown in an emergency. 888-442-7829; www.gapvax.com



#### 25 // HI-VAC O'BRIEN 7000 SERIES HYDRO JETTERS

Hi-Vac O'Brien 7000 Series Hydro Jetters feature a robust frame and a 190-degree rotating hose reel, ensuring convenient access regardless of the trailer's parking orientation. The Tier 3 Kohler Diesel Engine stands out for its quiet operation, enhanced torque and extended lifespan. They include a durable and high-capacity rotomolded polyethylene 700-gallon water tank. With flow rates from 18 to 65 gpm and pressures up to 4,000 psi, these jetters excel in tackling tough lateral lines and culvert cleaning projects. The extended jetting capability on a single tank, powerful engine-pump combinations and resilient construction benefit municipalities, industrial site operators and contractors. 800-752-2400; www.obrienmfg.com



#### 26 // HOTJET USA TURBO DIESEL TRAILER JETTER

HotJet USA is offering a turbo diesel-powered trailer jetter powered by Yanmar. It features 59 hp of power with true 20 gpm at 4,000 psi output in a compact, affordable package, offering 10% more power than regular 18 gpm units. Yanmar-powered units are Tier 4 compliant, are fuel-efficient and use an XL Radiator. The engines are water cooled for maximum efficiency and are easily maintained by a network of service centers nationwide. The jetters may be mounted on 5-by-12 to 5-by-16-foot decks with a choice of single or tandem axle. They are available in cold or hot/cold operation and will clean up to 24-inch drainlines. 800-624-8186; www.hotjetusa.com







#### 27 // MONGOOSE JETTERS BY SEWER EQUIPMENT MODEL 184

The Mongoose Jetters by Sewer Equipment Model 184 comes with a run-dry pump offering 18 gpm at 4,000 psi, a tubular steel frame, corrosion-resistant prepainted subassemblies, state-of-the-art controls, strong hose reel and high-quality gas engine. It is suitable for drain cleaning and sewer jetting, remote access locations, mainlines up to 12 inches in diameter, and commercial and industrial lines. The trailer unit comes with a water tank capacity of 300 gallons and standard hose reel capacity of 600 feet of 1/2-inch hose. The trailer setup consists of a 6,000-pound-rated single-axle trailer, and the addition of a wireless remote control system makes this equipment a true one-person operation. It is also available as a van pack or truckmounted unit. 815-835-5566; www.sewerequipment.com

#### 28 // SPARTAN TOOL WARRIOR

With fiberglass casing to protect and silence the entire machine, Spartan Tool's Warrior trailer jetter provides 4,000 psi at 18 gpm to clear almost any line, according to the manufacturer. The 180-degree pivoting hose reel and optional four-function remote control allow technicians to handle the tightest spots. With pulsation and a full antifreeze system, it is designed to remove tough clogs in any weather. Its design includes room to customize it with a company logo and colors, and it provides a 300-gallon towing capacity. 800-435-3866; www.spartantool.com



## PRODUCT FOCUS

#### 29 // SUPER PRODUCTS SUPERJET

The SuperJet truck-mounted jetter from Super Products is used to blast debris to clear blockages and maintain sewer lines when vacuuming extraction is not required. It uses a strong and smooth single-piston water pump to create consistently high water pressure. Units come standard with rotationally molded polyethylene water tanks in a modular design to accommodate water capacities ranging from 1,080 to 3,240 gallons. They offer standard curbside and street-side fill. The hose reel has 1,000 feet of 1-inch-diameter sewer hose, 200-degree rotation and a digital monitor. This allows operators to work efficiently while positioned out of traffic and away from other hazards. The monitor displays a hose footage count, offers 20 saved settings for hose reel payout and is designed with LED panel lights to enable readability in a variety of environments. 800-837-9711; www.superproducts.com



#### 30 // VAC-CON VJ SERIES

The VJ Series of jetters from Vac-Con are designed to provide operators with an economical, portable and powerful system in two configurations. The VJ375 offers a 375-gallon water capacity on a single-axle trailer, while the VJ750 offers 750-gallon water capacity on a tandem-axle trailer. Standard features include Tier 4 diesel engine, cold-weather recirculation and air purge system, hydraulically driven hose reel and a reel-mounted, weatherproof electronic control panel. Units are available in multiple water pump pressure and flow configurations. Optional features include gas engine, wireless remote and an antifreeze tank system for cold-weather use. 904-284-4200; www.vac-con.com



#### 31 // VACALL ALLJET

Vacall's AllJet truck-mounted jetter is an easy-to-operate, efficient sewer root maintenance machine. The hydraulically powered triplex plunger water pump is capable of 87 gpm at 2,000 psi with other power options available. The hose reel telescopes out 54 inches from a retracted position and swivels 200 degrees to properly direct the 600-foot jetting hose. It uses a single-engine PTO design and a 1,600-gallon UV-resistant polyethylene water tank. Operator-friendly features include four locking aluminum tool storage cabinets, a rear-view camera, roll-up doors and a washdown system with options including LED lighting packages, an extendable rear canopy and a heating and insulation package inside the all-aluminum rear compartment. 800-382-8302; www.vacall.com



#### 32 // VACTOR RAMJET

The newest model Ramjet from Vactor provides greater precision, increased storage options and superior cold weather protection, making jobs safer, easier and more efficient for the operator. IntuiTouch controls provide greater precision and enhanced productivity. Improved water plumbing adds even more storage options. It includes an IntuiTouch control system with one-touch activation, low-maintenance Jet Rodder water pump, Park-N-Clean technology for faster setup at the job site, a Modul-Flex design for maximum capacities and optimum weight distribution, a stainless steel water tank that offers greater strength and corrosion protection, and superior cold weather operation that includes separate storage for wet and dry items. 815-672-3171; www.vactor.com

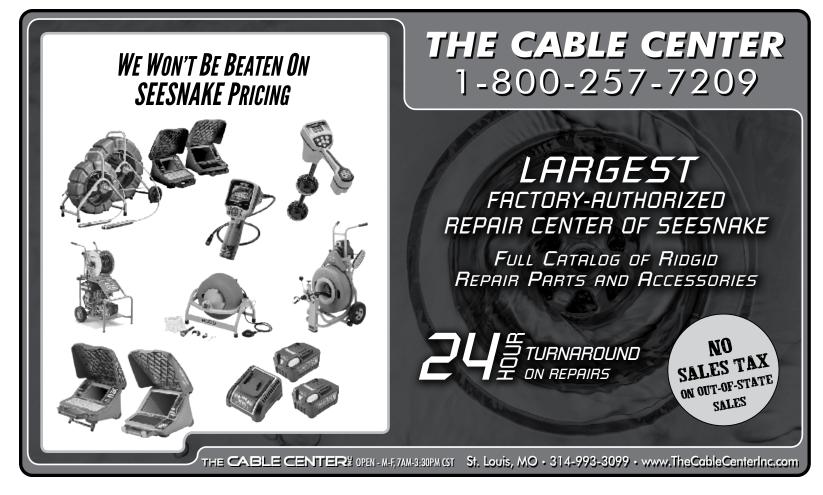




#### >> VACUUM TRUCK/PUMP/ACCESSORY

#### 33 // CAT PUMPS MODEL 7CP6165CSG1

The Cat Pumps Model 7CP6165CSG1 is ideal for demanding sewer jetting applications. With a performance rating of 8 gpm at 3,500 psi, the combination of high performance, compact footprint and proven longevity helps jetters cut through the most challenging jobs. It converts to a jetting pump by adding a pulsator assembly, which eliminates the danger of deadheading the pump, prolonging the life of the seals and reducing unplanned downtime. A convenient handle allows for a quick changeover from cleaning to jetting modes. It uses an industrial-duty gearbox that attaches directly to 1- or 1 1/8-inch 3,265 rpm gas engines. The gearbox allows for a smaller footprint and features hardened steel helical gears for smooth, quiet operation. The sealed housing provides independent gear lubrication, resulting in thousands of trouble-free hours. 763-780-5440; www.catpumps.com c



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## INDUSTRY **NEWS**

#### Avanti AV-100 chemical grout earns NSF/ANSI/CAN 61 certification

The Water Quality Association has granted certification to Avanti International's AV-100 chemical grout, both in liquid and granular form, confirming its compliance with NSF/ANSI/CAN 61 Standards for Drinking Water System Components. AV-100 chemical grout joins other Avanti products that are NSF/ANSI/CAN 61 tested and certified including: AV-150 Acrylate Gel, AV-202 Multigrout, AV-248-LV Flexseal LV, AV-275 Soilgrout, AV-278 Low Vis Hydro, AV-315 Microfoam, AV-330 Safeguard and Ultrafine SD.

#### **ACPA announces Pipe School 2024**

The American Concrete Pipe Association's Pipe School 2024 will be held Jan. 29-Feb. 1 at the Embassy Suites Hotel and Convention Center in Frisco, Texas. The Pipe School will continue the Concrete Pipe Week 2023 theme of "Engineered Strength. Proven Resilience. Undeniable Sustainability." The school will offer attendees more than 70 courses over four days on topics such as resilience, sustainability, installation, inspection, repair, design, production, quality and engineering. Additionally, there will be panel discussions, presentations on pressing transportation issues, and DOT leaders sharing case studies from across the country. A tour of Rinker Materials Grand Prairie plant is also available on Wednesday morning. In conjunction with the Pipe School, the ACPA will host the 2024 Pipe Show, a three-day trade show that connects producers with vendors and partners. For more information on Pipe School 2024, including how to register, visit pipeschool.org.

### Asahi/America partners with McElroy to provide welding equipment

Asahi/America has formed a strategic partnership with Tulsa, Oklahoma-based McElroy Manufacturing to provide fusion equipment that is compatible with Asahi/America's thermoplastic piping systems. Asahi/America will offer McElroy-manufactured butt and socket fusion equipment that will be available for rental or purchase. In addition to the fleet of welding equipment, Asahi/ America, in partnership with McElroy University, will launch an online welding certification and Learning Management System for contractors and installers who will be operating the equipment. This will be available in early 2024.

#### **GP Sewer launches new website**

GP Sewer launched its new and improved website, www.gpsewercam.com, featuring a fresh design and improved navigation. Customers can also view product videos, photos and frame grabs from inside pipes, and connect with GP Sewer's support team for more information on how to get started. c





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## PRODUCT NEWS



## PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

## STEERABLE CAMERA NOZZLE ENABLES CLEANING AND INSPECTION IN ONE RUN

By Craig Mandli

Inspection and cleaning of a drain system typically requires multiple tools — namely the high-pressure drain cleaner first, followed by the camera inspection.

The VIPER is a pipe and sewer cleaning system that saves time, money and resources by combining the two needs into one unit. NuFlow Technologies is now distributing the Germanmanufactured units from Envirobot in North America.

Thanks to the full HD live image, the innovative system enables improved knowledge of the cleaning process, thus saving water, fuel and time. Exploring branched pipe systems — such as laterals — is made possible by the steerability of the system. Due to the high tensile force, vertical stacks can also be cleaned and inspected against the flow direction. The entire process, including jetting pressure, inclination, distance counter and

more, is continuously documented on a USB thumb drive.

With the switchable forward jetting nozzle, blockages can be cleared quickly. Thanks to the modular design, nozzles can be easily upgraded from the standard cleaning nozzle. In addition, the jetting pressure can be adjusted to suit pipe conditions, so damage such as rinsing out the pipe bed, loosening of liner ends or short liners is effectively avoided.



"We often spent more time on practical tests than in the office, and that's exactly how it has to be," says Frank Matt, Envirobot owner. "If a product is as excellent as it can be, economic success is inevitable."

The VIPER series ranges from the portable VIPER light with a working length of 100 feet up to the VIPER long range that stretches cleaning and inspection up to 250 feet. The camera/nozzle combo fits in pipe as small as 3 inches and can be used in lateral launch operations starting from mainlines as large as 25 inches. Due to the wide range of accessories, the user-friendly systems can be adapted to the most diverse requirements.

The waterproof control panel is milled from an aluminum block and is suitable for use in any weather. It has an extremely bright, highresolution display to provide a clear view of the

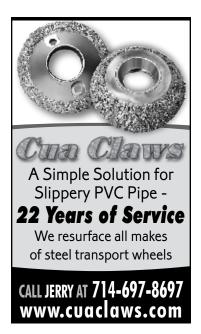
cleaning process. The internal pressure monitored HD camera with sensors and integrated front jet nozzle measures only 1 1/2 inches in diameter. Built into a solid stainless steel case with ram protection, it inspects the underworld through a practically indestructible, 1/6-inch-thick sapphire crystal. **866-430-2134**; www.nuflow.com

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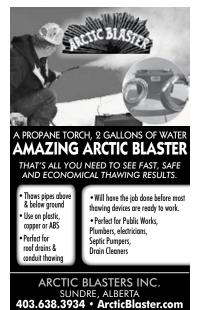


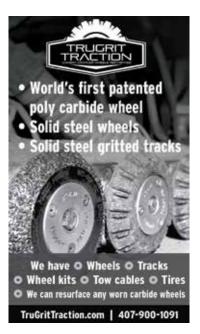


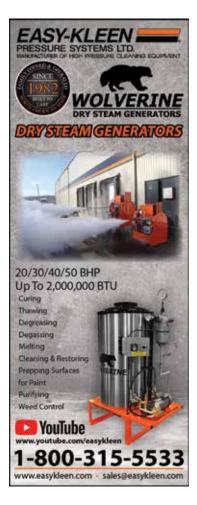
















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see photos in color at www.cleaner.com

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Cotta (single & dual stage) & OMSI transmission parts. Cloverleaf Tool Co., Sarasota, Florida. Phone 941-739-0707; Email: sales@cloverleaftool.com (CBM)

#### **BUCKET MACHINES**



2013 Sewer Equipment bucket machines, new, never used. Also available 2010 Sewer Equipment truck loader and 2005 puller

**Contact** usedsewerequip@gmail.com

#### **BUSINESSES**

Small pipe lining and sewer excavating business for sale. Room to expand business in Seattle area. \$350.000.00 . for more information, contact nveinc@gmail.com (C12)

BUSINESS FOR SALE that has been featured in Cleaner Magazine. Established 60 year strong Plumbing and Heating Company in San Francisco Bay Area services commercial, and residential clients, including schools, property management, restaurants and hotels. \$1.2-1.5 annual sales. Vehicles, equipment, tools, piping, and extensive parts included in sale. \$850,000. Call Marci at (415) 596-7446. (C12

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27 year old Trenchless pipe/excavation business for sale in Seattle/Tacoma area. Owners retiring. Pipelining/pipe bursting, pipe coating equipment, multiple camera/ locating systems, multiple excavators, multiple dump trucks. GPR, utility locating systems, vacuum truck, multiple service trucks and vans, robotic pipe cutter, much more. All equipment and trucks are low hrs. and low miles. 1 acre fenced, paved, commercial property security system with shop and office. All or part with possible owner financing. Owner will train in all aspects. \$1,500,000.00 253-677-1189

(C12)

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2023 Freightliner 114SD cab & chassis with a Vacall AJV1215 combination unit -12 cubic yard debris & amp; 1,500 gallon water - Roots 824 blower with General 87 GPM @ 2,000 PSI water pump (coming in August) www.vacuumsalesinc.com (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648) (CBM)

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Thank you for another great year! 2023 had its own challenges and we couldn't have gotten through without our dedicated team, dealers, vendors and customers! Thank you!

We look forward to seeing you at the WWETT Show in Indianapolis and all of the other events coming up in 2024!

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