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**ANNUAL  
Buyer's  
Guide  
36**

Derek Lalonge  
Hydroexcavator Operator  
Brass Inc.



**THE LATEST PRODUCTS  
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Addition of services keeps industrial cleaning company thriving

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**CONTRACTOR FINDS BIG RESULTS AFTER MOVING INTO PIPE BURSTING**

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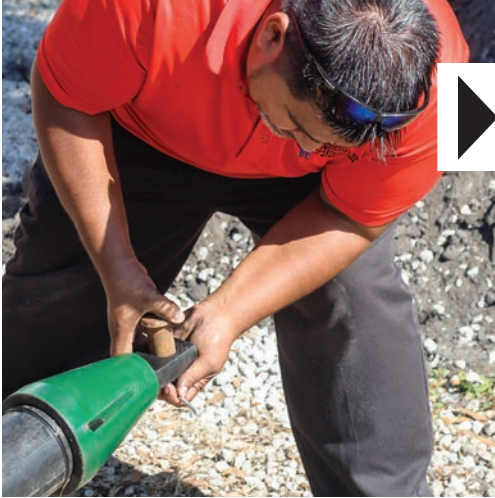
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By Giles Lambertson

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Brass Inc. hydroexcavator operator Derek Lalonge uses a high-pressure water wand from a Super Products 1600 Mud Dog hydrovac unit to break down the ground for the installation of fiber in Courtice, Ontario. Brass Inc., based in Utica, Ontario, provides hydroexcavation, directional drilling, industrial cleaning, dredging and dewatering services throughout Ontario with its 35 employees. (Photo by Vanessa Tignanelli)

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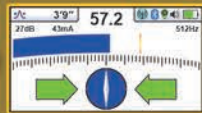
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## Being Thankful

### IT DOESN'T HAVE TO COST A FORTUNE TO GIVE A 'THANK YOU' TO YOUR CREW FOR THE HARD WORK THIS PAST BUSY SEASON

BY CORY DELLENBACH

**W**ith the end of the year approaching, I flipped through the issues we've put out in 2018. We've highlighted some strong, growing companies.

There is one thing in common with each of them — they know how to treat employees, taking care of them with benefits, bonuses, picnics, and even just a simple “thank you” every now and then.

In February we highlighted Louisiana-based Pro Serve, where owner Ronnie Baron Sr. retains his employees by paying them well, covering most of their health insurance and giving year-end bonuses. He also gives \$100 to any employee who refers a potential job candidate who ends up getting hired and staying with the company for at least 90 days.

Ken-way Excavating, profiled in March, does the same thing as Baron, and the company also helps pay for continuing education for its employees.

At Ontario's Graham Utility, profiled in July, owner Jordan Graham not only pays his employees well, he also treats them to tickets for sporting events — MMA fighting events — when he is on the ticket.

“We pretty much shut everything down, and we worked out subs for all of our clients that needed a truck and let them know our plan,” Graham says. “Almost every crew came, and it was a lot of fun. That's the family atmosphere that we have here.”

Doing little things for your crews will be what draws quality people to your company. They'll hear how you treat your employees and want to come and work for you.

#### THE PERFECT TIME

In a 2012 survey by the John Templeton Foundation, 81 percent of 2,000 participants said they would work harder for a grateful boss, and 90 percent said a grateful boss is more likely to be successful.

It was also noted that only 10 percent of the people surveyed said they thanked their colleagues.

The holiday season is just around the corner with Thanksgiving later this month and Christmas next month. This is the perfect time to say “thank you” to your crew. There are some simple and easy ways to do that:

- **Gift cards or bonuses** — Has your company had a strong year? Why not thank the guys out there doing the work for you by giving them a little bit of a bonus at the end of the year? This can be in the form of an additional check or just go to a local store and pick up a gift card for each employee. It'll be a surprise for them, and it's easy enough for you to do with minimal time used.
- **Team swag** — Who doesn't like team swag? Make it a nice hoodie or a water bottle. It's something they'll be able to use anytime. Plus, it's great marketing if they use it out in public.
- **Team meal** — You can't go wrong with a gift of free food. Treat your team to a lunch or steak dinner.
- **Make time to just thank them in person** — This option is the easiest. Just go up to your crew, shake their hands and thank them for the work they are doing. They'll appreciate it.

#### WHAT DO YOU DO?

What are some simple or unique ways you thank your team? I'd like to hear about them and maybe share some of those stories in *Dig Different*. Email me at [editor@dig-different.com](mailto:editor@dig-different.com) or call 800-257-7222.

Enjoy this issue, and see you in 2019! ▼



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## **BRING IT ON**

### **Experienced Employees Allow for Challenging Projects**

Many of the directional drilling jobs that Underground Systems of Buford, Georgia, takes on are fairly routine. But that doesn't mean the company hesitates when the opportunity arises to tackle something difficult and challenging. Underground Systems was featured in the August issue, and in this online exclusive you can read more about one of those types of jobs — two parallel bores under a 3-million-gallon tank filled with gasoline without the use of a locator. [digdifferent.com/featured](http://digdifferent.com/featured)

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## **CHANGING TECH**

### **The Evolution of the Modern-Day Work Truck Toolbox**

Work truck toolboxes have come a long way from the old wood or steel ones that were simply tossed into the back of a pickup truck and strapped down. This online exclusive looks at that evolution and the various options that are available to today's contractors. [digdifferent.com/featured](http://digdifferent.com/featured)

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## **BRAND BUILDING**

### **Reality Web Series Becomes Promotional Tool**

If you're struggling to come up with creative ways to promote your company and need some inspiration, you should check out the web series Canada's OSY Rentals and Rival Hydrovac have been producing. Modeled after a reality TV format, the series is light and fun with no real agenda, but exactly because of that it helps build the companies' brand. Learn more in this online exclusive. [digdifferent.com/featured](http://digdifferent.com/featured)





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# KEEPING UP WITH THE BRASS

ONTARIO INDUSTRIAL CLEANING COMPANY ADDS  
HYDROVAC AND DIRECTIONAL DRILLING SERVICES  
AS A WAY TO KEEP GROWING AND REMAIN PROFITABLE

STORY: GILES LAMBERTSON PHOTOS: VANESSA TIGNANELLI



Brass Inc. co-owners Adam Riewald, left, vice president and chief financial officer, and Adam Connaghan, operations manager.



“WE ARE FINDING IN THIS MARKET THAT WE ARE EITHER GOING TO HAVE TO **GET BIGGER OR GET OUT.** THAT’S THE SPOT WE’RE IN.”  
Adam Riewald

Adam Connaghan, center, supervises hydrovac operators West Venedam (left) and Adam Geer. The team is using the HXX Vector to pothole for utilities ahead of a directional drilling job.

First, the company name — Brass Inc. It does not allude to fittings in a hydroexcavator line. When the company was founded 18 years ago, it didn’t even offer hydrovac services. Some link the name to Ontario’s Clanbrassil neighborhood, but that’s a stretch. Adam Riewald suggests that brass being an alloy of multiple metals fits Brass Inc. because it succeeded only after multiple starts.

In the end, Riewald settles on this explanation for the name: The word “brass” implies “big and bold. That seems to fit.” And it does. Headquartered in Utica, Ontario, Brass Inc. is a growing multiservice company that operates big hydroexcavation trucks (which the company helped design) and manages its workforce in innovative ways.

The firm was founded in 2000 as an industrial cleaning firm. Riewald’s father, Frank Riewald, was a school teacher who founded the company to increase his income. He taught in one of Ontario’s numerous private Christian schools, and he wanted his children to attend the school. However, he couldn’t afford it.

His answer was to become an operator of an industrial cleaning truck — the only operator, that

is, of a one-truck company. His entrepreneurial genes kicked in when he realized he could make more money if the company was his. Consequently, he approached the person who owned the truck and, with partners, bought the rig and the company.

The rest isn’t quite history. Disagreement about the direction of the new firm came to a head and the partnership was dissolved. A second stab at building a company around the vacuum truck failed for the same reason. Brass Inc. was Riewald’s third and ultimately successful venture, a company that has diversified its services and grown into a major player in the Ontario underground utilities marketplace.

“It came down to him wanting to do better for his family,” Adam Riewald says of his father. “He was from a family of dairy farmers and, as the youngest son, sometimes would get the work of his brothers handed down to him. He developed a strong work ethic.”

## A NEW MARKET

Once Brass Inc. found its footing, it strode ahead, building up its industrial cleaning customer base over eight years by focusing on 23 steel manufacturing plants in the province. Then Frank Riewald saw another opportunity: The vacuum truck he operated to clean up spills, pressure wash equipment, hot wash-clean industrial surfaces and restore hazardous confined spaces was not altogether different from hydrovac mobile units employed in underground utility work. In 2008, the company entered the underground market.

The firm’s “underground utility solutions” was at first solely hydroexcavation work. Brass Inc. crews labored to daylight hidden utility lines, pothole and expose broken utility pipes and connections, trench for lines, and punch out holes for utility poles. In 2015, Brass Inc. added horizontal directional drilling to its portfolio of solutions.



The Brass Inc. team includes, from left, Adam Riewald, co-owner, vice president and chief financial officer; Clayton Carson, senior operator; Luke Pomery, driller; Lucas Greco, locator; Brent Adams, student laborer; Andrew Kimball, site foreman; and Adam Connaghan, co-owner and operations manager.

**Brass Inc.**  
**Utica, Ontario**



**OWNERS:** Frank Riewald, Adam Connaghan, Adam Riewald

**EMPLOYEES:** 35

**SERVICES OFFERED:** Hydroexcavation, directional drilling, industrial cleaning, dredging and dewatering

**SERVICE AREA:** Ontario

**WEBSITE:** [www.brassinc.net](http://www.brassinc.net)

“We found that directional drilling goes hand in hand with hydroexcavation work,” Adam Riewald says. “For just about every drilling job we had, the customer also needed a hydrovac. There’s a synergism.” Brass Inc. equipment operators are cross-trained so that when a job shifts from one piece of equipment to another — that is, when excavating or trenching is too disruptive —

**“WE FOUND THAT DIRECTIONAL DRILLING GOES HAND IN HAND WITH HYDROEXCAVATION WORK. FOR JUST ABOUT EVERY DRILLING JOB WE HAD, THE CUSTOMER ALSO NEEDED A HYDROVAC. THERE’S A SYNERGISM.”**

Adam Riewald

trained hydrovac operators can support the project by steering a drill head from one open-air area to another.

In the last couple years, Brass Inc. has broadened its lineup of services even further to include dewatering and dredging of stormwater ponds and lagoons. The work involves evaluating a body of water, assessing the body’s sediment, and mechanically or hydraulically removing unwanted material.

Unsurprisingly, underground utilities solutions are Brass Inc.’s dominant business component. They also constitute its fastest growing service. The pro-

liferation of underground gas, water and telecom lines combined with the already cluttered state of much of the province’s subterranean utility landscape steadily builds demand for the service.

**JOINING THE COMPANY**

Adam Riewald joined Brass Inc. five years ago. At that point, his entrepreneurial father became a silent partner — remaining as CEO but venturing off into real-estate work. Adam Riewald joined Adam Connaghan at the helm of the firm. Connaghan is

co-owner and operations manager, first partnering with Frank Riewald 10 years ago when the company entered the hydroexcavation market. Adam Riewald is co-owner, vice president and chief financial officer.

“My dad always wanted me to work with him,” Riewald says. “He would ask and I always would say no. My idea was I had a vision of going into investment banking, into hedge funds eventually. So I went into banking and did commercial loans with small and midsize companies that needed money to continue in business or to expand.”

*(continued)*



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His work with small business-people opened his eyes. “I’d ask them simple questions, like about profit margins and company goals, and I found a lot of small-business owners don’t have that knowledge,” Riewald says.

From his bank work with the small companies, watching how they operate, recognizing the strengths and demands on them, Riewald came away with greater understanding of how to help run a company. “So Dad again presented me with an opportunity to work for him and this time I said yes,” he says.

Adam Riewald’s arrival coincided with the beginning of the company’s expansion, especially in underground utilities work. Under his guidance, Brass Inc. is maturing into a full-fledged turnkey company. It principally is doing so as a hydroexcavation/directional drilling subcontractor, working with general contractors that interface with municipalities across the province. Some of the subcontract work is on long-term contracts. Other work is picked up independently.

“The reason we don’t deal directly with a customer is that we only provide services for one part of a project,” Riewald says. “A customer might need aerial work done as well, or cable-laying, connecting up with homes, and we don’t do any of that. We strictly do underground construction work.” That sounds like a former banker who once counseled businessmen about getting in over their heads and ending up in financial trouble.

### THE BRASS STANDARD

Brass Inc. has two locations — a main office in Utica and satellite office in Caledonia — with most of its equipment working out of the Utica yard. The company’s underground utility machinery includes a Vermeer D20x22 directional drill plus two comparable-sized Toro drills. Its hydrovac trucks are Supervac and Super Products models, 16-cubic yard and 18-cubic yard units, a mix of straight four-axle trucks and tractor-trailer rigs. The 10th truck in the fleet will arrive in November.

On its website, Brass Inc. commits to “100 percent satisfaction.” That commitment has been tested at times.

“It was a challenging project due to extreme ground conditions (compacted clay and rock) and the added restraint of drilling blindly under an eight-story building,” Riewald says.

The 2017 job ran two 4-inch and two 3-inch water conduits across a site. It required drilling down 8 feet to clear a belowground parking garage and then out nearly a hundred yards. A 16-inch rock reamer was employed.

“No one wanted the job, and we finally took it on. We priced it fairly,”



Clayton Carson uses the Supervac 2000 Atlas 3800, the first model of its kind, designed by Brass Inc. in collaboration with Supervac.

## Need a truck, design a truck

When provincial authorities in Ontario decided to enforce over-the-road rules, hydroexcavation trucks took a hit.

The big units previously could operate on the province’s public highways without being regulated and operators didn’t need to worry about weight restrictions. While new enforcement rules grandfathered in existing trucks in a hydrovac fleet, new trucks had to meet the new standards. It was decision time for Brass Inc.

The company operated a fleet of six quad-axle hydrovacs with 16-cubic yard debris bodies and 1,500-gallon water tanks. “All the trucks are overweight by the standards now being enforced,” says Adam Riewald, Brass Inc. vice president.

So Riewald teamed up with Quebec manufacturer Supervac to design a full-sized hydrovac that still could meet Ontario’s rigid standards. Brass Inc. executives worked with Supervac engineers for three years.

“Adam (Connaghan) was key, along with myself, to building the new truck,” Riewald says. “He provided years of experience operating the trucks and has a great eye for details.”

They wanted a truck with the functional capacity of their existing trucks, yet with reduced per-axle weight. The result is the Supervac Atlas, a hydrovac trailer unit with a 49,400-pound payload spread across six axles. At 31.5 feet, it is not much longer than the straight trucks in the Brass Inc. equipment yard.

The Atlas has a debris tank that holds 18 cubic yards, and a 20 gpm water pump, versus 18 gpm on the trucks it replaced. By November, Brass Inc. will have five of the new trucks in its equipment yard.

“I don’t believe a lot of companies would have gone to the trouble of designing a replacement truck,” Riewald says. “People tend to follow the path of least resistance. Most people would have waited for someone to design a new truck for the market. And a lot of companies would just have gone to a smaller truck. We didn’t want to do that. We wouldn’t have been able to give our customers the same service. We would have been dumping debris more often because of a smaller tank. We decided instead to look outside the box and solve the weight issue.”

Riewald says, but not profitably. “At one point, even though we knew we would lose money if we kept going, we did keep going and completed the job. If we say we are going to do something, we are going to do it.” As a corollary to that testimony about satisfying customers, Riewald adds that Brass Inc. is committed to telling the truth to clients. “If we make a mistake, we’ll let you know. We won’t hide it, and we probably won’t charge you.” The pledge to customers is summed up in writing in what is termed The Brass Standard.

### STAYING SAFE

An equally fierce commitment is made to employee safety. Monthly safety training meetings are faithfully held — all in-house, none by manufacturer

(continued)





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“THE REASON WE DON’T DEAL DIRECTLY WITH A CUSTOMER IS THAT WE ONLY PROVIDE SERVICES FOR ONE PART OF A PROJECT. A CUSTOMER MIGHT NEED AERIAL WORK DONE AS WELL, OR CABLE-LAYING, CONNECTING UP WITH HOMES, AND WE DON’T DO ANY OF THAT. **WE STRICTLY DO UNDERGROUND CONSTRUCTION WORK.**”

Adam Riewald

reps. Every workday morning sees individual work crews holding what are called “tailboard talks,” in which the day’s potential hazards are recognized and pre-emptively addressed. The company belongs to the Ontario Regional Common Ground Alliance that promotes safe and efficient underground work, the Infrastructure Health & Safety Association, which is dedicated to safety training and auditing, and EUSA, an electrician-focused program that informs Brass Inc. employees about underground electrical utility hazards.

Employee training ranges from how to park giant rigs in the road or on the roadside and how to recognize trenching and shoring hazards to the value of personal protective gear and how to safely operate hydrovac equipment. The focus on safety is fully supported by LiUNA Local 183, reputedly the largest construction local union in North America. All Brass Inc. employees are union members.

### GROWING WITH THE MARKET

Riewald has a vision for Brass Inc., unlike some of his former commercial loan customers who never developed a goal. It is of a company adapting and growing with the market. “We are going to expand, for sure,” he says. “We are

finding in this market that we are either going to have to get bigger or get out. That’s the spot we’re in. As this market matures, the larger we have to get. And the more we have to become a turnkey company.”

He doesn’t know the number of hydro-directional-drilling companies in Ontario, which suggests they are numerous. “More players pop up every day, a lot of them one-man operations. They come and go. It’s a growing industry for sure. I’m confident about the future. I think we do this better than most of our competitors.” ▼

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Luke Pomery uses a Vermeer directional drilling machine to insert a rod into the ground for fiber installation at a residence. Behind him is the company’s Mud Dog (Super Products).



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# IN THE TRENCHES

FLORIDA SEWER AND DRAIN COMPANY DRAWS ON YEARS OF EXPERIENCE TO DELIVER QUALITY RESULTS ON EVERY JOB

STORY: MARIAN BOND PHOTOS: ROB HERRERA

**W**hen Rick Hedge graduated from Florida State University in 1998, his gift was a trailer jetter. There was no question as to where he would put his skills and education to work.

Hedge's father, Dick Hedge, purchased a small drain-cleaning company in Fort Myers, Florida, in 1982. The company was named Trenchless Solutions.

"As we grew throughout South Florida and began incorporating the newer technology into our services, we wanted to provide our growing expertise to other plumbing companies, as well as to the residential market and small commercial such as mobile home parks, apartment buildings and restaurants in our area," says the younger Hedge, who has been president of the company since 2008.

Trenchless Solutions became The Plumber's Plumber, and the refocused company was at the forefront of pipe bursting in 1998. The company was one of the first customers trained at the TRIC Tools facility in Alameda,

California. In 2004, the company moved into relining.

With their years of experience, The Plumber's Plumber is perfectly suited to fill a trenchless rehabilitation niche within the plumbing industry, assisting companies that want to fully serve their customer base without having the responsibility at their own door.

At least 40 percent of the incoming calls come from referrals sent their way by other plumbing firms that simply ask that they take care of the customer. They do not typically subcontract, and the company has established a good relationship with other plumbers by assuring them they are not out to steal business or step on any toes. They are careful not to solicit any further business after referral jobs, and their aboveboard process has served them very well.

## **STRONG REPUTATION**

Hedge is adamant about their work ethic and their reputation. As he explains to his employees, they are

“WE’VE HAD THE EXPERIENCE THAT BUILDS INTEGRITY. **WE GOT OUR GRAY HAIR BY LEARNING THE BUSINESS** AND TAKING OUR SHARE OF PROBLEMS ALONG THE WAY. IT’S NOT AN EASY BUSINESS.”

Rick Hedge

not trying to be aggressive with marketing because they want to be able to fulfill the needs of existing customers and maintain a workload that keeps them busy, but still allows them to provide quality service. They are not the cheapest guys in town, but they stand behind every job they do and hold themselves to exceptional standards.

“Can I go out and get more work by pushing? Yes,” he says. “But we have to be able to back it up properly.”

“I’ve seen companies get into trouble if they think that with \$250,000 worth of new equipment they will go out and be successful. We’ve had the experience that builds integrity. We got our gray hair by learning the business and taking our share of problems along the way. It’s not an easy business. We’ve had our parcel of issues and we’ve worked through them and fixed them, never leaving a customer in the lurch. If we ever broke something, we fixed it, and we have learned over the years.”

The Plumber’s Plumber charges more for its relining services than much of the competition, but their customers are willing to pay the difference because of the reputation the company has built.

If a potential customer is looking for a bargain price, they are informed

Jose Nieto, The Plumber’s Plumber crew member, attaches a bursting head to a new 4-inch HDPE pipe that will replace old clay pipe. The Southern Florida company specializes in relining, pipe bursting, CCTV, jetting and basic plumbing work.



## The Plumber’s Plumber Fort Myers, Florida

**ESTABLISHED:** 1982

**OWNERS:** Rick Hedge and Dick Hedge

**EMPLOYEES:** 6

**SERVICES OFFERED:** Relining, pipe bursting,  
CCTV, jetting, basic plumbing

**SERVICE AREA:** Southern Florida



**“CAN I GO OUT AND GET MORE WORK BY PUSHING? YES. BUT WE HAVE TO BE ABLE TO BACK IT UP PROPERLY.”**

Rick Hedge



ABOVE: Rick Hedge, president of The Plumber's Plumber, prepares new clean-out piping. LEFT: Jose Nieto (left) and Jason Pegg attach the guide cable from the TRIC Tools pipe bursting machine to the bursting head that will pull the 4-inch HDPE pipe through to a home.

that the job is priced to provide quality. They are also assured that if there is a problem down the line, The Plumber's Plumber will come back and fix the issue.

Hedge, who in addition to two degrees from Florida State University and a Florida State Certified Plumbing License, is a State Certified General Contractor and a Florida State Certified Home Inspector.

The company occasionally takes on municipal work, and Hedge was recently asked to serve as a manager/superintendent for another firm doing a major relining job because of his reputation and experience.

#### **JOBS AND SOLUTIONS**

“When I go out to a job, I have a toolbox of all those technologies at my disposal, so I don't go in and say, ‘We will reline this,’” he says. “It is not always in the best interest of the customer. I always ask: ‘What is the best interest of this customer? What do we want to accomplish and what is the problem?’ Often we will go out where the referring plumber will tell us what the customer needs, but we go out and find he doesn't need to spend that much money

*(continued)*



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on the job. Would a complete job be good? Yes. Would a simpler solution help solve an immediate problem? Sometimes it will. We want to treat the customer as we would a family member or a good friend.”

Hedge says in some situations he recommends pipe bursting over relining with small-diameter pipes because it doesn't restrict the inside diameter, which in his opinion can reduce functionality.

The solution in each case, however, is what will best suit the customer, as well as consideration of the layout and conditions they find.

Sixty percent of the company's business comes from trenchless work, and the balance in jetting, drain cleaning, and some basic plumbing. Plumbing calls run the gamut from changing a faucet to installing a water heater and even re-piping a house if necessary. But their target is trenchless. Taking these other calls has helped keep the lights on, but what they really want are the dirty, tough jobs.

Much of their work is handled from inside the building. Sometimes they will cut a small hole in the floor of a bathroom in a home to access the line, or they can go through the toilet.

“When we first started relining, I thought the customer would be opposed to opening a small hole in the house to access the line, as we don't have basements in homes here,” he says. “As I got older and more experienced, we found we could maximize the job by accessing with a small hole cut in the floor of the home. If we had 100 feet of pipe we are rehabbing, I can use a 1-foot square in the middle of that 100 feet of pipe we are relining and make the job 100 percent perfect.

“Before I do a job, I explain to the customer that this makes sense and

makes the job less risky for me and better quality for the customer. This came from experience. We have been doing this for a long time now.”

### THE RIGHT TOOLS

The company operates with a fleet of Chevrolet, Ford and Toyota trucks. When a job calls for excavation, the company relies on a Komatsu PC27.

The Plumber's Plumber now relies on LMK Technologies and Perma-Liner Industries systems, and Source One Environmental's PipePatch for smaller cured-in-place pipe repairs.

The company uses cameras from RIDGID, and they have a PipeHunter Jet Eye trailer jetter, 4,000 psi/18-25 gpm.

### HANDS-ON

Hedge is a hands-on guy who is right there in the trenches with his technicians, and he demands perfection. Technicians are trained to set up jobs, but before the work begins, Hedge comes in and makes sure everything is perfect.

Hedge says that every time they start a job, he recalls the cleanliness and neatness of training demonstrations, but it's never quite that perfect out in the field. He does, however, strive to maintain those standards in every job.

“We have learned the hard way that inaccurately measuring anything on a relining job is not a good thing,” he says. “We triple-check each other. If I triple-check someone, they should not be offended. We have a checklist and report sheets. When you mess up on one of these jobs, it is 99 percent human error.



**“DON'T GET BEHIND,  
AND DO NOT RUSH  
ANYTHING.”**

Rick Hedge

The team at The Plumber's Plumber includes, from left, Dick Hedge, vice president; Leroy Campbell; Jason Pegg; Jose Nieto; and Rick Hedge, president.



“WE’VE HAD OUR PARCEL OF ISSUES AND WE’VE WORKED THROUGH THEM AND FIXED THEM, **NEVER LEAVING A CUSTOMER IN THE LURCH.** IF WE EVER BROKE SOMETHING, WE FIXED IT, AND WE HAVE LEARNED OVER THE YEARS.”

Rick Hedge



Rick Hedge (left) operates the TRIC Tools bursting unit as Jason Pegg guides the cable exiting the pit.



Rick Hedge, left, president of The Plumber’s Plumber, and his dad, Dick Hedge, vice president.

“The variables in the job include measuring the types of epoxy you are using, the size of the pipe you are dealing with — the elbows, the Y connections coming into the pipe, the ground conditions, the weather — all must be addressed in order to have success.

With a small but manageable crew, Hedge says they will do one relining or pipe bursting job at a time because they want it to be right.

“Don’t get behind, and do not rush anything.”

### THE TEAM

Like many of his counterparts, Hedge says finding qualified technicians who meet all his criteria is a challenge.

“In order to find a qualified technician, you have to pay them very well, and in order to do that, you have to charge the customer accordingly, have the equipment, and make some money for the company. You have to have it all in place before you can grow.”

When hiring technicians, Hedge says he wants someone who is mechanically inclined and knows how to pay attention, use his hands, and use a wrench — someone with a positive attitude who isn’t afraid to get dirty. He says it’s important that he be able to trust his technicians because they are given a lot of responsibility.

“I want to treat them as I want to be treated, and I trust them,” he says. “In some cases I may overly trust, but this is a relationship. We are partners. When

we are doing a job, I get into the hole with them. Just like my dad did. We are building something important. Sometimes things don’t go as you would want them to go, but my goal is to lead by example, and sometimes, as the head of the company, you have to be the boss.” ▼

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Keeping light towers and generators maintained will prevent work stoppages in the evening hours. If the equipment is kept clean, light towers should only require routine maintenance every 750 hours and generators every 500 hours.

# Tips for Maintaining Light Towers

## KEEPING LIGHT TOWERS, GENERATORS CLEAN AND MAINTAINED WILL KEEP YOUR CREWS WORKING WELL INTO THE EVENING

BY BRENDA SILVA

**F**or many contractors, working past sundown has become commonplace, making light towers essential for safe nighttime construction work.

These units, driven by diesel-powered generators, are fairly robust, but they are exposed to a wide range of elements such as high winds, corrosive rain, and rough handling during transportation.

As such, they require periodic maintenance to prolong the life of the equipment.

**1 CHANGE OIL AND FILTERS**  
Light towers may need to run constantly at a job site for weeks at a time, so regularly checking the engine oil and replacing fuel and air filters can go a long way in keeping these machines well-maintained.

“Proper maintenance and replacement schedules should be kept up for all filters, especially in dirty environments,” says Tara Schwersenska, technical services manager at Generac Mobile Products of Berlin, Wisconsin.

**2 AVOID OPERATOR ERROR**  
Warranty and service issues are often the result of turning the engine off without first turning the load off. To avoid damage, always turn off the lights and unplug tools from accessory outlets before shutting down the generator.

Some models automatically turn the generator load off before shutting it down or prevent the unit from starting when the main breaker is on or accessory items are plugged in.

**3 CLEAN FUEL CAP**  
“A common maintenance check contractors overlook is cleaning the light tower fuel cap vent,” Schwersenska says. “If the vent

is not cleaned, dirt can get into the fuel or vapor lock can occur. Vapor lock is a condition where air is sucked out of the tank and ‘locks’ the fuel from being sucked into the engine. This disrupts the operation of the fuel pump, causing loss of feed pressure to the fuel injection system, which results in transient loss of power or complete stalling.”

**4 PREVENT WET STACKING**  
When left unattended for lengthy periods of time, generators can be subject to wet stacking, a damaging condition that occurs when diesel fuel is not properly burned off during use.

To avoid wet stacking, Schwersenska recommends running the generator for a few minutes once a week at the designated operating temperature with a proper load size.

**5 KEEP BULBS PROTECTED**  
In general, the life span of a light tower bulb is 1,000 hours, but excessive towing can increase the risk of bulb damage. To reduce bouncing during transit, the telescopic mast should be completely down and secured with the lamp socket in a downward position and the lenses turned in.



A Generac Mobile Products light tower, while compact, still requires maintenance to keep it running at peak performance.

(continued)

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## “A **DAILY WALKAROUND TO CATCH SOMETHING THAT MAY BE WRONG COULD SAVE SIGNIFICANT TIME IN THE LONG RUN.**”

Tara Schwersenska

Bulbs should also be protected from contaminants and replacements should be stored in a clean, dry place. Avoid touching bulbs with bare hands because skin oils can get on the lighting element, causing it to burn at a higher temperature.

### **6 CHECK WEATHER CONDITIONS**

High wind speed can be potentially damaging to a light tower, as well as a major safety issue. While these units are equipped with stabilizers and are typically built to withstand wind gusts up to 65 mph when properly positioned, never operate light towers in winds higher than what has been rated by the manufacturer.

### **7 PERFORM ROUTINE MAINTENANCE**

If the equipment is kept clean, light towers should only require routine maintenance every 750 hours and generators every 500 hours. Before each use, inspect the tower and winch cables for wear, check tires for proper pressure, inspect trailer lamps, check fluid levels and perform a preventive maintenance check.

“A daily walkaround to catch something that may be wrong could save significant time in the long run,” Schwersenska says. “Make sure the required maintenance is being done on time, and always follow the manufacturer’s recommendations.” ▼

## Light tower safety

Light towers weigh about 2,000 pounds and can tip over if they are set up in a hurry or if the proper safety precautions are not followed. When operating these units, keep the job site safe and extend the life of the equipment by following a few simple guidelines:

— **Wear personal protective equipment**, such as hard hats, earplugs, dust masks, safety goggles, and gloves. Don’t wear loose, torn or bulky clothing around the machine.

— **Properly set up the equipment.** Always extend and lock the telescoping outriggers to level and stabilize the tower. Before raising the mast, make sure the lights are adjusted to the desired position. Be sure to angle the lenses to reduce glare and keep the light out of the drivers’ eyes.

— **Keep the unit away from combustible or dangerous objects**, like trees and overhead power lines that can catch fire or cause electrical shock.

— **Clean after heavy use.** Accumulation of oil and debris around the unit can reduce lighting efficiency. Moreover, heat from light towers may cause oily residue on the masts to burn at higher temperatures.

— **Turn the engine off and let it cool down** before fueling or lubricating, and always refuel in a well-ventilated open area. Light towers emit toxic exhaust fumes, so never use them indoors.

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# A New Breed of Powerful, Compact Attachments for Utility Jobs

**ARMED WITH NEW ATTACHMENTS, TODAY'S MINI SKID-STEERS CONQUER INDUSTRIAL UTILITY INSTALLATION WITHIN URBAN ENVIRONMENTS**

BY CHRIS THOMPSON

**M**ini skid-steers have long been viewed as landscaping equipment, traditionally used for small-scale, residential jobs. Today's mini skid-steers, however, have evolved into powerful machines capable of tackling complex industrial utility jobs while maintaining a compact size. Equipped with increased horsepower and an innovative line of new attachments, next-generation mini skid-steers pack enough power to help municipalities and utility operators accomplish city projects typically suited for traditional skid-steer units.

This new breed of versatile, compact machines retains a key safety feature offered by earlier models: full visibility on the job site. Furthermore, if an operator needs to exit the machine to examine the progress on a project, they can simply step off the mini skid-steer, rather than climb down from the cab of a full-size machine. The compact size of mini skid-steers requires less room on the road, reducing traffic congestion and improving overall visibility and maneuverability.



A Ditch Witch SK1050 mini skid-steer has a micro trenching attachment on it. The skid-steer can also take other attachments to make it a versatile tool for contractors.

## THE INCREASED POWER OF MINI SKID-STEERS HAS GIVEN RISE TO A VARIETY OF NEW ATTACHMENTS DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY FOR THE POWERFUL MACHINES.

The increased power of mini skid-steers has given rise to a variety of new attachments designed specifically for the powerful machines. Rather than hauling multiple larger machines to a job site, operators can simply bring one mini skid-steer outfitted with a range of attachments that can easily be used to suit the needs of most projects.

Here are five attachments that have contributed to the versatility of mini skid-steers, specifically for urban applications:

### MICROTRENCHER ATTACHMENT

It's difficult to line up a cut in a road with a trencher, but microtrenchers help eliminate this problem. Equipped with a microtrencher attachment, a more maneuverable mini skid-steer is the ideal solution for installing fiber optic cable in tight and confined urban areas.



An SK1050 mini skid-steer has a Utilicor Technologies coring attachment installed.

## AS THE EQUIPMENT CONTINUES TO ADVANCE, MORE MUNICIPALITIES AND CONTRACTORS WILL BE USING THE VERSATILE, COMPACT MACHINES FOR AN EVOLVING SET OF HEAVY-DUTY UNDERGROUND CONSTRUCTION JOBS.

A microtrencher attachment improves productivity, reduces fiber cost-per-foot and reduces ground disruption with a smaller diameter and less deep cut.

### CORING ATTACHMENT

Rather than using jackhammers or backhoes for utility maintenance under roadways, mini skid-steers can be equipped with a coring attachment that can more precisely excavate the utility that requires repair. This attachment makes utility maintenance more cost-effective, faster and less disruptive.

Operators have also found coring attachments to be useful for turning corners on fiber jobs. With one machine, an operator can microtrench along a paved right-of-way, then quickly swap in a coring attachment for installation around tight, 90-degree corners.

### SUBCOMPACT VACUUM-LIFTING ATTACHMENT

Operators can use this attachment for larger utility maintenance jobs that require more excavation than a coring attachment can provide. One example would be a project that requires operators to expose utilities beneath larger areas of concrete, closer to 4 square feet depending on the unit's operating capacity.

They can cut the concrete and use the subcompact vacuum-lifting attachment to easily lift the entire section out, as opposed to using a backhoe or crane for removal. This attachment can also be used to place road plates over exposed areas on urban projects that aren't complete at the end of the day.

### BREAKER ATTACHMENT

When a job requires an operator to break up concrete, asphalt pavement, and rock, a breaker attachment — sometimes known as a rock hammer — is the optimal fragmenting tool. Compared to a jackhammer, a mini skid-steer with a breaker attachment is ergonomic, faster and more cost-effective.

This attachment frees operators from the jolting effects of jackhammering, allowing the durable mini skid-steer to conquer the job.

### SWEeper ATTACHMENT

On urban projects, such as microtrenching and coring jobs, sweepers are great for the final cleaning of the job site. The sweeper attachment makes cleanup quick and effective. Rather than using a broom, operators can attach the sweeper to the mini skid-steer they used for microtrenching or coring and scoop everything into a bucket for disposal.

With a mini skid-steer and its variety of support attachments, it's easy to see how operators can effectively complete a variety of urban utility jobs from start to finish efficiently and at minimal costs. As the equipment continues to advance, more municipalities

and contractors will be using the versatile, compact machines for an evolving set of heavy-duty underground construction jobs.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chris Thompson is the product manager of compact equipment for Ditch Witch. ▼



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# Writing Wrongs

## KEEP UP TO DATE ON EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE REPORTS OR RISK A BIGGER HEADACHE WHEN IT COMES TIME TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST AN EMPLOYEE

BY NEIL FELDMAN

In an employment environment where risk management is absolutely vital, documenting employee discipline has become a critical task in protecting an organization. According to many legal experts, a systematic means of documentation is so important that lacking one substantially increases the likelihood of a company being on the wrong side of an expensive legal battle.

Although most states follow the Employment-At-Will doctrine — meaning either the company or the employee can terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause, with or without notice — it is always beneficial to have clear, concise documentation of an employee’s successes and problems. Ensuring there is a sound process in place for documentation “not only assures that an employee is being treated fairly during counseling and termination procedures, but also is a definite benefit for performance reviews and when considering promotions and raises,” says Julie Donahue, an employment law attorney with Ogletree Deakins in Philadelphia. “It can also be tremendously beneficial in problematic unemployment situations and unfair discharge lawsuits.”

### THE EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Establishing a set of well-drafted employee policies is an important precursor to thorough documentation practices. For employers, “the greatest benefit that an employee handbook can provide is the legal protections that can be secured by properly drafted and disseminated policies and procedures,” says Alisa Pittman Cleek, an employment law attorney with Elarbee Thompson in Atlanta. “From an employee perspective,” she adds “the employee handbook provides guidance, sets expectations, and provides information regarding policies and procedures that apply to the workplace.”

Employee handbooks should be written and periodically amended by an employment attorney who knows the law and knows how to draft the language to best protect a contractor. In essence, they should be viewed as an investment in the contractor’s best interests and an insurance policy against potential risk and liability.

“An employee handbook is the go-to reference source for just about any situation a company may face,” says Cassandra Carver, a human resources consultant with New York City-based Astron Solutions. “If there’s a policy in place, a manager can point to it and clearly document a violation or breach. You really want to avoid employees coming back to a manager and saying, ‘I didn’t know that we weren’t permitted to do that.’”

With a handbook solidly in place, documentation becomes far more substantiated. But it should not be one-sided or give the indication that there is any sort of agenda in place. “Initially, an employer should make a genuine effort to correct the problem and rehabilitate the employee,” Carver says.



### DOCUMENT EVERYTHING

Those in management will often think to document a matter when an issue has become substantial in nature. But this is not the right approach. “It’s best to err on the conservative side and document even seemingly minor concerns,” says Kevin Gallagher, a risk manager and auditor with Elite Risk and Insurance Consultants in New York City. “Big matters often start small, and it can be very helpful to demonstrate a pattern of behavior. You don’t want to be caught [in a situation] where an employee matter has escalated to a serious point and you haven’t documented the history as to how it got to that point.”

Many employers fail to keep any records, others fail to maintain records in a systematic and organized way, and still others make the mistake of documenting only the disciplinary action taken, purging documents related to the procedure to save on valuable space.

Another mistake employers make, Donahue says, is extending the concept of a paperless office and keeping only electronic versions of disciplinary records. “While electronic files have their uses and remain acceptable in many situations, courts may not accept all electronic records as evidence,” she says. “It is far easier to manipulate electronic records than paper records.”

The best approach when keeping documentation of employee discipline is



## “WHILE ELECTRONIC FILES HAVE THEIR USES AND REMAIN ACCEPTABLE IN MANY SITUATIONS, COURTS MAY NOT ACCEPT ALL ELECTRONIC RECORDS AS EVIDENCE.”

Julie Donahue

to have proper paper documentation, Donahue advises, which details both the procedure and result of the disciplinary proceedings. Each employee may have a separate file, or each case may have a separate file, as appropriate.

One good practice is to provide detailed documentation that covers the following aspects:

- The what, when, why, where, who, and how of the misconduct or misdemeanor.
- Steps being taken to try and rectify the situation and/or rehabilitate the employee.
- Customer complaints, complaints by other employees, evidence captured by camera and other records related to the issue.
- How the misconduct was identified.
- The initial response of the management. Include warning letters and details of support provided to the employee, such as counseling or training.
- Details of any repeat offenses.
- The letter to the employee stating the misconduct and asking the employee why action should not be taken for the misconduct.
- The employee's acknowledgement of the letter.
- The employees reply, if any.
- Signed minutes of the inquiry meeting, including details such as the people who conducted

**“THE GREATEST BENEFIT THAT AN EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK CAN PROVIDE IS THE LEGAL PROTECTIONS THAT CAN BE SECURED BY PROPERLY DRAFTED AND DISSEMINATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.”**

Alisa Pittman Cleek

the proceedings, the methodology of the proceedings, the people interviewed, the materials examined and the final verdict.

- The decision of the meeting, communicated to the employee.
- The same records for the employee's appeal, if any.

Make sure to date and time stamp all documents and get the signatures of all relevant parties, whenever appropriate. The documentation of disciplinary action should establish that the contractor has followed basic procedures, and adhered to all of the latest rules and regulations mandated in the company manual.

The actual size of a contractor should not bear relevance to whether or not these practices are put into place. “A court will typically hold a large organization

to a higher standard than a very small outfit, but courts can also be unpredictable and risk management is not something to toy with,” Pittman Cleek says. “It really makes sense for any size organization with employees to have a handbook in place along with protocols for documentation.” ▼



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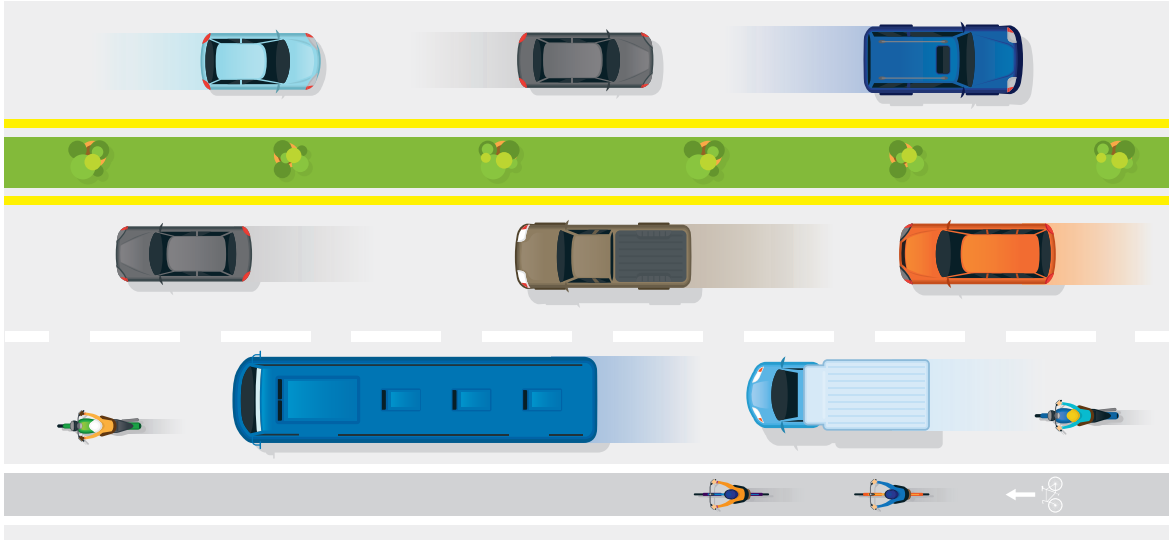
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# Simple Safety Improvements Can Save a Life

## ADD THESE TRUCKING TECHNOLOGIES AND TIPS TO YOUR ROUTE-RUNNING ROUTINE AND ENSURE THE SAFETY OF YOUR DRIVERS AND THE MOTORING PUBLIC

BY RONNIE TAMEZ

**F**rom time to time, we look at our world and see what we can do to improve driving/driver safety. We have chosen to make a few small changes and we have seen some big results.

### BUYING A GPS UNIT WITH INTEGRATED DASHCAM

When I started driving trucks, we used map books to find our addresses and plot everything out. We didn't have a secretary yet, so there was no one to plot out our route, no strategies to save fuel, and fewer ways to improve efficiency. Back then, scheduling pretty much happened in the cab of the truck. Now I remember driving around, flipping through the map and sometimes getting very lost. One thing was for sure: I was a very distracted driver.

But we made a small investment that changed all that, purchasing a windshield-mounted GPS with integrated dashcam. Now it's so much easier inputting the address and following directions. The GPS makes mistakes from time to time, but it's nothing like flipping through maps. The built-in dashcam is a nice bonus too. It is continually recording 180 degrees in front of my truck in 3-minute intervals all day. It has a convenient feature that hooks up to the cellphone wirelessly and puts videos we choose on the phone.

As of today, I have not needed the dashcam footage for anything but playing around, but it's there if I need it. The GPS also has the added feature of being able to hook up the rear camera and side cameras to it too.

### WALKING AROUND THE TRUCK BEFORE MOVING

Another small change we made to our driving procedures is to do a walkaround inspection of the truck before driving. For example, we're all done on a job site, the invoice is done and paid, we've said our goodbye and thanks to the client, and it's time to leave. Even though we just walked around it 10 minutes earlier, we walk around it again. Why? I'll tell you a story that takes us back 13 years.

I was at a job site and I got along well with the clients and their six children. The kids loved looking at the Mack truck. They asked if they could see inside the cab. They asked their parents to see if it was OK, and the par-

**I FIRED UP THE TRUCK AND WAS ABOUT TO LEAVE, BUT HABIT FORCED ME TO CHECK THE TRUCK OUT BEFORE I MOVED. NOW THIS TIME THE PRECHECK MAY HAVE SAVED A CHILD'S LIFE.**

ents consented, allowing the kids to sit with me, one at a time and look around. I showed them all the gauges and the lights, and I explained what all the switches do. I even let them blow the air horns, and they were amazed by the entire experience.

It was a great time, and I had to leave to my next job. The kids were running around everywhere. They had gotten used to the truck and were not afraid of it. I asked the parents for their help, and they asked their kids to go inside the house. I fired up the truck and was about to leave, but habit forced me to

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## UNNECESSARY ITEMS ON THE SEATS, THE DASH, AND THE FLOOR CAN CAUSE A DISTRACTION OR CAUSE OTHER PROBLEMS DURING SUDDEN STOPS OR EVASIVE MANEUVERS ON THE ROAD.

check the truck out before I moved. Now this time the precheck may have saved a child's life.

I walked around the truck to see a child hiding deep in a wheel well, between the drive axles. My heart skipped a beat I am sure. Even with the engine running, this was not enough to scare the child. So there is my story about the importance of doing a walkaround every time you move a truck.

### INSTALLING A REAR-VIEW CAMERA

You as the driver will always need the outside mirrors, but the addition of a rear-view camera and monitor offer a great benefit of night vision. We have nice reverse lights on the trucks, but it can be really dark behind your rig. Adding rain to the equation makes visibility behind the truck even worse. The camera has a shield to stop rain from coming down over the lens, but during driving it still can get dirty. It's not hard to wipe the lens at a job site to reverse our way out or turn the truck around.

### FITTING THE TRUCK WITH POWERED SIDE MIRRORS

Sometimes when the job is done and we're driving away, I notice that the passenger-side rear-view mirror has gone out of adjustment. It can happen if I close the passenger door too hard or a tree branch has grazed the side of the rig and pulled on the mirror. It is annoying and I have to stop the truck and adjust the mirror. We can't be driving the truck with the mirror out of adjustment. So we decided to upgrade one of the trucks with power adjustable mirrors.

I have to admit, it works very well. We brush up against a branch now and the mirror will still move out of adjustment. But now all we have to do is push a button and the mirror moves right back to position. No more hitting the

parking brake, leaning over the cab, rolling down the window, leaning out of the truck to adjust the mirror, going back to the seated position, going back-and-forth for minor adjustments, and reversing the mentioned procedure. Now, we push a button and in less than a second, the mirror is adjusted.

### CLEARING OUT THE CAB

Decluttering the cab has been a real struggle for our company. Unnecessary items on the seats, the dash, and the floor can cause a distraction or cause other problems during sudden stops or evasive maneuvers on the road. The truck we are currently building is going to have three outside toolboxes. This is mainly to get the cab free of loose tools that can become dangerous projectiles in the event of a crash. The side benefit is allowing drivers to be more organized and efficient on the daily route.

We have made these minor changes and continually look for ways to improve safety and operate more efficiently at the same time. ▼

## Little improvements matter

What are some of your tricks, tools and techniques to make sure your crews make the most of their workday and return to the shop safely every evening?

**Send your tips to [editor@digdifferent.com](mailto:editor@digdifferent.com) and we'll share them.**



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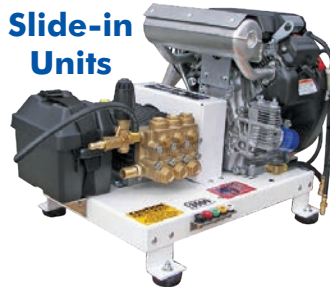
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www.foremost.ca  
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info@soilsurgeoninc.com  
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### Super Products LLC

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800-837-9711 • 262-784-7100  
info@superproductsllc.com  
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## Vac-Tron Equipment

Okahumpka, FL  
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sales@vacatron.com  
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New Philadelphia, OH  
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## Excavators



### ExcaVision, Inc.

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www.ExcaVision.com  
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New Berlin, WI  
800-837-9711 • 262-784-7100  
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## Fabricating and Refinishing

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www.hardfacetechologies.com

## Flags/Markers/Tape

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sales@prolinesafety.com  
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www.mclaughlinunderground.com  
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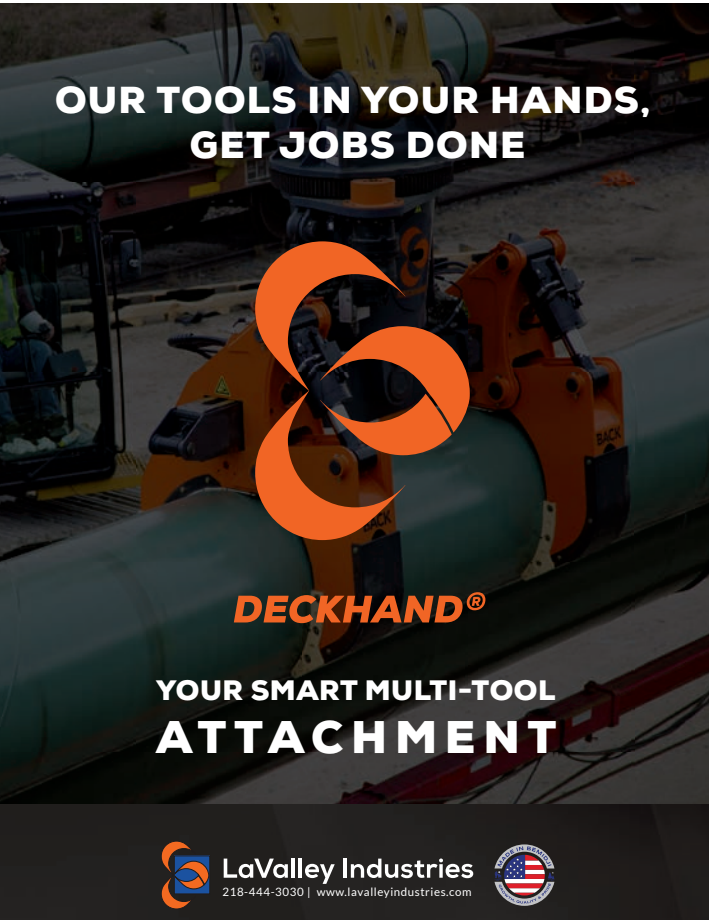
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www.easykleen.com

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Canada  
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vms@vac-con.com  
www.vac-con.com

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www.vac-con.com  
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**Vector Technologies Ltd.**  
Milwaukee, WI  
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www.vector-vacuums.com

## Jetters - Portable



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**Ring-O-Matic, Inc.**  
Pella, IA  
800-544-2518 • 641-628-1515  
jzylstra@ring-o-matic.com  
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**Spartan Tool**  
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800-435-3866  
sales@spartantool.com  
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Lake Mary, FL  
800-333-9274 • 321-800-5763 • Fax: 888-928-9274  
sales@watercannon.com  
www.watercannon.com/catalogrequest.aspx  
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## Jetters - Truck & Trailer

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Canada  
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sales@easykleen.com  
www.easykleen.com  
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www.mclaughlinunderground.com  
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**Presvac Systems**  
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sales@presvac.com  
www.presvac.com

**Ring-O-Matic, Inc.**  
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www.ring-o-matic.com

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sales@spartantool.com  
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www.superproductslc.com  
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**Transway Systems Inc.**  
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www.vac-con.com  
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www.vactron.com  
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**Vector Manufacturing**  
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sales@vector.com  
www.vector.com  
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**Vector Technologies Ltd.**  
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inquiry@vector-vacuums.com  
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**Water Cannon, Inc. - MWBE**  
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sales@watercannon.com  
www.watercannon.com/catalogrequest.aspx  
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## Laser Equipment



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www.ExcaVision.com  
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## Location/Leak Detection



### Lansas Mfg. by Vanderlans & Sons Inc.

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## Locators - Electronic

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www.hddbroke.com  
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www.melfredborzall.com  
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### Pow-R Mole Sales, LLC

Lancaster, NY  
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www.powrmole.com  
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### Pro-Mark Utility Supply, Inc.

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promark@promarksupply.com  
www.promarksupply.com



### Schonstedt Instrument Company

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schonstedt.info@spx.com  
www.schonstedt.com

### Spartan Tool

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sales@spartantool.com  
www.spartantool.com



### Subsite Electronics

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www.subsite.com

### VIVAX

### METROTECH

### Vivax-Metrotech Corp.

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www.vivax-metrotech.com  
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www.hddbroke.com  
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www.presvac.com

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www.vacatron.com  
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www.roddieunderground.com  
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www.leesupply.com  
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www.bor-it.com

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### ScreenCo Systems LLC

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**THE LATEST:**  
**News**

**Wastequip chief financial officer honored as CFO of the Year**

Wastequip announced that Steve Klueg was awarded the 2018 CFO of the Year in the mid-sized private company category by the *Charlotte Business Journal*. The award highlights Klueg's role in significantly improving the company's financial position, culminating in its recent successful acquisition by H.I.G. Capital. Nominations were evaluated by an independent panel of judges, facilitated by researchers from Wake Forest University, who selected the finalists and winners of each category based on a variety of factors, including accomplishments, civic involvement, leadership, and contributions to corporate success.



Steve Klueg

**Jason Worley joins Felling Trailers as sales manager**

Felling Trailers hired Jason Worley as the new regional sales manager for the Southeast. In this role, he will be responsible for all sales development, activity, and dealer support within Tennessee, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia. Worley brings several years' experience in the underground horizontal directional drilling equipment and environmental products industry where he held the role of a territory manager. ▼



Jason Worley

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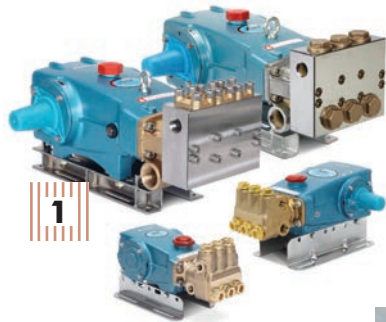
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5

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## 2. Ditch Witch HT275 heavy-duty trencher

The HT275 heavy-duty trencher from Ditch Witch has a Cummins 275 hp T4 engine and a hydrostatic trencher-chain drive with a variable displacement motor, allowing operators to match chain speeds to soil conditions. The trencher can do installations up to 10 feet deep and 26 inches wide, and it has four hydraulic quick-disconnect blocks that reduce the time it takes to change attachments. The suspension mounts to the center of each track frame, providing the ability to float each track independently, taking stress off the main frame. **800-654-6481; [www.ditchwitch.com](http://www.ditchwitch.com)**

## 3. Vac-Tron Equipment six-way hydraulic boom

Vac-Tron Equipment's new six-way hydraulic boom design for its trailer vacuum excavation equipment and industrial vacuum equipment maximizes job performance by supporting the weight of the vacuum hose. The design features increased boom length, full six-way hydraulic function, 5-inch hose, curved end with oversized rollers, wireless remote control, vacuum valve function operated from remote, wired harness, remote storage location, forward stored boom in front of the engine compartment,

330-degree swing, quick-connect 4-inch tooling, easily connected additional section hose, water jet clean-out in boom, and easily accessible clean-out port. **352-728-2222; [www.vactron.com](http://www.vactron.com)**

## 4. MB Crusher America jaw crusher bucket

MB Crusher America's crushers, the first and original jaw crusher bucket with multiple movements, have unbeatable performance that transforms any carrier into a true crusher. The innovative crusher buckets give contractors a versatile tool to navigate through narrow spaces and manage on-site processing. The company offers a full line of 12 crusher buckets for skid-steers, backhoe loaders, and excavators, regardless of brand. The product line covers any carrier starting from a 6,200-pound skid-steer or backhoe and going up to the largest excavator crusher bucket, the BF150.10, designed for excavators weighing more than 154,000 pounds. **855-622-7874; [www.mbamerica.com](http://www.mbamerica.com)**

## 5. American Augers T14-54 trencher

American Augers' new T14-54/617 trencher features a 64 hp Tier 4 Final emissions-compliant engine and a 54-inch-wide maximum-cut capability. The T14 offers an electronics package that includes a digital operator display in the cab, upgraded software and a telematics package. The telematics enables the rig to gather, log, and transmit real-time operating data used for predictive maintenance, reporting requirements, or overall optimization of trenching operations. The Mercedes engine runs low and quiet and generates torque rated up to 2,139 ft-lbs at 1,300 rpm. Safety enhancements include a new digging drive brake and optional cameras in the cab that increase operator visibility. **800-324-4930; [www.americanaugers.com](http://www.americanaugers.com)** ▼



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## This Issue's Feature:

### Lending a safe hand

BY CRAIG MANDLI

Jason LaValley knows full well what the dangers are when installing large pipe systems. Several years ago he witnessed that danger firsthand when a massive pipe crushed the ankle of one of the men on his pipeline crew. He figured there had to be a safer way to move and place large-diameter pipe. His sketch turned into the **DECKHAND** from **LaValley Industries**.

"I grew up in the horizontal directional drilling industry and originally invented **DECKHAND** after witnessing one of my friends be injured on a job site while working as a human deckhand," says LaValley, the company's president and founder.

The **DECKHAND** product line is designed to add an extra level of safety and efficiency to job sites by keeping ground crews farther away from danger zones. Rather than requiring personnel to manually position pipe or be in potentially dangerous proximity to moving equipment, the excavator-mounted unit can safely and efficiently load, unload, and position a variety of drill rod, pipe, poles, road mats, and other materials.

The excavator's auxiliary hydraulic circuit powers the **DECKHAND** even in the most adverse weather conditions. Its 360-degree continuous rotation, tilt, and shift functions deliver unmatched load control and placement. The



**DECKHAND** from  
LaValley Industries

convenient in-cab display and joystick controls allow the operator to safely operate, monitor and adjust all functions from inside the excavator cab. Load-locking valves ensure the load is never dropped, regardless of hydraulic pressure. Additionally, an optional stick-mounted camera allows the operator to see in even the most difficult spaces.

"We work with contractors every day handling everything from drill rod to flexible pipe, mainline pipe, utility poles and more," LaValley says.

**DECKHAND**'s modular design makes it easy to change out arms to accommodate different diameters and types of material. It can grip the load securely from an off-center position, allowing for more control in areas with tight accessibility. It is manufactured in several sizes allowing it to be easily used with any brand of excavator ranging in size from 19 to 75 metric tons. Based on the specific model, it can lift up to 50,000 pounds and has been designed to meet ASME below-the-hook lifting standards with a 3-1 safety ratio.

"It has been really satisfying to see so many different industries embrace **DECKHAND** as their preferred solution to material handling," LaValley says. "Give it a try, and I promise you will be loading drill rod faster and safer than ever before."

218-444-3030; [www.lavalleyindustries.com](http://www.lavalleyindustries.com)

# Happenings

## CALENDAR

**Nov. 1-2**

**WJTA - IMCA Conference & Expo**, Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, New Orleans. Visit [www.wjta.org](http://www.wjta.org)

**Nov. 7-8**

**Pipeline Leadership Conference**, Hyatt Place Houston/The Woodlands, Houston. Visit [www.plconference.com](http://www.plconference.com)

**Nov. 28-29**

**Risk Management in Underground Construction Course**, Hotel Marina del Rey, Marina del Rey, California. Visit [www.undergroundriskmanagement.com](http://www.undergroundriskmanagement.com)

**Jan. 20-25, 2019**

**Underground Contractors Association of Illinois Annual Convention**, Casa de Campo, Dominican Republic. Visit [www.uca.org](http://www.uca.org)

**Jan. 29-31**

**Underground Construction Technology (UCT) International Conference & Exhibition**, Fort Worth Convention Center, Fort Worth, Texas. Visit [www.uctonline.com](http://www.uctonline.com)

**Feb. 20-23**

**Water & Wastewater Equipment, Treatment & Transport (WWETT) Show**, Indiana Convention Center, Indianapolis. Visit [www.wwettshow.com](http://www.wwettshow.com)

**March 14-16**

**National Utility Contractors Association (NUCA) Annual Convention**, Naples Grande Beach Resort, Naples, Florida. Visit [www.nuca.com/convention](http://www.nuca.com/convention)

**March 17-21**

**North American Society for Trenchless Technology's No-Dig Show**, Donald E. Stephens Convention Center, Chicago. Visit [www.nodigshow.com](http://www.nodigshow.com)

**March 19**

**Association of Equipment Management Professionals (AEMP) 37th Management Conference & Annual Meeting**, Rosen Plaza Hotel, Orlando, Florida. Visit [www.aemp.org](http://www.aemp.org)

**March 26-28**

**Common Ground Alliance (CGA) Excavation Safety Conference & Expo**, Tampa Convention Center, Tampa, Florida. Visit [www.cgaconference.com](http://www.cgaconference.com)

**March 28-30**

**Mid-America Trucking Show**, Kentucky Exposition Center, Louisville, Kentucky. Visit [www.truckingshow.com](http://www.truckingshow.com)

Dig Different welcomes your contributions to our Happenings column. To recognize members of your team, please send notices of new hires, promotions, service milestones, certifications or achievements. We also invite your national, state or local associations and organizations to post notices, news items and learning opportunities. Send contributions to [editor@digdifferent.com](mailto:editor@digdifferent.com). ▼

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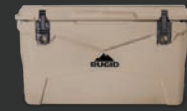
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