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ARTICLES

36 Shovel Ready - Ken Wysocky

On the cover: Wisconsin excavator John Laudolff strengthened his business by taking on new roles as a trusted onsite system installer and pumping professional. On the cover, Nick Laudolff pulls a hose toward a septic system for pumping. (Photo by Jim Kneiszel)

14 Reading Between the Lines: The Pumper Survey: We've Got the Answers Pumping contractors face challenges of finding new customers, providing employee benefits and dealing with rising disposal costs. - Jim Kneiszel

22 Building the Business: The 'Good Habit' Groove When small business owners and managers embrace 12 effective management habits, success is sure to follow. - Ty Freyvogel

28 Rules and Regs: Florida Regulations Aimed at Fixing Systems, Sewer Hookups - Scottie Dayton

44 Special Report: Is it Time to Quit Talking on the Go? Efforts to limit use of cell phones while driving are picking up steam. Here's how some contractors balance mobile communication with the need to drive safely. - Greg Northcutt

54 The Road to Retirement When it comes to financing the golden years, one savvy New England pumper says contractors can't rely solely on the sale of equipment and a customer list. - Seiche Sanders

64 After Hours: Memories ... Made in China New Jersey contractor David Zuidema III travels to Olympics with javelin-thrower son. - Judy Kneiszel

70 Onsite System Focus: Be a Drainfield Detective An accurate diagnosis of an onsite system problem can help a homeowner avoid considerable time, expense, and yard and landscaping disruption. - Zan Ewing

76 Overheard Online: It's System Upgrade Time Faced with a saturated drainfield, a poster turns to the pros for a second opinion on a costly proposed retrofit.

78 Pumper Interview: California Regulations a Long Time Coming Proposed septic system restrictions generate debate across the state. Will their eventual impact reverberate across the United States? - Erik Gunn

94 Lighter Side: An Expo Engagement Amid a backdrop of gleaming new vacuum trucks at the Kentucky Exposition Center, a pumper proposes marriage ... and she accepts. - Jim Kneiszel

REGULAR FEATURES

72 Septic System Answer Man: Pump and Install? Seeing customers with failing septic systems, an experienced pumper wonders if he should add onsite system installation to his service menu. - Roger E. Machmeier, Ph.D

82 NAWT News: NAWT Improves Access to Vacuum Truck Training Program - Tom Ferrero

88 Money Manager: The Audit Trail In most cases, an IRS income tax audit is nothing to fear. The keys are to keep calm, and make sure you're accompanied by an accounting professional. - Erik Gunn

90 Industry News

96 Product News; In the Spotlight: Geoflow Inc. BioDisc Filters

100 Reader Pipelines: The Name Game Does your company's moniker still accurately describe the varied work you perform? - Mary Shafer

102 Classy Truck of the Month We feature Imperial Western Products Pumping Division, Coachella, Calif.

120 Association News; Training and Education

Coming in June

Special Issue: DEWATERING & PRETREATMENT/LAND APPLICATION

- Special Feature: *Pumper* 30th Anniversary Issue
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27th Trucks Inc.46

A



Abbott Rubber Co. Inc.66



Abernethy Welding & Repair 20



Acro Trailer Company48
American Machine & Tool92
Anchor Graphics Inc.101
Aqua Ben Corp.101



Aqua-Zyme Disposal Sys.66
Aquaworx41



Arcan Enterprises Inc.18



ARMAL Inc.51



Armstrong Equip.13, 50, 71
Art's Truck & Equipment.....68
Atlanta Rubber & Hyd.16

B

Badger Vacuum Trucks.....16
Bandlock Corp.74
Best Enterprises Inc.61
Black Tie Manufacturing10
Brenlin Co. Inc.99

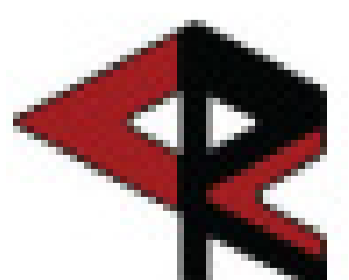


Bright Technologies99

C



Cam Spray23
Cape Cod Biochemical68

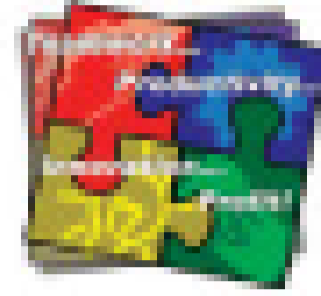


Capital Rubber Corp.79
Center Capital Corp.80

C



Chandler Equipment Inc. 9, 11
Chempace Corporation4



Clear Computing Inc.58
Com Vac Systems Inc.34



Comforts of Home Services 92



Crust Busters/Schmitz Bros.18

D

Dave Syverson Truck Cntr. ..40
Denver Truck Sales.....93
Dragon Products27
DropBox Inc.4
Dultmeier Sales.80

E

Ecological Laboratories101



Elastec/American Marine26
EnviroTub60
Erickson Tank & Pump60

F



F. S. Solutions.....35
Fergus Power Pump Inc.94



Flo Trend Inc.30
Fruitland Tool & Mfg.42

G

GapVax Inc.73
Glendale Welding68
Granite Leasing Co.24
Green Way by PolyPortables 59

H

Hannay Reels86
House of Imports5

I

Imperial Industries Inc.67

J



J&J Chemical Co.53



JAG Mobile Solutions12

K

KeeVac Industries Inc.65
Keith Huber Inc.52, 89
Kentucky Tank Inc.20
Key Commercial Corp.46
Kuriyama of America12

L

L.C. Tanks.....19
L.M.T. Inc.84
Lane's Vacuum Tank Inc.99



Lely Manufacturing Inc.40
Lely Waste Solutions30



Lenzyme-Trap-Clear Inc.4
Liberty Pumps.21
Longhorn Tank & Trailer42

M



Marsh Industrial18



Masport Inc.3
McKee Technologies Inc.93
Michigan Vacuum Truck86
Mid-Continent Truck Sales 112
Mid-State Tank Co. Inc. 46, 58
Milwaukee Rubber Prod.84



Moro USA East Inc.7

N

National Vacuum Equip.58
NAWT Inc.92



NuConcepts99
Nuhn Industries LTD.....17

P



Pik Rite Inc.48
PolyJohn Enterprises123
Polylok Inc.122
PolyPortables Inc.32-33
PowerFlo Products Inc.39



Pressure Lift Corp.93
Presvac Systems Ltd.124
Pumpbiz23

R

RA Ross N.E.24
Robinson Septic Service60
RotoSolutions Inc.101
Rush Refuse Systems25

S

Satellite Industries Inc. 2, 62-63



Septic Services Inc.52
Smithco Mfg. Inc.26
Specialty B Sales12
Standard Equipment Co.40
Surco Products.....16
Sweet Septic Systems Inc. ..71

T



T&T Tools Inc.50
Tank Truck Service & Sales101



TankTec.....43
The Service Program86



Toico Industries Inc.85



Transport Truck Sales31



Transway Systems Inc.47
TSF Company Inc.91
TST, LLC34
Tuf-Tite Inc.87

V

V.E. Enterprises Inc.10
Vac-Con Inc.83

V

Vacutru Limited81



VAR Co.49

W

Walex Products Co.77
Wallenstein Pumps-Elmira ..75
Water Cannon Inc.29
Wee Engineer Inc.74



Wells Cargo COG24
Wells Fargo Equipment.....69
Westmoor Ltd.95
Wilcox Truck Sales10

Classifieds.....114-119
Marketplace.....104-106
Truck Stop.....108-111

REGIONAL ADVERTISERS

Midwest Supplement

(after page 98)

Advance Pump & Equip.1
Engle Fabrication LLC8
Heritage Truck Equipment6
Marengo Fabricated Steel3
Milwaukee Rubber6
Pat's Pump & Blower4
Pierson Co.4
Rider Vacuum Sales7
Robertson Truck Sales8
T-Line Equipment Inc.5
V&H Inc.3
Vacuum Sales Inc.4

Eastern Supplement

(after page 98)

Advance Pump & Equip.1
Ander Inc.7
Heritage Truck Equipment4
Manchester Hose & Coupling ..2
Marengo Fabricated Steel5
Pat's Pump & Blower4
TSI Tank Services Inc.2
V&H Inc.8
Vacuum Sales Inc.3, 5

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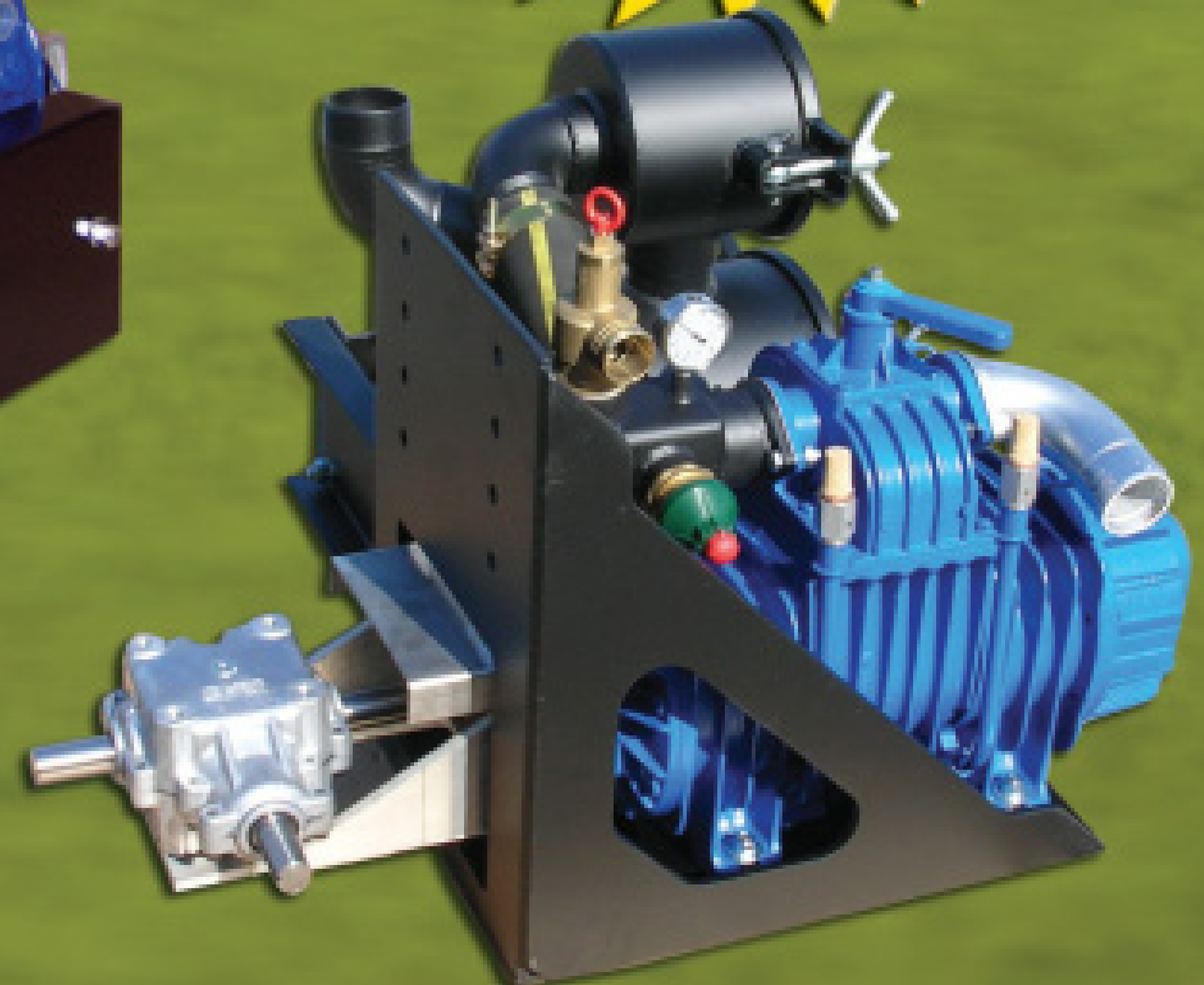
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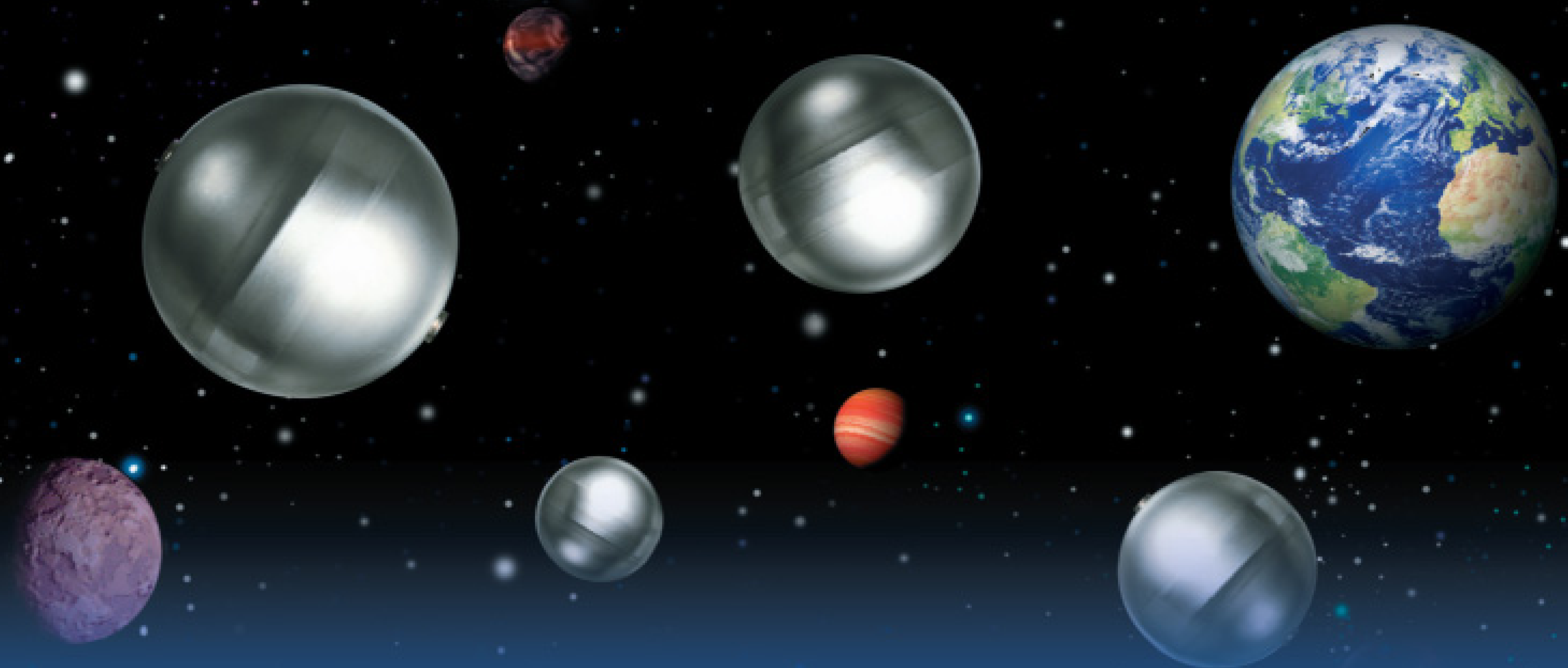
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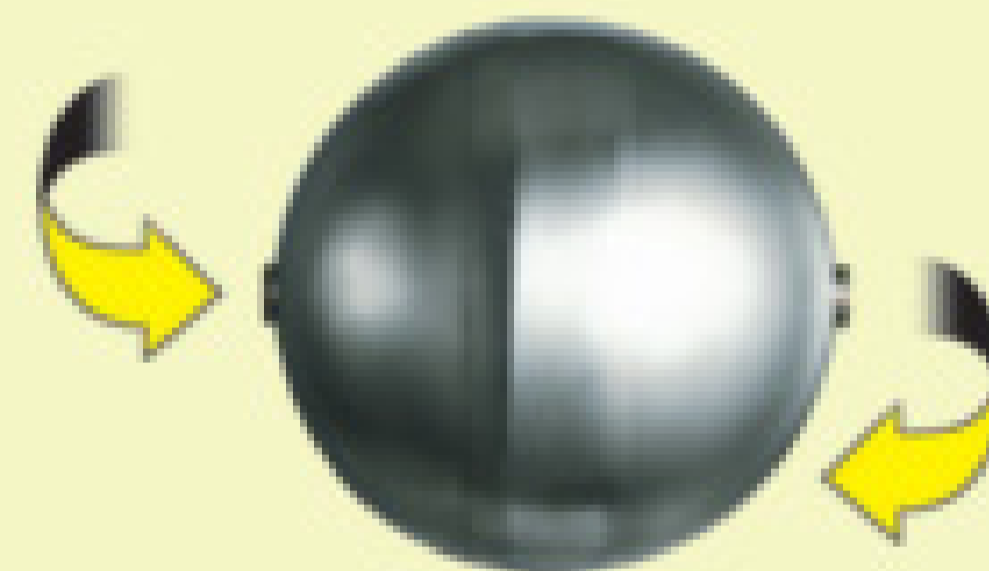
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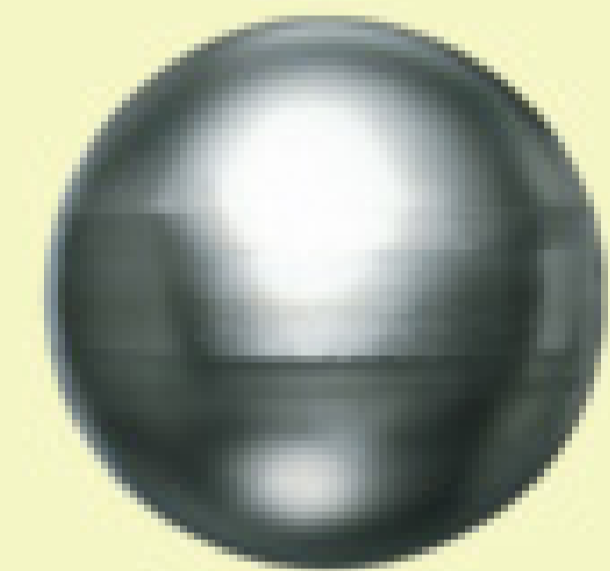
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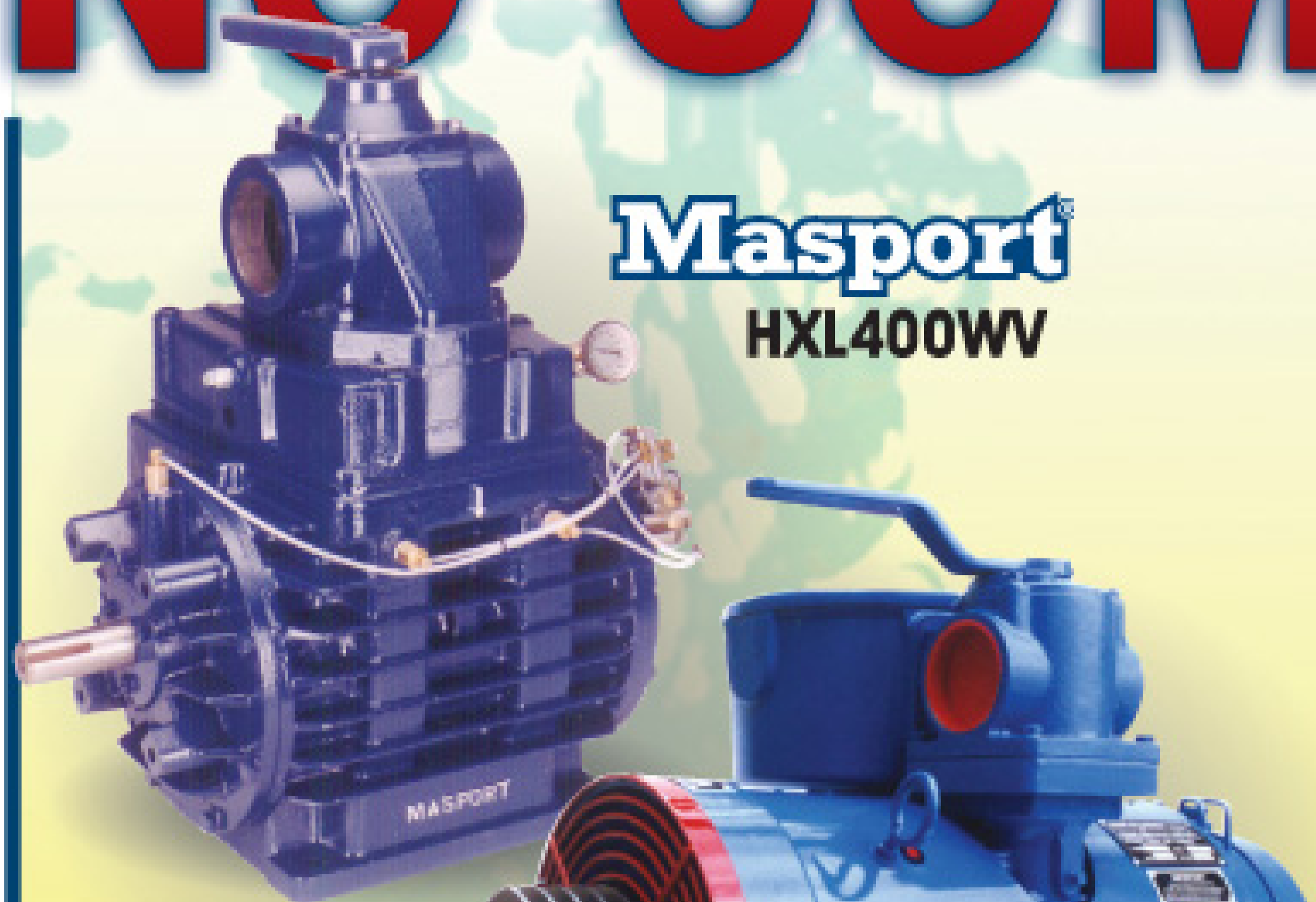
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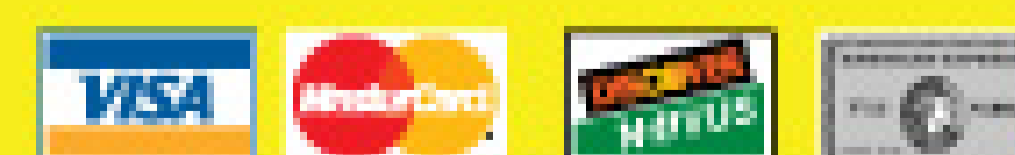


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The Pumper Survey: We've Got the Answers

By Jim Kneiszel, Editor

Late in 2008, we teed up a simple survey designed to find out what issues are most important to pumping contractors. We introduced the *Big 10 Pumper Survey* in the magazine and posted it online at www.pumper.com. We asked readers to go online and answer the 10 questions.

I'm happy to report that 188 pumpers participated, and their answers are published here. If you took the time to respond, please know that your effort is appreciated. For those of you who had the best of intentions to join the survey but simply didn't have the time, you'll get another chance to share your input. Later this year, we'll unveil the second *Big 10 Pumper Survey*. Our plan is to make this an annual project, so we can see how the industry changes and matures over the years.

We were pleased with the response rate for the first-time survey, though any survey-taker will tell you that bigger is always better. The accuracy of the results grows along with the number of responses. That said, I think the information presented here is a good measure of the pulse of liquid waste haulers across the United States and beyond.

STATE OF MIND

A number of responses came from Canada, mainly Ontario and British Columbia. If we gave an award to the pumper who traveled the farthest to provide a virtual response, it would go to a lone contractor from Australia.

Contributions came from all four corners of the U.S. Georgia won the prize for the most participation, with 15 pumpers answering the survey. New York was second with nine responses. Pennsylvania and Tennessee provided eight each. There were six responses from Michigan, Wisconsin and Ohio, and five each from Texas, Illinois, Alabama and California.

Outside the Lower 48, we also received responses from pumpers in Alaska and Hawaii.

CONCLUSIONS

I drew a few immediate conclusions from the survey responses, and they mainly served to reinforce assumptions I've made over the years talking to so many of you, either for stories or at the Pumper & Cleaner Environmental Expo. They are:

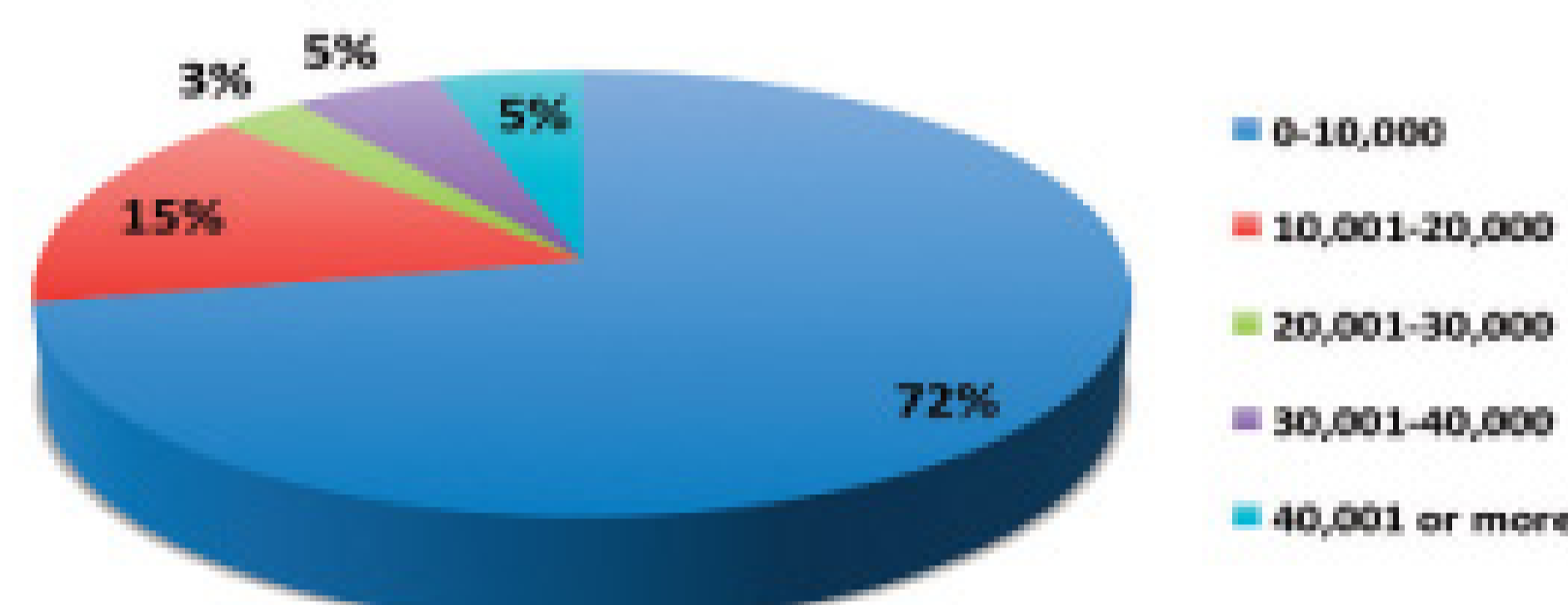
This is still predominantly an industry of small family businesses

I come from a background of farm families, and I often see a common thread between farming and pumping. The work is hard, the schedule is sun-up to sundown, dad is out slinging hose or riding the tractor while mom

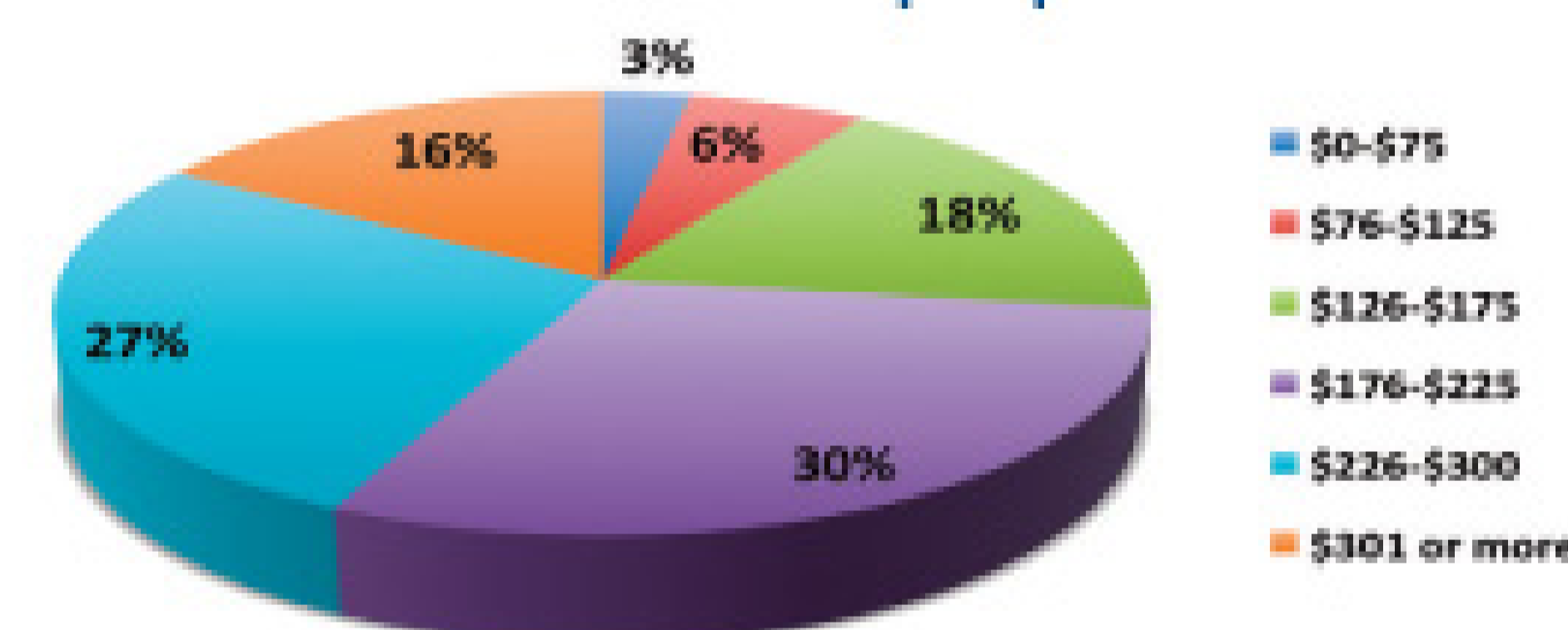
is inside keeping the books and answering the phone. Junior spends a fair amount of his childhood alongside dad in the cab of the truck, learning the business just like he learned to walk.

Of the pumpers surveyed, 51 percent said they had 1 to 3 employees, including themselves. More than three-quarters of the respondents had companies with 6 employees or less. I'll bet the majority of those businesses are family run, many with an office in the home, and the employees are almost always two or three generations of the same family. One pumper anonymously joked that the fringe benefits he provides includes "bossing myself around."

The nature of these businesses is that the owner has to be an expert in a lot of areas, from maintaining and operating a vacuum truck to customer service and marketing, from turning a wrench to balancing the books.



On average, how many gallons of residential septage does your company pump per day?



On average, how much does your company charge per residential pump-out?

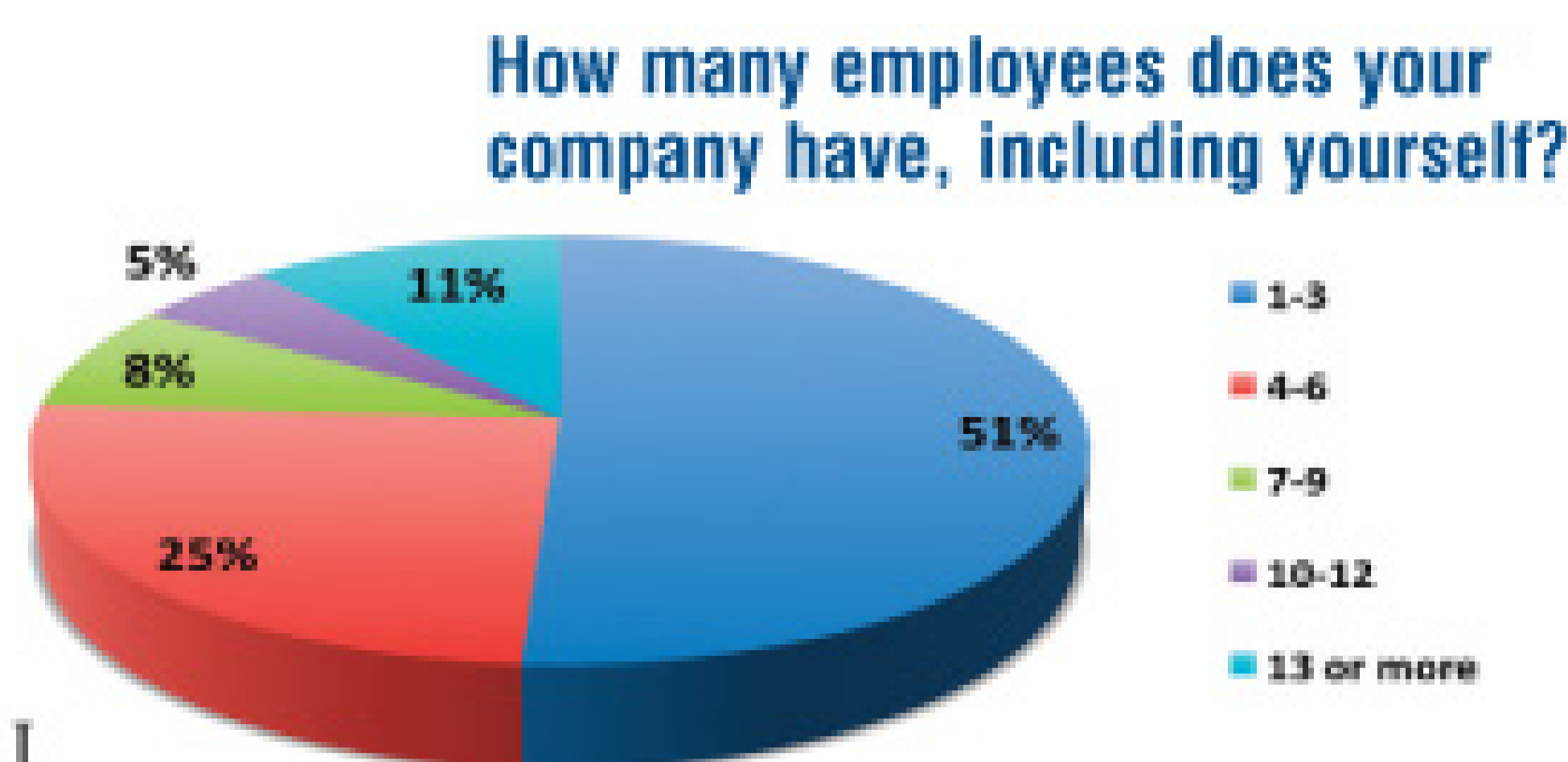
It's difficult for pumpers to offer a multitude of employee fringe benefits

The bulk of those surveyed pump less than 10,000 gallons of waste a day and operate with three or fewer trucks. And a majority of pumpers collect less than \$225 for each residential pump-out they perform. Finding more customers and dealing with rising fuel and disposal costs are their biggest concerns. Put all those factors together and you can imagine how difficult it would be to offer costly employee benefits like health insurance and retirement programs.

Just over half of the responding companies offer paid vacations, the top fringe benefit listed at 54 percent. Holiday bonuses remain a popular benefit, given by 47 percent of the companies. Uniforms came in third, at 41 percent; health insurance was fourth, provided by about one-third of the companies.

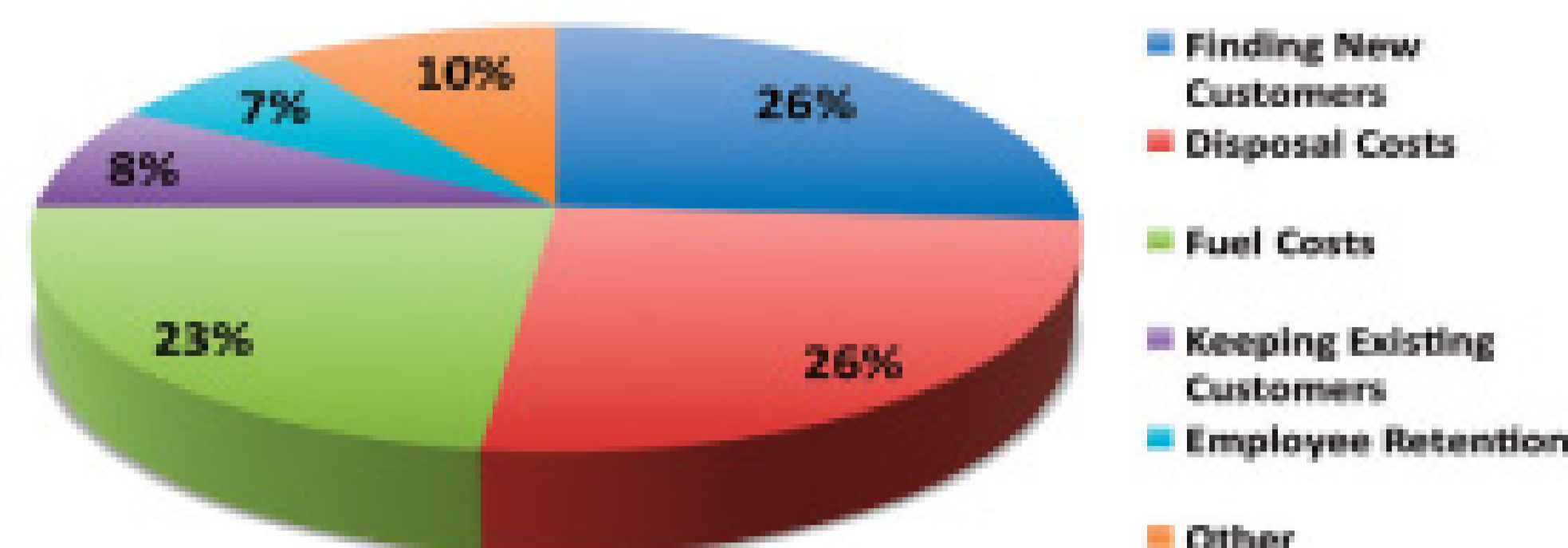
Until the recession kicked in, I'd often heard that attracting and retaining employees was a huge challenge for pumping companies. Interestingly, 20 percent of the companies surveyed said they offered no employee benefits, which can't help in building a stable workforce.

Employee benefits mentioned that weren't on our list: birthdays off, cell phones, Sam's Club memberships, midyear bonus, vacation bonus and permanent disability and life insurance.



SURVEYS LIKE THIS ONE CAN BE ENLIGHTENING FOR EVERYONE IN THE INDUSTRY. THEY PROVIDE A GOOD SNAPSHOT OF THE ROBUSTNESS OF A BUSINESS SECTOR AT ANY GIVEN POINT IN TIME.

What is the single most important issue facing your company in the upcoming year?



Rising disposal fees and finding new customers are big challenges

In a climate of increased competition and economic recession, it's no surprise that finding new customers was listed as a top concern for pumpers. The other major concern was rising disposal costs, presumably caused by rate increases at public treatment plants. The majority of contractors (70 percent) said they disposed of septage at public plants.

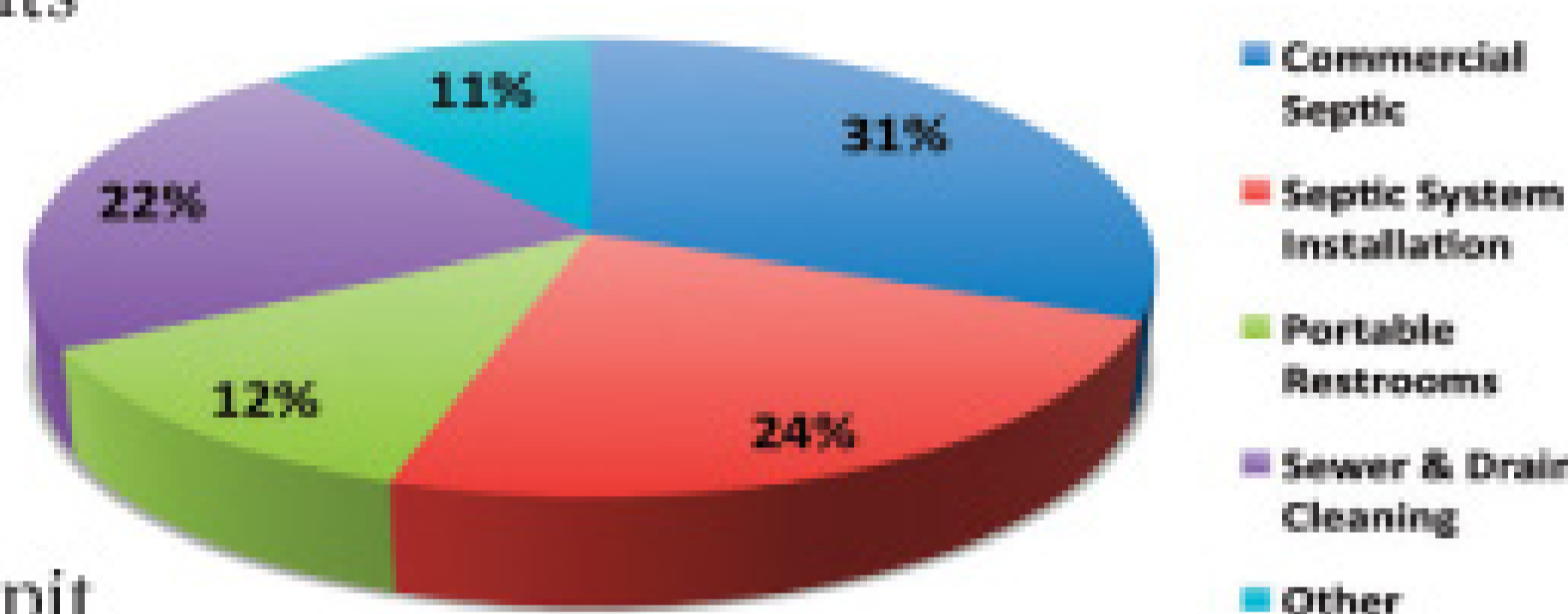
Fuel costs came in as a close third-place concern for pumpers, followed by keeping the existing customer base and retaining employees.

Elaborating on the single most important issue faced by pumpers, respondents zeroed in on government regulation and intervention or "interference" in their businesses. A few noted concerns over taxes and the economy. Some mentioned unscrupulous competitors. One said it's difficult to find "good positive team players."

MENU OF SERVICES

In the category of other services provided, respondents added several diversity choices that weren't listed on the survey, including confined space entry and camera work, full-service plumbing, hydroblasting and excavating, pit toilets and sumps, car wash pit and catch basin cleaning, home inspections, equipment rental, trenchless repairs, industrial and municipal tank cleaning, environmental cleanup and operating a disposal facility.

Other than residential septic pumping, what services does your company provide?



THE BOTTOM LINE

Surveys like this one can be enlightening for everyone in the industry. They provide a good snapshot of the robustness of a business sector at any given point in time; this go-around it's a challenging economic period — to put it lightly — and answers might reflect a degree of pessimism felt by small business owners today.

But the value and quality of the *Big 10 survey* is up to you. We rely on your feedback to build on the quality of the next survey. If you have different questions you'd like us to ask, send them to me by e-mail at editor@pumper.com and we'll add them to the list for consideration.

We also rely on you to participate in the survey. When we begin promoting the next survey, please take a moment to go online at www.pumper.com and make sure your voice is heard. ■

Contact us: Pumper strives to serve the liquid waste industry with interesting and helpful stories. We welcome your comments, questions and column suggestions and promise a prompt reply to all reader contacts. Call 800/257-7222; fax 715/546-3786; e-mail Pumper editor Jim Kneiszal at editor@pumper.com.



- 1. On average, how many gallons of residential septage does your company pump per day?**

0-10,000.....	72%	10,001-20,000	15%
20,001-30,000	3%	30,001-40,000	5%
40,001 or more	5%		
- 2. How does your company dispose of septage?**

Public Facility	70%	Land Application	19%
Private Facility	10%	Other	1%
- 3. On average, what is your company's septage disposal cost per 1,000 gallons?**

\$0	3%	\$1-\$40	34%
\$41-\$80	38%	\$81-\$120	16%
\$121-\$160	7%	\$160 or more	2%
- 4. On average, how much does your company charge per residential pump-out?**

\$0-\$75	3%	\$76-\$125	6%
\$126-\$175	18%	\$176-\$225	30%
\$226-\$300	27%	\$301 or more	16%
- 5. How many septage pumping trucks does your company have in its fleet?**

1	33%	2-3.....	48%	4-5.....	10%
6-7	5%	8-9.....	2%	10 or more	2%
- 6. How many employees does your company have, including yourself?**

1-3	51%	4-6	25%	7-9.....	8%
10-12	5%	12 or more	11%		
- 7. What employee benefits does your company offer?**

Paid Vacation	54%	Holiday Bonus	47%
Uniforms	41%	Health Insurance	34%
Flexible Scheduling	32%	Paid Sick Days	30%
Company Parties	29%	Retirement Fund	20%
Flexible Spending	5%	Health Club Membership.....	2%
Daycare	1%	None	20%
Other	8%		
- 8. How does your company compensate employees?**

Hourly	44%	Salary	21%
Bonus.....	20%	Commission.....	12%
Other	3%		
- 9. Other than residential septic pumping, what services does your company provide?**

Commercial Septic.....	31%	Septic System Installation ..	24%
Portable Restrooms	12%	Sewer and Drain Cleaning ..	22%
Other	11%		
- 10. What is the single most important issue facing your company in the upcoming year?**

Finding New Customers ..	26%	Disposal Costs	26%
Fuel Costs	23%	Keeping Existing Customers ..	8%
Employee Retention	7%	Other	10%

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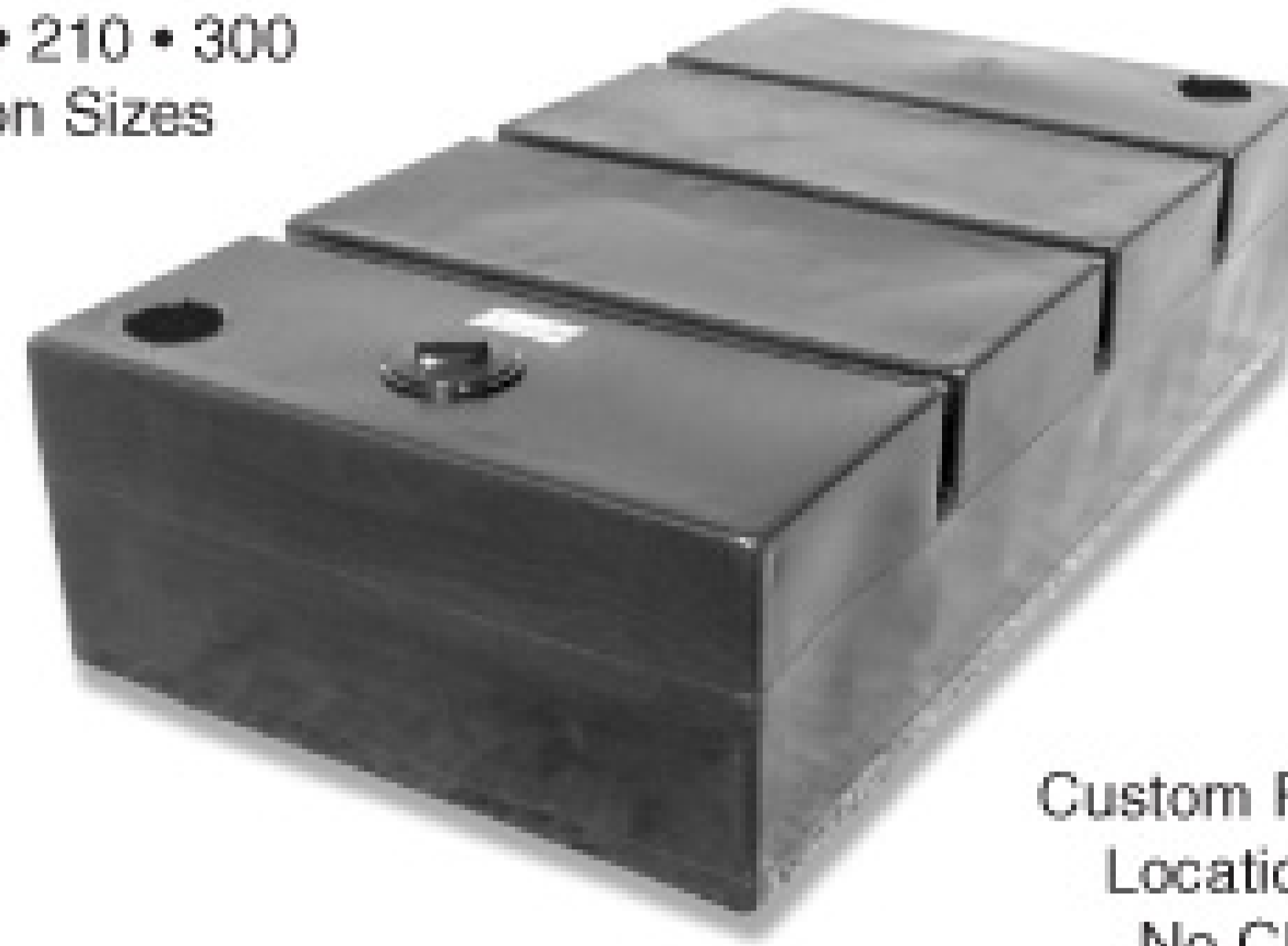


Options

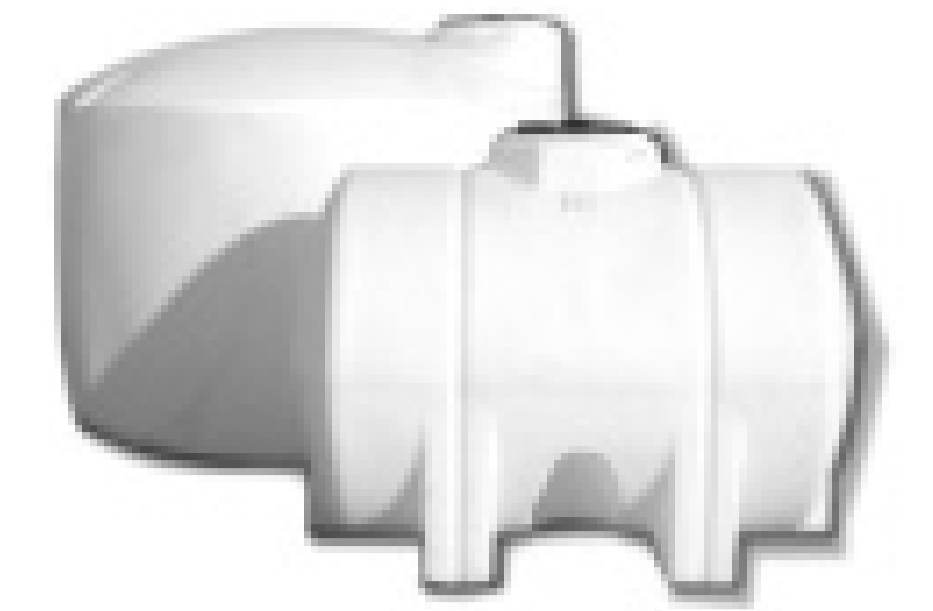
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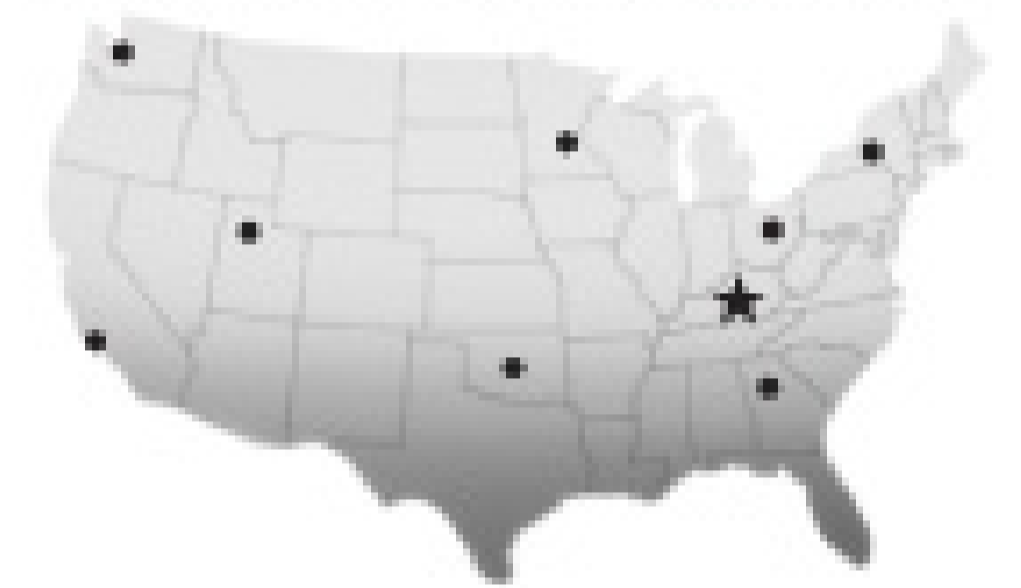


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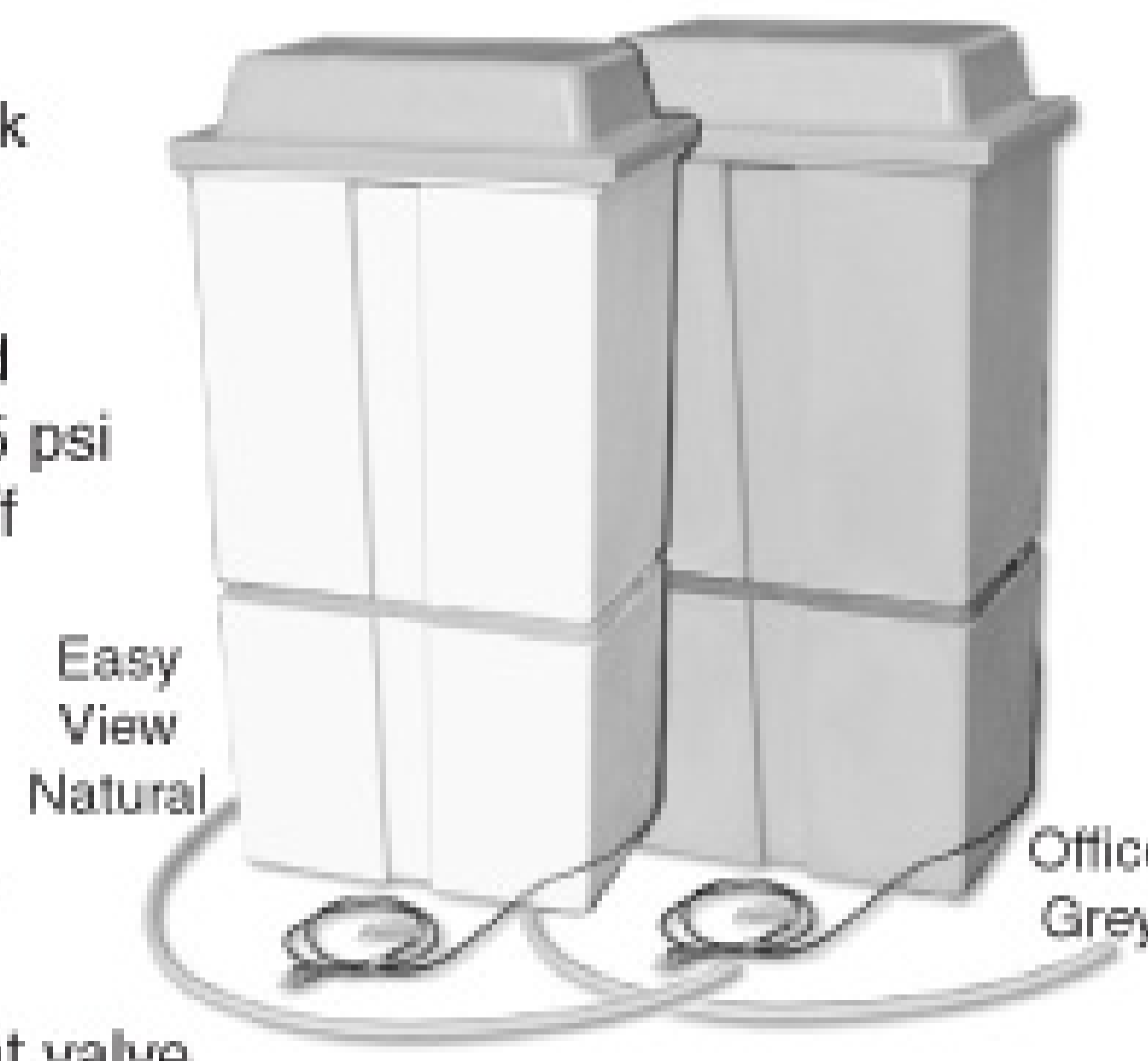
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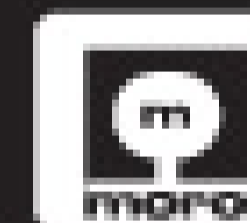
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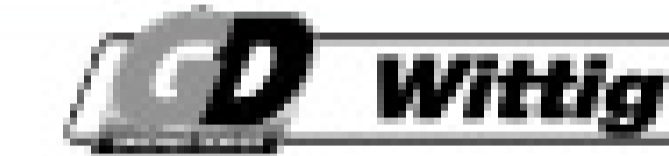
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The 'Good Habit' Groove

When small business owners and managers embrace 12 effective management habits, success is sure to follow

By Ty Freyvogel

When you started your own company, your focus was on doing anything and everything to get it off the ground. Most likely, you spent day and night building the business, solving problems, working overtime to please customers.

Now, you're proud to say that your venture is a success. But in all the hustle and bustle, you've likely let some small but critical details fall by the wayside. Unfortunately, those nagging little business practices that so often get overlooked are the same ones that can keep you a step (or two, or ten) ahead of the competition.

There's no time like the present to start developing habits that will help you run a more solid business. And if you're worried about where to start, don't be. I've created a checklist of business management habits that will help you keep a tight rein on your business and pull ahead of the pack.

Here's my checklist of 12 good habits that every business owner should develop:

1 Review all your systems from top to bottom. Carefully examine what is working and what isn't. Decide where the problems are and figure out what can be fixed. You might be able to fix them yourself, or you might need outside guidance. A system review can be an eye-opening experience for business owners. They are usually surprised to find that their business has fallen into habits that are hindering them from being more successful.

2 Review all vendor contracts. Take a look at how much business you are doing with each vendor. Are you getting the best rates based on how much you are working together? Is the relationship mutually beneficial? If not, don't be afraid to make a change. If you're happy with your vendors, take the time to tell them. Let vendors know that you want to create a great relationship with them.

3 Determine who your best customers are. You may be surprised to find out that your best customers aren't who you think they are. Examine all your customers through a profitability lens. Just because you always seem to be doing something for certain customers doesn't mean they're the most profitable. Of course, you should treat all customers well — but when you identify your best ones, you'll want to give them VIP treatment.

4 Touch base with your best customers. Be sure to tell them you appreciate their business and ask if there is anything you can improve on or do differently to help them grow their business. A quick letter to customers will let them know you care about their needs and encourage them to offer constructive feedback.

Ty Freyvogel owns the consulting firm, Freyvogel Communications, and is author of It's Not Your Smarts, It's Your Schmooze and Seize the Century! He can be reached through his Web site, www.EntrepreneursLab.com



Unfortunately, those nagging little business practices that so often get overlooked are the same ones that can keep you a step (or two, or ten) ahead of the competition.

5 Hold annual performance reviews. Talk to your employees about what they can do to help the company run more smoothly. Use annual performance reviews to find out what they feel most passionate about in their work, and ask if there is another part of the business where they would like to play a larger role. Always be honest with employees and take the time to listen to their concerns.

6 Engage your employees as partners. The best people to help you solve problems, particularly those involving customers, are the ones who experience them on a daily basis. Your employees are a (possibly untapped) wellspring of ideas on how you can make your customers happier. Hold a meeting designed to get them to share those ideas. Listening to and implementing your employees' suggestions is a great way to make them feel like valued business partners.

7 Do a "spring cleaning" at least once a year. Purge your office. There's no need to hang onto all of the stuff you either don't need or doesn't work anymore. Your employees will like working in a cleaner environment. Chances are they — and you — will be happier and more productive. It's depressing to be surrounded by clutter.

8 Review your marketing campaign. Make time to take a look at which marketing efforts are driving business and which are not. Do not hesitate to make changes if you think current efforts aren't paying off. A great marketing campaign is a valuable way to develop your business and it can be disappointing when you realize something you have been doing simply isn't working. Stay positive and come up with better ways to spend your marketing budget.

9 Overhaul your Web site. In the same way retail stores move around their floor sets, you need to make changes to your Web site to keep people coming back. Make sure information is updated. Set your company's Web site as the home page on your browser. That way every time you go online you will notice your Web site. It serves as a constant reminder that you need to keep making improvements.

10 Take a look at your business cards. Chances are you are handing out business cards to all kinds of people: your customers, your vendors, potential customers. Make sure the information is updated. Are all numbers and e-mail addresses current? Does the design match your Web site and stationery letterhead?

11 Consider technology upgrades. If you need new computers or a new phone system to help things run more smoothly, don't hesitate to make those upgrades. A technology upgrade can make a huge difference in the daily lives of your employees, enabling them to spend less time attending to problems such as computer crashes or lost voicemails and focus attention on things that truly matter.

12 Review insurance policies. Carefully review all of your policies at least once a year. I know, insurance is not the most exciting subject in the world. But taking the time to make sure you have adequate coverage could save you a lot of money down the line. This is especially important if changes have taken place in your company during the past year that affect your liability.

DON'T WORRY, BE HAPPY

Remember that once you've completed all of the tasks on the list, your work isn't done. Don't put the list aside for a couple of years to gather dust. All of the tasks on the list should be completed at least once a year if you want them to benefit your business in a consistent, positive way.

Don't fret over the time you spend completing these tasks. You'll be surprised at how much time you free up by habitually keeping your business in order. It will allow you to work on achieving your new goals and developing your business without having to constantly worry about what problem lurks around the corner. ■



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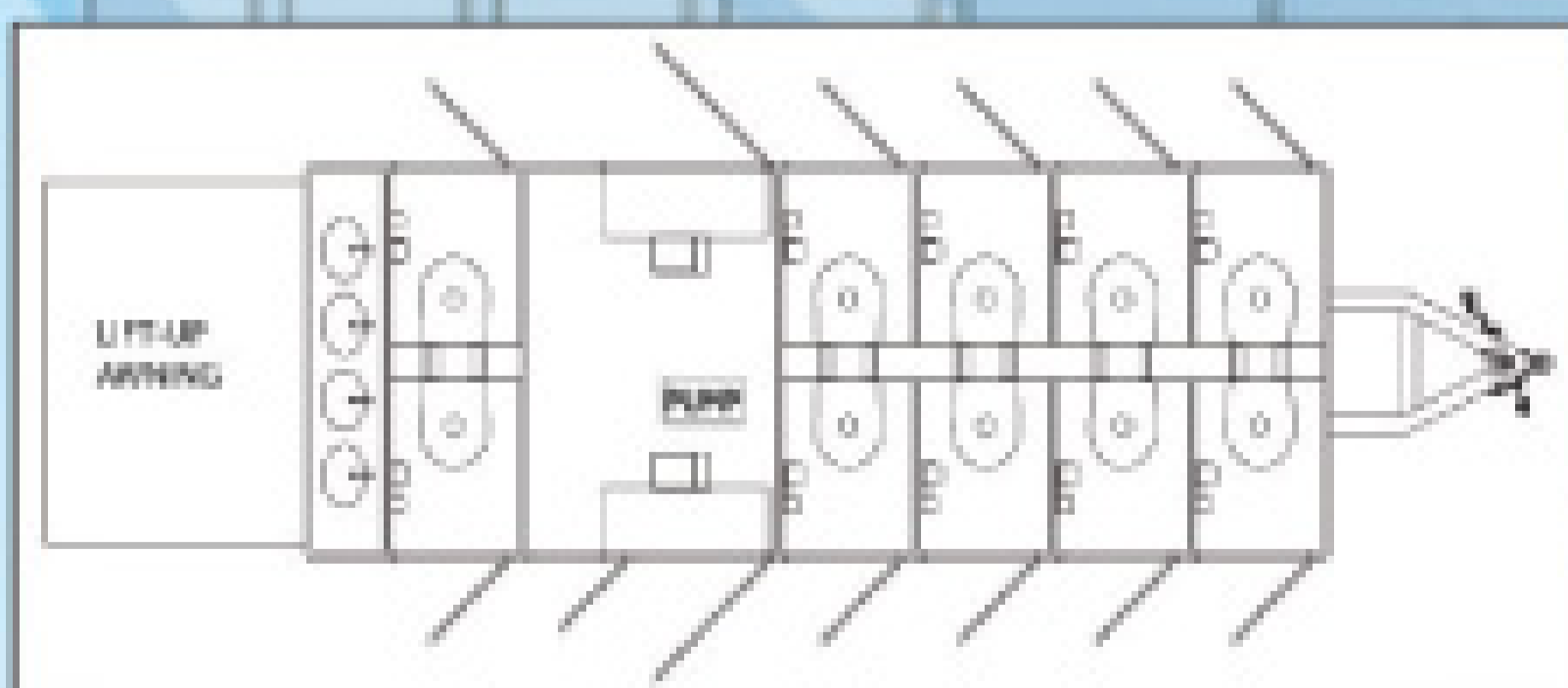
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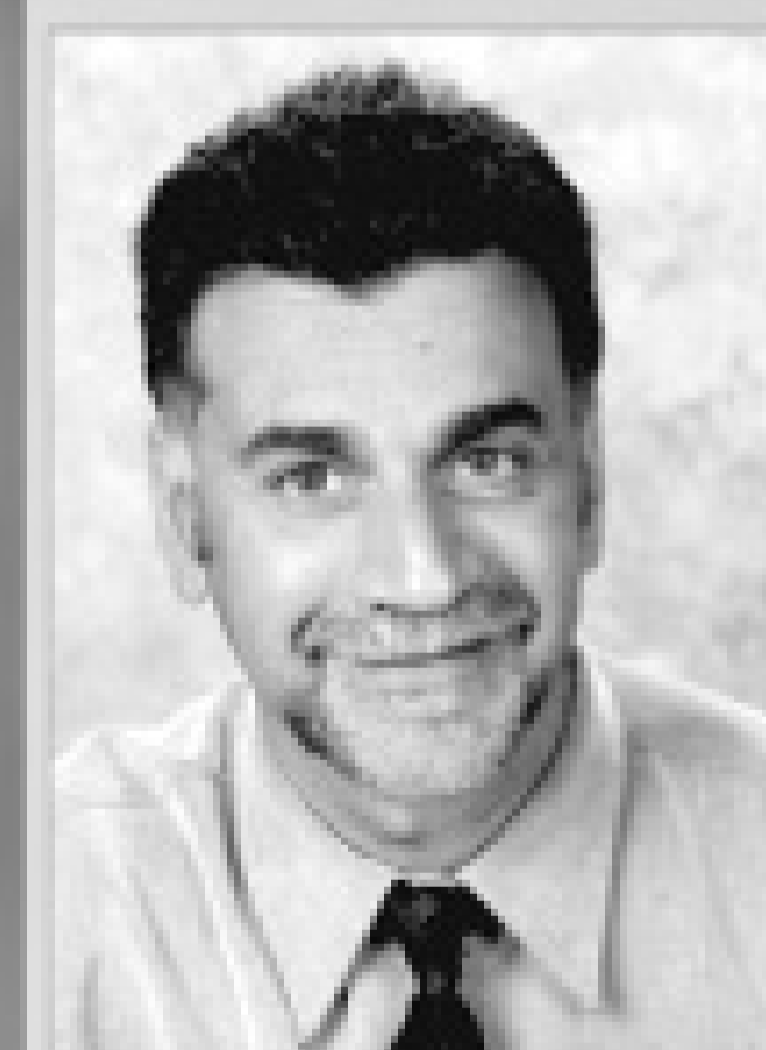
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Florida Regulations Aimed at Fixing Systems, Sewer Hookups

By **Scottie Dayton**

The Springs Protection Bill would create a pilot program featuring Rainbow and Silver Springs to combat their reduced water flow and declining water quality. It would require the Department of Environmental Protection to establish total maximum daily loads of pollutants and develop a basin management plan. It also would require monitoring and upgrading of onsite systems near basins.

If passed, the state Department of Health would have to inventory septic tanks within each spring zone. Licensed contractors would inspect and certify septic tanks as functioning properly. Homeowners within the zones would be required to pump tanks every five years, and repair or replace failed ones. When and where available, they would be required to connect to centralized water and sewers unless granted a waiver by the department.

The Lee County Board of County Commissioners ordered the Florida Governmental Utility Authority to begin a mandatory sewer connection. Homes with non-functional onsite systems must connect to the sewer. The Lee County Department of Health will not issue a repair permit. Homes with new or working onsite systems must hook up by April 2010, paying an impact fee of \$2,840.

The South Jacksonville Beach Redevelopment Agency set aside \$50,000 to help homeowners with onsite systems pay the \$2,500 impact fee to connect to the sewer. The city will pay 50 percent of the cost to fewer than 40 residents with financial problems.

A state advisory panel voted to postpone recommending new septic rules for residents living in the Wekiva River region. The regulations would force property owners

to install advanced treatment technology when their old systems failed or they sold or expanded their homes.

COLORADO

The Colorado House Business Affairs and Labor Committee rejected a bill to establish a prevailing or union wage for employees who work for contractors on government-funded construction projects in the state. Business groups and members of the Colorado Professionals in Onsite Wastewater argued that the bill would increase red tape for contractors and discourage small and minority-owned businesses from bidding on state projects. Opponents also contended that the legislation was designed to benefit union contractors over open shop contractors.

IOWA

Members of the Iowa Onsite Waste Water Association oppose a labor bill that would require small businesses (less than 500 employees) to pay union or prevailing wages and benefits to workers on public projects. The association argued the bill would increase costs for taxpayers because it eliminated competition from small contractors. The law would apply to contractors and subcontractors on any public project costing \$1 million or more. State-funded projects would have to cost \$100,000 or more.

WISCONSIN

Effective March 1, the state septic code allows the recycling of wastewater discharged from private and public lavatories. It recognizes portable restrooms with hand sanitizers as substitutes for lavatories if provided in appropriate numbers to satisfy demand.

GEORGIA

The Georgia Onsite Wastewater Association lobbied to remove language from the draft of the Environmental Protection Division Water Conservation Implementation Plan stating that septic tanks were 100 percent consumptive. The definition now states that water is consumed if it takes a specified period of time to return to the surface stream from which it came. The association is requesting removal of the wording "specified period of time," arguing that no science exists to confirm the loss of water. The Water Conservation Implementation Plan calls for all residents to live in nodes — small cities hooked to sewers with the rest of the land left undisturbed. The draft is at www.GeorgiaWCIP.org.

DELAWARE

As of February, the Delaware Class H Inspection Program requires installers to use the new Class H inspection form and guidance document. Notable changes include mandatory pumping during inspections, scaled drawings, and more detailed reports. The new pollution control strategies law prohibits cesspools and seepage pits in the Inland Bays Watershed. As of April, onsite systems for all property transfers within the watershed must be inspected and pumped.

The Delaware Ground Water Discharges Section is amending regulations to allow spray irrigation for systems larger than 2,500 gpd. It also established soil and hydrogeologic criteria, base system selection and sizing based on site-specific soil evaluations, infiltrometer tests, and preliminary groundwater assessments. The amendment states that only licensed individuals may perform soil evaluation and system selec-

tion, design, installation, and system operation and maintenance. The draft is at www.wr.dnrec.delaware.gov.

TEXAS

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality adopted proposed revisions to the septic code. Changes include:

- Eliminating certification by aerobic treatment plant manufacturers to maintain their systems.
- Eliminating requiring an Installer II or DR license to renew a site evaluator's license.
- Basing ATU tank sizing on 120 gallons per bedroom.
- Allowing homeowners to maintain systems without training or filing reports, provided the county has not changed its control orders.
- Allowing designated representatives to inspect any system at any time, and requiring homeowners to obtain a maintenance contract if they fail to correct a violation within 10 days.
- Requiring maintenance providers to have an Installer II or Class C wastewater license or three years of verifiable experience.
- Designating food-serving sites to have a high-strength waste system that produces less than 1,200 mg/L BOD5.

The regulations are at www.tceq.state.tx.us.

VIRGINIA

The Chesapeake Bay Nitrogen Reduction Act of 2009 would strengthen restoration plans for the Chesapeake Bay by requiring new or replacement onsite systems to have nitrogen removal technology. The Bay Restoration Fund would assist homeowners in paying the difference between the cost of conventional septic tanks and those with nitrogen removal systems. ■



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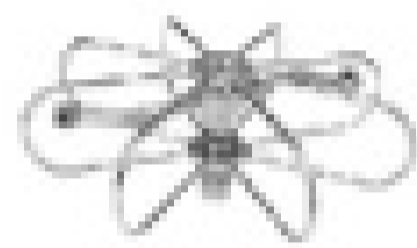
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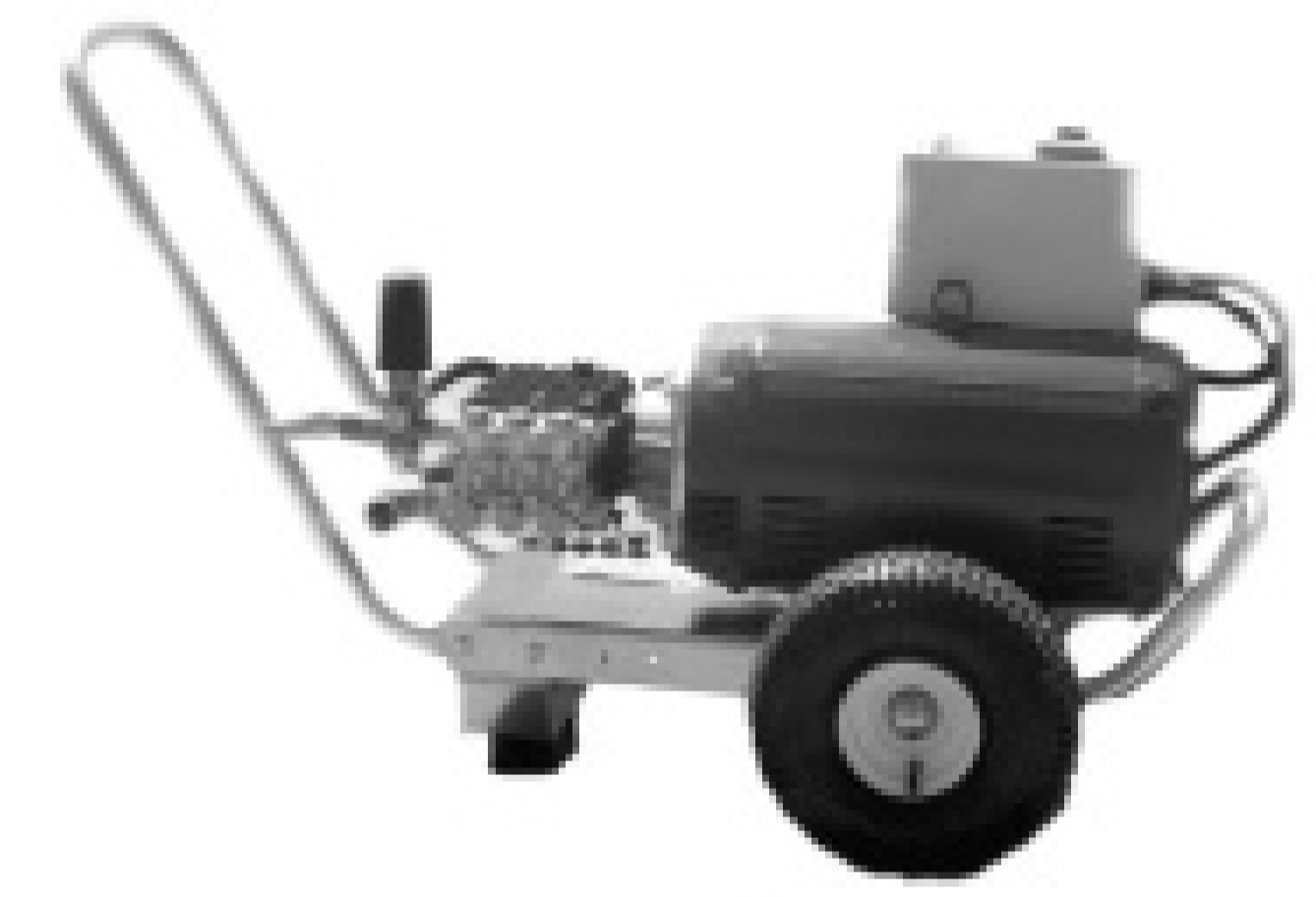


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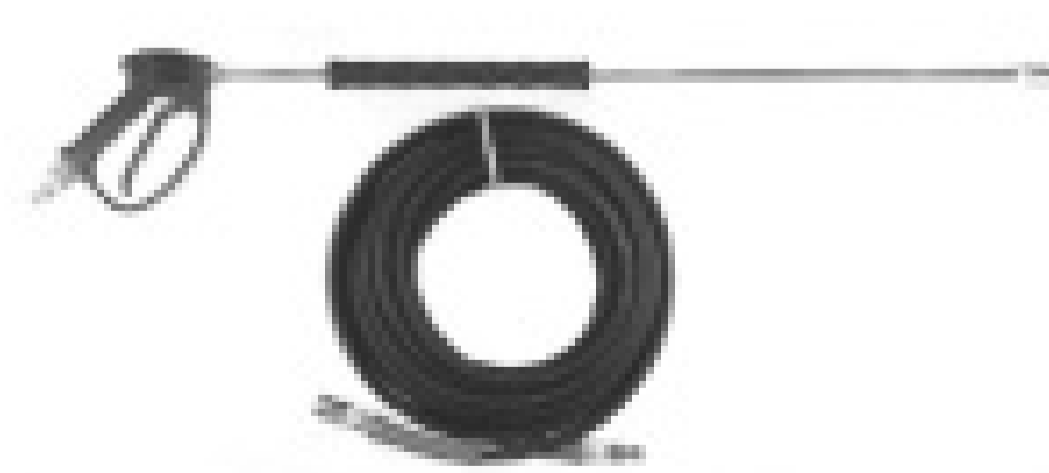
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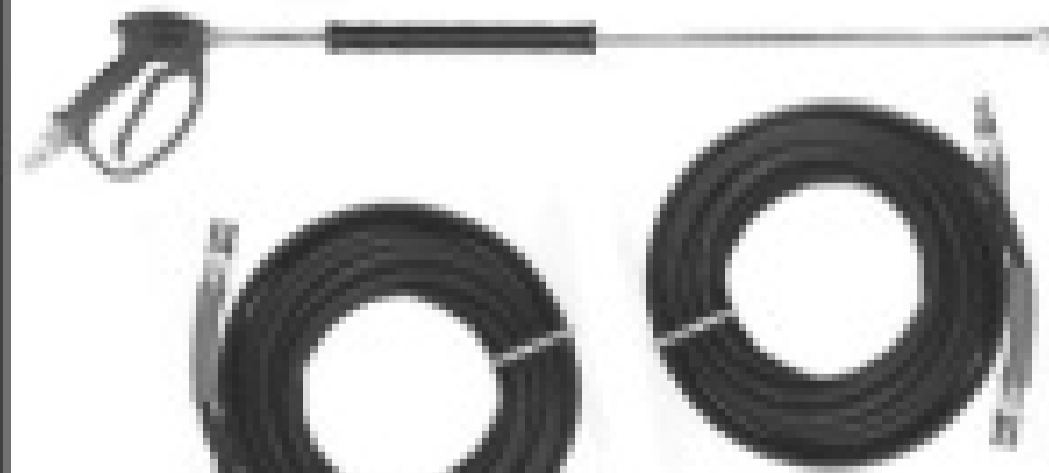
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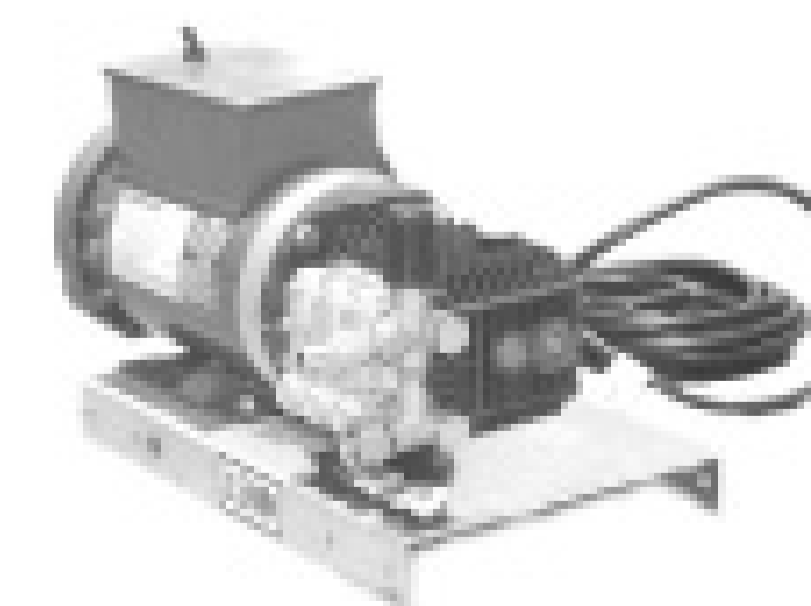
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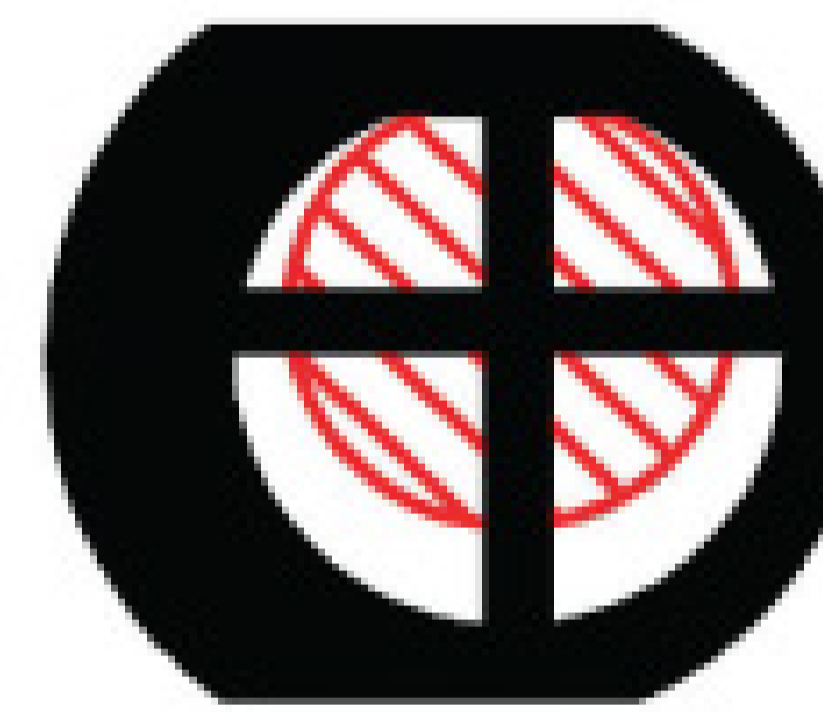
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SHOVEL READY

Over the years, Wisconsin excavator John Laudolff strengthened his business by taking on new roles as a trusted onsite system installer and pumping professional

By Ken Wysocky

Time-tested Wisconsin pumper, onsite system installer and excavator John Laudolff has a bit of advice for contractors looking to keep pace with new technology and regulations: Don't stop getting schooled.

An easy way to keep education on the front burner is to join a statewide or national trade organization, says Laudolff, the owner of Laudolff Excavating and Septic Service Inc. in Fond du Lac, Wis. As an example, he points to his membership in the Wisconsin Onsite Water Recycling Association.

LEARNING CURVE

"Our membership in WOWRA has been invaluable over the years," he says. "We've



Nick Laudolff services a septic system his company installed several years ago. Inset, he shores up a hose line between the system and his truck parked in a nearby driveway. (Photos by Jim Kneiszel)

Profile

Laudolff Excavating and Septic Service Inc.
Fond du Lac, Wis.

Owners: The Laudolff family

Founded: 1978

Employees: 7

Specialties: Septic system installation and pumping; excavation

Territory: 50-mile radius of Fond du Lac

Associations: Wisconsin Onsite Water Recycling Association



made good use of its classes and instruction in new technology. It's helped one of our employees obtain a master plumber's license and two others become journeyman plumbers.

"Being part of an organization exposes you to new technology and the people selling it and designing it," he adds. "If I wasn't a member, I'd have to rely on finding out about those things on my own."

A good example, Laudolff says, is the use of aerobic treatment units to downsize septic systems on smaller building sites.

"Pre-treatment systems allow you to make use of soil that would otherwise be unacceptable, like a lot with high groundwater, for instance," he explains. The customers with small lots and poor soils in Laudolff's territory never like the alternative. "Without the aeration, homeowners in those situations would have to use a holding tank and get pumped out every two to four weeks."

There's another benefit to belonging to a professional trade organization: It offers better opportunities for pumpers to provide legislative agencies with input about rules and regulations. In short, there's strength in numbers.

"It gives us the chance to be proactive

“OVER THE YEARS, WE’VE BECOME VERY WELL RESPECTED BY THE WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE (WHICH REGULATES ONSITE SEWAGE) ... WE’RE BOTH ON THE SAME PAGE. WE DON’T WANT TO POLLUTE GROUNDWATER, SO WE WORK HAND-IN-HAND WITH GOVERNMENT TO HELP PREVENT THAT. WE’RE ENVIRONMENTALISTS. WE HAVE TO OVERCOME THE IMAGE THAT SEPTIC SYSTEMS ARE A BAD THING.”

John Laudolff



Above, Nick Laudolff assists at an onsite system installation in a wooded, rural location. At left, brothers Nick (left) and Jason Laudolff flank their father, John, at a residential construction site.



Case tractor/loader backhoe and a 24-foot trailer.

“It was pretty risky at the time, having never been in the building industry,” he says. “We had to advertise to get work, and I also visited a lot of companies in person. Fortunately, local residential builders were very receptive and encouraged me.”

Over the years, Laudolff’s business slowly grew, largely through word-of-mouth referrals. He started out doing mostly plumbing excavation work for new homes until 1980, when he earned a master plumber’s license.

“My goal was to install (septic) systems, which requires a license,” he says. “I had no formal business plan, other than to get a license. Without a license, you can’t take out sanitary permits. But once you’re a master plumber, you can advertise for work, design plans and do installations.”

Today, Laudolff’s sons, Nick and Jason, are among the company’s seven full-time employees, making the operation a true family affair.

GROWTH PLAN

Growth didn’t occur without challenges. First, it meant hiring young employees that tended to get married and require benefits for growing families.

“You’re kind of responsible for them — they’re like extended family,” Laudolff says.

More work also generated greater pressure to finish projects on time, lest they delay the next day’s project, and so on. To avoid a negative domino effect requires working even longer hours to get work finished on time.

Then there was the matter of setting prices low enough to gain business but high enough to make a profit. As an inexperienced excavator, it initially took Laudolff a while to figure out how long it would take to do certain

STARTED OUT SMALL

Keeping up with education is just one of several strategies that have paid dividends for Laudolff, who along with his wife, Mary, established their business as an excavating outfit in 1978. After working for five years for a utility pipeline contractor in the early 1970s, Laudolff decided to get into excavating after meeting a contractor who’d just started out in the same field.

“That’s what gave me the idea,” he says. “Along with that, my job was taking me farther and farther from home, so the thought of being my own boss started to look very appealing.”

The Laudolffs began their enterprise with a 5-yard, 1962 Chevrolet dump truck, a 580B

rather than reactive about writing code for the onsite plumbing industry,” Laudolff says. “Over the years, we’ve become very well respected by the Wisconsin Department of Commerce (which regulates onsite sewage) ... We’re both on the same page. We don’t want to pollute groundwater, so we work hand-in-hand with government to help prevent that. We’re environmentalists. We have to overcome the image that septic systems are a bad thing.”

In addition, business owners who join professional groups generally are interested in doing things the right way and promoting a positive image for their industry, so there’s intangible value to rubbing elbows with such colleagues, he says.

Nick Laudolff stops at the company shop between pumping jobs. On any given day, workers might be installing a new onsite system, excavating for a home site or pumping septic tanks.



Superior Customer Service Trumps Recession

How do you know you're really in a recession?

"Companies provide a lot better service," says John Laudolff, who as owner of Laudolff Excavating and Septic in Fond du Lac, Wis., has been through this economic drill before.

That may be true in many an industry nowadays, where companies desperate for business are suddenly committed to customer service in ways they never were before. But Laudolff says that's never been the case at his company, where making customers the top priority has always been the rule, not the exception, whether the economy is booming or busted. That philosophy, along with a focus on business diversity, has carried the company through thick and thin economic times, he says.

"You can't get complacent in good times," Laudolff points out. "The customer has to be number one, no matter what the economic times are like. You just do your best and make sure you treat your customers right. That's the best way to endure a recession."

"Our philosophy is to do the job right the first time," adds Laudolff's son, Nick. "We hate going back to a job, and customers don't like it either."

Along with providing top customer service, Laudolff keeps an even sharper eye on costs during a recession, and tries to make equipment last longer than he otherwise might before replacing it.

holding-tank owners in Fond du Lac County; those owners are registered with the county, so their names are on file as public record. He says he generated about a 3-percent response rate, which is considered good for direct-mail advertising.

He also advertised 24-hour emergency service and made sure his truck promoted his company as a rolling billboard.

"It's like anything else," he says. "You've got to be visible in the community."

Today, Laudolff is leasing (with an option to buy) a 2008 Mack truck with a 4,200-gallon, stainless-steel tank that he's used on several different trucks. He's leasing the truck from Fond du Lac Truck Sales.

"I've used the same tank for 14 years," he says. "Mild steel rusts inside and eventually buckles, but stainless steel lasts forever."



Laudolff Excavating and Septic utilizes land application disposal on farmland near the company's headquarters. At top, Nick Laudolff spreads a load using the a 2008 Mack truck with a 4,200-gallon tank. At left, Laudolff attaches a spreader plate before dumping. Below, Laudolff prepares an invoice for a customer while on a pumping run.

In addition, if work goes slack in one area, the other business segment can keep things going, says Nick Laudolff, who's been working with his father for 10 years.

"One side of the business helps the others," he says. "If one is slow, we've been fortunate that the other one balances it out. One year, for example, we had a lot of rain and couldn't do much excavation work. But the pumper truck kept the cash flow going."

ADDING EQUIPMENT

To take a stab at this new endeavor, Laudolff bought a used vacuum truck: a late 1970s International with a 3,000-gallon steel tank. Today, he says he tends to buy new equipment if it's vital to the business's operations and is going to get used heavily every day.

Breaking into the septic-pumping field was a little easier than Laudolff's entry in excavation work, because his company was already well known in the community. He obtained job leads by sending out letters to all

things; miscalculations reduced profit margins.

"I learned by doing — from the school of hard knocks," he says.

In the late 1980s, Laudolff realized that pumping out septic tanks would be a logical extension of his company's septic installation service.

"Generally, when people have something wrong with their septic system, it has to be pumped out," Laudolff says. "That, in turn, can lead to new installations. I figured I was missing out on a business opportunity."

"Diversifying into pumping gave me access to septic systems that needed work and ongoing maintenance. It generates regular work."



Nick Laudolff reviews his afternoon of pumping jobs for his mother, Mary, at the company's home office near Fond du Lac, Wis.

Laudolff opted years ago for a tank large enough to handle two or three septic tank pumping stops per load, or one large holding tank. It's more economical for Laudolff to provide one-stop service for holding tanks, and it saves customers money by stretching out the time between pumpings, he says.

the back of his truck.

"Disposal can be one of the biggest problems, but we've been lucky overall," he says.

EDUCATING CUSTOMERS, TOO

One potential problem Laudolff successfully fends off is customers who don't under-

"YOU CAN'T GET COMPLACENT IN GOOD TIMES. THE CUSTOMER HAS TO BE NUMBER ONE, NO MATTER WHAT THE ECONOMIC TIMES ARE LIKE. YOU JUST DO YOUR BEST AND MAKE SURE YOU TREAT YOUR CUSTOMERS RIGHT. THAT'S THE BEST WAY TO ENDURE A RECESSION."

John Laudolff

Septage disposal hasn't been a major issue for Laudolff, thanks to 100 acres of farmland he purchased in 1994. He trucks holding-tank waste to a nearby municipal treatment plant, but land-applies septage (except for waste pumped during emergency service calls in winter). After balancing pH levels by adding lime to the tank, Laudolff surface-applies the waste with a spreader plate off

stand how septic systems work. Dispelling myths and correcting disinformation is all part of the company's emphasis on education.

"We hand out brochures to our customers that tell them things such as what not to put into their septic tanks," says Nick Laudolff. "And after installations, we have a walk-through with the customer to explain what they now have — basically, a small treatment plant in their back yard.

"We tell them what each component does and why it's there. That saves us panic phone calls down the line when a customer might, for instance, hear water running in the tank and doesn't realize what's going on," he says.

It's just another example of how education benefits the company — and its customers, too. ■

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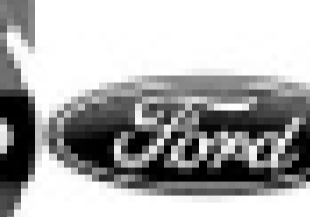
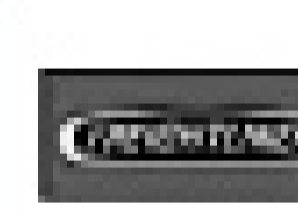


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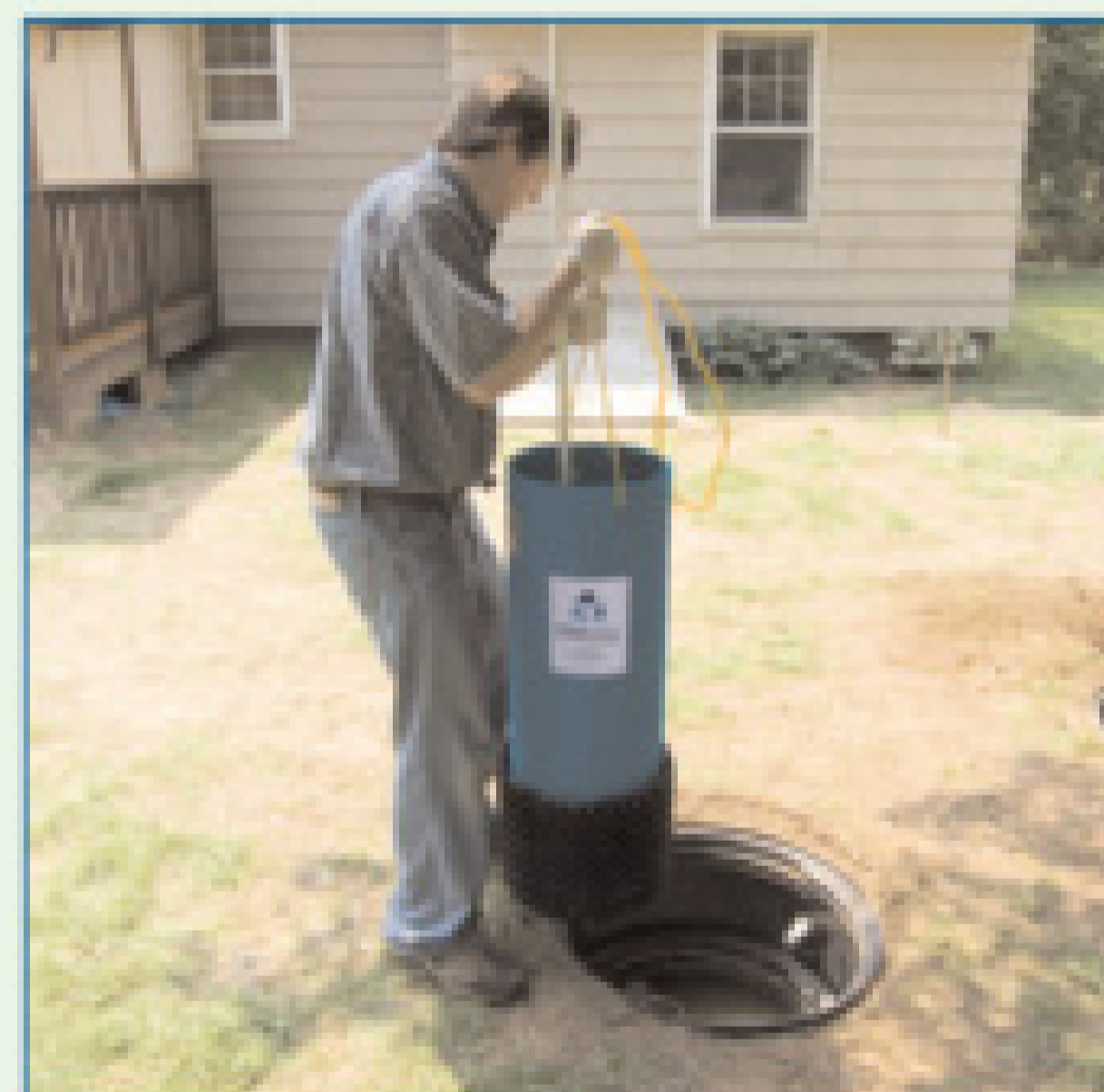
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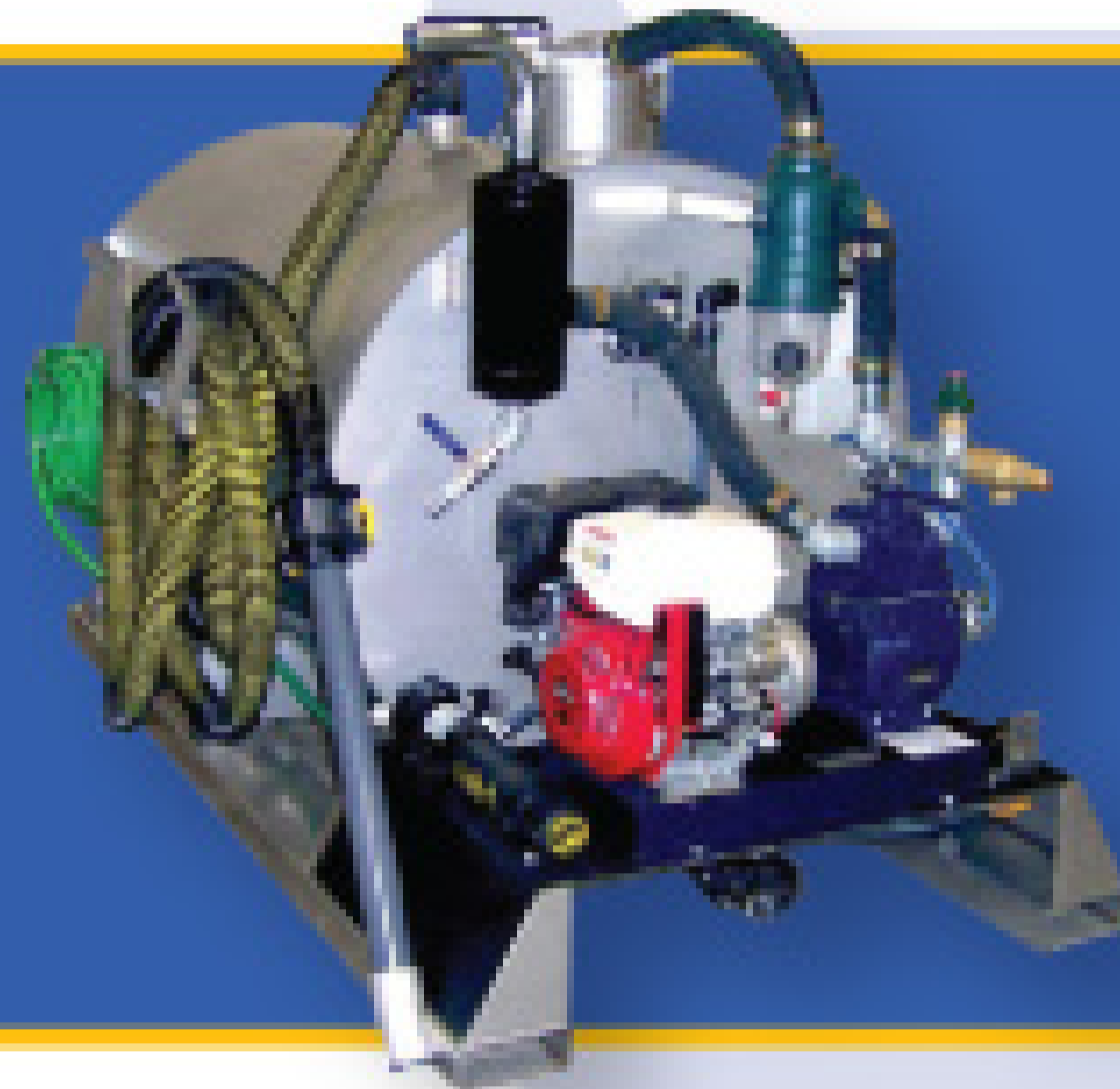
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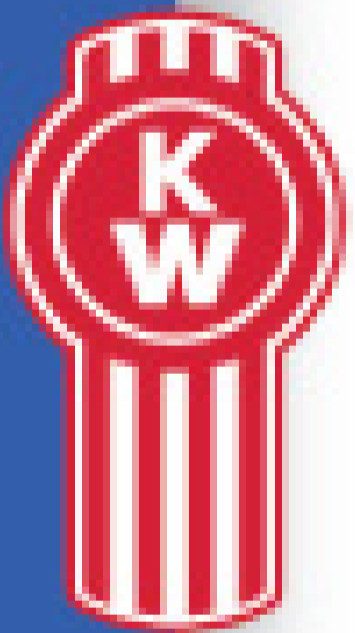
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Is it Time to QUIT TALKING ON THE GO?

Efforts to limit use of cell phones while driving are picking up steam. Here's how some contractors balance mobile communication with the need to drive safely.

By Greg Northcutt

When the National Safety Council in January called for a nationwide ban on the use of cell phones — both hand-held and hands-free — and text message devices while driving, it turned up the heat on an issue that has been simmering for some time: Are the convenience and time-savings of communicating on the road worth the risks they pose to life and limb?

Contractors' reactions to such a ban range from acceptance (if not support) to sputtering in exasperation at what they see as just one more attempt to stick the government's nose where it doesn't belong.

Currently, no state bans the use of all types of cell phones while driving. However, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety reports that six states — California, Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, Utah and Washington — and the District of Columbia prohibit drivers from using hand-held cell phones. At the same time, all drivers are banned from text messaging in seven states — Alaska, California, Connecticut, Louisiana, Minnesota, New Jersey and Washington — and in the District of Columbia.

DON'T TAKE AWAY MY PHONE

Whatever your opinion about driving while talking on a cell phone, don't try to deny Danny Kleinpeter the use of his cell phone when he's behind the wheel.

The owner of Ranger Sewer, an onsite system services contractor and sewer cleaning firm based in East Northport, N.Y., depends on his phone to keep in touch with his customers and suppliers throughout the day. Complying with a New York state law that prohibits the use of a hand-held cell phone while driving, he takes calls on his hands-free unit while wheeling his truck from job to job.

"I don't want anyone telling me how to run my life and that I can't operate my truck or car safely with a phone in my ear," he says. "When I turn on my phone, I don't turn off my brain. I have the skill to drive and use my hands-free phone responsibly and safely. If the call is going to be



a lengthy conversation, I pull off the road and stop to complete it. I shouldn't have to give up my cell phone while driving just because someone else hasn't mastered the art of driving and talking on a phone safely."

As executive director of the National Association of Wastewater Transporters Inc., Tom Ferrero recently asked members what they thought of a ban. "The polite ones said it would really be a step backward, because we all lean so heavily on cell phones these days. Others definitely would not like it."

BANS INEVITABLE

Peter Allard considers cell phones a necessary evil for his business. He's vice president of operations for Rooter-Man of Tampa Bay, Fla. The company employs 18 technicians who use cell phones and two-way radios. The safe and sane use of these devices is a frequent topic at the company's weekly safety meetings.

Allard agrees with prohibiting text messaging while driving. "That's a ridiculous practice," he says. However, he doesn't want to lose mobile voice communications with his technicians. "Cell phones and two-way radios have become a way of life for our business," he observes. "I sure hope that we don't lose them."

Donald MacDonald, president of A Corp/Rooter-Man, North Billerica, Mass., says he hasn't heard of any crashes related to cell phone use by drivers among his company's franchisees who provide plumbing, sewer and drain cleaning services. He's resigned to the idea that all states will eventually pass laws prohibiting the use of cell phones while driving.

"Even though cell phones can save a lot of time, the safety risks of using them while driving are valid concerns," he says. "But, laws to prevent it would be more government interference with commerce. You'd be operating your business with one hand tied behind your back. Still, I'm sure that it's just a matter of time before there is a national ban on drivers using cell phones."

RESPONSIBLE USE

The Safety Council cites numerous studies highlighting safety risks associated with cell phone use by drivers. However, say some contractors, the solution to the problem is not to ban the practice, but to promote more responsible use of mobile communications technology.

The ability to reach drivers on the road offers businesses real economic benefits, these contractors say. They use cell phones to exchange dispatching information with technicians and technicians use them to check with the office and to talk directly with customers.

"Because of the size of a truck and the added workload in the cab, a truck driver tends to be much more conscious of safety and the need to use cell phones responsibly than many motorists. Rather than imposing another mandatory requirement on our business, the government should let the industry address safe cell phone use."

Tom Ferrero

“We tell our people to keep their hands on the wheel when driving and to use the radios only when they are stopped and to leave the radios in the truck when they are working at a jobsite.”

Jeff Wigley

Septic cleaning contractor David Hapchuk of Hapchuk Inc., Washington, Pa., likes drivers of his 10 service trucks to use their cell phones to talk directly with customers. It's more convenient than relaying information through the office and, he says, it can save each technician about 45 to 60 minutes a day.

At Allard's operation, technicians have been using two-way radios and cell phones for nine years, switching from pagers. “Instead of going to a supply house and waiting for parts as we used to, our technicians now call ahead and the parts are waiting for them when they arrive,” he says. “There's also the security aspect of being able to call for assistance, if necessary. And, have you tried to find a pay phone these days?”

Even more importantly, loss of instant communication between office and driver risks losing business. “In our fast-paced society, people want service now,” Allard says. “If there's a plumbing emergency and we can't respond right away, they'll call the next guy.”

THE INDUSTRY'S ROLE

As Ferrero sees it, safety issues surrounding cell phone use are related more to the driver than to the phone. He thinks most truck drivers can handle cell phones more safely than a typical motorist. “Because of the size of a truck and the added workload in the cab, a truck driver tends to be much more conscious of safety and of the need to use cell phones responsibly than many motorists,” he says. “Rather than imposing another mandatory requirement on our business, the government should let the industry address safe cell phone use.”

Ike Casey, executive vice president of Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors — National Association, says the association doesn't have an official position on the National Safety Council stand. However, his group has surveyed members to learn what they think of a ban, and how it would affect their operations.

“We do know that cell phones and text messaging have been banned in California, and some of our members report that it has not had as much of an impact on them as they thought,” Casey says. “They have just changed their procedures so that techs respond to voicemails and texts at their next stop.

“The safety of employees is always a priority for association members, he says. “Safe driving is a topic at many of their safety meetings, and many take advantage of a “Distracted Driving — At What Cost?” safety program. The program emphasizes the many ways business owners and their drivers can avoid the pitfalls of distracted driving.”

SAFE PHONING

Recognizing the risks of driving while distracted, some contractors are promoting practices for responsible cell phone use.

Anthony Heath, president of Tidy Coast Containers Inc., provides portable sanitation and trash container services and transports various types of equipment from his base in Hobe Sound, Fla. The company, which operates 15 trucks, has been using cell phones to communicate with drivers since it opened for business 10 years ago. “Our drivers have never had an accident while using a cell phone,” he reports.

“Answering a cell phone is left to the driver's discretion,” Heath con-

tinues. “Normally, if we're giving them instructions from the office, they're either at the jobsite or have pulled off the road. “If they get a call en route, they'll call back when they have a safe place to stop, unless they're on a back road with little traffic, in which case they may take the message.”

Two years ago, the company added dash-mounted GPS units to trucks to supplement cell phone communications. Now, customer information can be sent to the driver from a computer in the office, eliminating this use of the cell phone.

OTHER APPROACHES

Over the years, Rasmik Hovsepian, who owns a Rooter-Man business in Burbank, Calif., has communicated with eight technicians on the road in several ways — first with pagers and then two-way radios, and now with hands-free cell phones.

He agrees with state bans on hand-held cell phones and texting while driving, but says hands-free cell phones are easier and more convenient to use. In fact, because he doesn't like headsets or ear pieces, he's equipped his pickup with a system that allows him to talk using a microphone mounted near the sun visors and to listen over the truck's sound system.

Technicians use the voice feature of their cell phones to talk with the office and with customers. However, they receive their dispatch instructions via text messages from a computer in the office.

“More and more communication is going to text messaging,” he says. “It works out much better for us. Often, when we called technicians on the radio, we'd be interrupting them. Now, when they get a text message, they can respond after they are stopped.”

Portable sanitation contractor Jeff Wigley, co-owner of Pit Stop Sanitation Services of Marietta, Ga., has abandoned cell phones in favor of two-way radios to talk with his 10 technicians. This eliminated use of cell phones for personal calls and fostered better customer relations by forcing technicians to talk face-to-face with customers rather than leaving messages.

“We tell our people to keep their hands on the wheel when driving and to use the radios only when they are stopped and to leave the radios in the truck when they are working at a jobsite.

Wigley is a member of the Georgia Motor Trucking Association. “For a number of years, many members have prohibited their drivers from using communication devices while driving,” he says. “I'm in favor of that. All those motorists engrossed in their cell phone conversations make the roads unsafe for our drivers.”

“Laws to prevent (cell phone use) would be more government interference with commerce. You'd be operating your business with one hand tied behind your back. Still, I'm sure that it's just a matter of time before there is a national ban on drivers using cell phones.”

Donald MacDonald

WHAT'S NEXT?

Meanwhile, the NSC is urging businesses to enact policies that prohibit phoning and texting while driving, and is asking governors and legislators in all 50 states and the District of Columbia to pass laws banning those practices.

As evidence that it is serious, the NSC cites its record of turning the “Click It or Ticket” seat-belt campaign from a one-state pilot project to a 50-state program. ■

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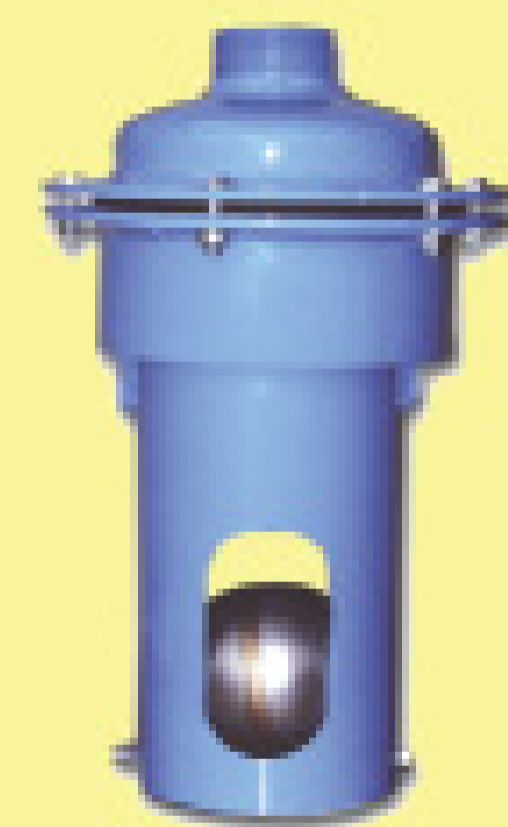


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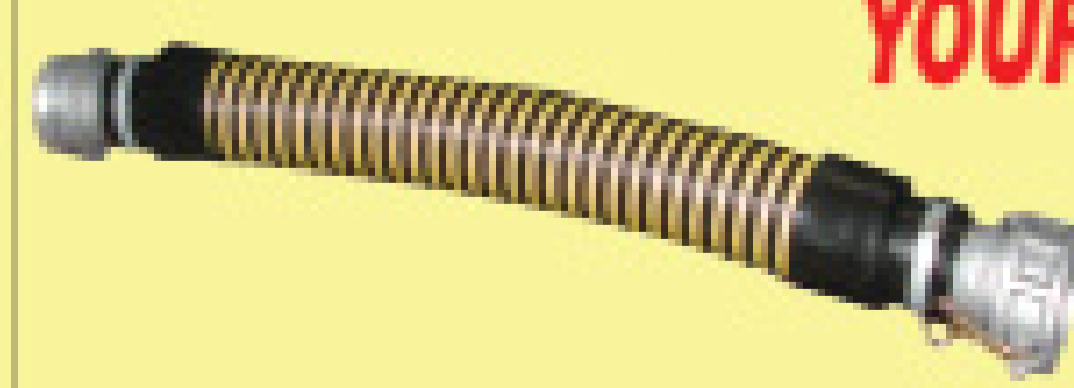
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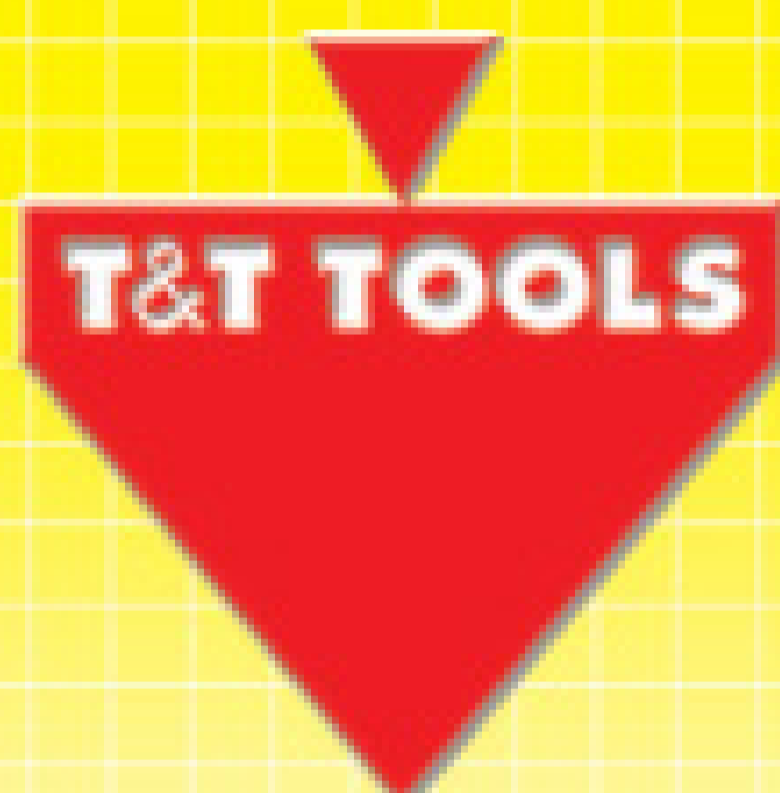
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Ralph "Bud" Hobbs Jr. supervises as his son Keith Hobbs excavates for an advanced onsite system installation in the oceanfront community of Wingersheek Beach, Mass. (Photos by David Stotzer)

The ROAD to RETIREMENT

When it comes to financing the golden years, one savvy New England pumper says contractors can't rely solely on the sale of equipment and a customer list to support a comfortable lifestyle

By Seiche Sanders

As Ralph "Bud" Hobbs Jr. nears retirement, he has more questions than answers about what his next steps will be. But, even at 65, he's still got time to think about it, he says.

Always a hard worker, Hobbs plans to hold onto his business, Cape Ann Septic Service, for the foreseeable future. In the meantime, he is diligently planning and preparing for the day he sells his Gloucester, Mass., company.

Like anyone nearing retirement, having enough money to live comfortably is top of mind. Hobbs wants to secure his financial future as he looks to retirement — but, he has

no illusions that an eventual sale of his business alone will cover his living expenses.

"Even with a good (pumping) business, it's hard to retire off of it," he says.

Hobbs has taken a non-traditional route into the liquid waste industry, but has used a varied business background to build a profitable and diverse little company of one. From septic pumping to real estate inspections, onsite system repairs to full installations, Hobbs has steadily added services to the tiny sole proprietor-

ship he bought 15 years ago.

And while Hobbs always has an eye on the next profit center for his business, he's also staring point blank at a looming retirement decision. Though he derives a lot of enjoyment by the hardworking pumper lifestyle, he knows some day in the not-too-distant future, he'll be preparing to sell the business.

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Ralph "Bud" Hobbs



Hobbs (right) points out site improvements to a city inspector.

Profile

Cape Ann Septic Service Gloucester, Mass.

Owner: **Ralph Hobbs Jr.**

Years in Business: **15**

Employees: **1**

Territory: **75 square miles in several towns around Gloucester**

Services: **Onsite system pumping, repair and installation; sewer line hookups, real estate inspections; installation and service of pump stations; waterjetting**

Associations: **National Association of Wastewater Transporters; Massachusetts Association of Wastewater Transporters; Yankee Onsite Wastewater Association; Gloucester Chamber of Commerce**



MASSACHUSETTS



Ralph Hobbs's fleet includes (from left) a 2008 GMC pickup, 1994 Grumman equipment van and 2000 Sterling vacuum truck (above and at right) with 3,600-gallon tank.



He knows many retirement-age pumpers are asking themselves the same questions he is about the end-game for their businesses. And he enjoys sharing his insights into maximizing a pumping business's value for a future sale.

PREPARE FOR POTENTIAL BUYERS

"A lot of things come into play when you're selling a business like this," Hobbs says.

One of those things is that a business is only worth what someone is willing to pay for it, and the value of these businesses is highly subjective. This was evidenced by Hobbs in 2007 when a new and growing larger company offered to buy him out.

"When these people come in to buy your business, they look at the area you're servicing, and they place a value on what they think they can do for business," Hobbs says of the larger company, which was "rolling up" independent pumping businesses. "They won't buy your customer list, because it's not worth

anything because (customers) are not particularly loyal to anything."

The owner of a pumping business might view a customer list as having high value, Hobbs explains, but when it comes time to sell, a potential buyer might see things differently. There is always the risk a new owner could lose many of those customers because of loyalty or resistance to change.

The potential buyer couldn't offer the number Hobbs had in mind.

"One of the reasons I haven't really sold today is that it would be difficult for me to get what I think the business is worth ... it's all about finding the perfect buyer, and that is extremely difficult."

So for now, Hobbs is exploring other income-producing ventures while he continues to polish up the business in preparation

for its eventual sale. He's approaching this in several ways.

DIVERSIFY TO ADD VALUE

The first is exploring add-on services. Hobbs is currently considering the purchase of a dealership that includes an exclusive territory, which he thinks might be attractive to a potential buyer for his business in the future.

The product addresses drainfield rejuvenation. Hobbs sees this service diversification as a win. "At some point, hopefully the value of the business will go up because of that. The dollars generated will be greater, which will



Keith Hobbs (left) and Kevin Riley install 2-inch PVC drainfield piping.



Ralph Hobbs adds a brick and mortar riser to a septic tank.

“ONE OF THE REASONS I HAVEN’T REALLY SOLD TODAY IS THAT IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR ME TO GET WHAT I THINK THE BUSINESS IS WORTH ... IT’S ALL ABOUT FINDING THE PERFECT BUYER, AND THAT IS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT.”

Ralph “Bud” Hobbs

add to the value of the business. Maybe at that time I might sell it,” he says.

Hobbs’ real estate investments will also lead to a comfortable retirement, he hopes. Having owned rental properties and developed real estate earlier in life, he felt confident when he purchased land four years ago and developed commercial space — a location for Cape Ann, and five other rental units. Hobbs saved money by serving as general contractor.

“It’s always better to own your own property, and by owning you can build equity in the real estate.” It offsets rent and affords tax deductions you wouldn’t get otherwise, Hobbs explains. “Hopefully, the property will appreciate in value and you can use that as a retirement package when you want to retire.

“It’s an asset to my business because it gives me a place to operate out of and it gives me the security that no one is going to move me out or raise my rent,” he adds.

Buying land or a building requires capital, and pumpers just starting out might not have the finances or experience to buy something. But if at all possible, it’s a wise investment that will pay off in the future, Hobbs suggests.

Will he hold onto his own building even after retirement? Hobbs hasn’t decided. “Once it’s up and running it’s very simple to run — just collecting rents once a month.” He says it requires a maximum time investment of 10 hours a month, and that it might fit nicely into a semi-retired lifestyle.

EQUIPPED TO SELL

While always a good practice, keeping equipment clean, attractive and shiny-new looking offers clear advantages when it comes time to sell, says Hobbs. That’s why he takes special care of his trucks.

“The appearance of your equipment is a major issue because first impressions make a big dent in people’s attitudes toward you and your business,” Hobbs notes. He now owns a 2008 GMC pickup truck; 2000 Sterling vacuum truck with 2006 3,600-gallon steel tank and 500 cfm pump, built by Vacutrix Ltd.; and a 1994 18-foot long P30 Grumman box van used for onsite work. He uses CAT brand jet-



Ralph Hobbs searches for the distribution box as he conducts a Title 5 system inspection for a property sale in Manchester, Mass.

ting pumps, model 45G, powered by Honda motors.

“If your equipment is in good shape, you have a better opportunity of getting a return on it,” says Hobbs. For example, he owned one truck for four years for which he paid \$36,000. But, it was repainted and had a new tank installed. He added chrome wheels and vinyl graphic art on the tank. “It looked really impressive — I sold it for \$29,000 after 12 years of use.”

He applies the same care to his current fleet. Hobbs washes the Sterling almost every day.

FROM THE GROUND UP

Much of Cape Ann’s current worth can be attributed to Hobbs’ sweat equity, as well as his nose for diversification opportunities. His successes are all his own. But he’ll admit to getting off to a less-than-ideal start.

Hobbs had never been one to shy away from jobs where he had to get his hands dirty. So when fate dealt him an unexpected hand in the early 1990s and he was forced to seek a new career path, the prospect of running a company that involved pumping septic systems didn’t faze him.

After a real estate investment went awry, Hobbs, then 50, needed income, and he needed it fast. So when he was presented with the opportunity to buy a one-man pumping operation, he leapt at the chance — in part, to tap

Building the business: Keys to long-term profitability

Ralph “Bud” Hobbs has the years of experience and knowledge younger generations can learn from. Here are a few tips for those just getting started:

- You must be physically able to do the work and have an aptitude for the tools. Time is money, and unless you’re quick and efficient, you won’t be as successful. “It’s not like sitting behind a desk, and it’s not like delivering mail. It’s strenuous and dirty and takes some commitment,” Hobbs says.
- Invest in owning your own property, if at all possible. Real estate is always a good long-term investment.
- “Be prepared to get into it with both feet and work very hard,” he says. “It’s not a 9-to-5 job.”
- You must be personable and professional. It helps — greatly — if you’re a people person.
- “Stay on top of what’s new. Belong to organizations that sponsor the industry.”
- Go to the shows to see what’s cutting edge, including the Pumper & Cleaner Environmental Expo.

into ready-made cash flow. Or so he thought.

With no industry experience, Hobbs had to quickly apply what he’d learned from various other jobs and seek help where he could.

“It was brand new to me,” Hobbs remembers. “The investment (to buy the business) wasn’t (substantial), which made it easier to get into.” However, the “business” Hobbs purchased turned out to be not much to speak of: miscellaneous equipment — a vacuum truck and some hand tools — and a customer list of about 100 names, most of which, Hobbs quickly found, were dead leads.

Hobbs immediately put the assets he had up for sale and began looking for better quality equipment. He soon found a truck and he was able to sell the original equipment for the exact amount he paid for the business itself. Hobbs now felt confident he had firmer financial footing.



Ralph Hobbs pumps a residential septic tank.

BUILDING THE BUSINESS

Then came the tough part — drumming up business with nothing but an outdated customer list and the drive to succeed. Hobbs quickly pursued an alternative method of reaching potential customers: direct mail. He partnered with a company that organized direct mail marketing for any type of business, and had established customer lists for the surrounding communities.

Hobbs worked with a printer to design a brochure with a logo and listing of services, and had 25,000 printed and mailed to addresses within the neighboring five towns. The \$5,000 investment paid off: the phone started ringing. “It immediately brought me business,” Hobbs says. His strategy was to offer high-quality service at a competitive price point. It worked.

“I put the price on the flier, so when it hit the mailbox of the customer, they could see what we provided, our phone number and the price of the service ... I had more business than I could really keep up with.”

Hobbs still very much believes in the benefits of advertising. He runs an ad every week in the local newspaper. “I’m visible and consistent. I’ve done it since I got into business.”

ADAPT TO CHANGE

Business was already good when, in April 1995, the course of the septic industry changed forever: Massachusetts’ Department of Environmental Protection began requiring a Title 5 inspection for all residential property sales. This included septic evaluations performed by a state-certified inspector. The requirement set the stage for Hobbs’ business philosophy from then on: change and adapt to meet new and evolving market demand.

Hobbs became a licensed Title 5 inspector

in 1996. “That allowed me to be on site at someone’s home doing an inspection of their onsite septic system to allow them to move forward on the closing of their home,” Hobbs explains of the then-new, face-to-face marketing opportunity. “If the system failed, I was also there as a potential contractor to install the new system.”

Hobbs began taking various exams to become a licensed installer in each town within his service area. As both an inspector and installer, Hobbs was on hand when a seller faced the potential deal-breaker of a failed Title 5 inspection. He was able to provide a bid right away, and customers often chose Hobbs’ company for the installation business as well. Installation jobs began to fall into his lap.

“This whole process was almost like a gift from heaven. I bought (the business) and then all these other things happened. I just happened to be in the right place at the right time. It wasn’t something I foresaw; it just happened.”

PRIME LOCATION

About the same time, other environmental concerns drove changes that translated into opportunity for Cape Ann. Gloucester’s unique makeup — the city is essentially an island — was the source of special concern over the common practice of dumping raw sewage into the ocean, contaminating shellfish beds. The state mandated that the city clean up its wastewater treatment sites. Cape Ann was there to help.

“This generated a tremendous amount of business,” Hobbs explains. “Our city was the only one mandated.

“We were doing the pumping, inspections and installations, and when you get a man-

date from the state, the town has a specific program and the standards are ratcheted up, and it puts everyone with an onsite system under the microscope. That drove the business substantially.” Hobbs’ youngest son, Keith, now 34, joined the company at that point, and the father-son team worked together to install residential and commercial systems.

A year later, Hobbs’ eldest son, Keven, now 36, joined the company as well. With more available manpower, Hobbs invested in a backhoe and other excavating equipment — everything needed to install the systems.

Hobbs began taking classes to learn about specific systems — mainly advanced systems designed for use near water. There was training on the installation of the systems, and then operation and maintenance once the systems are in place. Four times a year, this type of system must be inspected, checked and a report filed. Being a Class 2 wastewater treatment licensee again fueled Cape Ann’s growth.

As other needs have arisen, Cape Ann has quickly moved to fill in gaps. From failed system rejuvenation to troubleshooting to repairs, Hobbs has steadily allowed his service menu to grow in response to changing market needs.

WHAT’S NEXT?

Six years ago, Hobbs’ sons decided to launch their own venture — AK & K Construction LLP — a construction firm that now works closely with his company as a subcontractor on many jobs. As Hobbs has backed away from performing the physical installations, his sons have been able to step into that capacity. “They do the bulk heavy work, and I just oversee it. I work with the customers, and hire them as a subcontractor. I know what they do and I know it’s going to get done correctly.”

At 65, Hobbs realizes he’s at an age where many in his position would be racing to retirement — but he’s not ready just yet.

“That’s the dilemma I’m trying to figure out — where do I go from here? I still like the business,” Hobbs explains. “I’m thinking maybe I should do it for a few more years.”

Hobbs is worried that he’d miss ... well, the work.

“I’ve always worked, and I’ve always worked hard and long.” For Hobbs, long will be a bit longer. ■

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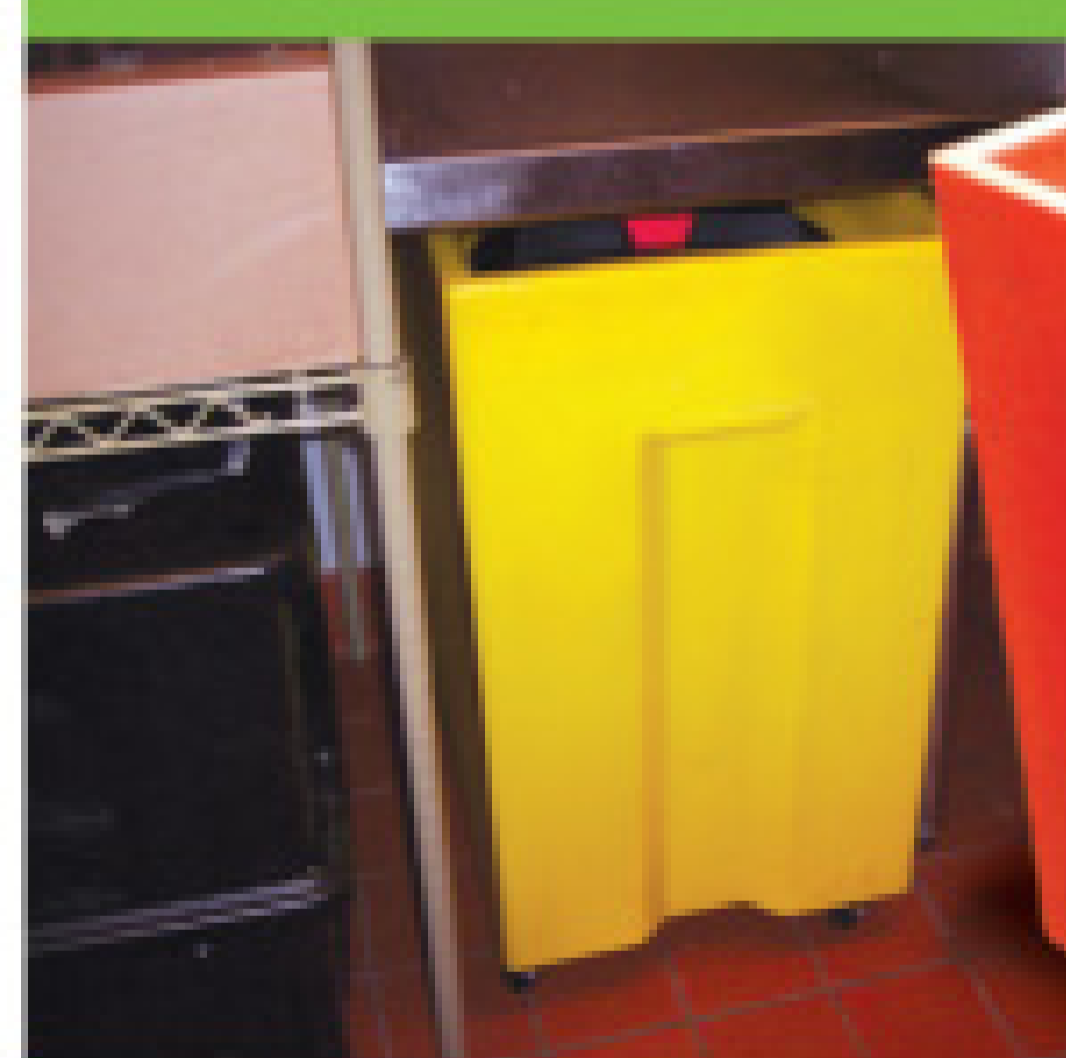
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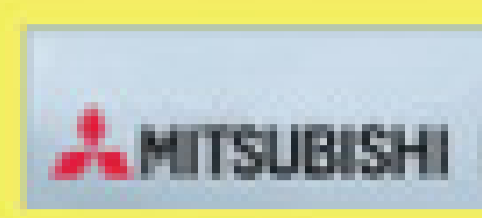
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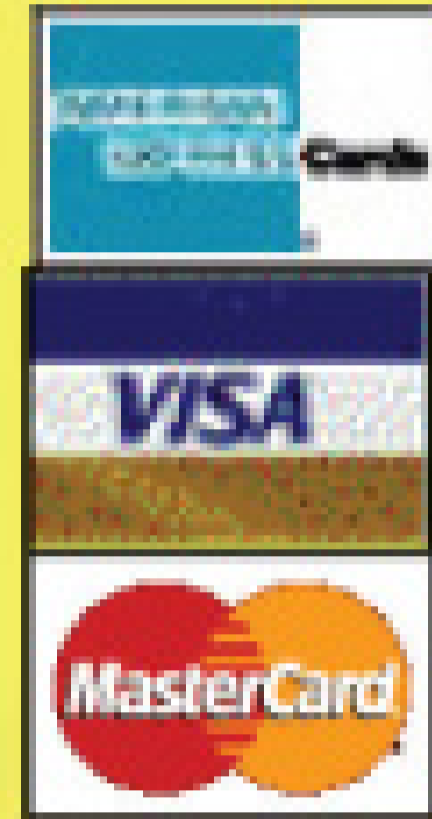
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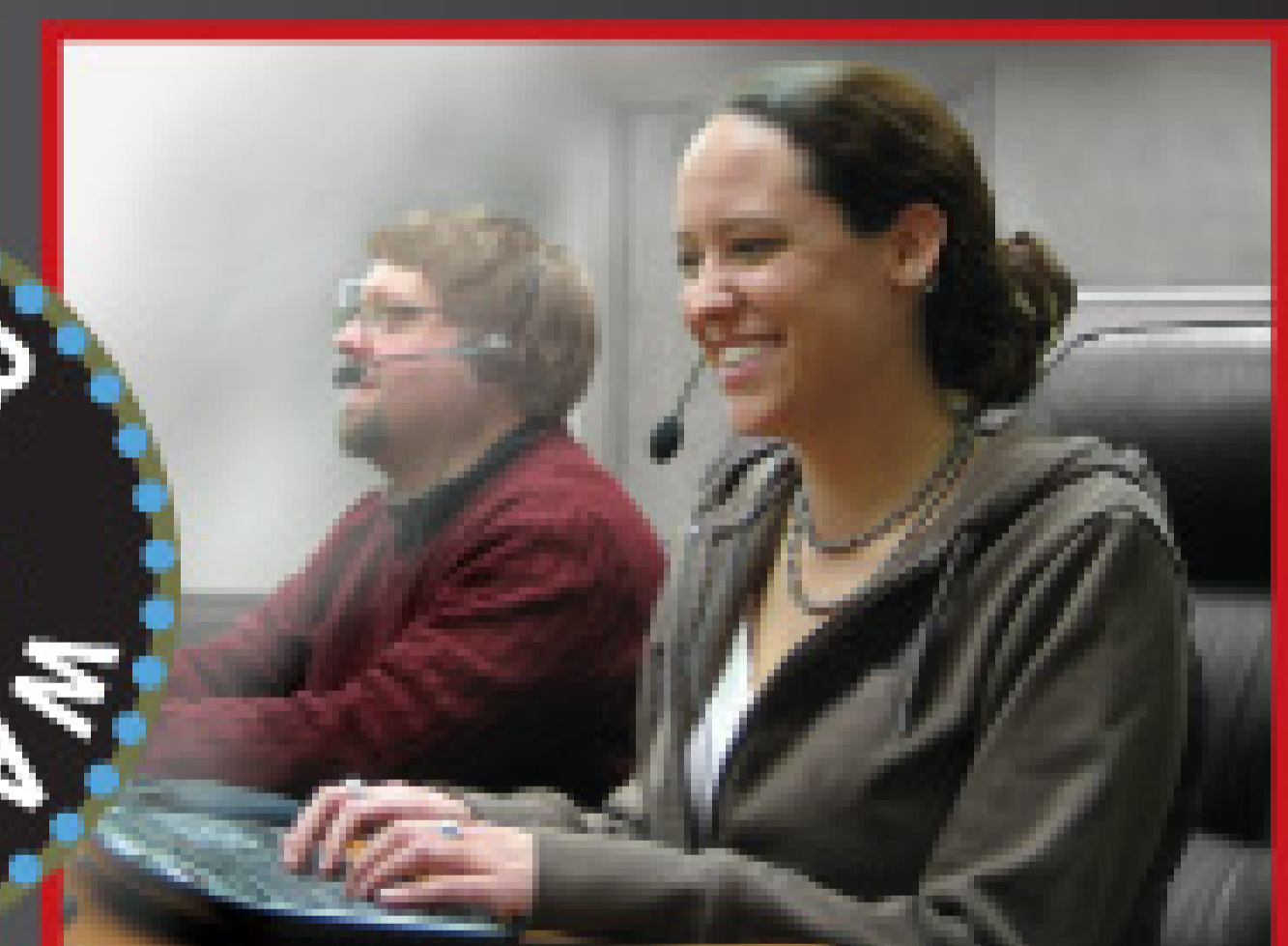
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MEMORIES

Made in China

New Jersey contractor David Zuidema III travels to Olympics with javelin-thrower son

For 11 days last August, David and Kaleb Zuidema left the family's Midland Park, N.J., septic service and pipe inspection and repair business behind and took the vacation of a lifetime to the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing.

The father and son weren't motivated to make the trip by popular events like gymnastics or athletes like multiple medal-winning swimmer Michael Phelps. It was the javelin-throwing competition that motivated the pair to travel almost 7,000 miles.

"We'd been following the javelin Olympic trials and knew who had been in the last Olympics," says David Zuidema III. "But honestly, it's an event I wouldn't be too interested in if not for my son's involvement."

COMPETITIVE THROWER

Kaleb, 16, was the only freshman in New Jersey to compete in the javelin throw at the state high school championships last year, and in 2007 he placed first for his age group in the javelin throw at the national Amateur Athletic Union Junior Olympics held in Nashville. At that event he threw the javelin 49.27 meters, or about 54 yards. He has yet to beat the record older brother Andrew set for the javelin throw at Midland Park High School, but it's on his "to-do" list for the upcoming season.

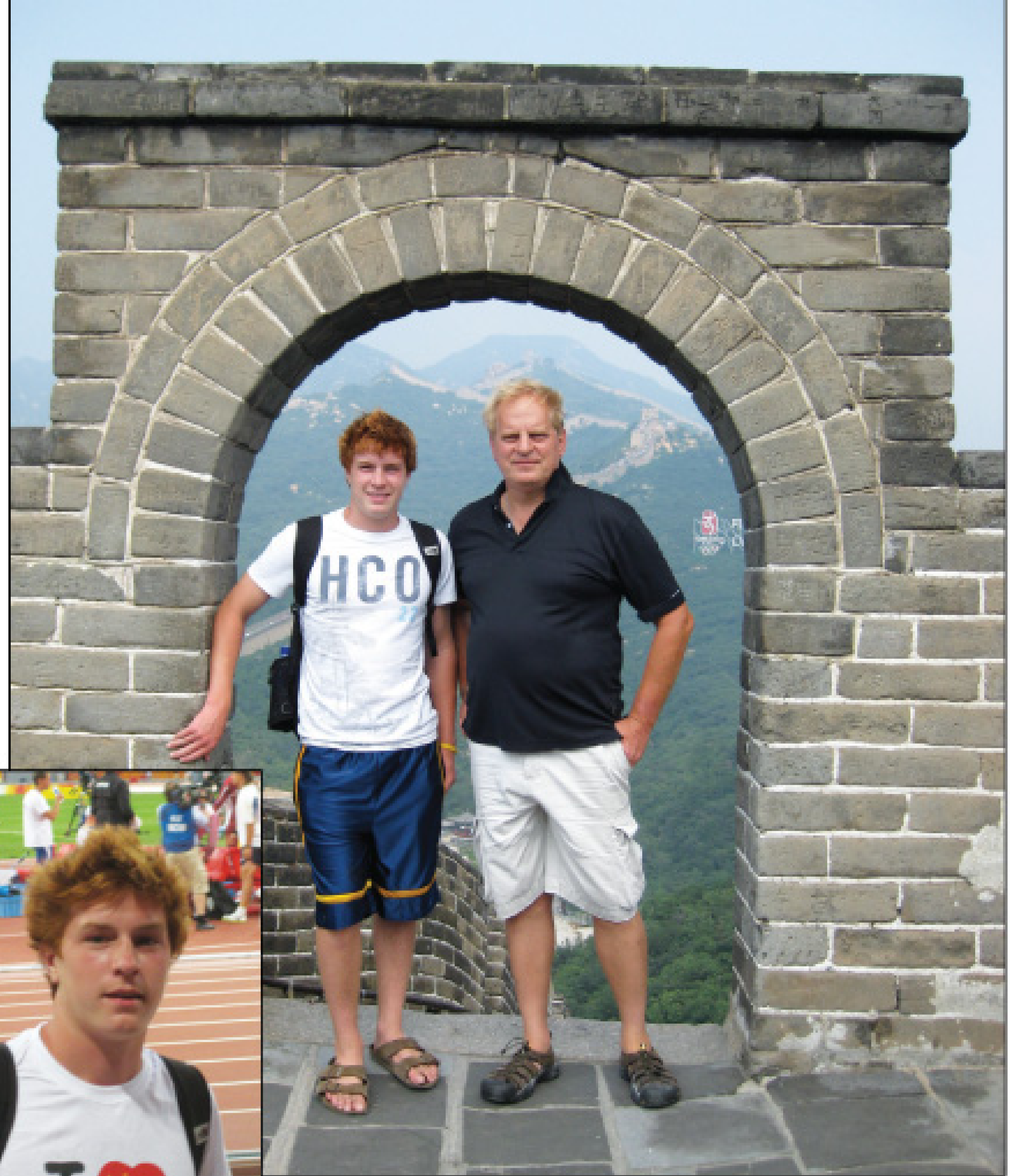
Zuidema says the trip was partially a reward for his son doing so well in his competitions, but mainly it was a father/son-bonding trip.

Zuidema's wife, Mary, did not accompany them on the trip to China.

"We've done a lot of traveling together," he says. "But this was the longest time I was ever going to be gone, so she needed to hold down the fort."

The "fort" is David Zuidema Inc., a company that traces its roots back to around 1920, and provides services including cesspool and septic tank cleaning, septic tank pumping, real estate inspection of septic tanks, jetting, video evaluation of underground pipes, sewage ejector pump repairs, baffle and tank replacements and portable restroom rentals.

The David Zuidema Inc. fleet includes 11 vacuum service trucks for



Above, David and Kaleb Zuidema visited China's Great Wall during their trip to the 2008 Olympics. At left, Kaleb got a close-up look at track and field events at the Olympics. (Photos courtesy of David Zuidema)

the septic business and five service trucks dedicated to the portable restroom business. Zuidema is the third David at the helm.

David Zuidema Sr. founded the company, which today serves all of New Jersey and the southern boroughs of New York City. Through the '50s, '60s and '70s, David Zuidema Jr. operated the company and in the '80s, David III took over. David III's two older sons David Timothy and Andrew also work in the business today. Kaleb helps out in the portable restroom business during the summer, and a fourth son, Seth, is 12 and may be on the payroll in a few years as well.

Preparations for the trip to the Olympics began more than two months before the Zuidemas' flight to Beijing took off from Newark International Airport. When they arrived, they attended the javelin, decathlon and women's high jump events. They avoided high-profile opening and closing ceremonies at the famed Bird's Nest venue, partly because they were cost-prohibitive, and instead spent more time sight-seeing.

STUDYING TECHNIQUE

Javelin throwing is all about technique Zuidema says; and what better place to study technique than the Olympics, where the best throwers in the world are gathered.

"Athleticism is part of it, but technique is the bigger part," he says. "The average person in the stands wasn't observing how the thrower moved his arms and probably couldn't tell the difference between the guy who came in first and the guy who came in last, but my son picked up some techniques that he brought back with him."

Back home, Kaleb works with a trainer to improve his technique, and he does weight training to improve arm and abdominal strength, which are also crucial to becoming a successful javelin thrower. Track is not his only sport. He also competes in soccer and basketball.

"It's like I have a second full-time job keeping up with his sporting events," Zuidema says.

BEING TOURISTS

In addition to attending track and field events at the Olympics, Kaleb met the Canadian and Australian javelin throwers. The entire trip was not devoted to sports, however. The Zuidemas also went to the Great Wall in three separate locations; visited Tiananmen Square and took a rickshaw ride. They hired a private guide one day to show them around, which Zuidema says is very affordable in China. They also contacted a Chinese family acquainted with friends in the U.S. and spent a couple of days with them.

"I'd been to Japan, South Africa and a lot of Europe before, so I'm not intimidated by foreign travel," Zuidema says. "Before we went people kept asking me about issues like smog and terrorists, but we didn't have any problems at all. The people treated us really, really well."

Those who thought Kaleb was an Olympic athlete treated the father and son especially well.

"Me, I'm an older guy; graying," says Zuidema, whose main sport as a youth was football. "I don't look like an athlete, but people wanted their picture taken with my son. They thought he might be an Olympic athlete." ■

Olympic Javelin: Quick Facts

- Europeans traditionally dominate Olympic javelin competition and 2008 was no exception with the gold in the men's competition going to the Norwegian thrower who set an Olympic record with a 90.57 meter throw (about 99 yards). Throwers from Latvia and Finland were awarded the silver and bronze medals. The U.S. thrower did not qualify for the finals.
- American Cyrus Young was the last non-European to win the gold. That was at the 1952 Olympics in Helsinki, Finland.
- The javelin is made of metal, fiberglass or carbon fiber.
- The javelin must be between 2.6 and 2.7 meters long (about 8.5 feet) and weigh 800 grams (1.76 pounds).
- Throwers run along a 33.5-meter runway (110 feet), carrying the javelin over their heads. Their last few steps are "crossover" steps as they prepare to plant their lead leg. This increases the velocity of the javelin. They release the javelin overhead and then try to stop themselves from crossing the foul line.
- The javelin must land tip first for it to be measured. Each competitor is given three attempts.

After Hours is an occasional feature that describes how business owners reconcile work life with family, leisure time, charitable pursuits, and personal interests and passions. Pumper welcomes story ideas.

If you take part in something interesting outside work, or if you know someone in the pumping business who does, please send a note to editor@pumper.com.

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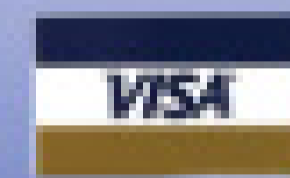
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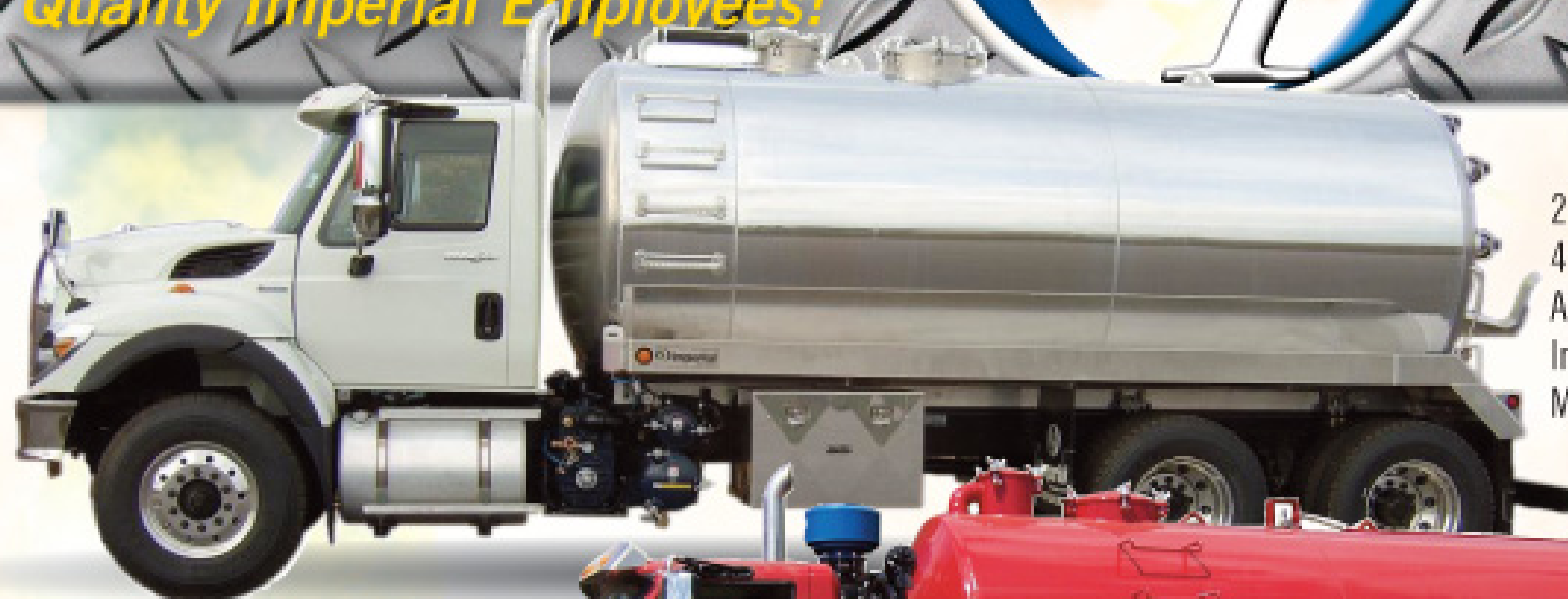
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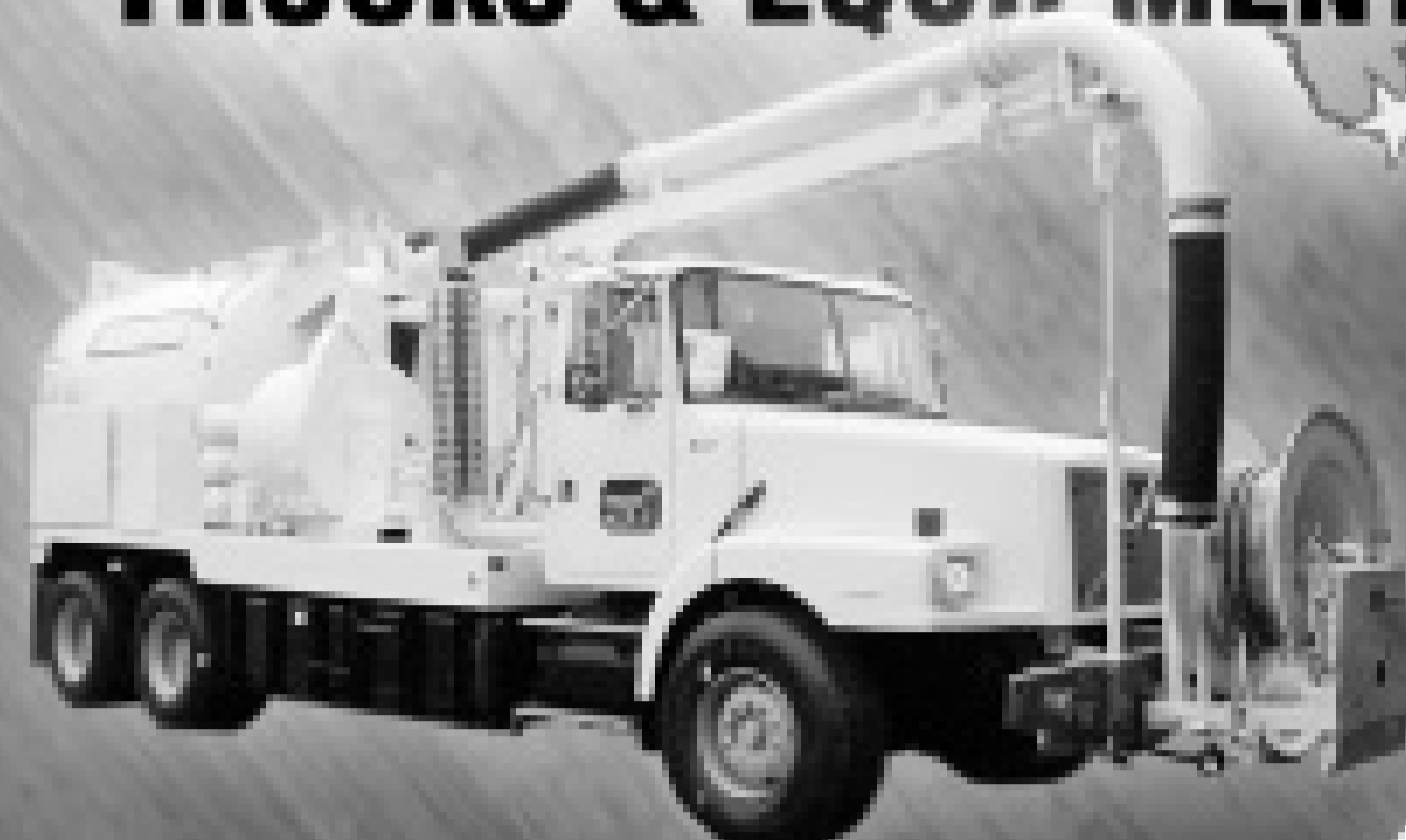
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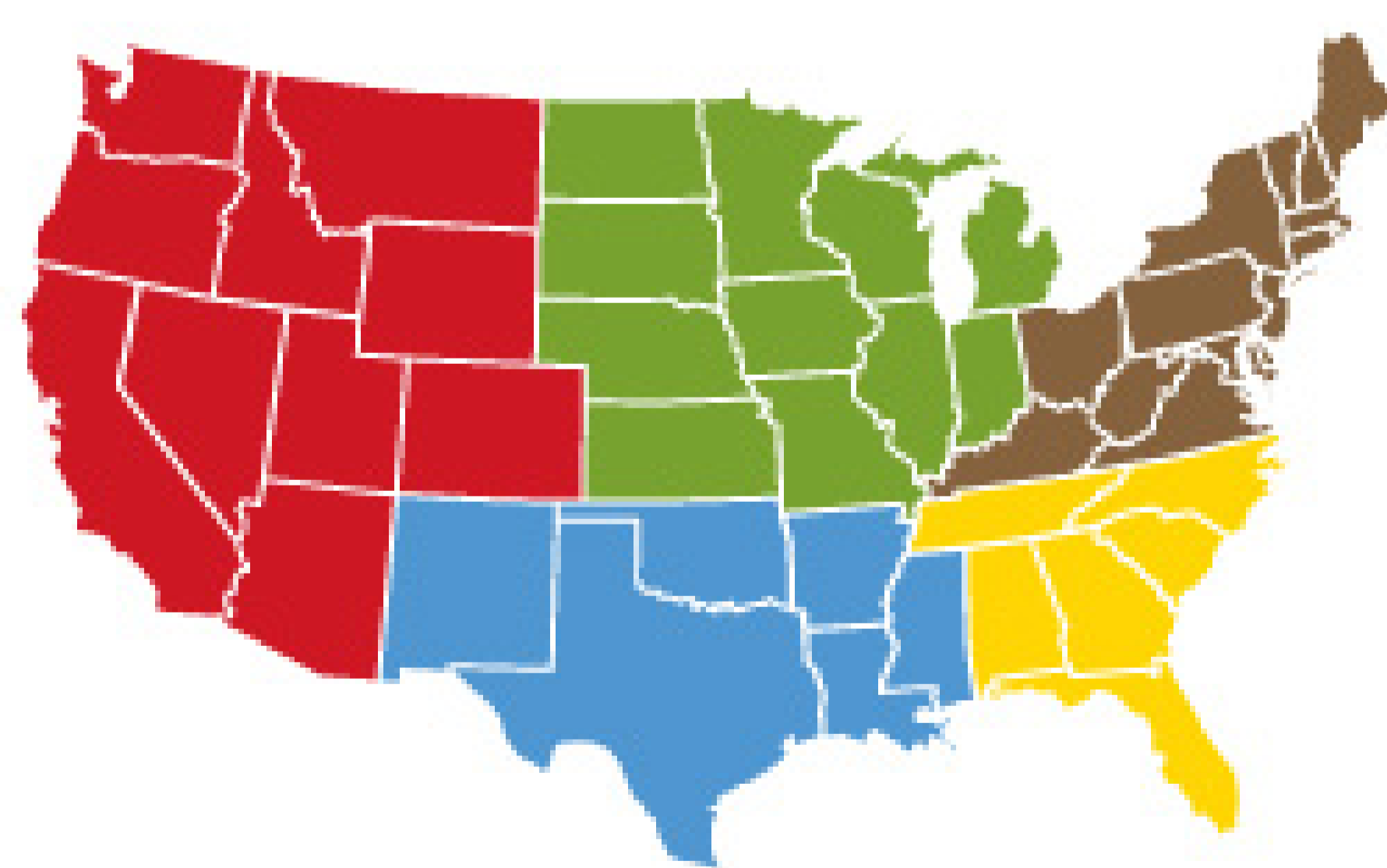
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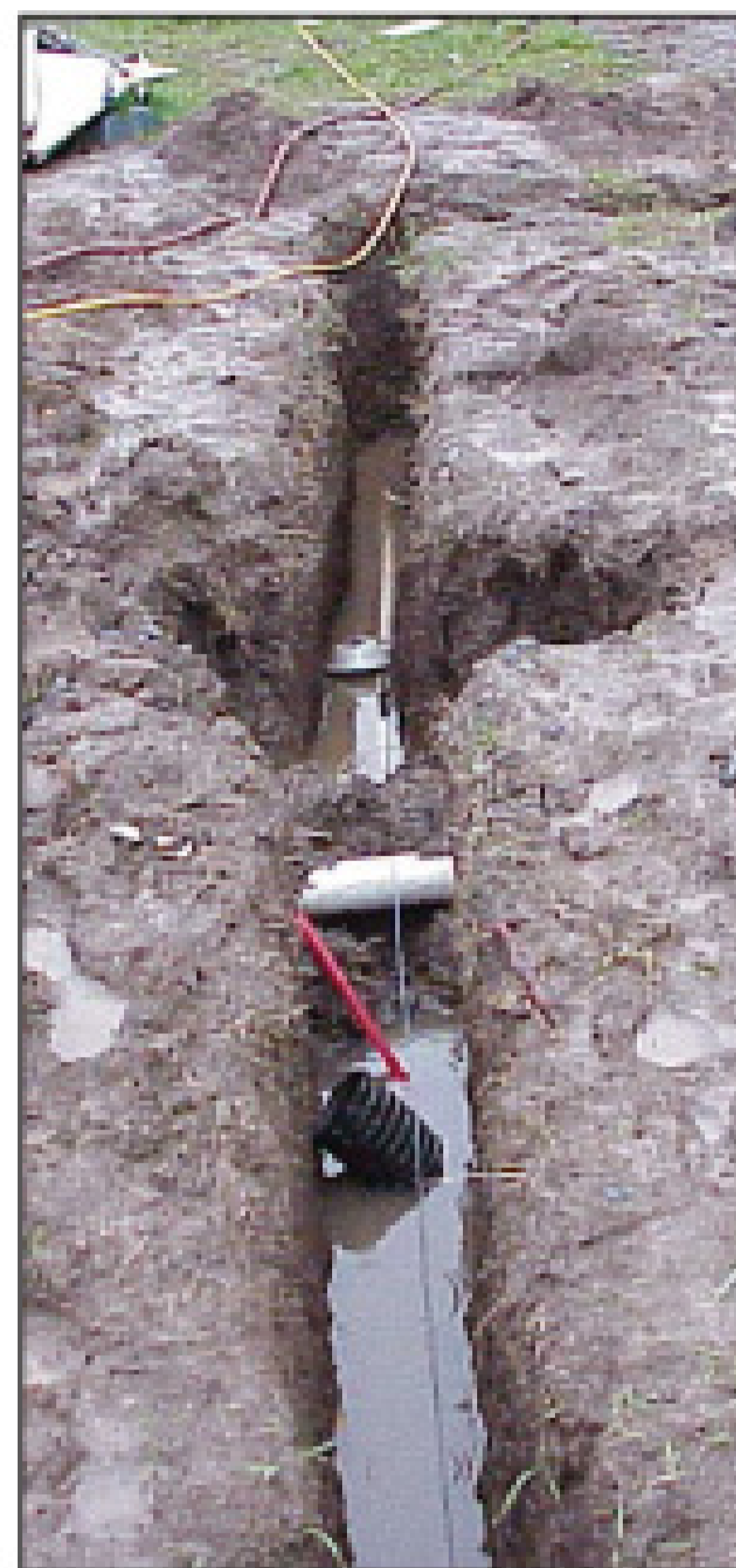
Be a Drainfield Detective

An accurate diagnosis of an onsite system problem can help a homeowner avoid considerable time, expense, and yard and landscaping disruption

Listening to onsite system expert Bill Stuth talk about “Repair and Recovery of Sand Filters” at an Oregon Onsite Wastewater Association conference a few years ago, I noted his advice.

“Don’t rush into a system repair until you know the cause of the problem,” advised Stuth, an onsite consultant, trainer and inventor of the Nibbler treatment unit.

That caused me to reflect on many septic repairs I have seen where the problem was other than a failing drainfield. Jumping to conclusions about the cause of a septic system problem frequently leads to wasted money, unnecessary yard damage and less space available for other uses. It seems that when problems arise, the knee-jerk reaction with homeowners, installers and many regulators alike is: “Let’s put in a new drainfield.”



or soon after, the effluent sewer line had sheared completely off at the tank outlet, probably during backfilling. For 10 years, the loose, well-drained backfill around the tank excavation had absorbed all the septic tank effluent without backing up.

This illustrates the value in first taking a little time to troubleshoot and evaluate the septic system to determine the cause of the problem and a proper course of action. The problem may be less complicated than you thought.

JUST A BLOCKAGE?

Many septic systems have been replaced that were not failing but merely had blockages or other minor problems that could have been corrected easily with a minimum of time, expense and impact to the property.

Another example: A few years ago I received a telephone call from a man telling me his system was failing, and he needed a new drainfield. The matter was urgent, he said, because an outdoor wedding was being planned for his daughter, and a new system had to be installed ASAP. According to the owner, the system was 16 years old and had five, 100-foot drainfield lines; the problem lay at the first line.

I obtained the installation drawing from the county and then visited the site. The drainfield was located on a gentle 3-percent slope, and the top line was indeed surfacing. The disposal field was installed not with drop boxes but with serial distribution and the up-and-over-type fittings popular some years ago. These fittings were plumbed in



This photo shows how an inadequately supported septic system outlet fitting led to a blockage and required a repair. Above, a contractor inadvertently cut through a drainfield line, causing damage. (Photos courtesy of Zan Ewing)

Onsite System Focus

By Zan Ewing

NO EFFLUENT

An extreme case a colleague told me about illustrates this point. A system had apparently failed after only 10 years. The site was fairly well drained, and the standard system was permitted, inspected and approved on completion. The contractor hired to fix the problem got a repair permit for drainfield replacement without any real investigation.

After completing a major portion of the new drainfield, the contractor dug into a portion of the old drainfield and found the gravel virtually clean, as if it had never been used. Investigating further, he found that the “failed” drainfield had never received any effluent from the septic tank.

At this point, the contractor realized he had found the real problem. Digging upstream from the drainfield to the septic tank, he finally located it. Evidently, during system construction,

a serpentine fashion, tying the five lines together.

I told the owner that a drainfield on a slope like that virtually couldn’t fail on the top line. If it did fail, it would normally fail at the weakest point of the lowest line due to hydraulic pressure. The problem, I said, was likely something else.

I suspected that the difficulty may be with the up-and-over fittings at the end of the top line connecting it to the next lower line. Probing the line to where I thought the fitting was, I dug down and found that it had become disconnected, probably again during the original backfilling, and no effluent had passed this point to the lower lines.

I recommended abandoning the serpentine up-and-over fittings and replacing them with a series of drop boxes installed at one end of the system to connect the lines. I told the owner that the cost would be considerably less than he feared, and that there would be minimal damage to his yard. He thanked me for taking time to diagnose and fix the real problem, and he was happy to pay the modest cost of that extra work.

THE FIRST CLUE OF PROBLEMS IS PROBABLY THE AGE OF THE SYSTEM. A PROPERLY SITED AND INSTALLED SEPTIC SYSTEM, IN REASONABLY WELL-DRAINED SOIL, SHOULD LAST AT LEAST 30 YEARS. IF THE SYSTEM IS MUCH NEWER, THE PROBLEM MAY NOT BE FAILURE OF THE DRAINFIELD BUT SOMETHING ELSE.

LAY OF THE LAND

To diagnose a septic system problem effectively, it is necessary to know where all the components are and what they consist of. A critical piece of information is the as-built drawing, done at the time of the installation. This should be available from the local agency that regulates the onsite program. It provides a lot of useful information for an accurate assessment of the system and problem.

The first clue of problems is probably the age of the system. A properly sited and installed septic system, in reasonably well-drained soil, should last at least 30 years. If the system is much newer, like the one described above, the problem may not be failure of the drainfield but something else.

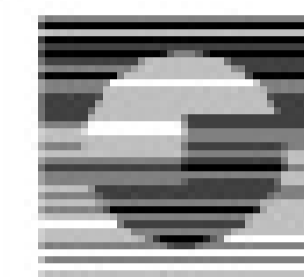
Another clue might be found in the landscaping and irrigation layouts. Landscaping and irrigation systems typically come after the septic system is installed. Homeowners have often called, telling me that landscapers had just pulled up white pipe and gravel with their trenching equipment.

This can have a serious impact on the system, cutting off and damaging a number of the drainfield lines and thus shortening the life of the system. Often, this damage, if known, can be repaired and the lines reconnected, making the system almost whole.

Identifying the true cause of a septic system problem may avoid the cost of installing an unnecessary system. It requires a significant effort and experience to do this properly. Homeowners need to be educated on the value of this professional service, and contractors should never be reluctant to charge for it.

Zan Ewing is a Registered Environmental Health Specialist with 35 years in the industry as a regulator, installation contractor and consultant. He is past president of the Oregon Onsite Wastewater Association. He can be reached at ewingzan@aol.com. ■

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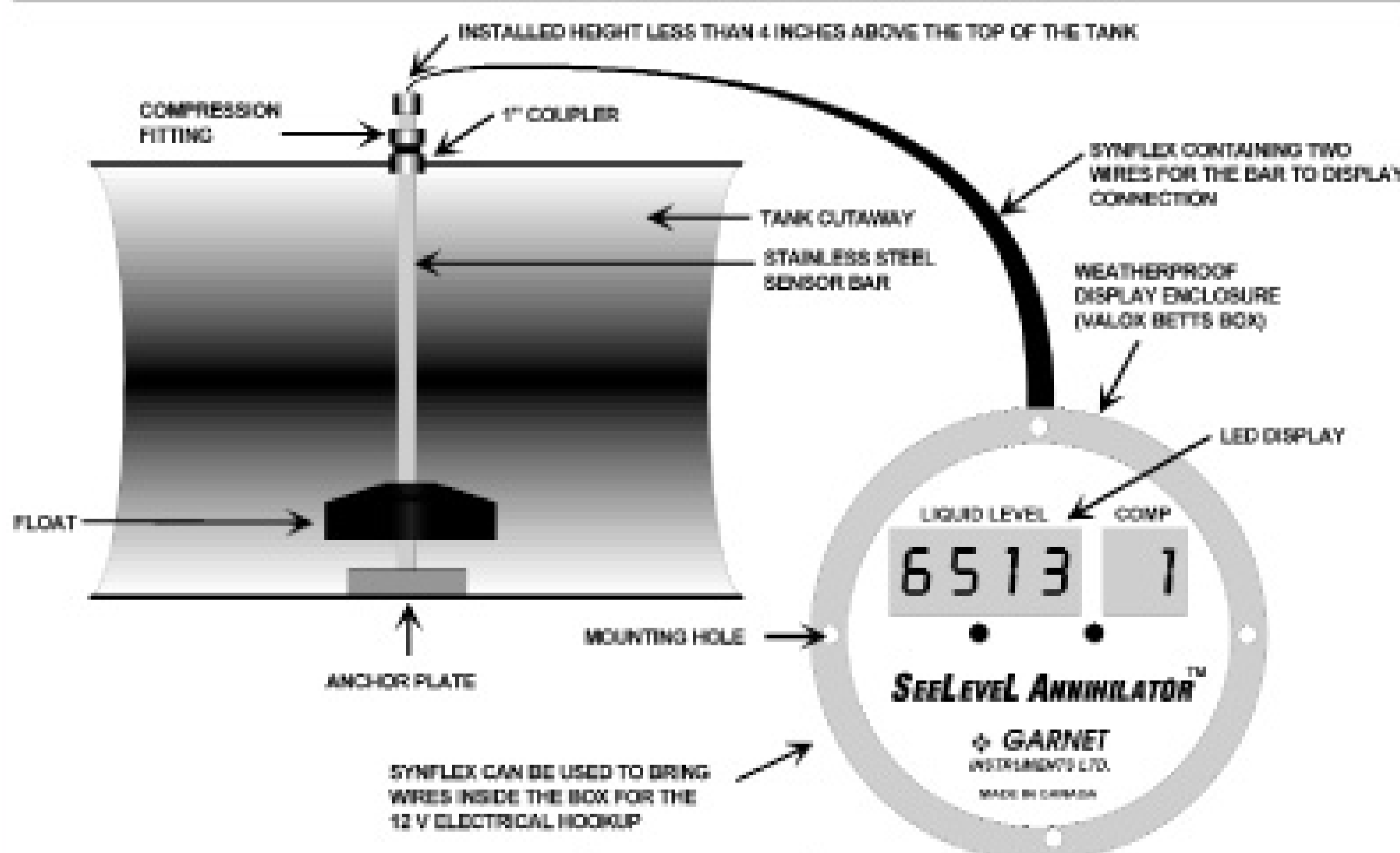
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Pump and Install?

Seeing customers with failing septic systems, an experienced pumper wonders if he should add onsite system installation to his service menu

By Roger E. Machmeier, Ph.D.

Q I have a septic tank-pumping business. Some of my customers are on a regular schedule, but others only call when they have problems. Then the sewage is backing up in their house and I need to rearrange my schedule to help them. What can I do to convince them septic tanks need regular cleaning? Some of the systems are surfacing and need repair. Should I get in the installation business, too?

A For many years, promoting regular septic system maintenance has been a problem for the industry. Many local sanitary codes require the septic tank be cleaned and pumped on a frequent interval. Three years is the interval most often used. But some people argue this is too often for a large tank serving just a few people. But the regulations certainly err on the side of safety.

I would prefer to see a septic tank pumped too often than not often enough.

EDUCATION IS JOB ONE

Apparently you live in an area where some homeowners only call to have their septic tank pumped when they have trouble with their system. Of course, the first thing you must do is to get their tank pumped so the system can be used again; maybe for only a short while if the system has been sorely misused.

At this point you must impress upon the customer that you are an “onsite sewage treat-

ment system professional.” It will take a little time, but the professional approach is much better than to just take your money for the job and leave.

Tell the customer how a septic tank works. You might want to make copies of the March 2009 *Septic System Answer Man* column and distribute them to this and other customers who need to be educated on septic system maintenance. Take time to discuss a few of the basics with them and give them your card so they can get in touch if they have more questions.

A lot of how you proceed now depends on your customer's interest level. You might suggest a riser be placed on the manhole opening. The expense of the next service call will be less since time will not be required to do any digging to locate the manhole. In the northern climates it is a good idea to place some expanded polystyrene at the tank level to retain as much heat in the tank as possible. This will help maintain the bacterial activity in the septic tank.

Point out to your customer that a filter can be installed at the outlet of the septic tank to prevent sewage solids from flowing out and plugging the drainfield.

STICKER SHOCK?

Now, these suggestions are going to cost money for the homeowners. They are likely under some stress with the septic tank just having failed and been pumped. Don't press the points any more unless they are interested. Leave them with the

At this point you must impress upon the customer that you are an “onsite sewage treatment system professional.” It will take a little time, but the professional approach is much better than to just take your money for the job and leave.

thought you are the “expert” and are making suggestions to improve the operation and life of their system. Don't forget to give them your card and invite them to call if they have any questions.

THE NEXT QUESTION

Should you get into the installation business? I presume you are thinking about the installation of complete onsite sewage treatment systems. You need to take a careful look at what is going on in your trade area. Those who are installing systems may like to have a reputable service company in the area. Those firms may not refer customers to you for pumping tanks if you are also in the installation business.

Installing systems may be a big jump for a pumping-only contractor to make. Expensive equipment is needed, along with experienced operators for that equipment. You will need adequate financing and need to manage a complete business operation including purchasing supplies, billing customers, etc.

Certainly you can install risers for septic tank manholes, replace outlet tees, install outlet tees with filters, etc. and not be in competition with firms that install complete systems. In fact, they may welcome a firm that will do minor service work. I suggest you talk to each of the companies in your area that installs complete onsite systems. Explain

the services you usually provide and invite them to refer customers to your business. Find out how you can best work with them to provide maintenance service to their customers.

You may consider offering service contracts for onsite sewage treatment systems. This is a good way to build steady repeat business. For an annual fee, you inspect the system to see how it is operating and then clean the septic tank, say, every three years. Let your installer friends know about this service; they may even do some sales work for you.

There may be some system installers in your area who also pump septic tanks and have a maintenance service. They won't need your services. But there will also be installers who will welcome having a reputable firm they can recommend to their customers for pumping septic tanks.

If you do good work and have satisfied customers, you will likely do very well in the maintenance and service end of the onsite business.

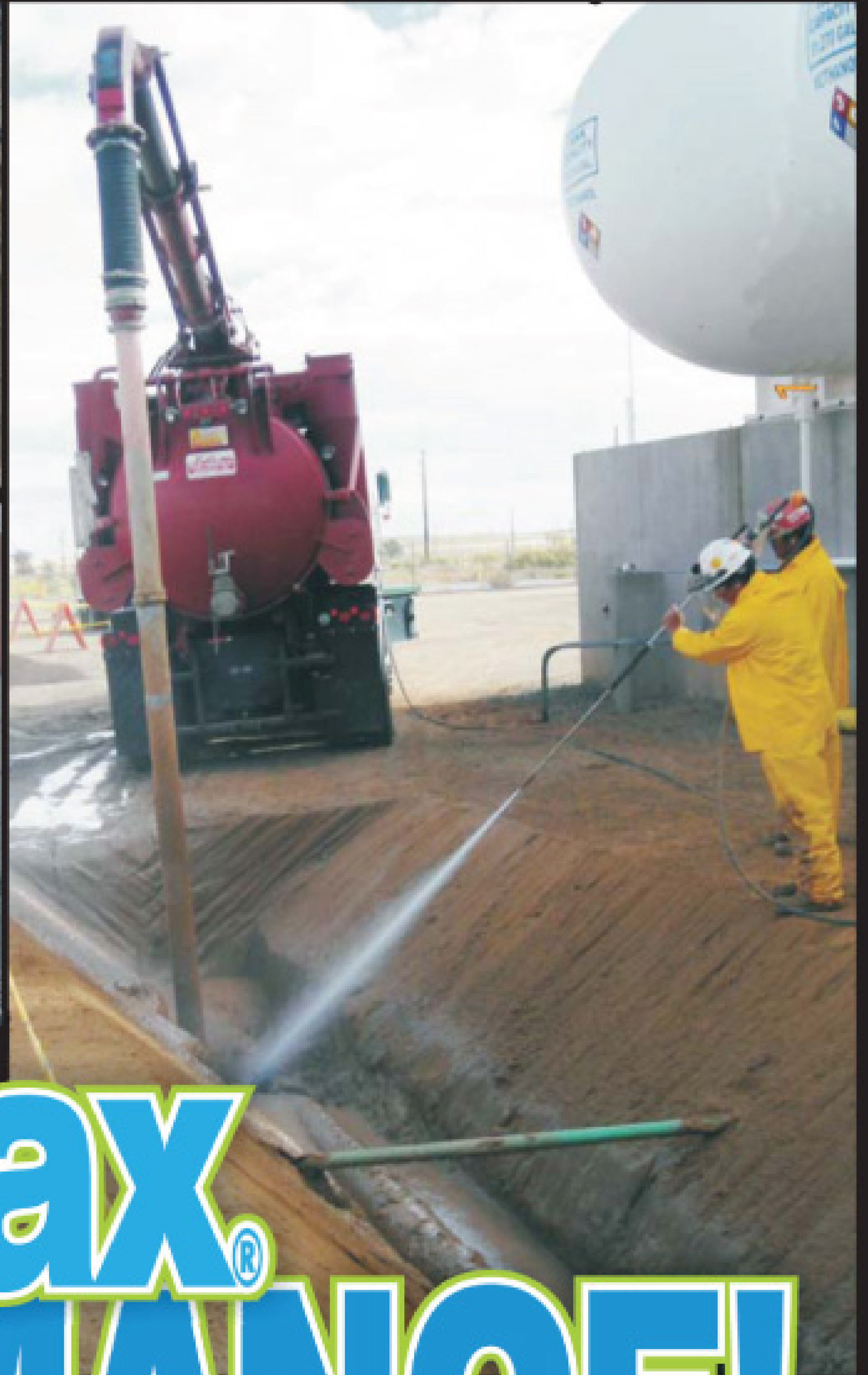
THE BOTTOM LINE

For now my advice is to stay with your maintenance and service business. This is a service sorely needed in the onsite industry, so onsite sewage treatment systems can continue to perform their treatment job for a long, long time. ■

Readers are welcome to submit questions to the Answer Man. Send your question to COLE Publishing by e-mail to editor@pumper.com, by fax to 715/546-3786; or by mail to P.O. Box 220, Three Lakes, WI 54562. We will pass your question along to Dr. Machmeier.



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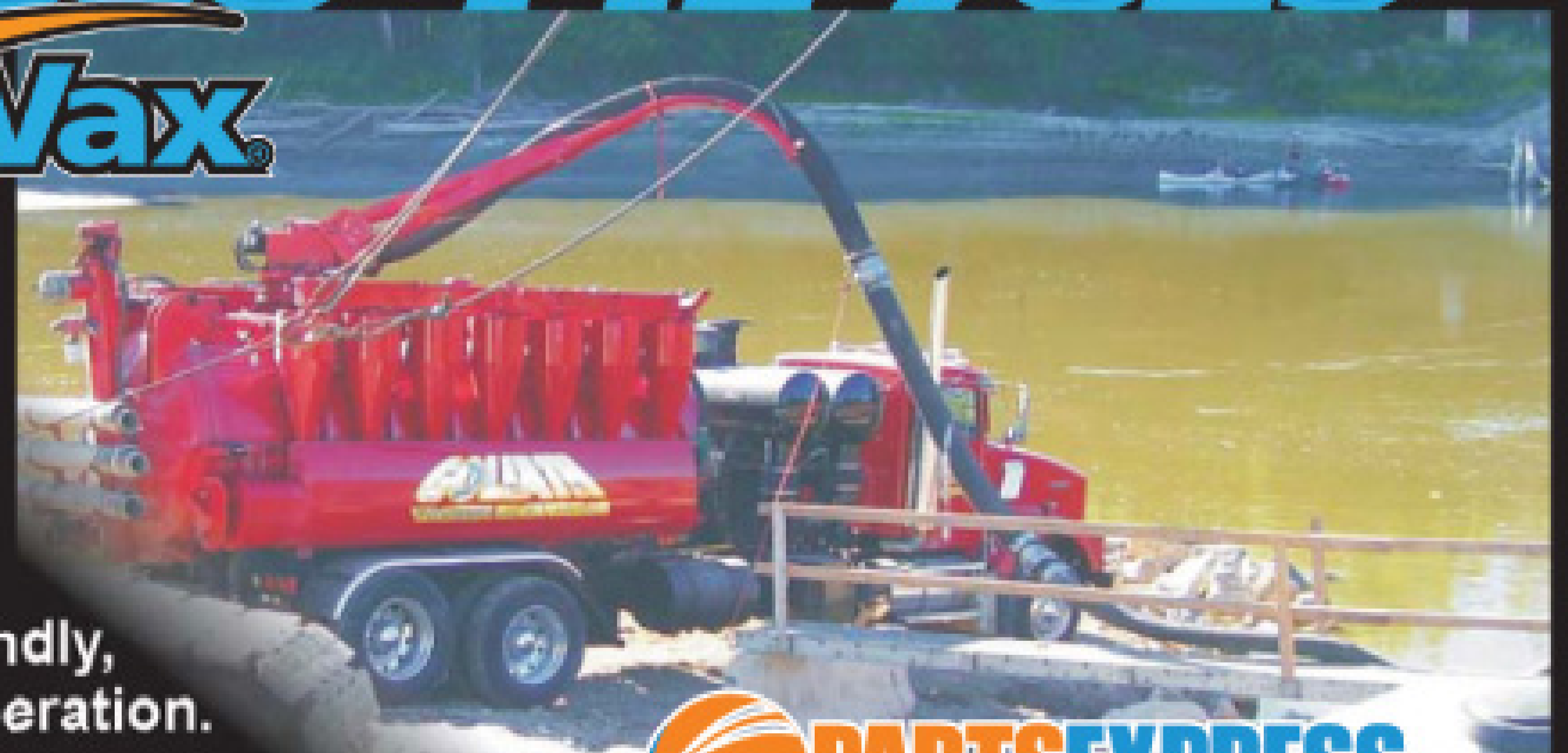
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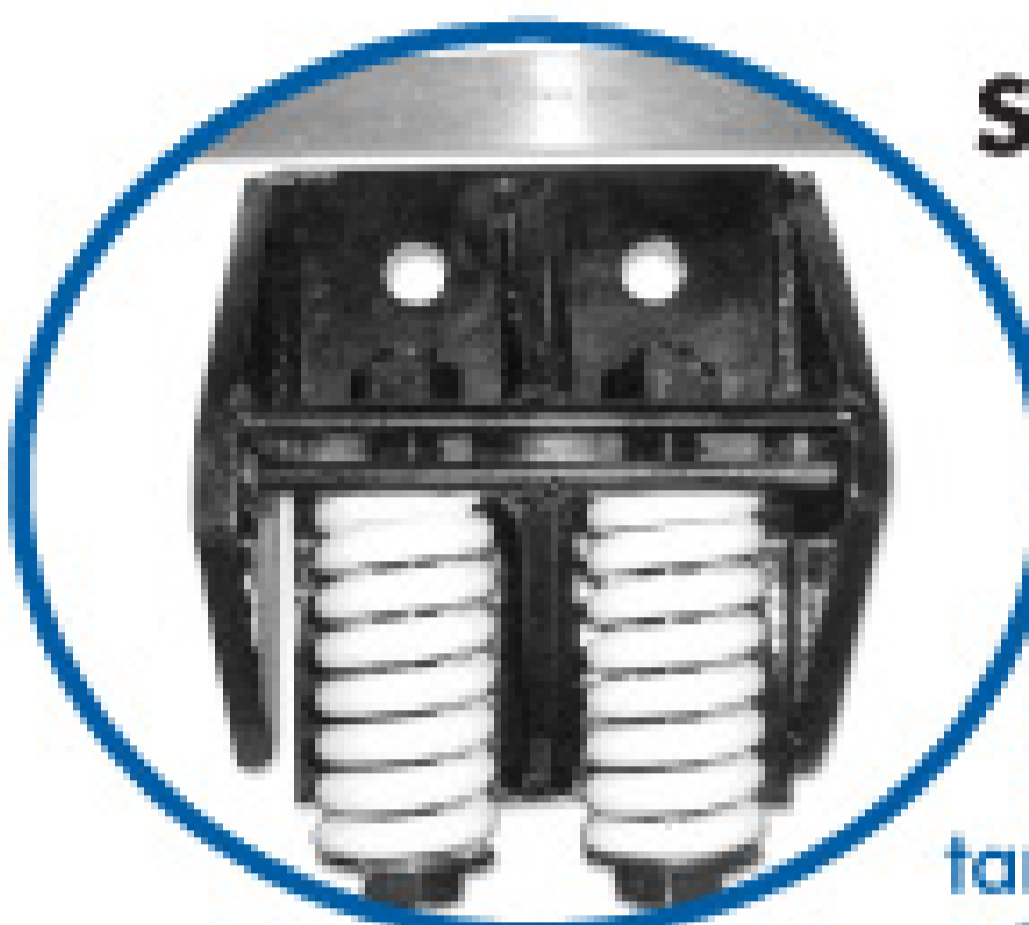
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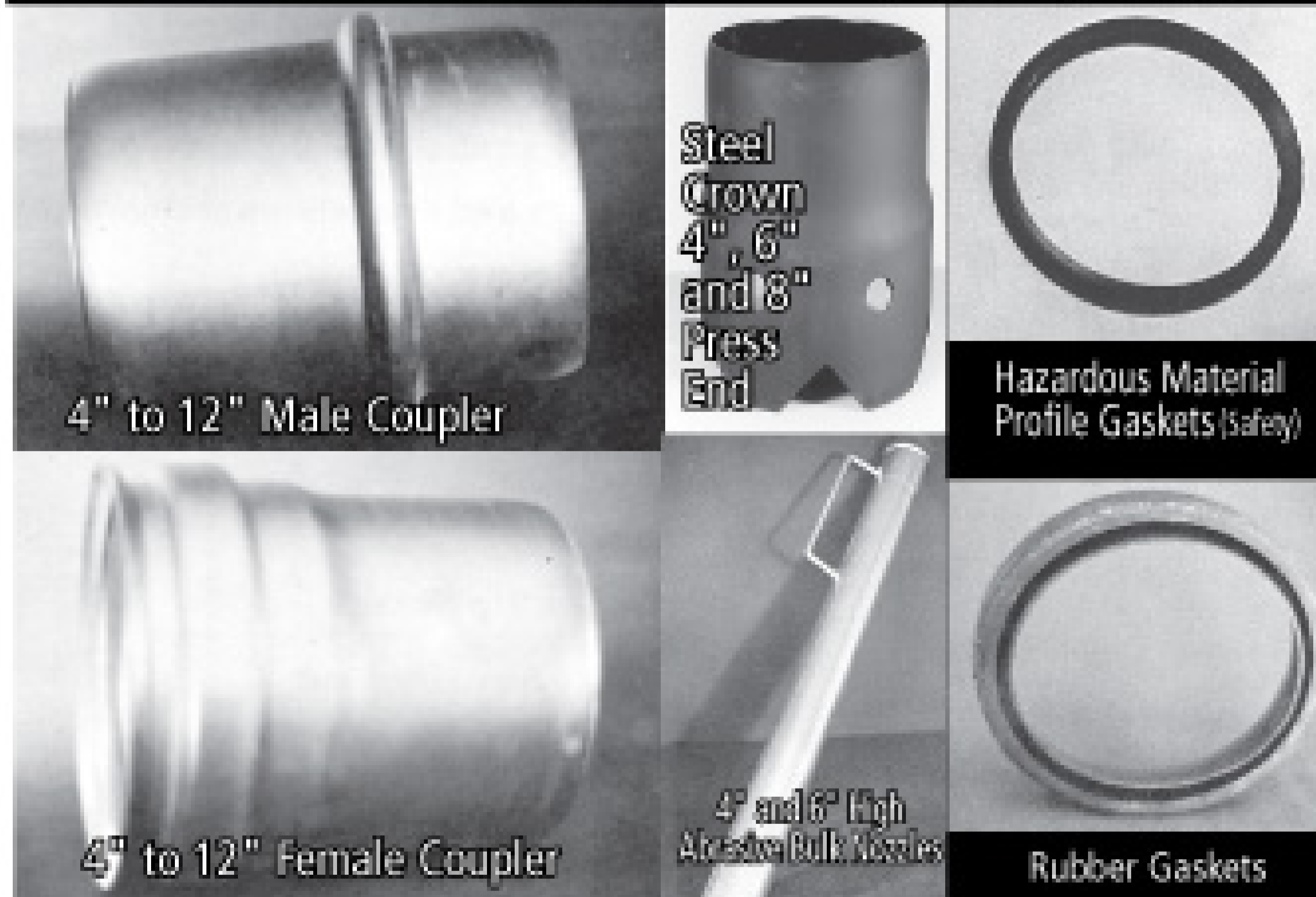
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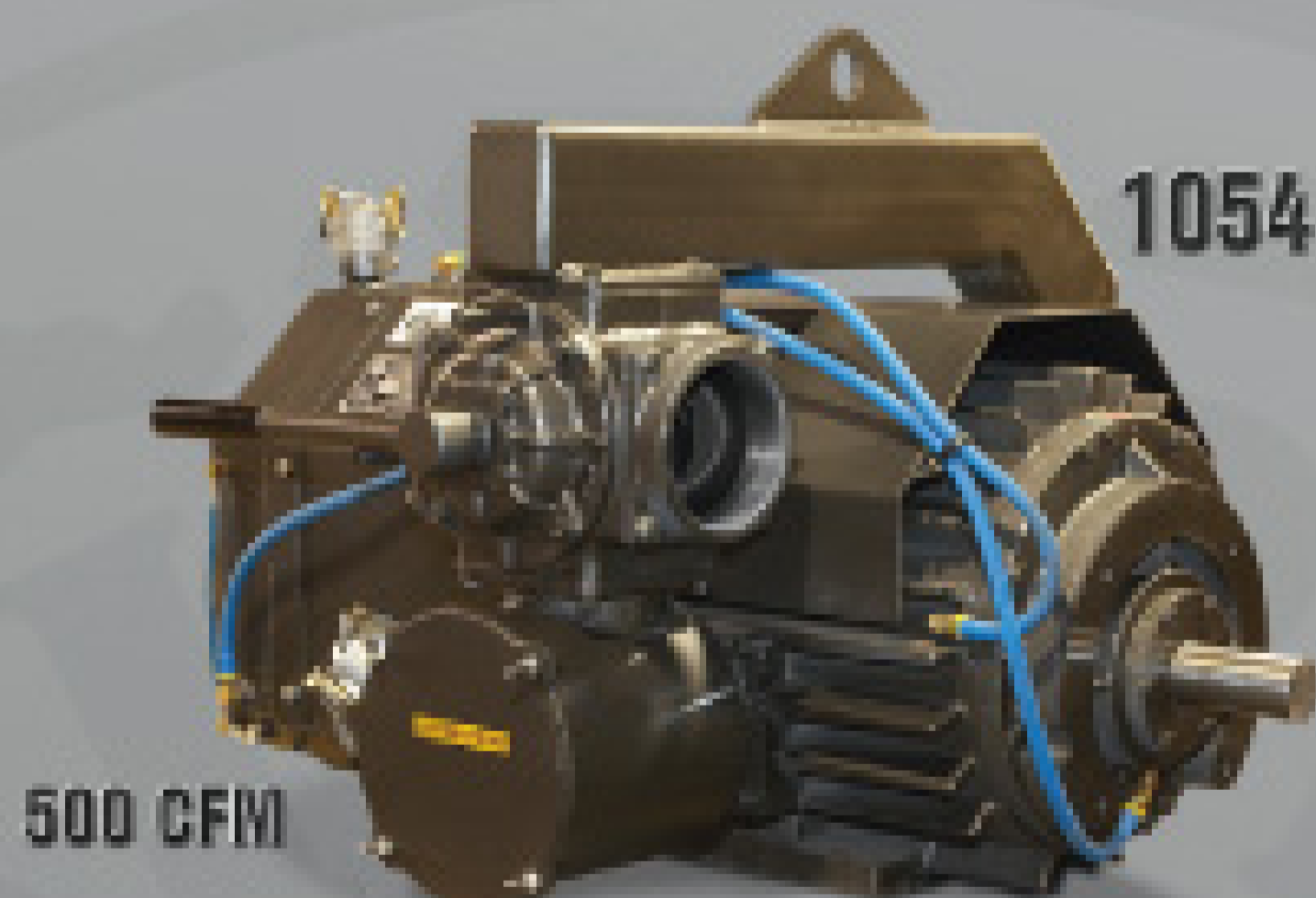
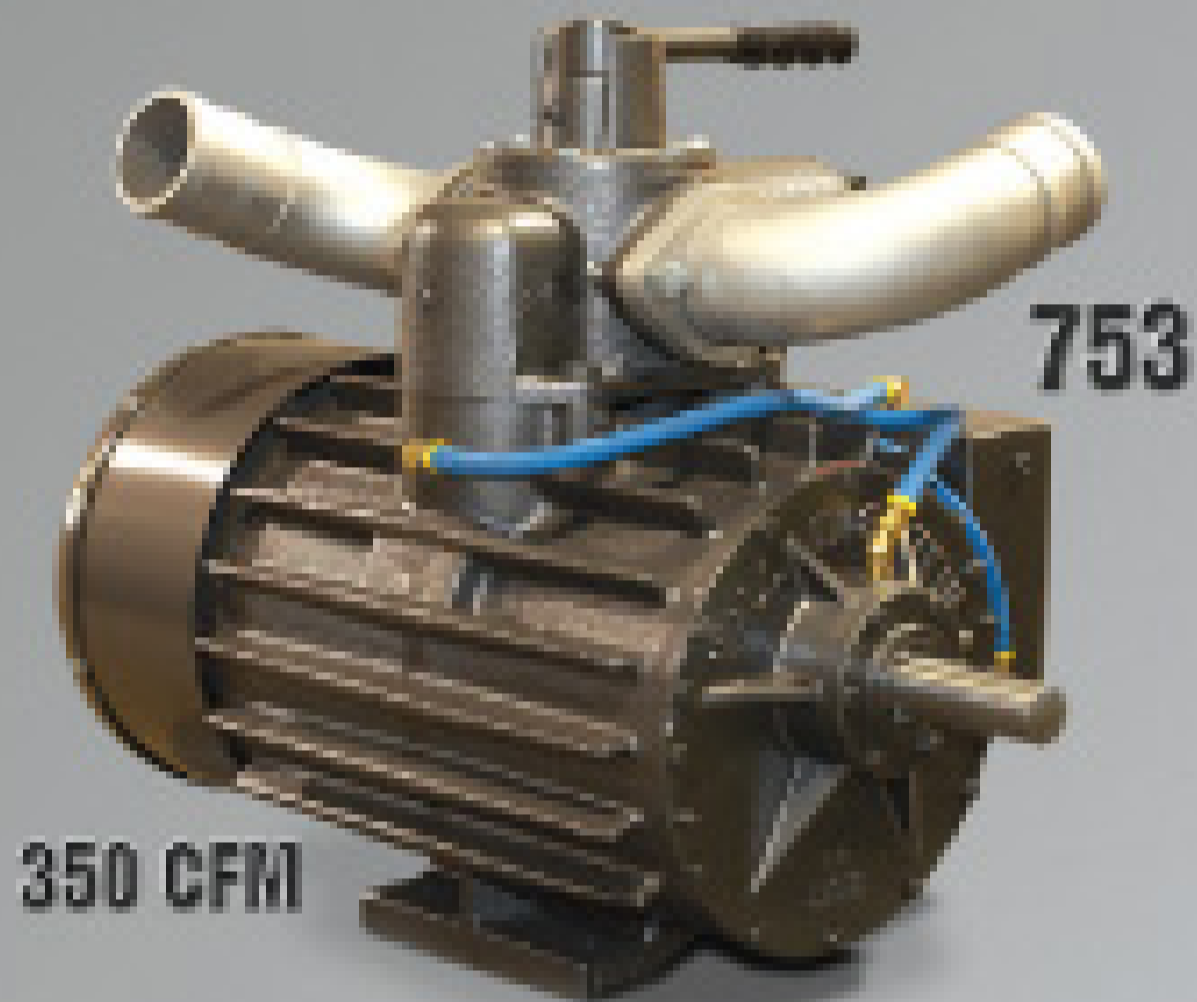
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It's System Upgrade Time

Faced with a saturated drainfield, a poster turns to the pros for a second opinion on a costly proposed retrofit

This feature in Pumper reports noteworthy conversations that take place in Pumper Discussion, an e-mail based forum for industry professionals sponsored by COLE Publishing. Pumper Discussion provides for the exchange of information and ideas on septic and drainfield installation and maintenance, trucks and equipment, portable sanitation, chemicals and additives, and much more. To find out more about Pumper Discussion, or to subscribe, visit www.pumper.com.

Information and advice in Overheard Online is offered in good faith by industry professionals. However, readers should consult in depth with appropriate industry sources before applying such advice to a specific business situation.

Overheard Online

IS AN AEROBIC SYSTEM THE ANSWER?

Question:

I have a septic system with lateral lines. Lines are on a slight slope, so in addition to the 1,000-gallon trash tank, I have a 1,000-gallon pump tank. I'm in Oklahoma, where we had record rainfall the past year. I am now experiencing water surfacing when the pump activates. The septic system contractors I talked to say the field is saturated and I need to convert to an aerobic system. The three companies I talked to use all-in-one tanks, but would use my existing trash tank and cave in my existing pump tank. In my research it seems I might be able to drop in an aeration tank between the existing trash and pump tanks and add lines and sprinkler heads for distribution of the effluent.

Does anyone have experience with this they can share?

Answers:

Converting a septic system to aerobic bacteria is a fairly simple process. Aerobic bacteria is claimed to be faster-acting and more aggressive than typical anaerobic bacteria. It is also claimed that when the aerobic bacteria gets to the field, it will devour the biomat — which is a common cause of field failure — and in fact, restore a failed drainfield (according to system manufacturers).

Supporting aerobic bacteria requires an air-infuser, also called an oxygenator. An air pump sits outside the tank, which pumps air to the infuser inside the clarifying chamber of a tank. The already somewhat clean effluent is "bubbled" and the fine particulates fall to the bottom, super-cleaning the effluent. Aerobic bacteria is manually added (periodically), above the bubbler, and is mixed in by the bubbling action. Filters are optionally added at the tank's outlet.

A riser above the bubbler is necessary for ongoing, scheduled maintenance and adding the aerobic bacteria packets. It sounds like you have a "forced" system. In other words, it drains under pressure (with a pump) rather than typical gravity. Although what you suggest may be helpful, I would also consider installing a chamber system to add drainfield capacity. And protect the chambers from rain infiltration with the appropriate products.

If you're going to dig a hole, you may want to install the chambers

Septic systems don't work underwater. One of the best things you can do is conserve water. Turn off the water when you're brushing your teeth or shaving. In the shower, get wet, turn off the water, soap up, then turn the water back on to rinse off.

and get it over with at the same time. Also, give the rainwater some place to go instead of sitting on top of your field.



All this talk of adding things to the system, but nothing about how much it will cost. Mound systems are expensive, tending to be \$3,000 to \$6,000 more than a typical tank and drainfield system.

I like the aeration system solution the best, since it is a minor change to your existing system. Some companies advertise an aerator motor for an existing septic tank; then you wouldn't have any tank costs.

The problem you have is you're trying to put water into water. Septic systems don't work underwater. One of the best things you can do is conserve water. Turn off the water when you're brushing your teeth or shaving. In the shower, get wet, turn off the water, soap up, then turn the water back on to rinse off.

Replace an older top-load washing machine with a front loader, which uses half the water and detergents. Replace all faucet aerators and showerheads with water-conserving devices. If you really want to get radical, replace your toilets with new water conserving toilets (or even more radical with a composting toilet). Bottom line — less water will help your system.

I tell folks, if you never use your system, then it will never fail.

MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS, ANYONE?

Question:

We are thinking of doing service contracts. Have any of you done this?

Answers:

I use service contracts and they are a great way to keep the money rolling in during the winter. But they do have a downside. Some people think the contract covers parts, labor and pumping, and they get mad when they don't see you doing the testing. I test twice a year and leave a sticker on the door to show that I've been there.



In my opinion, the only thing better than cleaning septic tanks is having your customers on a checklist paying you to tell them when it's time for you to pump it. But you must let them know when they sign up that any repairs or pumping costs additional money. Other than that, the only thing to avoid is price wars. Stick to your deal, and if the next guy wants to work for nothing, that's his business. ■



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California Regulations a Long Time Coming

**Proposed septic system restrictions generate debate across the state.
Will their eventual impact reverberate across the United States?**

Nearly five years after the original deadline, California has finally issued draft regulations to implement a 9-year-old law on design and operating standards for onsite wastewater treatment systems.

After Assembly Bill 885 passed in 2000, state officials were given until 2004 to draw up implementing regulations, but they didn't make it out of the state bureaucracy until late 2008. Hearings for public comment began last December and were to be completed over the winter, but were subsequently cut short.

Along with the regulations, the California State Water Board has issued an Environmental Impact Report, which assesses the potential effect of the regulations on public health and the environment, as well as expected economic impacts on local governments, businesses and septic system owners. A key element of the regulations are requirements for so-called "impaired water bodies" — many of them coastal — believed to have been polluted in part by septic systems.

Earlier this year, though, the new regulations were derailed again, as hearings were postponed due to unexpected criticism from the public. So it's back to the drawing board, as the law is revised again before the process continues.

Pumper Interview

By Erik Gunn

Norman Hantzsche, a principal and managing engineer at Questa Engineering Corp., based in Richmond, Calif., is the resident expert on AB 885 and its regulations on behalf of the California Onsite Wastewater Association. Besides duties at Questa Engineering, which provides engineering and planning for onsite wastewater treatment facilities for small communities and other customers throughout the state, Hantzsche has represented COWA to a statewide stakeholders group on the regulations.

COWA's members include septic system designers, manufacturers, contractors, and regulators. The organization provides members with technical updates, training, and networking opportunities, and it advocates for best practices in the onsite wastewater industry. Hantzsche recently brought *Pumper* up to date on the on-again, off-again regulations.

Pumper: What's the status of the AB 885 regulations now?

Hantzsche: After hearings, the state water board staff will start reading through and responding to comments on the draft Environmental Impact Report and regulations. They expect that will take at least four to six months. At the end they will issue final recommended regulations. The final documents would be brought to the state water board, which might adopt the recommended regulations, or adopt them with changes, and will also be asked to certify the environmental document.

Pumper: What are the biggest concerns about the regulations as drafted, particularly from the pumping contractors and their customers?

Hantzsche: One general theme of criticism has been the state's attempt to get into the minutiae of the details of some of the design and siting requirements for onsite systems. In California we have complex and



IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT SUDDENLY PEOPLE WILL START BUILDING AND EXPANDING SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANTS TO REPLACE ONSITE SYSTEMS. SEWERS ARE NOT NECESSARILY POPULAR IN MANY AREAS OF CALIFORNIA. A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE NOT CONVINCED THAT SEPTIC SYSTEMS ARE BAD AND WOULD NOT SUPPORT ABANDONING THEIR USE.

Norman Hantzsche

diverse soil, geologic, climatic and groundwater conditions. But the state has attempted to try to define the requirements for an idealized wastewater system, as opposed to minimum criteria for water quality protection. That, we think, goes too far into issues better dealt with at the regional water board and the local county level, especially when it comes to design.

Pumper: What local changes are taking place in response to the proposed regulations and the law?

Hantzsche: Of the 58 counties in the state, some are not doing anything because they're already set with fairly progressive programs, some are not doing anything because they don't know what to do, and some are pushing ahead and figuring, "We just need to do it on our own."

Pumper: What are the basics of the new regulations?

Hantzsche: There are a lot of general provisions and statements that no one really disagrees with, related to how onsite systems should perform, the correction of problems when they occur and minimum permitting and submittal requirements.

There are some minimum siting requirements, but there's what a lot of people think is a gap in the regulations. Whereas typical regulations utilize a buffer or setback to wells, watercourses and other features, that's noticeably absent from the regulations. The proposed siting requirements are all about depth of soil, types of soil and rock percentages to protect groundwater quality directly beneath the dispersal system.

A lot of the criticism of the regulations centers on design requirements for dispersal systems. They have bits and pieces of design requirements, but not a complete set of requirements that you could design from. They have a section on supplemental treatment systems that apply where soil depth is minimal and at the discretion of a regional water board actually requiring supplemental treatment, for nitrogen removal as an example.

Monitoring is another key component. Both existing parcels and new development with wells would require testing of groundwater from their well ... or from a monitoring well installed within 100 feet of a septic system every five years. There is also a requirement that every existing and new septic tank be inspected and pumped as necessary every five years. An estimated 500,000 to 600,000 existing septic systems that have a well on the property would be affected by the testing requirements.

Existing and new onsite systems within 600 feet of the edge of a defined impaired water body have a certain period of time to implement the new treatment standards or connect to a community wastewater system.

Pumper: In COWA's view, do the new regulations help ensure a base of business for pumpers, or might they drive people or communities away from septic systems entirely?

Hantzsche: There's not going to be any one particular response, but a mix, depending upon the local circumstances.

The consequence may be driving some areas away from even attempting to utilize onsite systems or simply working outside the regulations. (But) it's hard to believe that suddenly people will start building and expanding sewage treatment plants to replace onsite systems. Sewers are not necessarily popular in many areas of California. A lot of people are not convinced that septic systems are bad and would not support abandoning their use. But there will be areas, like Malibu, where people will see a real need for something other than the septic systems because of the strict requirements for properties near impaired water bodies.

Pumper: How has the public responded to stories about the regulations, such as higher fees or new investment that has to be made in systems?

Hantzsche: A lot of the public is not that aware of it, but in certain areas they are more aware. AB 885 started as an effort to deal with managing onsite wastewater systems in communities in California's more affluent coastal region. Now the real impact's likely going to be on the rural areas. There's growing negative reaction to the way this has all played out, that it has lost sight of what the real intent was. There's also a sense that the proposed regulations are not minimum standards, but tend to be more idealized standards.

Pumper: What sort of public education does COWA think is appropriate for this program?

Hantzsche: The state meetings really are public hearings to take input and not to discuss pros and cons. COWA felt what was needed was a series of workshops — all-day sessions working with local health departments, giving an overview of what's in the regulations, sharing with everyone the criticisms that we've collected along the way, opening up to general give and take, and then breaking up into small groups to discuss some key issues. Then we are bringing in someone from the local planning department to talk about the environmental review process.

Pumper: Do you find that California is something of a trendsetter in onsite system regulations — and that if it happens in California, you can expect it to happen in other states in the future?

Hantzsche: At the local and regional level, we do have a lot of onsite system management programs, operating permit programs, so I think there's a lot of things to look to that have been done in California. But I wouldn't expect, just because we're doing it here, that everyone else is going to jump on the bandwagon.

The AB 885 minimum statewide standards has been a frustrating disappointment in the way it's been handled, how long it's gone on, and the reluctance on the part of the state water board staff to really engage and work with regional and local regulators as well as those in the private sector.

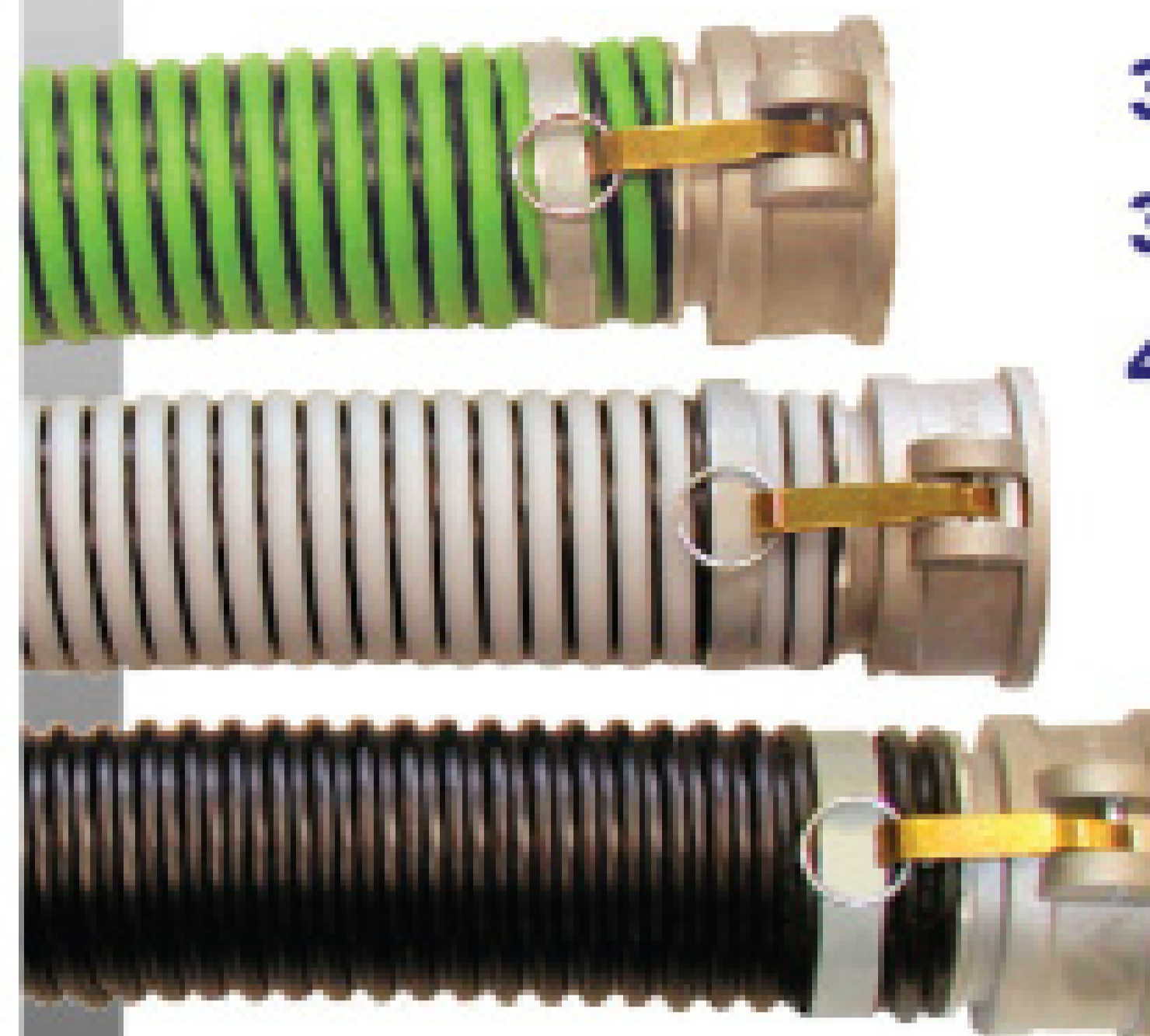
We tried to tell the state, 'Look around, you've got a lot of good examples in the state at the local and regional levels; use those to form a statewide standard.' We haven't completely given up hope of trying to salvage something, but we are more than a little disappointed that a good opportunity wasn't seized and taken the way we think it could have been.

Norman Hantzsche is a managing engineer at Questa Engineering Corp. and a representative of the California Onsite Wastewater Association. Reach him by e-mail at nhantzsche@questaec.com or phone at 510/236-6114, ext. 214. ■

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NAWT Improves Access to Vacuum Truck Training Program

By Tom Ferrero

VACUUM TRUCK TRAINING ONLINE

Our e-Learning program is a reality. The National Association of Wastewater Transporters Inc. vacuum truck training course presented at this year's Pumper & Cleaner Environmental Expo International was filmed by a professional production company. The streaming video is online, on demand at www.nawt.org. Filming the course enabled us to create a classroom atmosphere with questions from the audience and answers from the instructors. Even the PowerPoint presentations and field components are included.

The course costs \$175, and subscribers can log on and off as often as they like for two months. The manual is a free download, but printed copies cost \$35 each. Chapters in the manual end with review questions. Anyone with additional questions can e-mail a NAWT instructor and receive a prompt response.

After completing the course, subscribers will receive a certificate worth six CEU hours. To become a NAWT-certified vacuum truck technician, subscribers must take a final exam administered either by Prometric, an outside testing service with centers throughout the United States, or a NAWT proctor. The Prometric testing fee is \$75 and the cost will vary with NAWT proctors.

ON THE WEB

Thank you to everyone who made our booth a destination at this year's Pumper & Cleaner Expo. We enjoyed a constant flow of traffic and answered many interesting technical questions, which will be addressed in a future column. One general question, however, regarded when to renew NAWT certifications. As a result, we are developing a Web page where members can access their contact information, course credentials and certification status. In case you haven't visited our site in a while, all our Expo Education Day presentations starting from 2007 are posted.

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

NAWT received eight applications — a record — for the \$1,000 William Hapchuk Memorial Scholarship Fund. Alyssa Pamaby, a senior at Berkshire High School in Burton, Ohio, is our 2009 recipient. Her father, Donald Pamaby, is an Ohio Waste Haulers Association Qualified Service Provider and service technician at Tim Frank Septic Cleaning Co. in Huntsburg, Ohio. Pamaby is applying her scholarship toward tuition at Kent State University where she plans to major in English and become a teacher. Her hobbies are painting, drawing, cooking and sewing.

Applicants were asked to write a 500-word essay on the role pumpers can play in reusing waste materials. Pamaby's composition followed the stages of dewatering septage and listed the benefits of using the treated effluent for irrigation and the biosolids for agricultural fertilizer. She concluded that reducing the amount of waste would be

impossible without pumpers. "It is because of them that a good amount of our waste does not become the wasted," she wrote. The scholarship is available to high school seniors or full-time college students.

The 2010 scholarship question, set by the NAWT Scholarship Committee, is: Onsite systems treat wastewater for more than 25 percent of households nationwide, and the interest in installing decentralized systems instead of hooking to municipal sewers is increasing. In many regions, land development occurs only by installing alternative wastewater treatment technologies. To ensure that these systems consistently produce the mandatory level of treatment, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency sees a need for their operation and management. What roles can pumpers play in your community to ensure that these systems are operated and maintained properly, thereby protecting public health and the environment?

The deadline for scholarship submissions is Feb. 1, 2010. Download applications at www.nawt.org.

WASTE TREATMENT SYMPOSIUM UPDATE

The NAWT Waste Treatment Symposium will be held on Oct. 9-10 at the Renaissance Orlando Resort SeaWorld (www.renaissanceseaorldorlando.com). To qualify for the hotel discount of \$150 per night double occupancy plus tax, you must register for your room by calling NAWT at 800/236-6298. These rates apply only for Oct. 8 and 9, after which they are \$217.

The Water Environment Federation Technical Exhibition and Conference follows at the Orange County Convention Center on Oct. 12-14. Registration to the Waste Treatment Symposium includes free admission to the WEFTEC exhibit hall on Monday (www.weftec.org). The hall is open all three days from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Last year, 1,111 vendors participated, many with information on waste treatment.

The registration fee for the treatment symposium is \$275 for members and \$375 for nonmembers. It includes classroom presentations, field demonstration and lunch both days. Sign up early; space is limited to 200 people. Based on the enthusiasm for the symposium at the Pumper & Cleaner Expo, we'll hit and probably surpass that number. Download the symposium registration form at www.nawt.org, and don't miss seeing equipment process septage and grease trap waste and learning from the most competent, knowledgeable people in the field. ■

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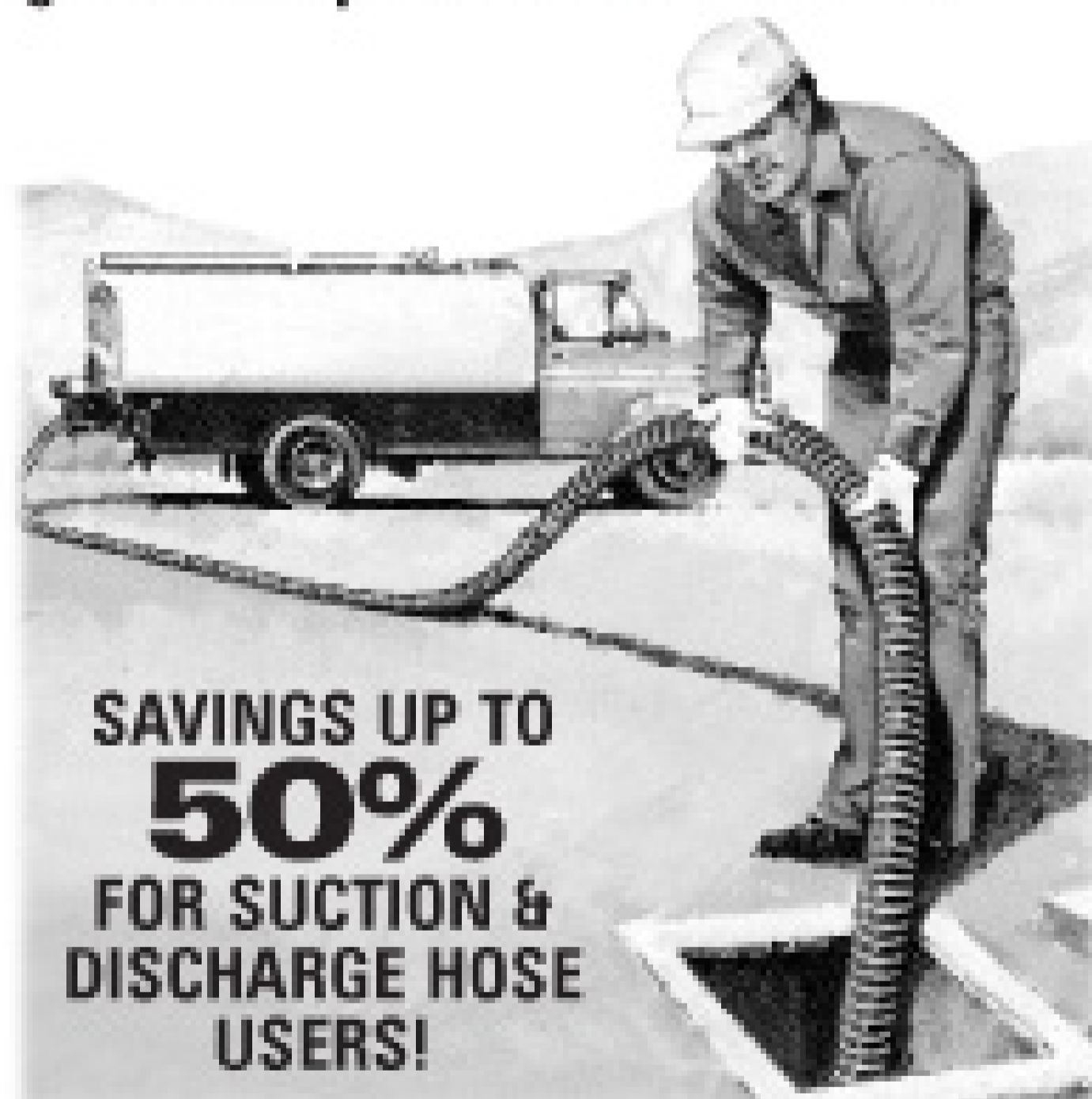
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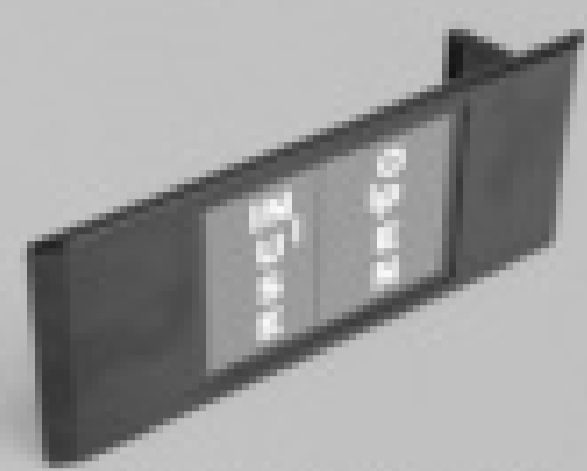
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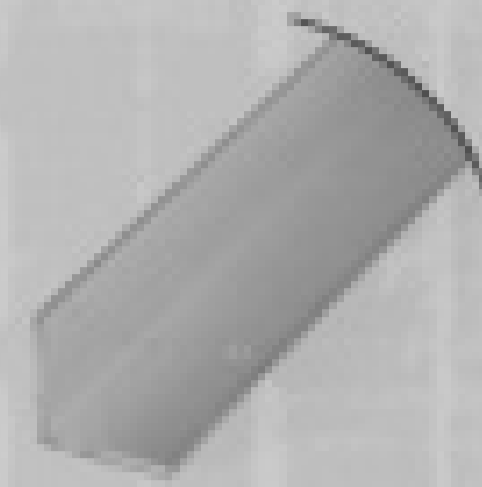
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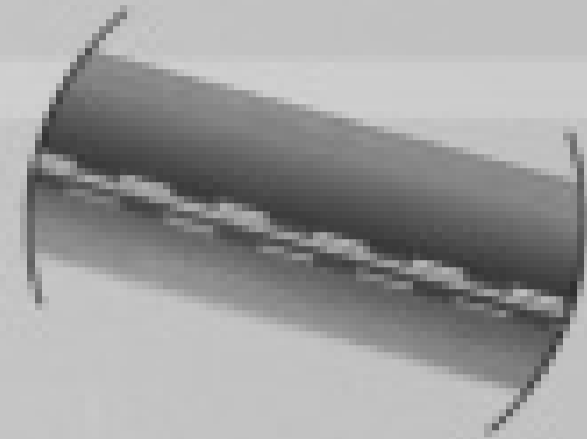
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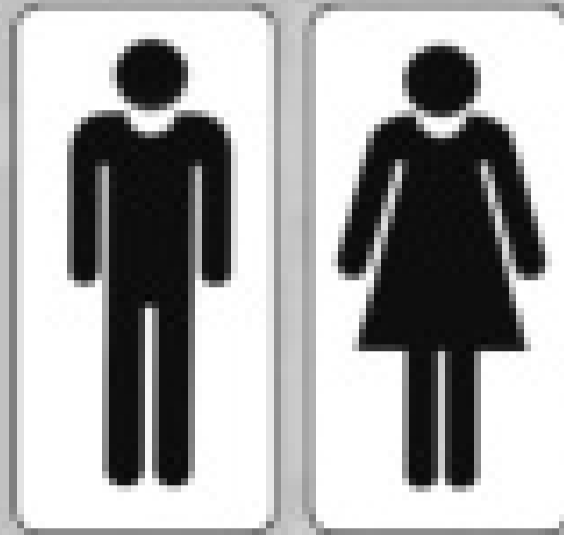
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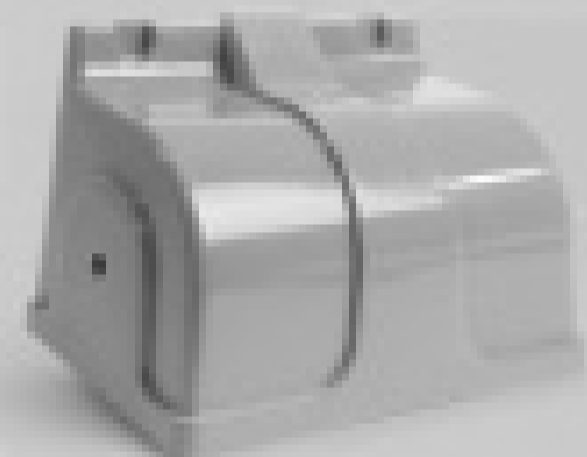
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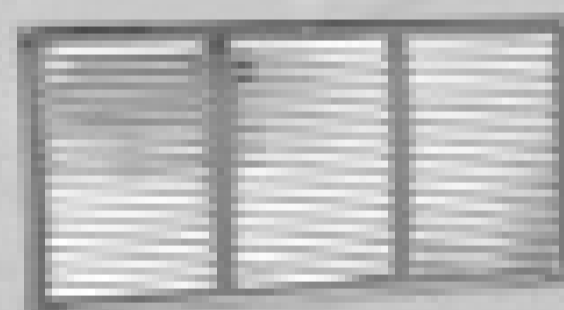
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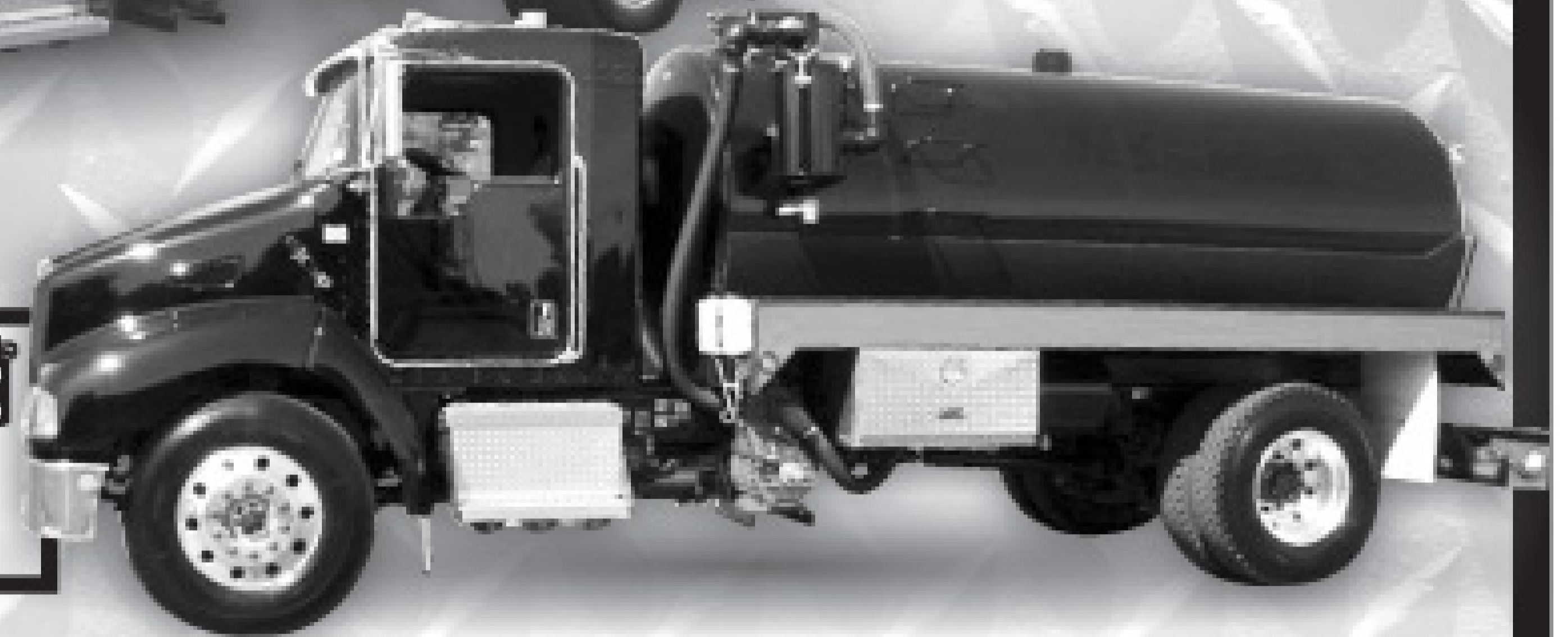
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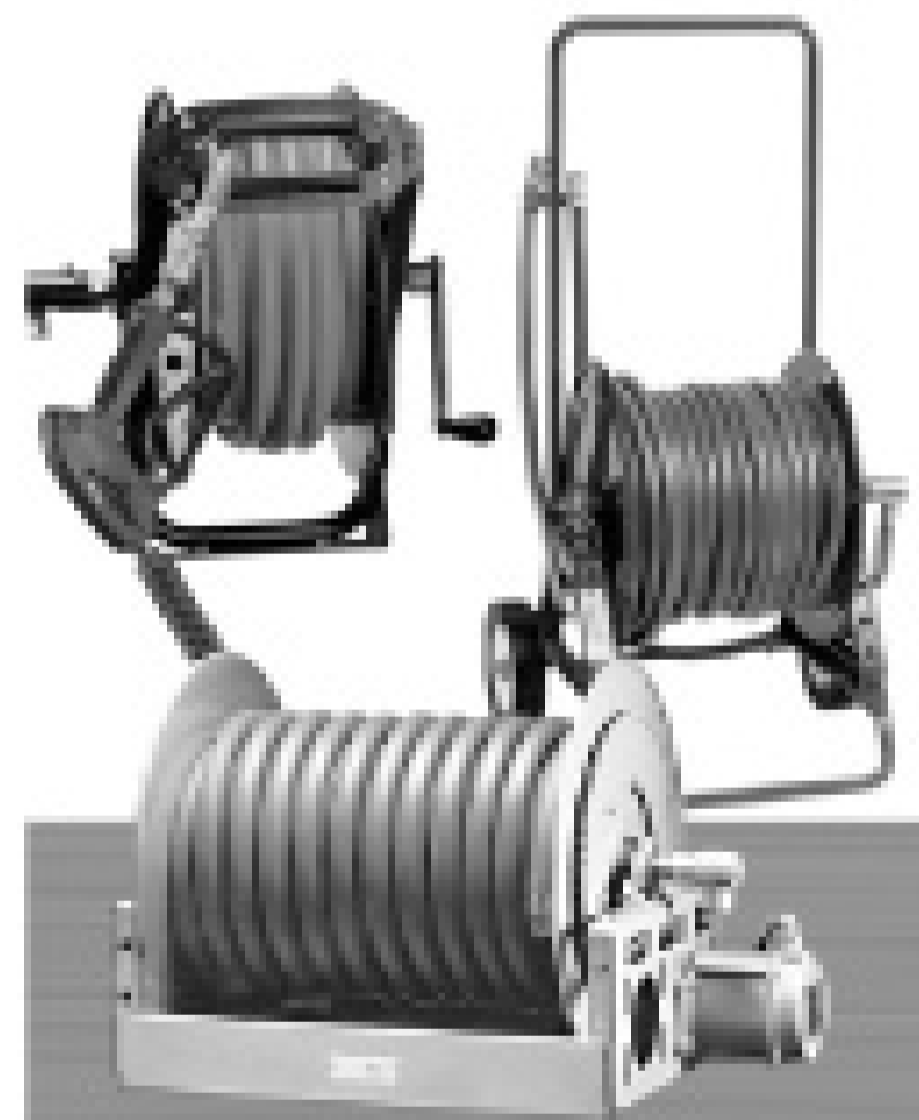
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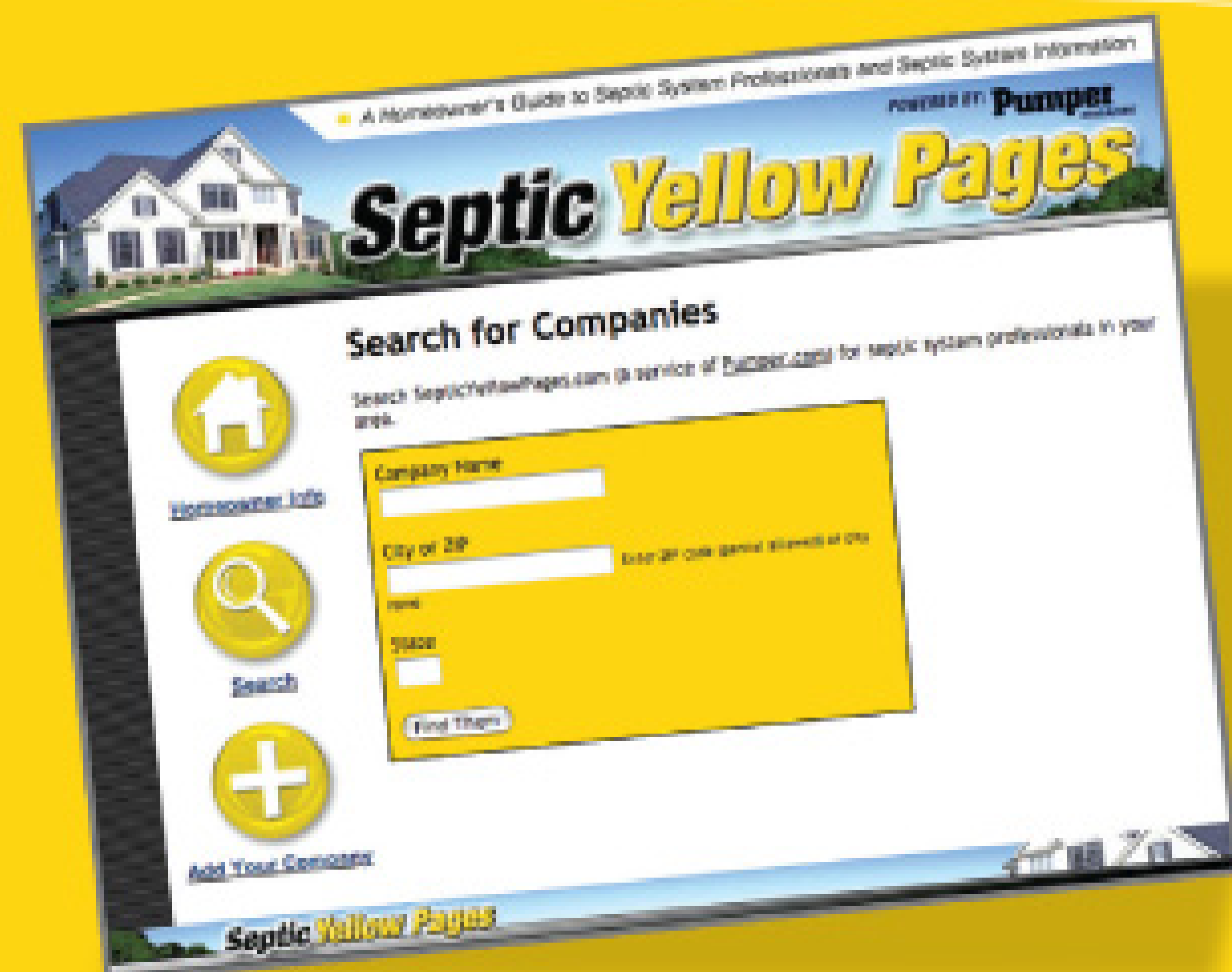
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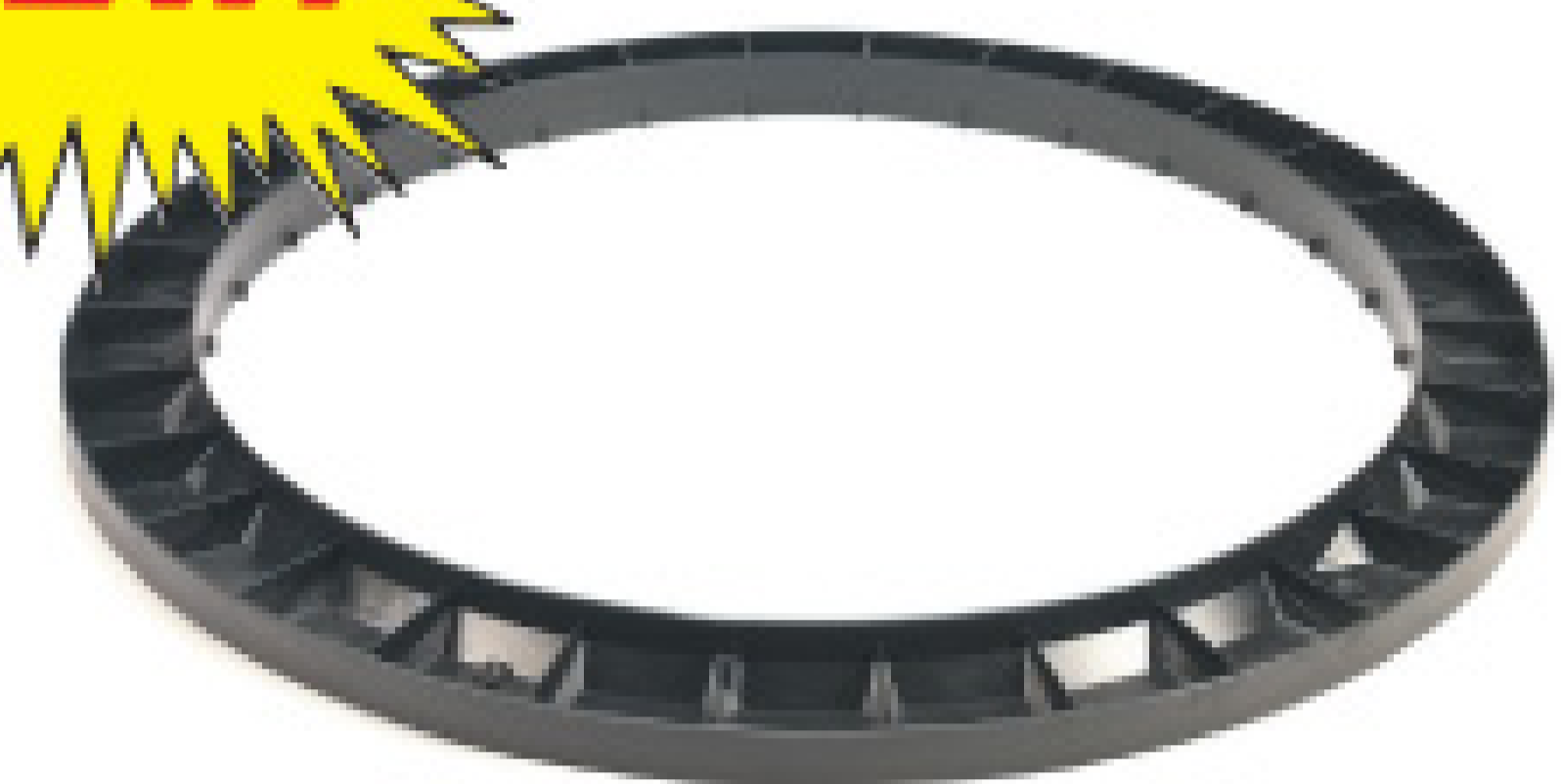
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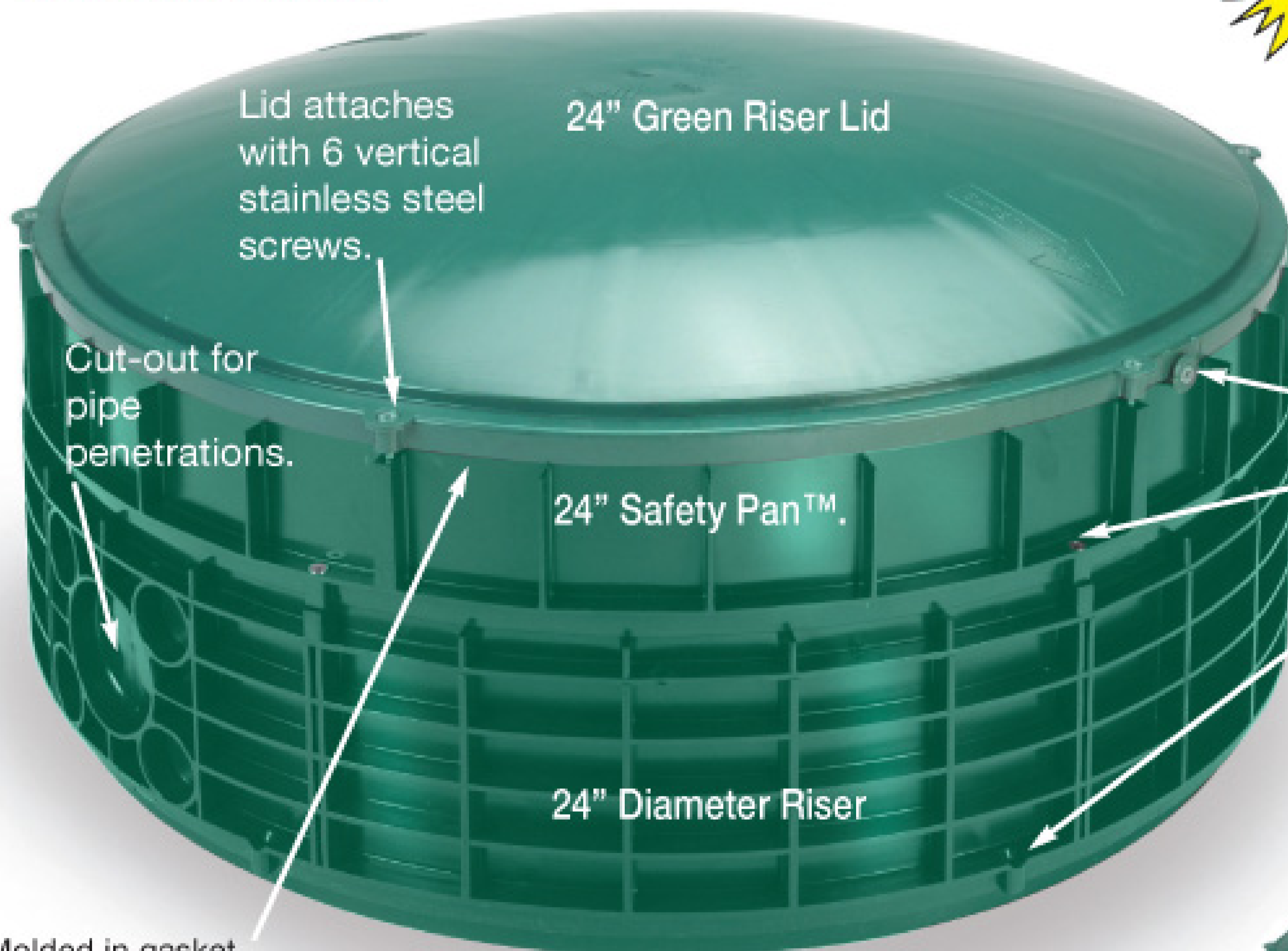
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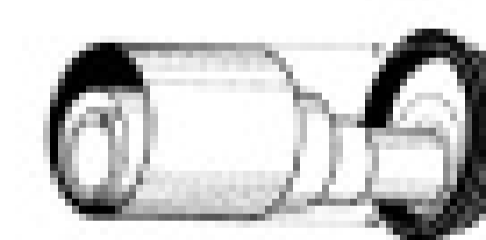
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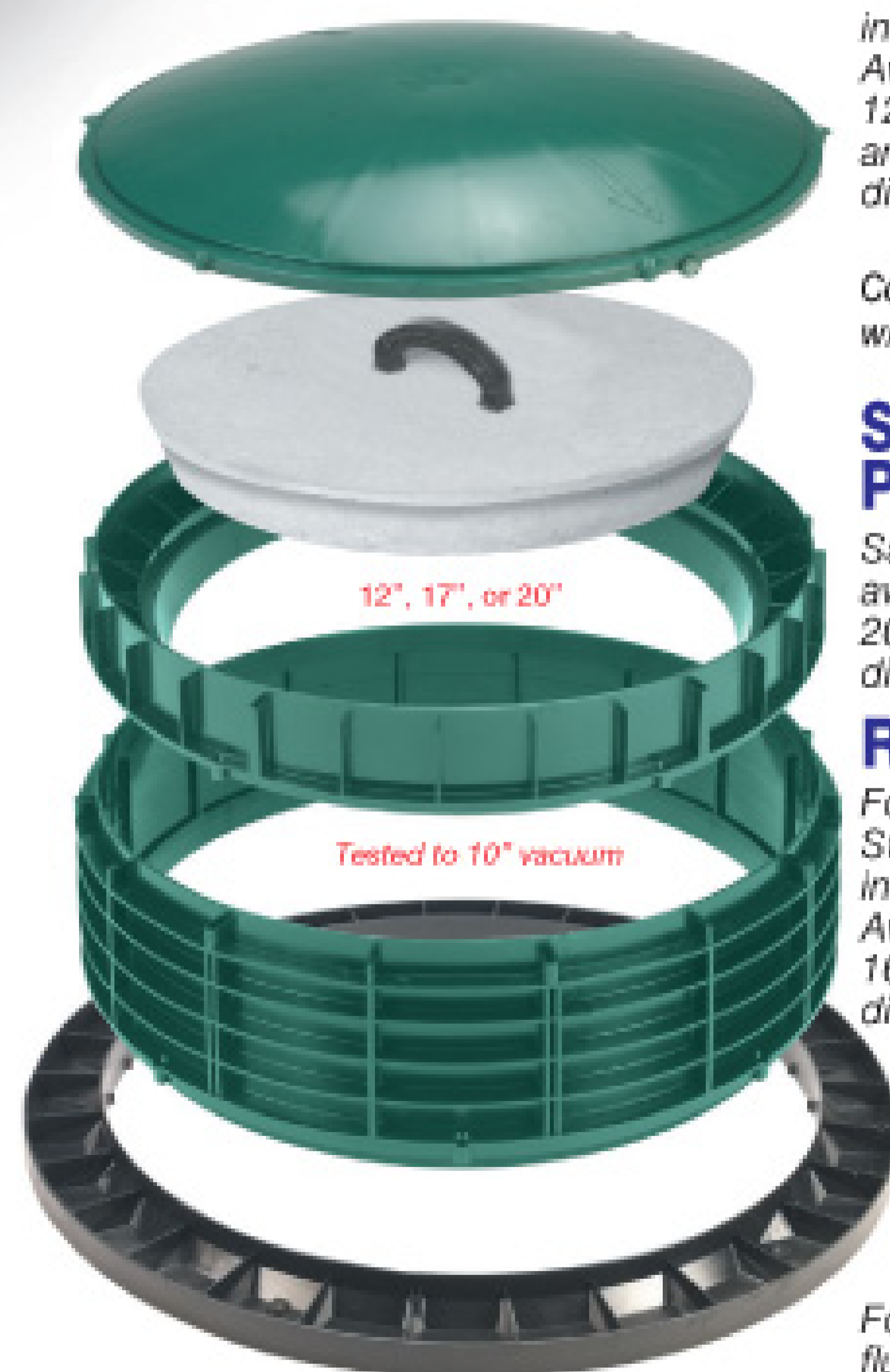


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5,624,123
& 5,711,536;



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The Audit Trail

In most cases, an IRS income tax audit is nothing to fear. The keys are to keep calm, and make sure you're accompanied by an accounting professional.

By Erik Gunn

Within the past few months, you've gone through the ordeal of filing your tax returns. Now that you've finished, there's a momentary sigh of relief. But that relief can be short-lived if a follow-up call from the Internal Revenue Service is forthcoming.

A visit from the tax man is the stuff of grim jokes and horror stories. When makers of the recent movie *Seven Pounds* wanted Will Smith's character to come off as thoroughly unlikeable, they made him an IRS agent.

That's fiction. The facts are something else. If you get one of those letters from Uncle Sam announcing it's your turn for an IRS examination, Lesson No. 1 is: Don't panic. Easier said than done, perhaps, which is why there's Lesson No. 2: Call a professional, ideally your certified public accountant or the tax attorney who helped you prepare your returns.

NO DRAMA

There are two reasons for having professional help: expertise and detachment. "They have experience in dealing with the IRS, and they know what the hot buttons are and what are not," says Tom Ochsenchlager, vice president of taxation at the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. "Second, and almost as important, it takes the emotion out of the issue."

When the agent challenges a particular deduction, it's easy for the emotionally invested business owner to get his dander up and get in a shouting match, Ochsenchlager says. A professional can hear the same challenge, stay cool, and calmly point out why the deduction is legitimate.

Besides yourself, only a CPA, an attorney, or an Enrolled Agent — a technical expert formally authorized to represent you by the IRS — can handle your case. Representing yourself is as ill-advised as being your own lawyer or your own surgeon. "A taxpayer should never represent himself before the IRS," Ochsenchlager says.

Expert help can head off unnecessary inquiries. In his years of helping clients with the IRS, Ochsenchlager observes, "I recall several instances where it looked like the agent was headed toward a particular issue and was asking for certain information, but I could approach the agent and say, 'I know what angle you're looking at, and let me tell you why that's not a valid argument.' Sometimes these things can be nipped in the bud if you have a professional involved on the front end."

THE RIGHT INFORMATION

The most common mistakes audit subjects make is with the information they give the examiner — too little, too much or the wrong kind. It's not because they're trying to deceive, but because they don't understand what's being asked of them.

"In one extreme they send too much information — stuff the agent didn't ask for. That sets the agent off on a tangent" and may raise red flags, Ochsenchlager says.

Erik Gunn operates Great Lakes Editorial Services, consulting for businesses, non-profits, and individuals. Readers may direct inquiries to him by contacting this publication at 800/257-7222 or e-mailing editor@pumper.com.



"The greatest misperception is that the IRS is intimidating and that therefore they collect a lot more money than they really deserve. I've had situations where, during the audit, the taxpayer actually got a refund."

Tom Ochsenchlager

The other extreme is failing to provide the asked for information, perhaps simply because the business owner didn't understand the request. "They send something they think is responsive, but it's not what the agent was looking for," Ochsenchlager says.

The agent shows up on the appointed day for the audit, doesn't receive the information requested, and everyone gets frustrated. "You get in these sort of cat and dog fights over something that was very preventable on the front end, if you'd understood their terminology and the way the IRS works," says Ochsenchlager.

Often, these conflicts arise when the audit subject doesn't understand the information request. Take a business owner who donates property to a charity, such as a church. Such a donation earns a deduction for the property's fair market value.

But to uphold it, the donor needs documentation of the donation itself — a receipt, for instance — as well as documentation of the property's value and an acknowledgement from the church that the company didn't get something of value for the property. Faced with the request from the IRS to document the deal, an uninformed donor might respond, "OK, I'll show you the deed." But that doesn't address the questions at all.

NO THUGS HERE

Alarmists love to depict IRS agents as police-state thugs out to nail even the innocent, but Ochsenchlager insists that's really not fair.

"The greatest misperception is that the IRS is intimidating and that therefore they collect a lot more money than they really deserve," he says. "I've had situations where, during the audit, the taxpayer actually got a refund." Agents are professionals, and they don't work on commission, so they have no incentive to misrepresent the law.

But they're not perfect. "Generally they're technically knowledgeable, but they can't know everything," Ochsenchlager says. "That's why it's wise to have an expert."

An expert can also steer you through IRS appeals processes. The first step is requesting a technical advice memorandum. Suppose your advisor understands that a particular deduction is permitted in your industry, even if it's normally not allowed, and the agent doesn't believe you.

You can request a technical advice memorandum on the issue from an IRS internal expert, who may be more familiar with the details of the law than the agent. If the law and rules support you, the IRS expert won't hesitate to side with the taxpayer. "I've often found that just the suggestion of going for technical advice would kill the issue," Ochsenchlager says.

The More Things Change...



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The agency also has a formal appeals process. But wait, you ask. Isn't that going to be stacked in favor of the agency? Won't they just back up their own people?

"Probably most people think that, but it's not true," Ochsenschlager says. "In my experience, close to 75 percent of the time we win at the appellate level." (That reflects the likelihood that most cases appealed probably were wrongly decided at the audit.)

OUNCE OF PREVENTION

There's no guaranteed way to avoid an IRS audit. Ochsenschlager says many business cases are first flagged by computers programmed to analyze returns and compare them with norms for the industry. But again, that's a reason to make sure you have a relationship with a competent professional who knows your business.

That way, you can get advice not only to keep you on the right side of the tax law, but also on how your costs, expenses and margins compare with others in your industry, and how you can catch up if you're behind. Then, at least, when the IRS sends you that letter, you may find yourself breathing more easily. ■




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Aqua-Aerobic Systems Inc. has partnered with the Colorado School of Mines' Advanced Water Technology Center and Mines Small Flow Program to conduct field testing on the Aqua-Aerobic MBR decentralized wastewater treatment system. Research assesses the performance of the system by treating one of the campus's housing community domestic wastewater sources (about 400 apartments). The testing focuses on optimization of the treatment process for biological nutrient removal, membrane operation and process adjustment for constant and seasonal flow patterns.

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Phoenix Process Equipment Co. of Louisville, Ky., marks its 25th anniversary this year. A Department of Energy grant helped fund the development of the company's initial technology, the separation of clean coal from coal refuse. The process led to the development of a high capacity dewatering filter press, the company's core product line. ■

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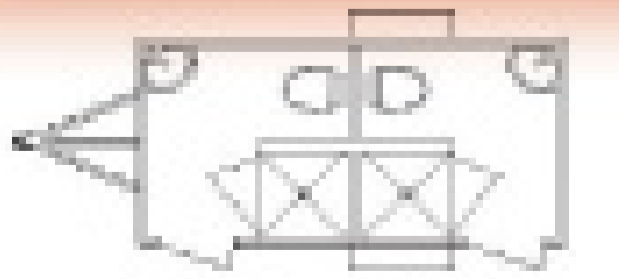
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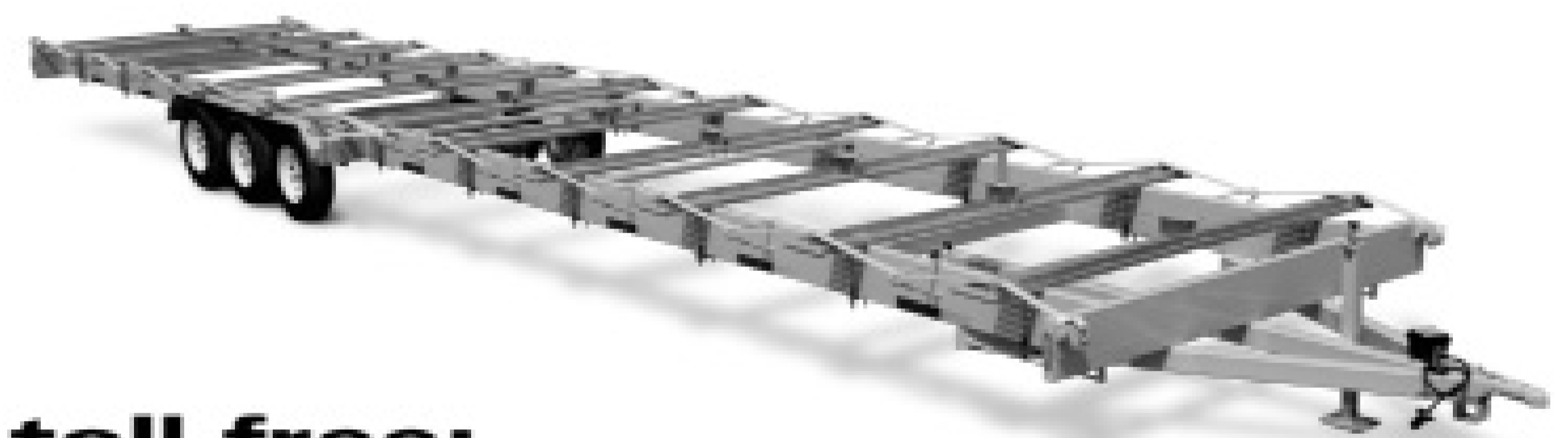
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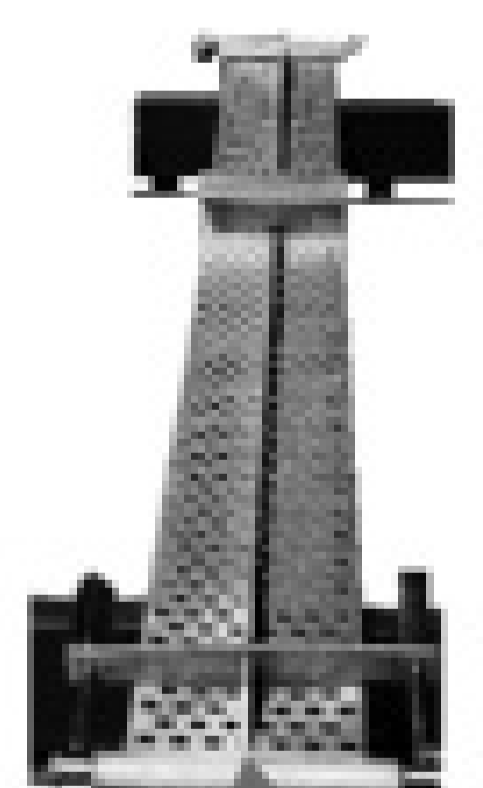
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An Expo Engagement

Amid a backdrop of gleaming new vacuum trucks at the Kentucky Exposition Center, a pumper proposes marriage ... and she accepts

What better way for a pair of love-struck new pumpers to start their life out together than committing to marriage at the Pumper & Cleaner Environmental Expo International?

Between Education Day seminars at the 2009 Expo in Louisville, Ky., on Feb. 25, Steven DuRussel popped the question to Juliette Morse. She said "Yes," and the couple spent the rest of the Expo making plans for life together — both in marriage and in the pumping business.

The big moment caught Morse by surprise, as DuRussel got down on bended knee outside an entrance of the Kentucky Exposition Center and proposed.

The Lighter Side

By Jim Kneiszel

"PRETTY NEAT"

"There was a bunch of guys out there talking about their trucks. He just decided to plop down on one knee and did it right up," Morse recalls. "(The other pumpers) were clapping and smiling and asking, 'Are you actually proposing to her?' I thought it was pretty neat. I was there with him when he bought his truck, and we started this whole idea together."

The idea was starting a septic pumping business to augment DuRussel's longtime family excavation business in the couple's hometown of Frankenmuth, Mich. Shortly after they met in 2008, DuRussel bought a used International vacuum rig and refurbished it, and Morse was gung-ho for helping start the new business.

DuRussel will work the truck, while Morse will handle the paperwork and the marketing as they start in earnest this summer. The couple hopes the business takes off so they can consider buying one of the



Juliette Morse and Steven DuRussel celebrated their engagement at the 2009 Pumper & Cleaner Environmental Expo. (Photo by Ed Wodalski)

shiny new service rigs they saw on display at their first Pumper Expo.

"I saw a lot of trucks I'd like to buy," DuRussel said of the displays he saw in Louisville. But for now, he's got to pump with the 1986 truck with a 2,300-gallon steel tank and Masport pump. "The way the economy is, you've got to try to do everything you can. The truck wasn't a big investment, and I did all of my own work on it, and it goes down the road nice now."

The Expo opened the couple's eyes to a world of business possibilities, just like the flashy 1.5-karat diamond opened Morse's eyes to a world of possibilities for their new blended family. DuRussel lost his wife to cancer a few years before he met Morse, and has two children, Christina, 13, and Brent, 9. Morse has a son, Robert, 8.

"We just hit it off from day one, and the rest is history," Morse said of meeting DuRussel in January 2008. "Every day is fun with him. We get along great and have a great relationship."

"We had a great time in Louisville. The city was clean, we enjoyed the nightlife, the bars were incredible. The whole thing couldn't have gone any better than it did."

Juliette Morse

A RETURN ENGAGEMENT

And it's a relationship that was cemented with the couple surrounded by new friends met at the Expo. Morse vowed they'd be back in Louisville in 2010.

"We had a great time in Louisville. The city was clean, we enjoyed the nightlife, the bars were incredible," Morse said of the couple's rare getaway mixing business and pleasure. "The whole thing couldn't have gone any better than it did."

DuRussel said he wanted to propose in a memorable way. Looks like it worked.

"It's not many people who get proposed to at the Pumper show," Morse says. "I think Steve always does things in a way you don't forget. It was one of the best days of my life." ■



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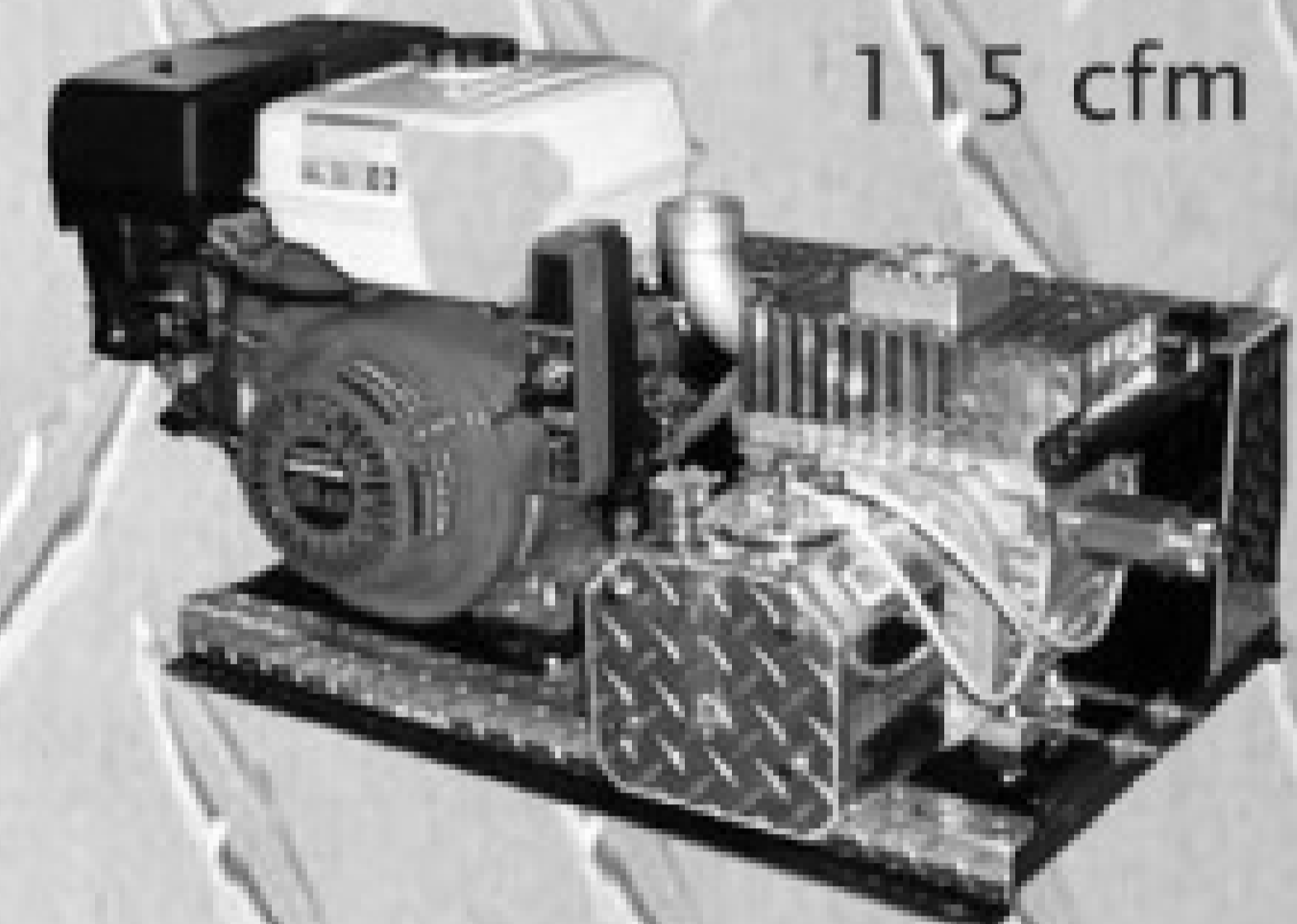
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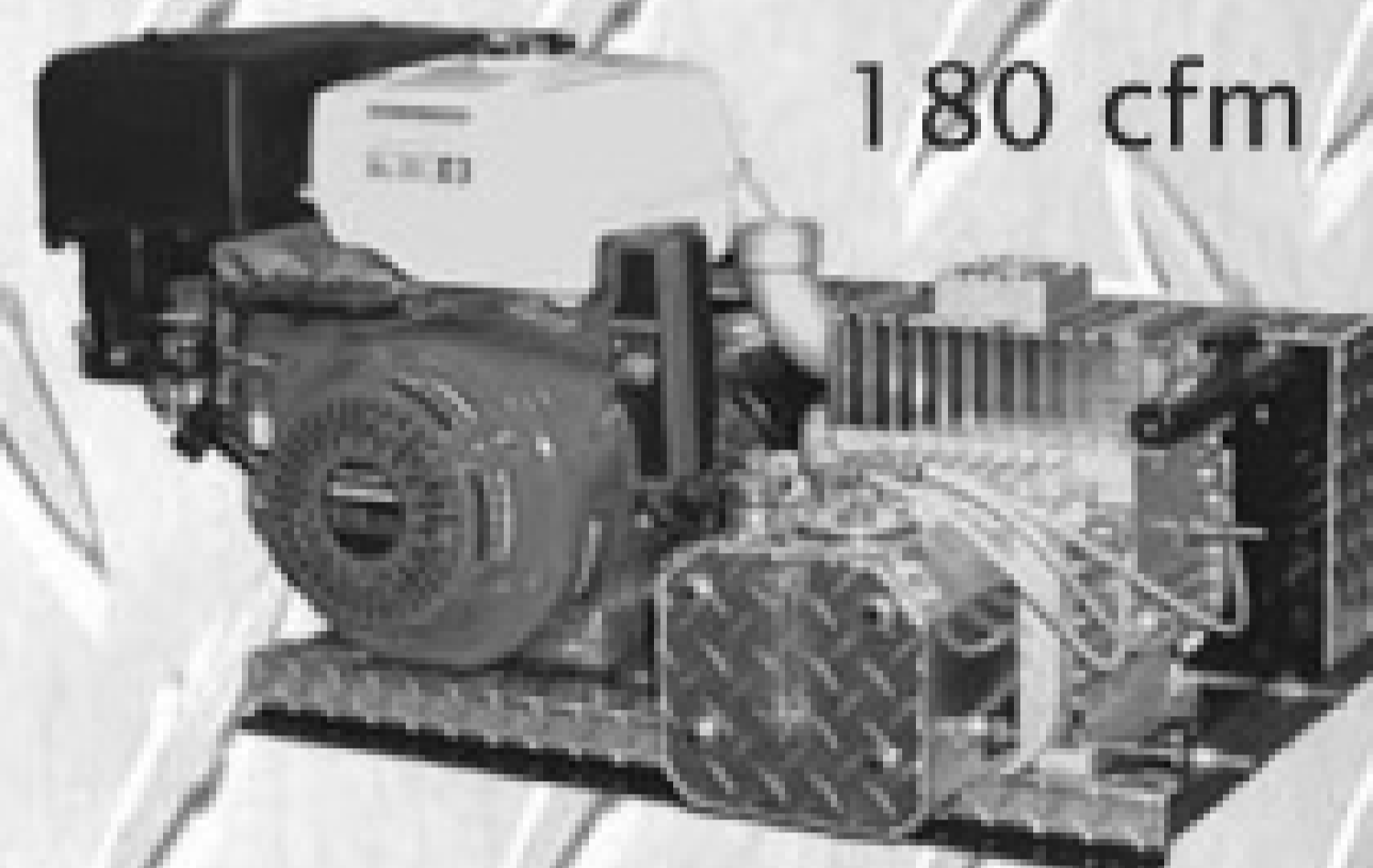
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Geoflow Inc. BioDisc Filters

in the
SPOTLIGHT
By Ken Wysocky

Making repeated return trips to clean plugged effluent filters decreases productivity and profitability for septic waste haulers. **Geoflow Inc.** addresses that problem with **BioDisc filters**, which use Geoshield anti-microbial material to retard slime growth.

The disc filters, which are placed between the effluent pump and the drip dispersal field, are molded from polyethylene resins. That makes them lightweight and durable. With a 120-mesh opening, they trap debris — down to 130 microns in size — that could otherwise plug tubing and drip emitters.

The Geoshield treatment makes the filters unique, says Karen Ferguson, company president.

“The Geoshield material is molded onto the BioDisc filters to stop slime from building up,” Ferguson says. “As a result, the filters last longer and require less frequent cleaning. Septic pumpers will field fewer callbacks for plugged filters.”

Geoshield is made of an anti-microbial material called tributyl tin maleate. It attacks the energy systems that microbial cells require for growth. There’s virtually no discharge of tributyl tin maleate into

the environment because it’s not water soluble, Ferguson says.

“It’s used on everything from hulls of boats to shower curtains to sneakers to stop microbial growth,” she says.

The filters can be installed in self-cleaning mode when used with a second filter and two solenoid valves, an application best suited for large commercial systems, Ferguson says. For smaller systems, it’s better to twist the two-piece filter apart for a thorough cleaning.

For more information:
800/828-3388; www.geoflow.com.



BioDisc filter from Geoflow Inc.

PolyPortables Introduces DriPax Deodorizer

The DriPax throw-and-go deodorizer from PolyPortables comes in a 12-gram, water-soluble pouch. The product is designed for one-week service. The blue deodorizer is available in three strength levels — first gear, second gear and third gear — and comes in cherry, mulberry and fresh-room cleaner fragrances. 800/241-7951; www.polyportables.com.



SJE-Rhombus Introduces Event Monitoring Control Panel

The Installer Friendly Series In-Site event monitoring control panel from SJE-Rhombus enables users to monitor up to 20,000 date/time stamped events by plugging a flash drive into the USB port located on the inner door. The panel logs any changes made to the system settings and tracks service calls made to the panel. Events monitored include pump run times, pump cycles, alarm conditions, power outages and more. The panel features a NEMA 4X enclosure and comes complete with float switches, wiring diagrams, step-by-step installation instructions and flash drive with IFS In-Site software. 888/342-5753; www.sjerrhombus.com.



Zoeller Offers Residential Effluent Filter

The residential effluent filter from Zoeller Pump Co. features a screen that remains in the outlet tee while the filter cartridge is removed for servicing. The bypass protection keeps solids in the tank and out of the drainfield. The filter’s pleated design provides 132-linear feet of 1/16-inch filtration and encourages top-down filtration for longer service intervals. A twist-lock mechanism prevents the filter from floating out of the tee, while a locking tab keeps the bypass sleeve in place during servicing. A rubber gasket ensures all effluent passes through the filter and fits standard 4-inch outlet tees. 800/928-7867; www.zoeller.com.



Aero-Stream Introduces Septic Remediator

The septic system remediator from Aero-Stream LLC is designed to reverse and maintain biomat permeability, restoring full system function in a matter of weeks by using a natural bio-chemical process to convert an anaerobic system to an aerobic system. Available in three models, QT800H is designed for up to three occupants, QT800HH for four to eight occupants and QT800UH for nine to 13 occupants. Measuring 13 1/2 inches square and 6 inches deep, the system operates on any standard electrical outlet. 877/254-7093; www.aero-stream.com.

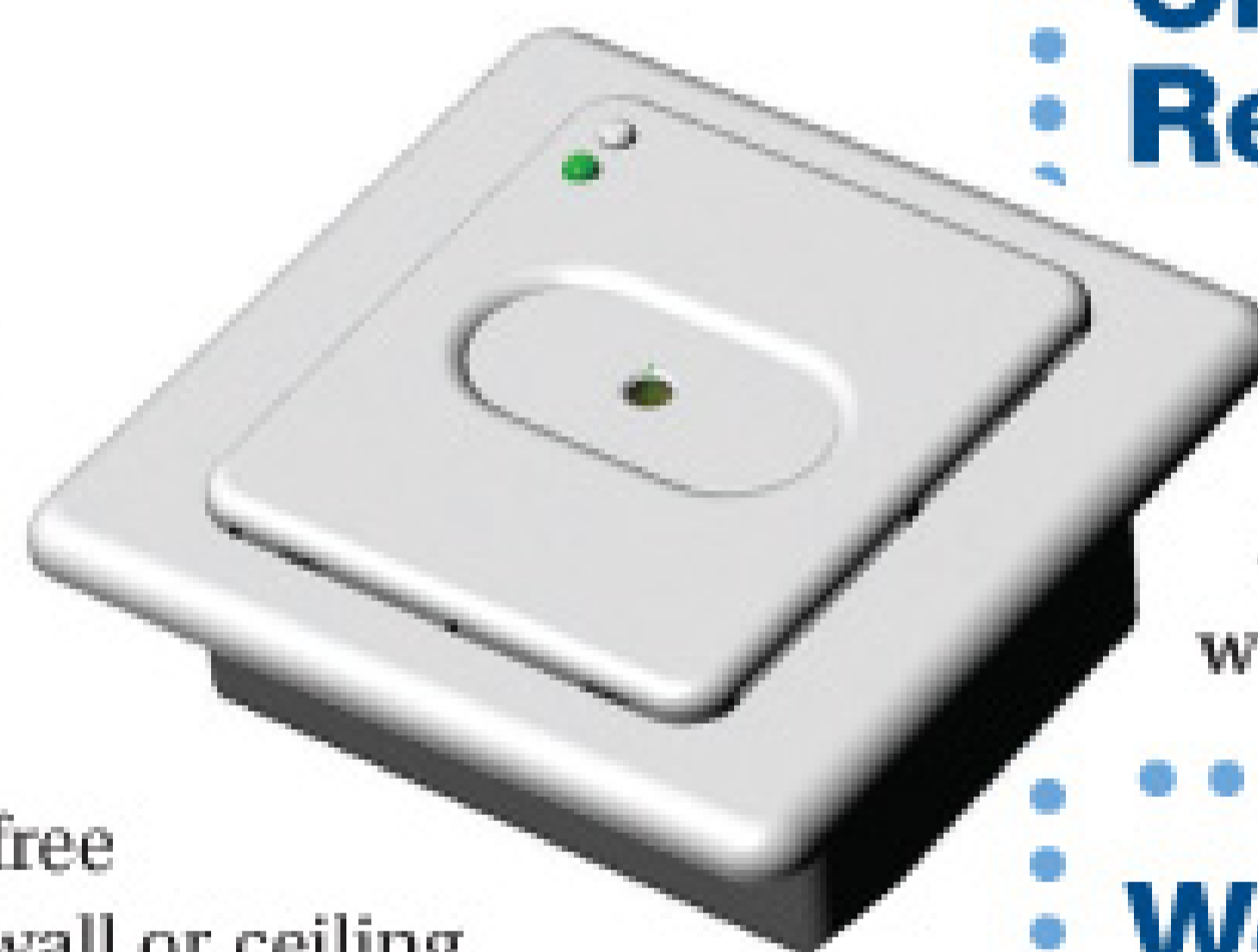
Blue Angel Introduces BSP45 Back-Up Sump Pump

The BSP45 24-volt, cast iron, battery back-up sump pump system from Blue Angel Pumps is made to deliver flows up to 48 gpm at 5 feet total dynamic head. The system includes a heavy-duty battery charger with audible alarm, reed vertical float switch, and top suction to prevent air locks and clogging. 888/636-6628; www.blueangelpumps.com.



Newaire Introduces Air Purifying System

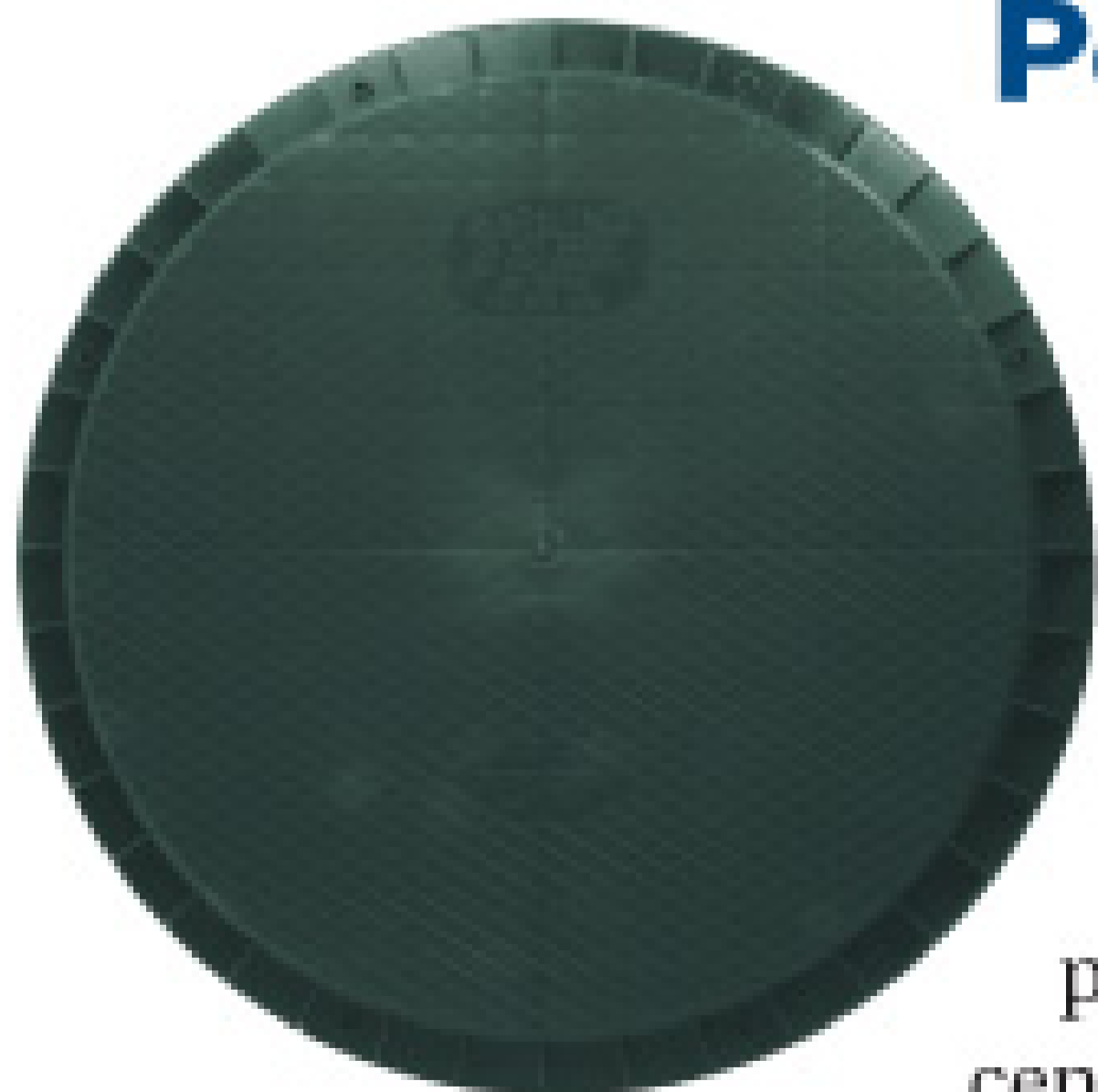
The HW250 and HW500 air purifying systems from Newaire Inc. are designed to deodorize rooms up to 250 and 500 square feet, eliminating most odors, including those caused by smoke, urine, mold, mildew and garbage. The chemical-free system can be hard-wired to virtually any wall or ceiling 115-volt or 240-volt connection. The 4 1/2-inch square unit naturally eliminates odors by circulating ozone without the use of fans or moving parts. It leaves no residue and requires a twice-a-year cartridge change. 877/646-9663; www.ozoneexperts.com.



Polylok Introduces 18-Inch Cover

The 18-inch, heavy duty cover for corrugated pipe from Polylok Inc. is made to be watertight and airtight. It has been independently tested to withstand a static load of 1,000 pounds as well as center and off-center impact of 150 ft. lbs.

877/765-9565; www.polylok.com.



Sweet Air Offers Vent Filter

The Sweet Air vent filter from Sweet Septic Systems Inc. is designed to eliminate septic odors by filtering foul air that flows through house vents. The unit fits existing 3-inch or 4-inch piping and features a twist-top for carbon maintenance. 800/622-8768; www.sweetair.com.



Infiltrator Introduces Smart-Rock Media System

Smart-Rock engineered media system from Infiltrator Systems Inc. is a lightweight, all-in-one system designed to replace traditional septic drainfield stone and perforated pipe. The synthetic media, made from recycled materials, surrounds a perforated pipe and eliminates the fines associated with gravel, reducing compaction and embedment. The aggregate is held in place with a durable netting in 10-foot lengths.

800/221-4436; www.infiltrator-systems.com.



Cloverleaf Offers Replacement Seals

Cloverleaf Tool Co. has introduced a new line of replacement inlet/outlet seals, vacuum breaker door and lid seals as well as rear door seals for Vac-Con sewer cleaning trucks. All the seals are made to exceed manufacturer specifications. 800/365-6583; www.cloverleaftool.com.

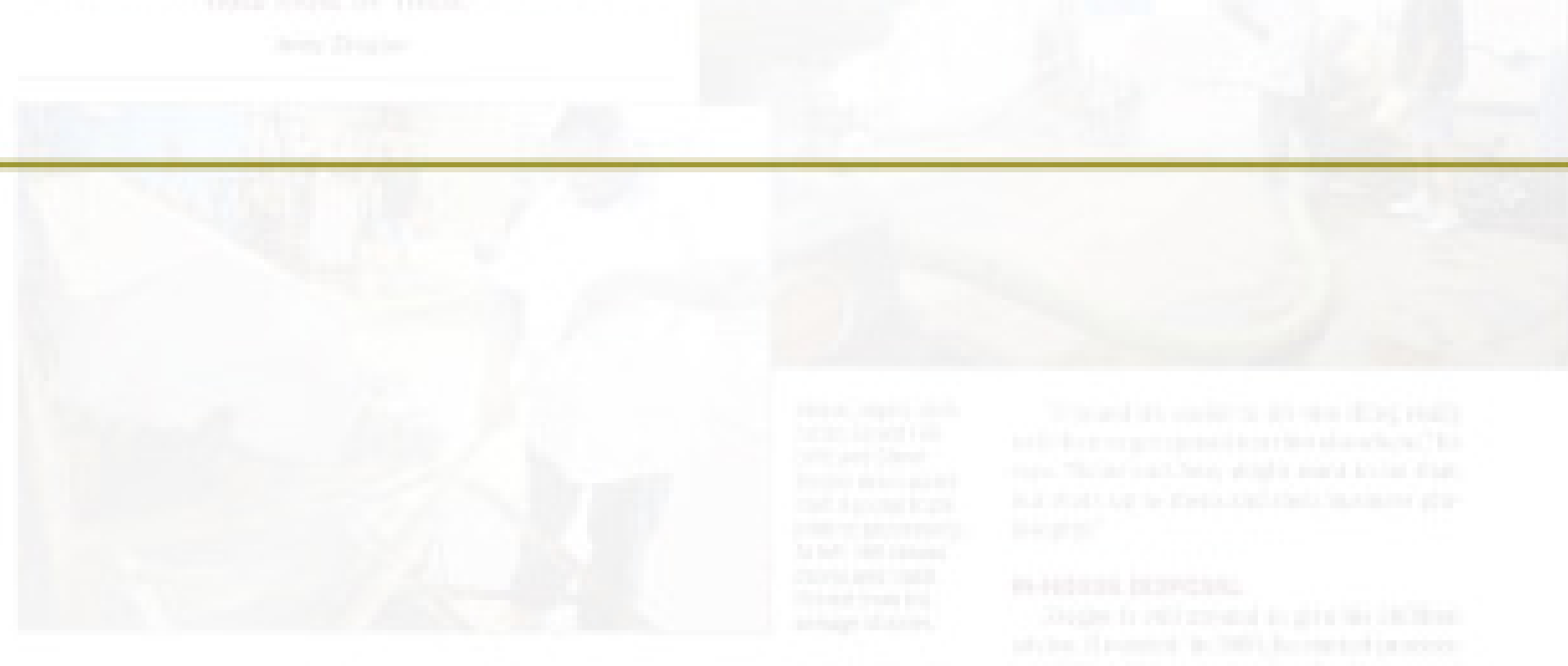
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Garrett Smith and Amy Douglas, founders of Old Pueblo Septic and Drain Service, are shown in their work clothes. The company has been in business for over 25 years and has a strong reputation for quality service.

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Garrett Smith and Amy Douglas, founders of Old Pueblo Septic and Drain Service, are shown in their work clothes. The company has been in business for over 25 years and has a strong reputation for quality service.

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Separation ANXIETY

Water Tech owners build their own custom solution offering simplicity and significant disposal cost savings

By Scott Dayton

When the owners of Water Tech LLC, a water treatment company, decided to build their own custom solution, they faced a significant challenge. The solution they developed offered simplicity and significant disposal cost savings.

Water Tech LLC

Water Tech LLC is a water treatment company that has built its own custom solution. The solution offers simplicity and significant disposal cost savings.

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Water Tech LLC has implemented a Corvette package and employee loyalty program. The program has been successful in increasing employee loyalty and productivity.

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Water Tech LLC is featured in an interview with industry experts. The interview discusses the company's custom solution and its impact on the water treatment industry.

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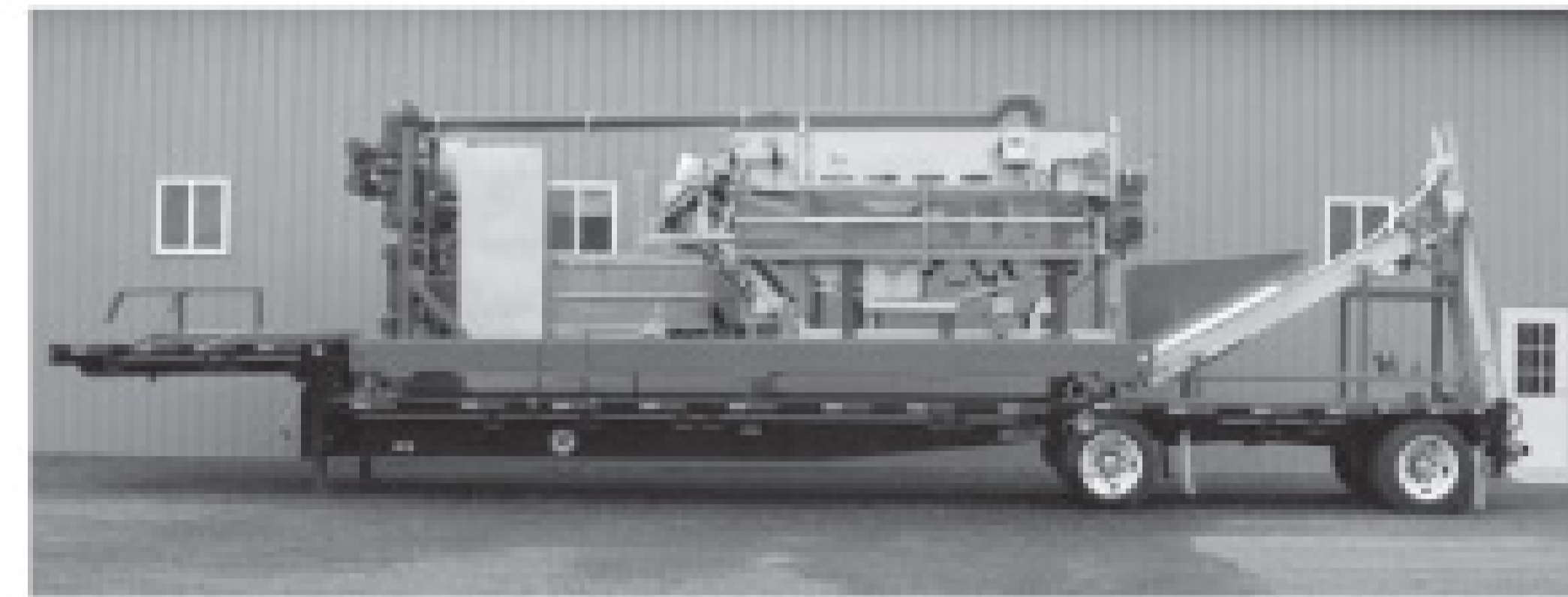


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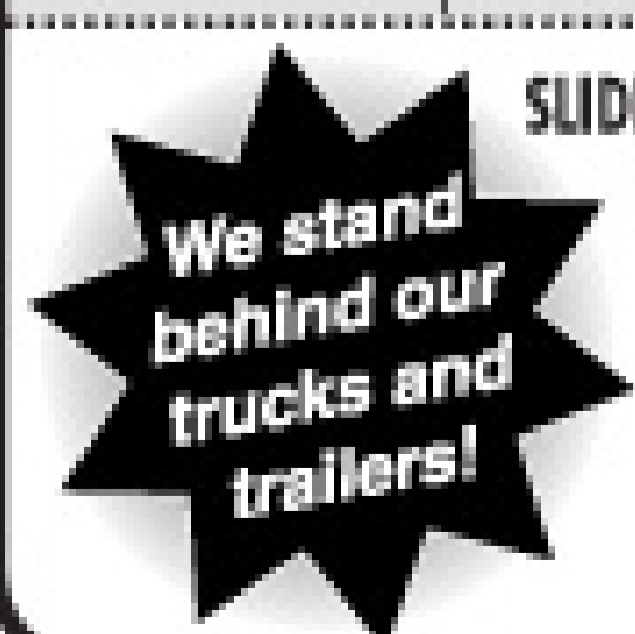
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The Name Game

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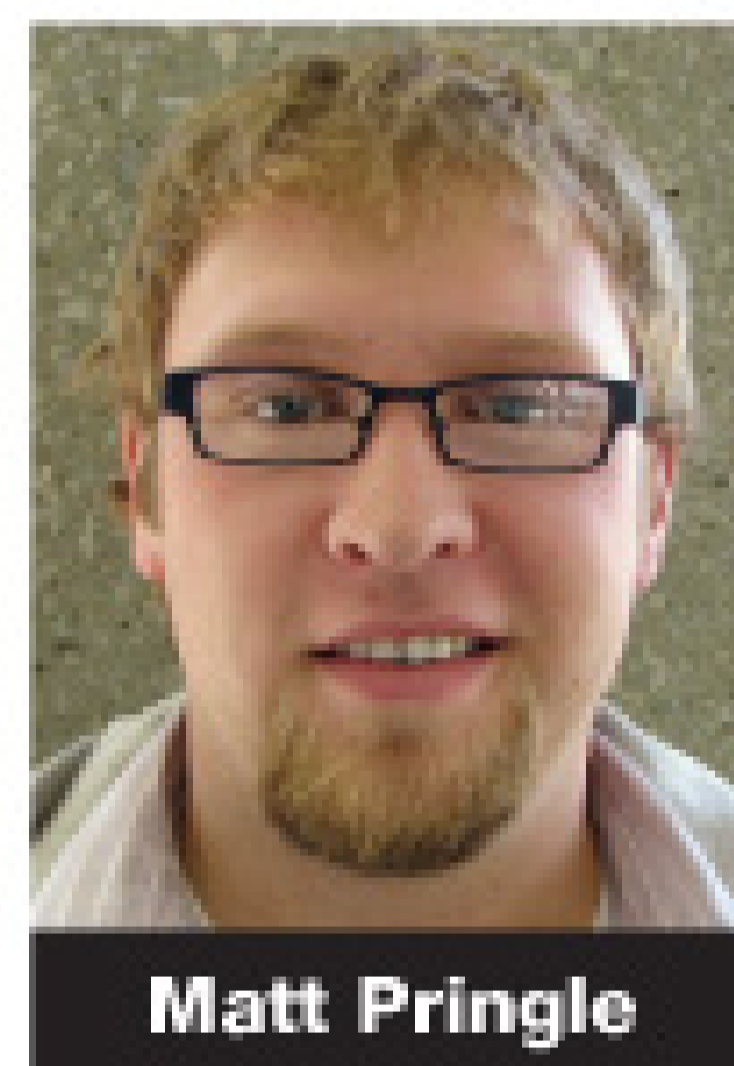
By Mary Shafer

In a world of greater business diversification, pumpers are constantly shifting to serve a changing market. As they deal with concerns over operations, equipment, technology and human resource issues, it can be easy for a contractor to forget about something that seems relatively insignificant, like the company name.

But neglecting the importance of your corporate identity can be a big mistake. With an increasingly sophisticated marketplace, customers know and expect more than ever from service providers. It's not enough to be good at what you do. You must also be perceived as being part of the solution, not part of the problem.

Just as the old "suck and run" business model no longer flies for today's professional pumper, a run-of-the-mill, generic business name is equally unappealing to your customers. They need a reason to choose you over your competition, and your public image starts with your corporate identity. Choosing — or changing to — the right name can be critical to your success in a competitive atmosphere.

These pumpers have embraced that reality and have incorporated it into their market approach.



Name:
Matt Pringle, co-owner
Company:
CAL Services
Location:
Commerce City, Colo.
Employees: 3
Years in Business: 1

Matt Pringle and his father recently started their septic and grease trap pumping business, CAL Services, in a suburb of Denver. They had originally intended to set up an aerial lift company, Colorado Aerial Lift. Then they realized that the changing construction market

might hurt a company with limited service offerings. So they searched for a service that would always be needed, along with what they originally wished to do. They hit on pumping, and decided to diversify right away, so they incorporated as CAL Services.

Sensing the name itself was too vague, they added a positioning tagline to their business name: "We dispose of your waste with our environment in mind." The general name allows them to continue adding or adjusting services as they see fit, while the tagline clearly positions their company as environmentally aware and ethically concerned.

"We like to make it possible for our customers to track where their waste goes, and to feel good about the company they chose to handle it," Pringle says. He believes positioning CAL as an environmental company, as opposed to simply a pumping concern, gives them an advantage in Denver's crowded marketplace.

The company makes a concerted effort to educate customers about how their septic systems work, how their waste is properly disposed of in an environmentally responsible manner, and why it's important to pump regularly. "I think with education, they learn why our service is needed and they keep doing it. They see more value in what we do."

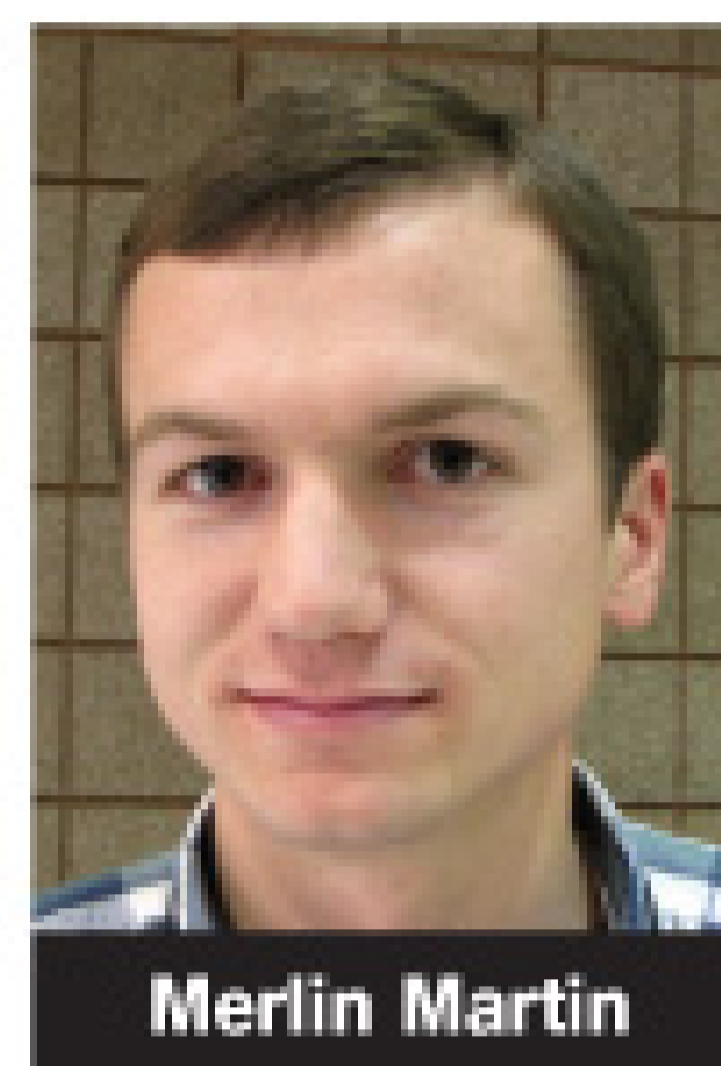
He also believes that stressing the environmental angle enhances customers' perception of the pumping industry. "It makes them feel like they're responsible and doing the right thing for the environment."

CAL carries this message through the design of their promotional

Comments may be directed to Mary Shafer in care of Pumper. You may also e-mail pipelines@pumper.com.



materials. Business cards feature a background theme of a beautiful waterfall surrounded by lush green forest and a placid pool. The business name and the names of staff are printed in a rich, forest green to further reinforce the "green" theme. So even though the company name itself isn't pointedly environmental in nature, the way it's presented sends that message.



Name:
Merlin Martin, pumping technician
Company:
EnviroTech Septic Solutions
Location:
Rochester, Wash.
Employees: 5
Years in Business: 6

"We purchased the business from another company, and my understanding is that the owners chose this name to be perceived as a 'green' company," Merlin Martin says of EnviroTech's septic installation, repair and pumping service. "It refers to the environment, and everybody's concerned about that. I think it helps

us be perceived as also being concerned about taking care of the environment."

Just as important as the green perception of the company's name is its constant effort to educate customers. "We deal mostly with the septic tank and the drainfield, and we have a lot of people who are really not educated about what happens there." Martin says technicians help customers understand the link between proper maintenance and keeping waste from becoming pollution.

"Once they understand how it works, they're like, 'Wow, I never knew that!'" he says. "I think it makes an impression." They distribute brochures that further explain the inner workings of critical septic system maintenance procedures.



Name:
Bob and Pauline Himschoot, owners
Company:
Crews Environmental
Location:
Fort Myers, Fla.
Employees: 14
Years in Business: 27

"I bought a business named Crews Septic, and I changed it to Crews Environmental because I wanted to be in the environmental business instead of just the septic pumping field," says Bob Himschoot. He feels strongly that this branding move has helped cast his company as a more professional operation.



"It's been a challenge, because people don't associate septic tank pumping with environmental business.

"We're constantly educating people, which is what this business is all about, especially for the onsite business.

"Septic tanks were given a bad name in the early years because they were functional but not necessarily environmentally acceptable. They served a purpose at the time, but now we're more sophisticated in the design and operation of onsite systems."

Himschoot intends to bolster the company's environmental education effort through to the company's new Web site, crewsenvironmental.com, launching this year. ■

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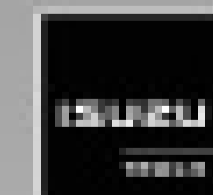
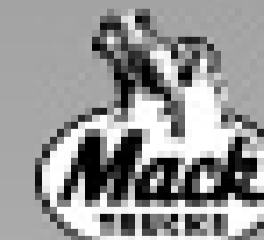
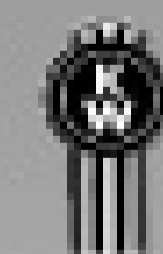
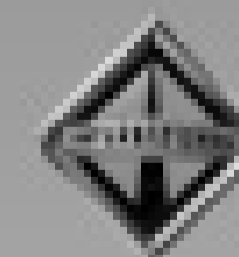
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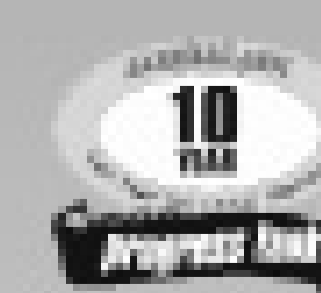
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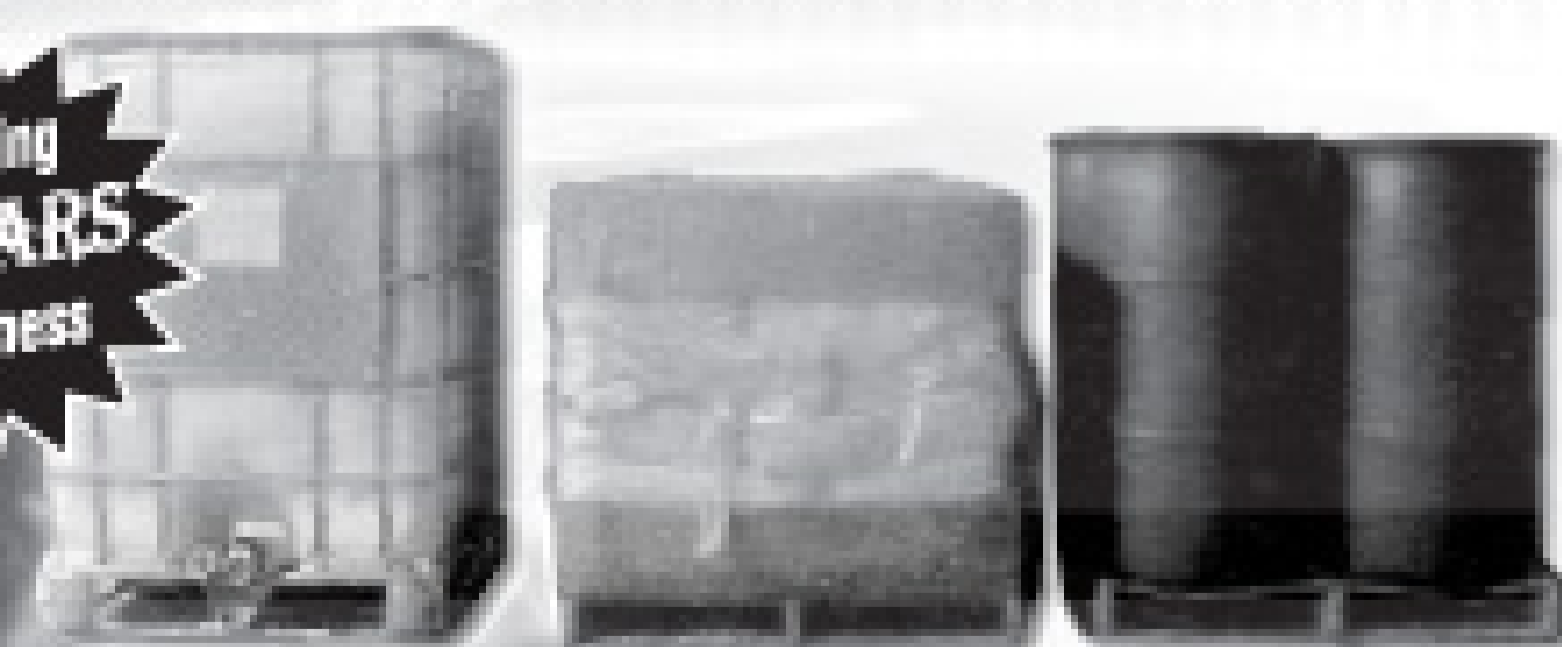


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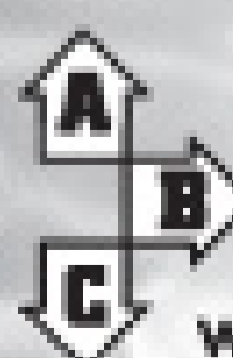
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Tino Garza operates this 1995 Peterbilt 357 with a 4,000-gallon aluminum tank from Longhorn Tank. Purchased from International Machinery in British Columbia, the truck is powered by a Cummins M11 engine and 13-speed transmission. The tank features two 24-inch manways on top to aid in cleaning and sampling. Another 24-inch manway is at the rear for cleanout. The intake is a 4-inch valve, while discharge is through a 6-inch valve for quick emptying. The truck has a Masport HXL400 vacuum pump. The truck is also outfitted with aluminum toolboxes and a 4,000-psi jetter for clogged lines. Graphics were created by EFX Signs. Other features include aluminum wheels, CD player with satellite radio and air-ride seats. The rig is used for collecting waste cooking oil from restaurants.

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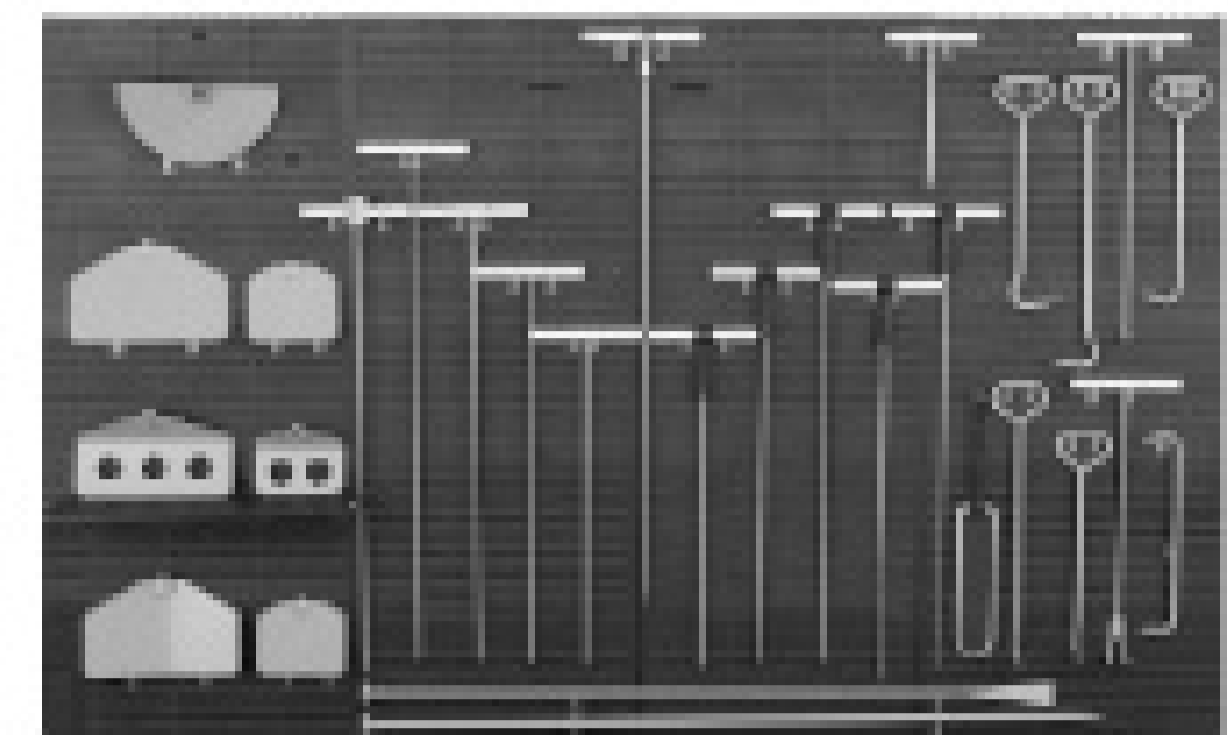
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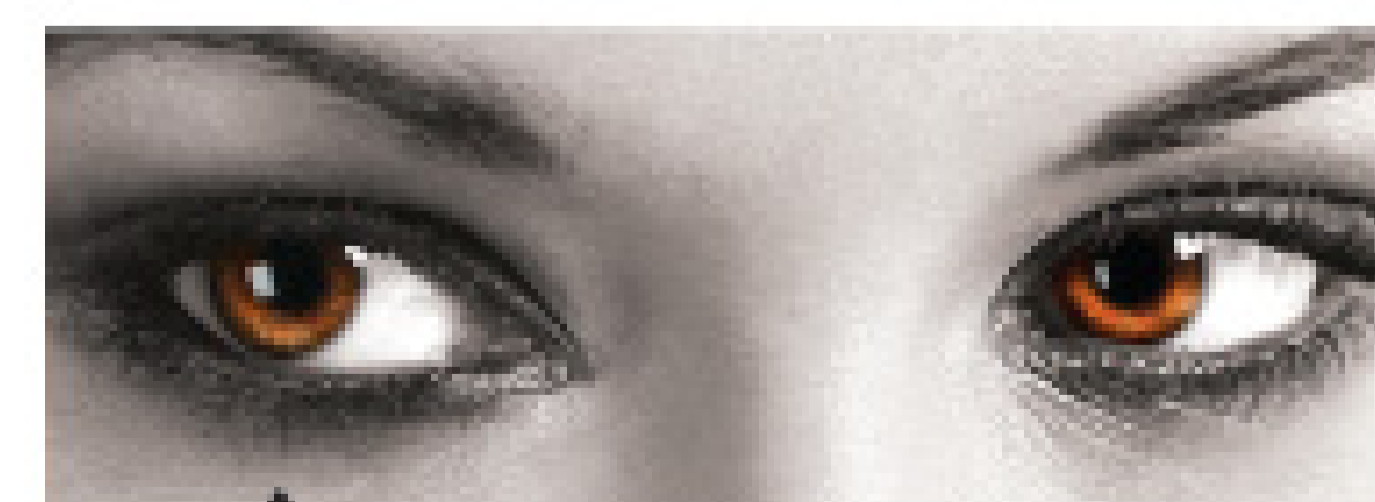


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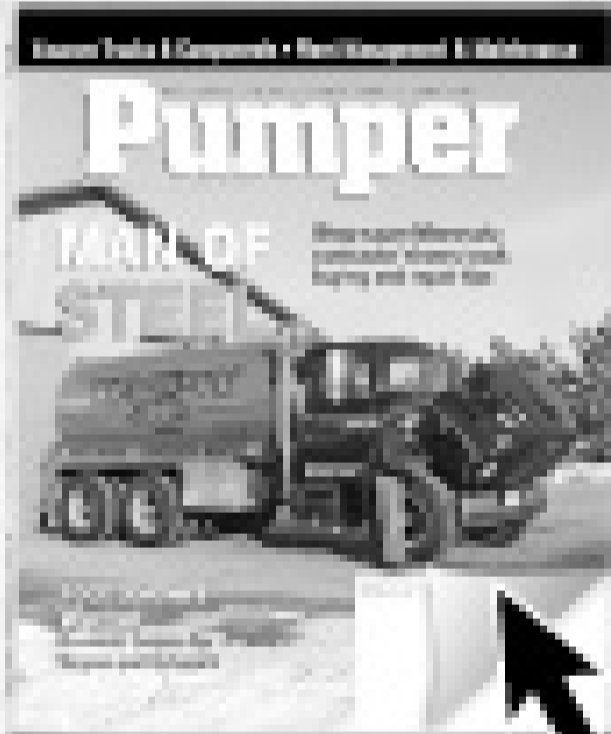
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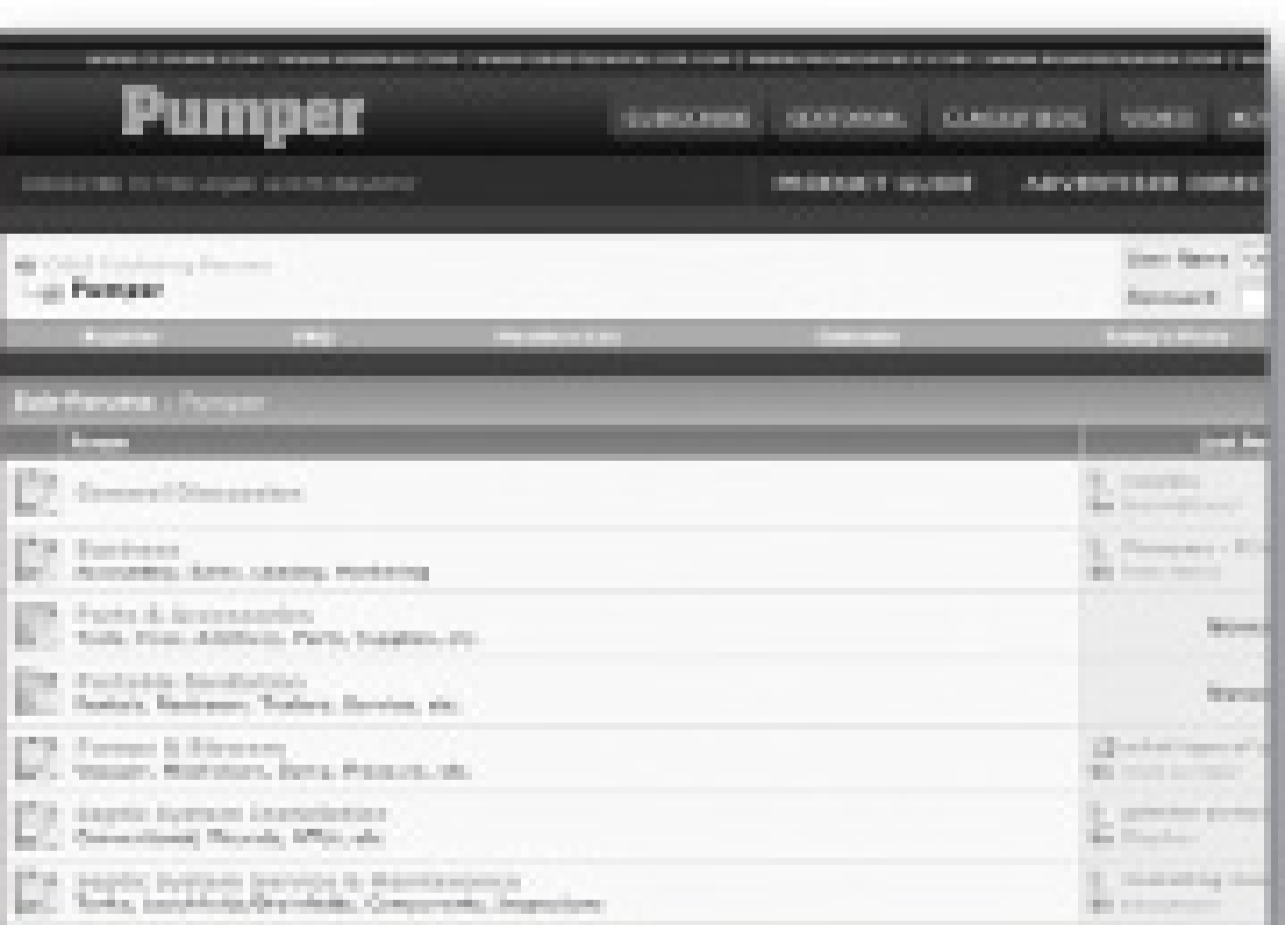
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2003 IH: Cummins N14 (435 hp), 10-speed, 165K miles, double frame, new Wally 753LNHR vacuum pump, new 3800 gallon aluminum vacuum tank.
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2007 Freightliner M2: 19K miles, equipped with a new 2500 gal. vacuum body, 400 cfm liquid cooled Masport vacuum pump.
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TRUCK STOP



May



2001 GMC W7 Forward: 6 cylinder, 210 hp Isuzu engine, auto. trans. 1 year old, tires excellent, MEC pump, 1800 gallon tank, owner is retiring.....\$28,000 OBO
Jan 248-420-7779 MI PS



2006 Safevac - Five (5) To Choose From: Sterling LT9511 chassis, MBE 460 engines, 27" Wispair blowers, OMSI transfer cases.....Special Price \$149,950 Each
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chrisdunn@lapinservices.com
for pics/questions, Ph: 321-436-0150 PS



2000 Kenworth: C-12 Cat, 8LL trans., Jake, AC, cruise, 20 front, 46 rears, 2 steerable lift axles, new 4500 gal. tank and Masport 400 vac pump, new paint and tires. This truck was a one-owner and we installed all new equipment. Beautiful truck....\$64,000
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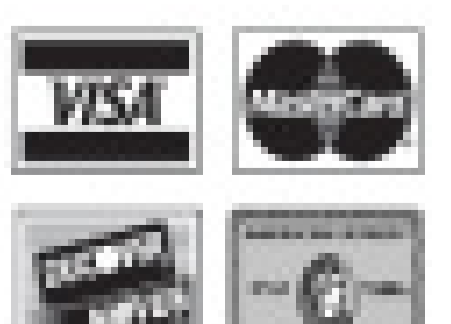
• **ONLINE** ad form at: www.pumper.com; www.pumpertrader.com,
www.cleaner.com, www.mswmag.com

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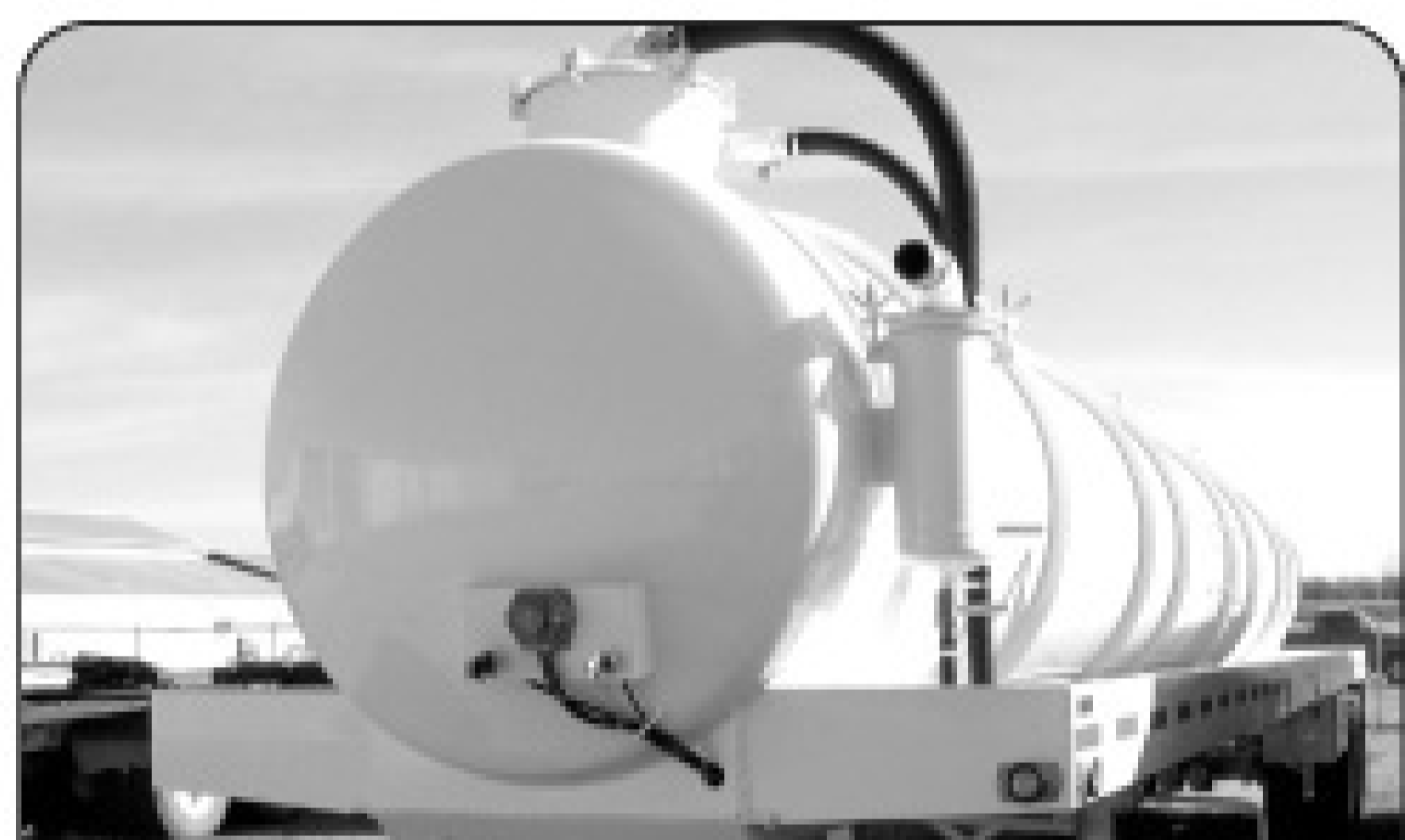
1981 Peterbilt 359, Cummins 350, 13-speed, Fruitland RCF500 vacuum pump, 2500 gallon vacuum tank.



2000 IH 4700, DT466E, 5-spd., non-CDL, double frame, new Wally 403HR vacuum pump, new 1600 gallon vacuum tank.



1998 Freightliner FL60, Cummins 5.9 (210 hp), 6-spd., Masport H75V vacuum pump, General 47 series triplex, 1100/200 gallon vacuum tank.



New Fluidmaster 5460 gal. vacuum trailer in stock. Also several used vacuum trailers in stock.



1999 IH 9900, Detroit 60 series (430/500 hp), 10-spd., new Wally 753LN vacuum pump, new 3000 gallon vacuum tank.



1989 Chevrolet C70, 8.2 ltr. diesel, 5+2 air brakes, double frame, MEC 5000 vacuum pump, 1500 gallon vacuum tank.



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BUSINESSES

PORTABLE RESTROOM BUSINESS: Front Range, CO. 360 toilets, 2 handicap, 8 wash stations, 3 trailers, 2 professionally built trucks. Family owned and operated 18 years. 719-499-8335. (PT6)

Family owned portable toilet business. Owner with health issues forces sale. 500+ units, 4 service trucks, located in beautiful Sacramento, Calif. area. 16 years established business, loyal customers. Serious inquiries only. Leave message; will return calls. 916-645-1136. (P6)

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BUSINESSES

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Growing portable restroom company in North Eastern Pennsylvania. 180 units - 95% in great shape. Truck and customers. Call Steve 570-760-2064. (PT5)

FOR SALE: Septic and Portable Toilet Business located in White Mountains, Arizona. 150 toilets, 2 ADAs, 3 trucks. For more info, respond to: 11448 East Monte Ave., Mesa, AZ 85209. (PBM)

Manitowoc County, Wisconsin. Located on seven acres near I-43 on State Highway 10. Septic tank manufacturing, installing and repairs business, Works accounting system with complete history of installations and repairs. Owners retiring. 25 years in business. Asking \$500,000. 920-732-3484. (PI5)

Long Island, New York: For Sale: Cesspool, Septic, Sewer and Drain Cleaning Company For Sale. 2 pump trucks, 2 porta-pottie trucks (service and delivery). Quality workmanship, has established 3000+ loyal customer base. Great opportunity for right person. Jump in on busy season! Money maker! Debt free! Office/shop/yard also available. Call for more information. 631-472-0677. (PBM)

FOR SALE: Septic/portable toilet business. House, land, all contracts. Many extras. Established 27 years. Call 715-623-6767 leave message. Antigo, Wisconsin. (P6)

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Prime 36" double channel rotary press, capacity to 70 gpm, skid mounted, with control panel, polymer feed system, sludge feed pump, 21' ss conveyor. dick@servicepumpingdrain.com. 978-276-0217. (PM6)

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2 meter stainless belt press, Polmor pump with controls, wash-down motor, will fit on tandem axle trailer, excellent cond. \$25,000. Call Steve 503-577-7223. (P6)

Aqua-Zyme 30-yard Dewatering Box, 2 years old, one owner. Excellent condition and ready to use. \$30,000 OBO. 317-539-7304 or 317-563-2072. (P5)

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Vaughn Lagoon Pumper Model 4500 electric. 500/1000 gpm. Can email pics and more information. \$10,000 OBO. Email for more information/pics! marty@bay-environmental.com. (P5)

Seepex sludge & polymer mixing & pumping unit. 5 years old. Excellent condition. Asking \$20,000 OBO. Call 1-506-672-2100. (PBM)

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2006 MudDog - 7000 miles, low hours. Excellent condition. Call for details. Mitch 219-306-2761. (P6C7)

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2000 Mack RD686 triaxle with 4,000 DOT certified dump and door Presvac vacuum tank. New Moro PM100 vacuum pump with new NVE valves and tank inspections. 350 hp engine with 44K rears with 15K pusher, 18K ft. axle. Must see. KLM Companies. 617-909-9044. (P5)

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1994 GMC Topkick cab and chassis with a Presvac 2300 US gallons, DOT certified vacuum/pressure tank. "As is." In stock. (Stock #8094V) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

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2010 Peterbilt 340s loaded with every option except with **automatics** with a new Presvac 3200 gallon carbon steel, DOT 412 certified, **full open rear door, dump style units.** PVB750 vacuum pumps. (Stock #TBD A,B,C&D) *In production.* **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

1986 Polar 5,000 gallon 316 stainless steel MC 307/312 vacuum trailer with new vac pump and hyd. drive. New tank inspections with new NVE valves. Spring suspension. In excellent condition. Must see. KLM Companies 617-909-9044. (P5)

NEW Presvac 5500 gallon c/s DOT certified vacuum tank unit, self-contained. **In stock!** (Stock #13373) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

2010 Peterbilt 340 cab and chassis with a pre-owned Presvac 3200 gallon s/s DOT certified vacuum pressure tank. (Stock #5530V) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

2009 Kenworth T800 steerable tri-axle with new Presvac Powervac 3,800 cfm, DOT 412, wet/dry vacuum unit. 3,200 gallon tank with full open rear door with top loading boom. 475 hp engine with aluminum wheels and fully loaded. Buy or rent. KLM Companies/KLM Rentals Inc. Call 617-909-9044. (P5)

2000 Kenworth T300 cab and chassis with a Presvac 2010 US gallons, DOT certified vacuum tank. **In stock.** (Stock #4675C) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

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ATTENTION: Fleet of Mack vacuum waste oil trucks for sale/trade by owner. Assorted size MC312 aluminum vacuum tanks. 417-619-5111. (PBM)

JETTERS-TRAILER

New PipeHunter Model 38T44 jetting unit, trailer mounted unit, w/335 Poly water tank, 4,000 psi @ 25 gpm, 600' of hose and attachments. **In Stock!!!** (Stock #13317) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

Myers Jetter. 4,000 psi @ 18 gallons per minute. Wisconsin gas engine. Lateral kit included. Like new condition. 1980s model. \$8,900 OBO. Contact Scott at 704-289-7760. (CP7)

New O'Brien Model 3518-SC jetting unit, trailer mounted unit w/350 poly water tank, 4000 psi @ 18 gpm, 400' of hose and attachments. **In Stock!!!** (Stock #3024V) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

Used PipeHunter model 38T44 jetting unit, trailer mounted unit, w/335 poly water tank, 4000 psi @ 25 gpm, 600' hose and attachments. **In Stock!!!** (Stock #4313V) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

2 SECA trailer jets. Both have Myers 35 gpm, 2000 psi pumps. New paint on both. Located in Dallas. 972-938-1905. **www.empireequip.com.** (CPBM)

2004-J2512A General Typhoon, 24 hp Kohler electric start engine, 2500 psi, 150 gal. tank. Training demo, less than 20 hours. Excellent condition. \$8,900. For more info call Patty at 727-329-2770. (P5)

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1995 Harben, 925 hours, in excellent condition, mounted on 1998 Ford F800, 5.9 diesel hydromatic, 300 gallon water tank. Asking \$17,500. In Florida. Call 561-740-2010. Cell 396-4469. (CP6)

2000 SECA water jet. Front mounted, hose reel, Myers 50 gpm 3000 psi, 1500 gallon plastic water tank. Was a city owned unit. In excellent condition. 714-639-8352. **www.empireequip.com.** (CPBM)

JETTERS-TRUCK

2006 GMC TC6500 cab & chassis truck mounted jetting unit with JET EYE camera system, 3,000 psi @ 50 gpm, 1,000 gallons water, 600' hose, 500 cfm blower, debris tank and attachments. RENT ME!!! (Stock #13234) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

JET VACS

1989 AutoCar, st. 7-spd. Cummins & Cummins, Vactor 810C dual fan, 5-yr, 65 gpm/2000 psi, low hrs. & mi. \$25,000. Dick or Anthony 800-794-9265. (P6C7)

2005 Vac-Con mounted on a 2005 International 7400, extendable boom, articulating hose reel, fully operational. 37,466 miles, 3950 hours. \$131,000. Call Ken 904-744-9138. (CP5)

2008 Sterling LT7501 with a Vac/All All Jet Model AJV1215 1500 water comp, 12-yr. debris body, Roots 824 PD blower, 80 gpm @ 2000 psi jetting system with 600' of 1" hose. Combination vacuum-jetter unit. **In stock - RENT ME!!!** (Stock #0329V) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

1998 Vac-Con V312THA on a Ford LT8000, 3-stage fan, 65 gpm, 2000 psi pump, extendible boom, articulating hose reel, 12 yard debris tank, new paint. Was a city owned unit. Located in Dallas. 972-938-1905. **www.empireequip.com.** (CPBM)

2001 Vac-Con Model V390 SHA, 3-stage fan, 80 gpm 2000 psi pump, 600' of new 1" jet hose, new paint. Was city owned. 972-938-1905. **www.empireequip.com.** (CPBM)

1988 International DT466 engine, Allison AT with Model 815C Vactor, BT4 Cummins, 4500 hrs. \$49,900. Call 574-534-1301. (P5C6)

1998 Vac-Con Model V350THA, 3-stage fan, 50 gpm, 3000 psi pump, 5-yr. debris tank, new white paint. Was city owned. 714-639-8352. **www.empireequip.com.** (CPBM)

1992 International 2554 cab and chassis with a Vac-Con Model V211TR combination unit, 12-yard debris body, 1000 gal. water, front mounted hose reel, extendable top load boom. **In stock.** (Stock #5045) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

JET VACS

Looking for a couple late model Vactors with low hours. Please contact Steve @ River City Environmental, Inc. 503-969-7591. SteveM@rivercityusa.com. (CP5)

1996 Vactor Model 2110, **PD blower**, 65 gpm, 2000 psi pump, 10-yard debris tank, new paint. 972-938-1905. **www.empireequip.com.** (CPBM)

(1) 2002 Vactor 2110; (1) 2002 2115; (1) 2003 2110. **All PD units.** All were city owned units in excellent condition. Located in Dallas. 972-938-1905. **www.empireequip.com.** (CPBM)

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1998 Vactor 2110 on a Freightliner FL80, 28,213 miles, 2-stage fan, 80 gpm, 2,000 psi pump off system accumulator. Was a city owned unit. Located in Dallas. 972-938-1905. **www.empireequip.com.** (CPBM)

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150 Used Synergy World High Tech, 1 kelly green sides with a gray front, good condition. \$200 each. Call Bill Jr. 614-497-1776 OH. (P6)

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250 Red, White & Blue PolyPortable (Integra) units in excellent condition. \$275-\$350 each. Handicaps also available. Please call 352-572-2687. (PBM)

WANTED: Used ADA compliant portable restrooms. Midwest area. Call Lynda 1-800-657-4886 or lynda1@charterinternet.com. (PT5)

200 Used Fiberglass Toilets for Sale. Excellent condition, some as new as 2007, some older. \$75-\$100 each depending on age. Call Lorraine 847-955-1214. (P9)

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Restroom Trailer - Gold Series: 32', new and used. Women's - 5 stalls, 2 sinks. Men's - 2 stalls, 2 urinals, 2 sinks. CCI/Brian Touey 805-896-3777. (PBM)

Restroom Trailer - Platinum Series: 30', new and used. Women's - 4 stalls, 2 sinks. Men's - 2 stalls, 3 urinals, 2 sinks. CCI/Brian Touey 805-896-3777. (PBM)

2005 Wells Cargo Comfort Elite III. Brushed nickle finish. Very light use in my yard. On the road once. Excellent condition. \$16,500. 805-452-9000. (P5)

1998 24' Olympic Trailer. Mens side has 3 urinals, 2 stalls, 1 sink. Womens side has 3 stalls, 1 sink. Trailer upgraded to be completely self contained for low water needs and waste tank efficiency. This trailer handles large crowds with ease. \$15,000. Call Rich at 219-405-0405. (P6)

Restroom Trailers For Sale: 16' and 28'. 16' \$5,500; 28' \$6,500. Will negotiate renovations to meet your use. Business closed. Call for details. Don 443-867-9883. (PT6)

PORTABLE RESTROOM TRAILERS

2006 Wells Cargo Comfort Elite III. Light use, stored inside. \$19,750. 573-896-8665. (PT5)

New and used **RESTROOM TRAILERS** available immediately. 8 to 34 foot luxury trailers. Comforts of Home Services Inc. 877-382-2935. (PBM)

PORTABLE RESTROOM TRUCKS

2005 Ford F550 Super Duty diesel pump truck. White with gray interior, cab and chassis, with PTO driven Masport pump. There is no tank. Wholesale price of \$9,900. 800-634-2085. (P5)

Aluminum Portable Toilet Tankers: '02 F-650; '02 Isuzu; '02 Inter.; '02 Inter.; '03 Inter.; '03 Inter.; Masport pump, pressure cleaners; 500 clean & 1500 waste. Contact Manuel @ 305-970-9837. (P5)

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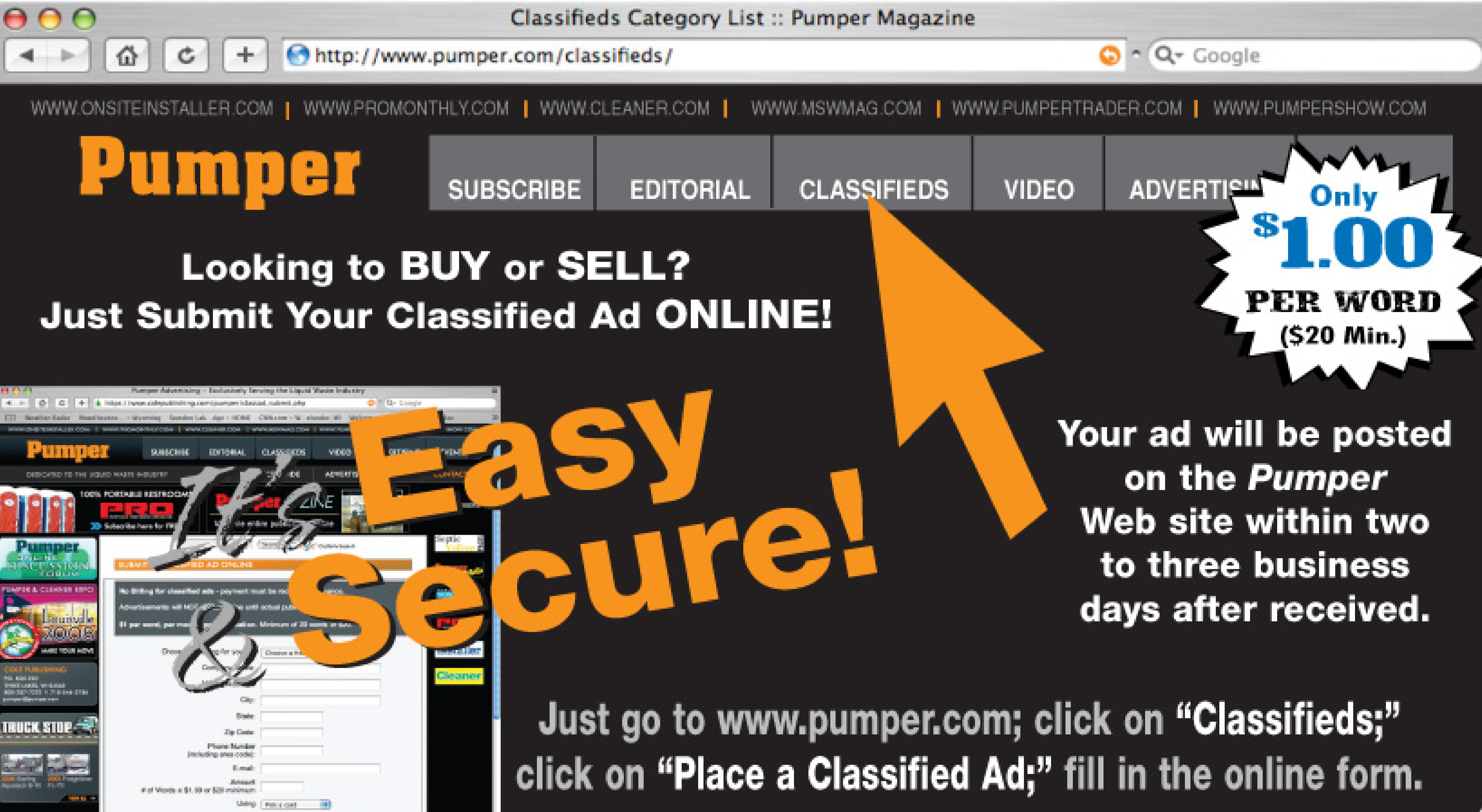
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PORTABLE RESTROOM TRUCKS

1997 Ford Super Duty portable toilet service truck, 400/250 split, 236,200 miles, running condition. Still on route, sold "as is." Asking \$10,000 OBO. Truck is in Illinois. Call 877-919-2378, ask for John. (P7)

1999 Freightliner w/automatic with a Keith Huber 1,000 waste, 500 water, toilet service unit. (Stock #4506V) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

(3) F-550s For Sale: Super Duty 6.0 diesel powerstroke, automatic, AC, purchased from Satellite, fresh chem. delivery, pressure washer, Conde pump, 650 waste/300 fresh, 2-unit rack, no salt, washed daily, kept in shop nightly. 2005 with 155,000 miles; 2006 with 89,000 miles; and 2006 with 97,000 miles. Call Bruce at 701-471-4098. (P6)

2005 Crescent Tank Isuzu Truck: 650 waste, 350 fresh, carry 6 units, Masport pump & new Masport traps; NQR diesel, automatic with 91,653 miles. Factory refurbished vacuum tank, good condition. \$35,000. **Crescent Tank Mfg. 585-657-4104.** (P5)

2005 Ford F550, diesel, auto., Satellite tank, 350 fresh, 600 waste, 2-unit carrier. \$25,000. 800-275-3616 NY. (PT5)

1996 Ford Super Duty portable toilet service truck, 600/200 split, 126,300 miles, running condition. Vac pump works, needs rack, sold "as is." Asking \$7,000 OBO. Truck is in Illinois. Call 877-919-2378, ask for John. (P7)

1998 International 4700 with a 1,500 US gallon, 2-compartment (1100/400 split), carbon steel, portable toilet service unit. (Stock #8734C) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

1996 Chevrolet 3500. Engine and transmission have been replaced in the last year. Steel tank, 800 gal. 600 waste/200 fresh water. Jurop pump, powered by gas Honda engine. Sale price is \$10,000. Call 352-446-0475. (PT5)

1998 International 4700 cab and chassis with a Coleman 1,000 US gallon, 2-compartment (700/300 split) carbon steel portable restroom service unit. **Available!!!** (Stock #1327C) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

PORTABLE RESTROOM TRUCKS

2000 F-650, non-CDL, 6-speed, diesel, AM/FM, A/C, 700 waste/250 fresh water, Masport pump, aluminum tool boxes, heavy duty hitch, 2-unit carrier. Unit is in great condition. Must sell. Contact Clifton at 317-730-5311. (PT5)

2004 Crescent Tank Chevy 4500 Truck: 650 waste, 250 fresh, carry 6 units, Masport pump & new Masport traps; diesel, automatic with 111,710 miles. Factory refurbished vacuum tank, good condition. \$39,000. **Crescent Tank Mfg. 585-657-4104.** (P5)

1999 Isuzu FTR, 190 hp, 6 cyl. diesel, 25,900 GVW, new Allison auto with 2-yr. warranty, Jay's Inc. 1,300 gallon 800/500 split, National 190 cfm vac. pump, Burks DC-10 wash down pump, heated dump valve, heated bucket fill, heated water pump, 60' hose reel, 2-unit toilet carrier, and more. 123,800 miles. \$35,000. Call Dale 708-878-4391. Located in Illinois. (PBM)

1989 Ford LNT 9000, 52000 GVW, 300 Cummins, 9-spd., A/C, PS, air brakes, 3600 gallon tank, Masport water-cooled pump, 21" manway, 26" rear manway, 6" dump. Tank and cab white. Engine overhauled 695 miles since. Price \$27,000. Located Phoenix, AZ. Pictures at www.acoinc.com/classified. Call 208-362-3193. (P5)

2007 or 2006 Ford F-550 XLT, 4x4, AT, loaded with extras, 99K or 77K, warranty, 950 gallon Satellite unit, Conde waste, Burks fresh water wand, 2-unit hauler. Both look like new. Choice \$39,500. 641-420-5310. (P6)

1994 International 4700 with a Keith Huber 1,500 carbon steel portable toilet service unit. (Stock #6499V) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

2004 4300 International, 25,500 GVW, DT466, Allison, A/C, air-brakes, 3-compartment aluminum tank (450/1400/250), M-10 Water-cooled pump, spot lights, 2 Burk water pumps for fill and spray down, restroom carrier. Pictures www.acoinc.com/classified. Located Phoenix, AZ. \$45,000. 208-362-3193. (P5)

2002 International Pumper Truck: 4700 series, DT466, automatic, air brakes, 1200 gallon waste, 300 gallon fresh water, Masport 75 pump. CCI/Brian Touey 805-896-3777. (PBM)

PORTABLE RESTROOM TRUCKS

New 700 US gallon 2-compartment (450/250 split), carbon steel, portable toilet service unit. (Stock #13238V) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

2008 Ford, 49,000 miles, \$45,000. 2007 C5500 Chevrolet, miles in 40s with aluminum and steel tanks. Still under warranty. Slide-ins 600/200, \$10,000. Portable toilet transport trailers: 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 20 haulers. New portable toilet trucks and new and used septic trucks. We stand behind everything we sell. Lane's Vacuum Tank Inc. 1-800-592-3308. (PBM)

1995 International 4700 with a Prime 1,500 US gallon, 2-compartment (1000/500 split) carbon steel; portable toilet service unit. "As is." **Available!!!** (Stock #3469C) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

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1991 International 4900 cab and chassis with a 1700 US gallon, carbon steel vacuum-pressure tank. Dump type with rail-gear "as is." **In stock!!!** (Stock #1443V) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

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2000 Volvo WG64 with a Pikrite 4,000 gal. vacuum tank and a Jurop PNR-102 pump. (Stock #9010C) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

1984 IHC w/DT466, w/Jay's 2,600 gal. tank, 250 cfm pump, 90,000 miles on complete new motor, transmission and rear end. New tires. Available June 2009. \$19,500 OBO. 715-644-2332. (P5)

2003 International 7500 with a 3,000 gal. carbon steel vacuum tank unit. (Stock #2319C) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

1992 Ford LN9000 with new 4,000 US gallon carbon steel vacuum pressure tank, Presvac PV 750 vacuum pump. 44K rears, 18K ft. axle, 145,000 miles, in excellent condition. \$37,500. KLM Companies. 617-909-9044. (P5)

2003 Mack CV713 cab and chassis with a 3,200 gal. s/s vacuum pressure tank. Masport pump package. **Coming soon!!!** (Stock #3680V) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

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2001 Intl. DT-466, 7-spd. tandem, new 3600 gal. tank, Masport 350 cfm vacuum pump, 237,000 miles, \$49,000. 2000 Intl., DT-466, auto., new 2300 gal. tank, 350 cfm Masport pump, 147,000 miles, \$44,000. Other new & used toilet & septic trucks available. Everything we sell has warranty. Lane's Vacuum Tank Inc. 1-800-592-3308. (PBM)

2001 International 4900 with a 2,000 gallon, vacuum tank and a Fruitland pump. (Stock #9960C) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

SEPTIC TRUCKS

2002 Presvac 4,000 US gallon C/S tank only. (Stock #6255V) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

1999 Sterling with a 2,500 US gallon CS dump type unit and pump package. (Stock #2192V) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

2009 Peterbilt 340 with a Presvac 3600 gallon (US) aluminum vacuum tank unit. **Special Show Pricing!** (Stock #13337 A,B,C&D) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

1992 GMC Topkick, good condition, runs well, A/C, 176,000 miles, 2100 gallon tank, Jurop pump. \$24,500. Chicago area. 815-741-4440. (PBM)

2001 Progress 4,800 US gallon C/S tank only. (Stock #0138C) **www.VacuumSalesInc.com, (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648).** (PBM)

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SHOWER TRAILER

Shower Trailer - Gold Series: 32', new and used. Men and women sides each have 3 private shower stalls with changing area, 1 restroom stall, 1 sink. CCI/Brian Touey 805-896-3777. (PBM)

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By **Scottie Dayton**

PENNSYLVANIA: Preserve Land Application

The Pennsylvania Septage Management Association is contesting an ordinance passed by Shrewsbury Township that bans land application of biosolids and includes additional fees, enforcement and local regulatory oversight.

Town supervisors responded to citizens opposed to biosolids recycling. Other municipalities and boroughs have or are adopting similar legislation. A letter from the septage association to the state attorney general contended that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and state Department of Environmental Protection have established comprehensive, science-based rules governing biosolids quality and management.

The attorney general's office is reviewing the legality of the Shrewsbury ordinance and can sue the municipality if evidence exists that the regulation unlawfully restricts agricultural operations. The Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund offered to defend the ruling in court.

WISCONSIN: WOWRA Awards and New Board Members

The Wisconsin Onsite Wastewater Recycling Association honored State Rep. Scott Gunderson (R-Waterford) and State Sen. Mark Miller (D-Monona) with its 2008 Distinguished Service Award for co-sponsoring conflict-of-interest legislation that became law in 2008. Duane Greuel of the Wood County Planning and Zoning Department also received the award.

Aaron Ausen of Dalmaray Concrete Products in Janesville and Christopher Fellner of Fellner Soil and Septic in Sturgeon Bay joined the association board.

Adam Greuel won the \$2,000 Robert Lindner Memorial Scholarship, Addie Hauptert received the \$1,500 Gretchen McQuestion Scholarship, and Jordan Brull was selected for the \$1,000 WOWRA scholarship.

NORTH CAROLINA: Industry Symposium Scheduled

The North Carolina Septic Tank Association will hold its first Outreach Symposium on Aug. 12-14 at Greenville Convention Center under the theme of "The Coming Onsite Storm." The event brings together national speakers and vendors from traditional onsite wastewater technologies and emerging stormwater technologies.

Symposium topics will include regulatory issues to confront development in the future. The event replaces the regional continuing education classes normally offered in the eastern part of the state. Call Monica Rhea at 704/739-5849 or visit www.ncsta.net.

FLORIDA: Onsite System Permits Down

The Florida Onsite Wastewater Association newsletter states that the trend in new onsite permits is still down, but repair permits have held at around 20,000 per year. The association helped secure \$1 million from the legislature to fund a study on passive nitrogen reduction technology. The project, under way at the University of Central

Florida, looks at systems that cost-effectively reduce nitrogen loading. The association intends to contract for a multi-year project to look further into the issue.

The state Department of Environmental Protection will fund a complete inventory of onsite systems in Florida. The inventory is critical to the association's plans to improve onsite management and maintenance. The group asks licensed septage haulers to provide electronic records on pump-outs by calling Elke Ursin or Kara Loewe at 850/245-4070.

WORLD: Just for Fun

Author Luke Barclay unearthed more than 40 of the world's best views from lavatories. His book, *A Loo with a View: From Waterloo to Honolulu — an Illustrated Guide to Panoramic Privies*, features open-air toilets with sweeping vistas, urinals where men watch live international sports through the window, and even a restroom with a view of the highest point on Earth. The book is available in bookstores, online, and from www.looswithviews.com.

Training & Education

Web-based Aggregate Course

Registered contractors may subscribe to the Florida Onsite Wastewater Association Web-based course, "Judging Aggregate Quality," and earn six continuing education hours. The course provides an understanding of the fundamentals of aggregate and its function in onsite systems. The post-test will be administered at various testing facilities. Call 407/937-2228 or go to www.fowaonsite.com.

NAWT

The National Association of Wastewater Transporters has these sessions:

- June 12 – Vacuum Truck Technician, Monterey, Calif.
- June 16 – Inspector Recertification Training, Flagstaff, Ariz.

Call NAWT at 800/236-6298 or visit www.nawt.org.

For Arizona classes, contact Kitt Farrell-Poe at 928/782-3836 or kittfp@ag.arizona.edu.

Alabama

Licensing classes are the joint effort of the Alabama Onsite Wastewater Association and University of West Alabama. Courses are at UWA Livingston campus unless stated otherwise:

- June 3-5 – Basic Installer
- June 25-26 – Continuing Education, Dothan
- July 9-10 – Pumper
- July 21-22 – Maintenance Training for Onsite Installers, Crestview, Fla.
- July 29-31 – Basic Installer

Call 334/396-3434 or visit www.aowa.org.

California

The training schedule for the California Onsite Wastewater Association is:

- June 12 – NAWT Vacuum Truck Technician, Monterey
- July 24 – Science of Soils and Onsite Wastewater Disposal, San Luis Obispo

Call MaryAnne Bobrow at 916/727-2692 or e-mail maryanne@cowa.org.

Florida

Courses are at the Florida Onsite Wastewater Association's Training Center in Polk City unless stated otherwise.

- June 2-4 – Onsite Technologies from A-Z
- June 15-16 – Basic Florida Soils, Master III
- June 17-18 – System Design and Function, Master I
- June 19 – System Materials and Regulatory Requirements, Master II
- July 7 – System Design and Function, Fort Myers
- July 9 – System Design and Function, Master IV, Davie
- July 21-22 – Maintenance Training for Onsite Installers, Crestview

Contact FOWA at 407/937-2228 or www.fowaonsite.com.

Iowa

The Iowa Onsite Wastewater Training Center has an Aerobic Treatment class on June 17 at Ankeny. Call Annette Adams at 515/964-6464, option 5, ext. 6464 or visit www.iowwa.com.

Kentucky

The Kentucky Onsite Wastewater Association has a class on Diagnosing and Preventing Failures/Overcoming Site Limitations for six continuing education units on June 17 at the Bluegrass Community Technical College in Lawrenceburg. Call 270/715-0043 or visit www.kentuckyonsite.org.

Minnesota

The University of Minnesota Extension has these classes:

- June 2-5 – Advanced Design and Inspection of Onsite Systems, St. Cloud
- June 9-11 – Basic Design of Onsite Systems, Brainerd
- June 12 – Soils Continuing Education, Cloquet
- June 16-17 – Inspecting Onsite Systems, Waseca
- June 18-19 – Soils, St. Cloud
- June 25 – Soils Continuing Education, Pipestone
- July 1 – Soils Continuing Education, Crookston
- July 14 – Soils Continuing Education, Blue Earth

Call Nick Haig at 800/322-8642 or visit

<http://septic.umn.edu>.

New England

The New England Onsite Wastewater Training Program at the University of Rhode Island in Kingston has these workshops:

- June 2-3 – National Operation and Maintenance Service Provider Program
- June 11 – INSP200 Examination
- June 25 – Bottomless Sand Filter Design and Installation
- June 25 – Soil Basics for the Onsite Wastewater Contractor
- July 15 – Surveying Techniques for the Wastewater Professional
- July 16 – Microbiology for Wastewater Professionals
- July 29-30 – Advanced Soil Morphology

Call 401/874-5950 or visit www.uri.edu/ce/wq. Contact Mark Stolt at 401/874-2915 or mstolt@uri.edu.

Pennsylvania

The Pennsylvania Septage Management Association is offering these courses:

- July 15-16 – Onsite Inspection, Chester
- July 22-23 – Onsite Inspection, Bordentown, N.J.

Call 717/763-7762 or visit www.pasma.net.

Virginia

The following courses by the Virginia Onsite Wastewater Recycling Association and Virginia Center for Onsite Wastewater Training (VCOWT) are at Blackstone unless stated otherwise.

- June 1-5 – Onsite Design Camp II (VCOWT)
- June 3 – A to Z of Onsite Wastewater, Charlottesville (VOWRA)
- June 3-4 – Effluent Dispersal Systems (VCOWT)
- June 17 – Proprietary System Training (VOWRA)

For VCOWT classes, contact Debbie Campbell at 434/736-2011 or visit www.southside.edu/programs/wastetreat. For VOWRA courses, contact Jeff Barr at 703/771-5250 or visit www.vowra.org.

Wisconsin

The Wisconsin Onsite Wastewater Recycling Association is holding a Certified Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment System Evaluator Course May 18-19 in Minocqua. Call 608/256-7757 or visit www.wowra.com.

Pumper invites your state association to post notices and news items in this column. Send contributions to editor@pumper.com. ■

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