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**SMART BUSINESS:**

**WELL-DESIGNED WEBSITE IS THE KEY TO DRIVING IN BUSINESS**  
**17**

**PRODUCT FOCUS**



**22**

# COURSE CORRECTIONS

**Alabama contractor shifts focus to keep company on right path**  
**12**

**TECH PERSPECTIVE:**

**SEVERAL OPTIONS TO GO GREEN AND PULL IN COST SAVINGS**

**20**



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# Contents

MARCH 2021

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FOCUS: Piercing, Bursting, Tunneling and HDD



## COVER STORY

### 12 **PROFILE: DIRECTIONAL DRILLING Course Corrections**

Adapting to shifting business dynamics keeps Southern Directional headed in right direction.

By Ken Wysocky

#### ON THE COVER:

Southern Directional drill foreman Philip James uses a Falcon F1 receiver (Digital Control) on a job site in Chelsea, Alabama, as he tracks the drill head from the Vermeer D40x55 S3 Navigator drill behind him. Southern Directional, based in Alabaster, Alabama, was founded by Matt and Tina Calma in 1999 and now has 93 employees. (Photography by Kaylinn Gilstrap)

## FEATURES

### 22 **PRODUCT FOCUS: Piercing, Bursting, Tunneling and HDD**

By Craig Mandli

### 18 **SHOP TALK: Next in Line**

A clear plan will keep your business and family financially stable if anything happens to you.

By Joan Koehne

### 26 **SUCCESS STORIES: Piercing, Bursting, Tunneling and HDD**

By Craig Mandli

### 20 **TECH PERSPECTIVE: Looking Green**

CNG, electric vehicles provide options for contractors looking to become more environmentally friendly and see cost savings.

By Tim Dobbins

## COLUMNS

### 8 **BELOW THE SURFACE: Dealing With Adversity**

Finding a way through the tough times isn't always going to be easy, but some easy tips will help you along the way.

By Cory Dellenbach, Editor

## IN EVERY ISSUE

### 10 **@digdifferent.com**

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### 17 **SMART BUSINESS: Focusing on Your Website**

There are some basic necessities that any utility company should have prominently displayed on its website.

By Alicia Johnston

### 28 **The Latest: Products**

This Issue's Feature: Hydroexcavation trailer provides big power in small footprint

By Craig Mandli

### 30 **Happenings**

### 33 **The Latest: News**

**NEXT ISSUE: April 2021**

focus: Site Prep and Remediation

- Profile: CG Environmental (Fort Worth, Texas)

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## Advertiser Index

March 2021

Bald Eagle Pellet Co. ....	6	Radius HDD .....	9
Boss Industries, LLC .....	19	 Rival Hydrovac Inc. ....	29
 Cat Pumps .....	2	 Rock Rental .....	5
 Ditch Witch .....	back cover	 RODDIE, Inc. ....	16
 GapVax, Inc. ....	35	 Sonetics .....	7
Kondex Corporation .....	30	TRUVAC by Vactor Manufacturing, Inc. ....	3
 Milwaukee Rubber Products, Inc. ....	11	VAN AIR .....	21
 National Vacuum Equipment, Inc. ....	27	WEQ Fair .....	31
Pow-R Mole Trenchless Solutions .....	11	WWETT Show .....	25
		<b>Marketplace</b> .....	<b>33</b>

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# Dealing With Adversity

**FINDING A WAY THROUGH THE TOUGH TIMES ISN'T ALWAYS GOING TO BE EASY, BUT SOME EASY TIPS WILL HELP YOU ALONG THE WAY**

BY CORY DELLENBACH, EDITOR

**H**ow do you handle adversity? The answer to that question can be different for everyone. Some people stress about it for a long time, others shrug it off and move on quite easily.

Now, think about it from your company's perspective. Can your company handle adversity as well as you? What happens if one of your biggest customers suddenly starts using another contractor or wants to renegotiate a contract that doesn't favor your business?

Matt and Tina Calma, owners of Southern Directional in Alabama, found themselves in that type of situation. After founding the company in 1999 and working as a sub-contractor as part of a national project, they found out in 2001 that a larger firm acquired the general contractor on the project and renegotiated contracts at rates that weren't favorable to the Calmas.

The two could have easily given up and called it quits on their business, but they didn't. In the profile in this issue you'll read that they diversified and came back stronger than ever and are still thriving to this day.

It wasn't an easy road and things had to change almost overnight, but the Calmas didn't let adversity drag them down. They knew how to handle it and there are some ways you can be prepared, too.

## 1. BE MENTALLY PREPARED

First and foremost, you have to be mentally prepared for adversity, even if you never face it (which isn't likely). I've heard the phrase "I am prepared for the worst, but hope for the best" several times when we profile companies for *Dig Different*.

Running through potential events that could happen on a regular basis builds your mental preparedness and flexibility to overcome them in real life.

Have a plan written down on what your company would do if it lost its primary customer, as an example. Go through that plan every now and then so if it does happen, you can hit the ground running faster and there will be less stress involved.

## 2. TAKE STOCK OF WHAT YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH

Chances are you've already been through some tough times in your lifetime and you've likely learned from them, even if you don't realize it.

The hardships and adversity you've been through gives you confidence that you're capable of handling whatever comes your way. Use your past experiences to help you find your way.

Have you lost customers in the past? OK, what did you do when you lost them? You adjusted schedules and reached out to other contractors in the area? Great, do that again! Use everything you've learned from past experiences.

## 3. USE IT AS AN OPPORTUNITY

When the Calmas faced their situation, instead of giving up, they used it as an opportunity to re-evaluate their business and diversify. They added services and went after other markets instead of just fiber-optic installations.

That opportunity has paid off immensely for the couple and their business. Your situation might not be the same as theirs. Maybe you need to scale back your operation and focus on just a few services to make the company stronger, or maybe you need to add different equipment.

Look at the situation and see how you can use it to benefit your company and yourself.

## 4. REFUSE TO GIVE UP

It seems like a pretty basic tip, but don't give up. If you just throw up your arms and call it quits your decision doesn't only affect you, but it has a chain reaction from your employees, to other clients you serve and more.

It might be a long and bumpy road, but if you can, fight through the adversity and make your company better. Use past profiles in this magazine, and the story about Southern Directional, as encouragement and a lesson on why you shouldn't give up.

## YOUR ADVERSITY

How have you adjusted to adversity with your company? Let met know by emailing me at [editor@digdifferent.com](mailto:editor@digdifferent.com).

Enjoy this issue! ▼



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## **EMPLOYEE BUY-IN**

### **What To Do When Your Team Pushes Back**

You may have some crewmembers who constantly question your established policies, but that doesn't mean that it's impossible to get them to fully believe in the company culture. Read more about tactics you can use in this online exclusive.

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# COURSE CORRECTIONS

ADAPTING TO SHIFTING BUSINESS DYNAMICS KEEPS  
SOUTHERN DIRECTIONAL HEADED IN RIGHT DIRECTION

STORY: KEN WYSOCKY PHOTOS: KAYLINN GILSTRAP

**H**ow companies handle adversity often serves as a litmus test for success. Take Southern Directional, for instance, an underground-utilities and directional-boring company in Alabama that was flying high after getting hired in 1999 as a subcontractor to lay a fiber optic line across the state of Alabama — part of a national cross-country project.

It was the first job for the newly established company, founded in 1999 in Alabaster, about 15 miles south of Birmingham. “That project opened the door for us,” says Tina Calma, who owns the company with her husband, Matt.

But in early 2001, the company faced a sink-or-swim moment when a larger firm acquired the general contractor on the project. The new company then renegotiated contracts at less-favorable rates that the Calmas found unacceptable.

The blindside hit forced the couple to step back and re-evaluate their company’s direction.

“We pretty much had to revamp and refocus overnight,” says Tina Calma. “We were so laser-focused on just fiber optic lines that we were missing the big picture — that we needed a more diverse customer base.

“We were so busy satisfying one client that we weren’t building a company,” she continues. “It forced us to step back and decide what kind of company we wanted to be — what direction Southern Directional should go. It definitely was a pivotal moment.”

## DIVERSIFICATION PUSH

The shift in focus was fruitful. Today Southern Directional is a well-diversified business, handling underground-utility projects that typically involve installing, replacing and relocating utility lines. About half of the projects involve directional boring. Clients include privately owned utilities, municipalities and the Alabama Department of Transportation, along with occasional work for the federal government.

“It helps a lot when you’re not confined to one particular niche, such as fiber optic lines,” Calma points out. “We continue to respond to economic and political changes. We adjust to what our communities and clients need, whether it’s building new municipal infrastructure or relocating utility lines to accommodate a new emphasis on improving highways.”

Southern Directional drill operator Jessie Ingram uses the Vermeer D40x55 S3 Navigator drill on a job site in Chelsea, Alabama, as crews work to install a new gas main to reinforce the existing by allowing multiple ways of gas feeding into the system.

Customers also drive the company to diversify. After completing a waterline project, for instance, a client might then ask if Southern Directional also does gas lines. That underscores the need to do top-notch work that generates repeat business and word-of-mouth referrals, Calma notes.

“If customers see your integrity and the quality of your work, they’ll ask you to do more,” she explains, noting that the company has grown organically because of these requests for additional services.

“It’s a more gratifying way to grow as opposed to following some kind of master business plan,” she says. “Sometimes when you try to force things, you pursue avenues that don’t match your vision.”

### ANOTHER CRITICAL JUNCTURE

Around 2008, the company faced another game-changing moment of reckoning amid an economic recession. This time, the circumstances prompted the Calmas to reflect on internal changes as opposed to shifts in external markets.

“After the market downturn, we realized we were trying to grow too quickly,” she explains. “Instead of focusing so hard on growth, we decided to step back and focus on quality, not quantity.”

“We also realized we had to somehow differentiate ourselves in the market,” she adds. “So we extended that focus on quality to our employees — building a true team and solidifying our leadership.”

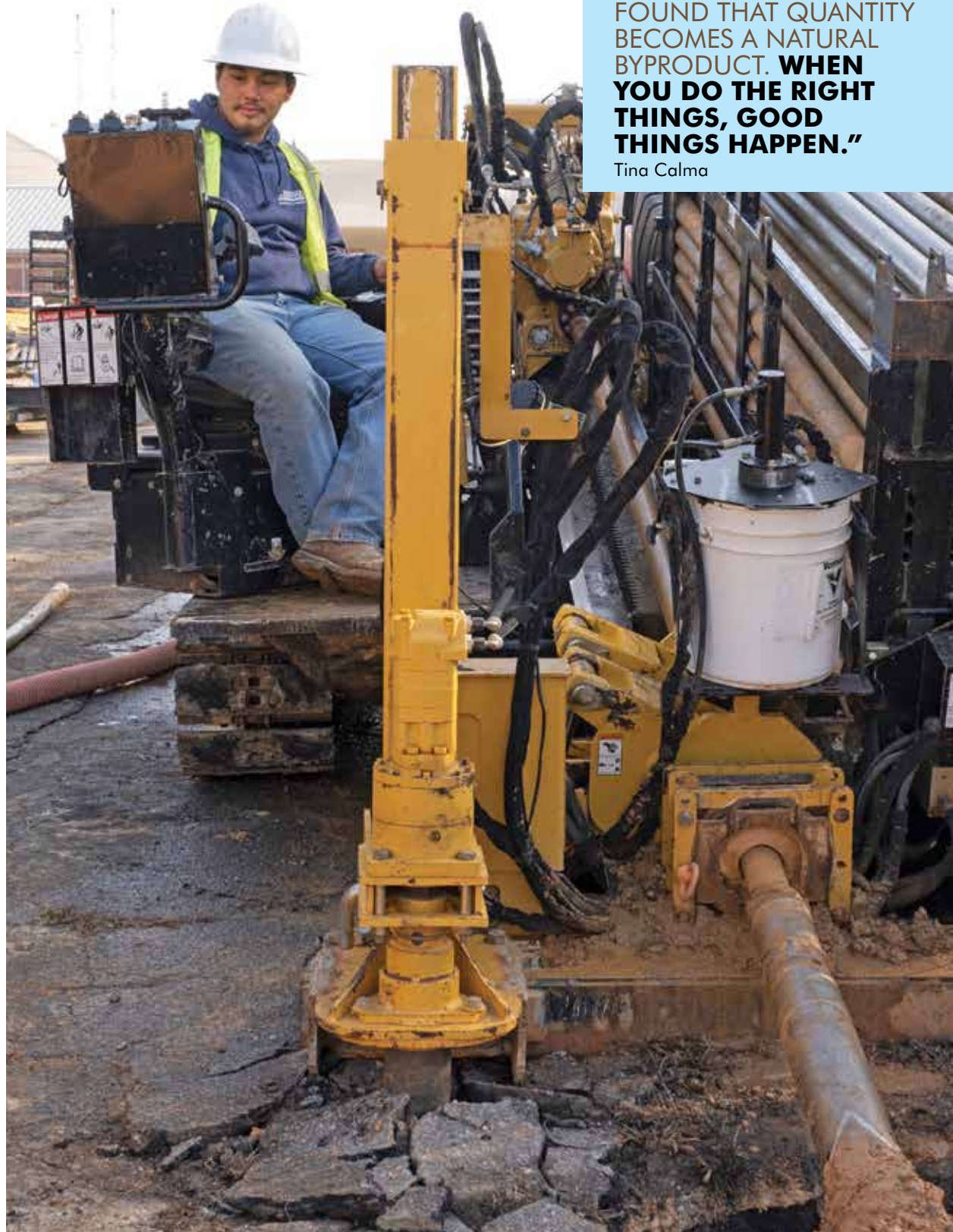
A funny thing happened in the ensuing years: As the focus on quality deepened, the quantity of work increased. “When we focused more on quality, we found that quantity becomes a natural byproduct,” she says. “When you do the right things, good things happen.”

### DEEP INDUSTRY ROOTS

The Calmas’ entry into directional drilling was a natural outgrowth of their respective career paths. Both had established careers in construction-related businesses. But they eventually decided to form a company and call their own shots.

“WHEN WE FOCUSED MORE ON QUALITY, WE FOUND THAT QUANTITY BECOMES A NATURAL BYPRODUCT. **WHEN YOU DO THE RIGHT THINGS, GOOD THINGS HAPPEN.**”

Tina Calma



## Vermeer directional drilling machines bring the braun, reliability to job sites

Southern Directional owns 10 horizontal directional drilling machines, all made by Vermeer Corp. More than half of the fleet is composed of D24x40 S3 units. The smallest machine is a D10x15 S3 and the largest is a D40x55 S3, says Tina Calma, co-owner of the Alabama-based company along with her husband, Matt.

The S24x40 S3s are the backbone of the fleet because of their versatility. They're used mainly to perform bores for water and natural gas lines and electrical conduit, she says.

"They can handle smaller boring projects and larger-diameter pipes as well," Calma says. "And it's small enough to fit into tight spaces — great for working in rights-of-way."

The D24x40, first introduced in 1993, is roughly 20 feet long, nearly 7-1/2 feet wide and just more than 6 feet tall (almost 10 feet tall with a cab). It weighs 20,700 pounds.

In terms of power and performance, it offers 28,000 pounds of thrust and pullback, 4,200 foot-pounds of rotational torque and a carriage speed of 240 feet per minute, all of which boost productivity.

But the company invests in Vermeer machines for other reasons than performance, Calma notes.

"They have a great service department that provides great customer service," she says. "We've had other drills where we've spent lots of time waiting on parts and service when they break down. Downtime is a productivity killer.

"But if Vermeer can't get a part to us quickly, they'll send a mechanic out to us the same day," she continues. "Their customer service is really what sets them apart. They stand behind their product."

In terms of reliability, Calma points to one SD24x40 unit that's six years old and still running as well as a new 2020 model the company recently purchased. "They cost about \$250,000, but we know we're getting a good return on our investment," she says.

"They're easy to work on, too," she adds. "They're engineered with mechanics in mind."

Along with the directional drills, Southern Directional uses Falcon F1 receivers (Digital Control) to track the drill heads.



Hydroexcavator operator Tristan Hood uses a digging wand from the Vac-Con truck to expose utilities ahead of the directional drill being used.



The Southern Directional field crew includes, from left, Josh Burr, new growth foreman; Tristan Hood, hydroexcavator operator; Matthew Gray, skilled laborer/fuser; Jessie Ingram, drill operator, and Philip James, drill foreman/locator. Their equipment includes a Vermeer MX240 mixing system, and a Vermeer D40x55 S3 Navigator directional drill.

Southern Directional's leadership team includes, from left, Drew Hopkins, new growth superintendent; Bruce Smith, reinforcement/relocation superintendent; Matt Calma, vice president; Tina Calma, president; Keith Tittle, shop manager; Stephen Walcott, replacement superintendent; Brooke Howard, office manager; and Johnathan Bigham, training and safety officer.



“We wanted to create a family-owned business that operated more like a team and a family than a corporation,” Calma explains. “We wanted to avoid treating people like numbers — create a place where team members feel valued, are treated with respect and encouraged to improve themselves.

“As a result, we work very hard on creating a great company culture, based on core values,” she continues. “They’re more than just a set of rules. They cover values like always doing the right thing. Caring about others. And integrity in the workplace.”

#### A QUESTION OF CHARACTER

Of course, plenty of companies say they want to create vibrant corporate cultures, but merely pay lip service to the concept. So how does Southern Directional make it happen?

In short, the company incorporates its core values into everything from the hiring process and employee training to performance evaluations, promotions and employee pay.

For example, after job interviews, prospective candidates receive what Calma calls a core-value score. The score is based on candidates’ answers to interview questions specifically aimed at determining their values, she says.

“Is it always accurate and right?” she asks rhetorically. “No. People can fake what they want to fake. But it’s still one of the best ways to find out what people are all about.

“We can always teach skills, but not character — that’s something they either have or they don’t have. So we ask questions that try to get at their character.”

#### MONTHLY MEETINGS, AWARDS

In addition, the company holds a 30-minute meeting for all employees once a month, usually accompanied by breakfast or a lunch. After presenting a topic related to a core value, an employee who’s nominated by a supervisor — or sometimes even a customer — receives a small award for exemplifying one of the company’s core values. The reward usually is a gift card to a local business.

“It’s nothing huge, but it’s recognition that reinforces our values,” Calma points out. “We try to make a pretty big deal about it.”

In addition, job evaluations, promotions and employee compensation all are linked to how well employees follow the core values. “This makes those core values live and breathe, instead of just paying lip service to them,” she says.

While it’s easy to envision construction workers rolling their eyes at the touchy-feely aspects of core values, Calma says the program works. She says she periodically gets phone calls from clients that praise employees’ conduct and performance.

“I recently had a resident call just to tell us that one of our flaggers (on a road-construction project) makes his day because he’s always smiling and saying good morning to people as they leave the neighborhood,” she says.

## Southern Directional

### Alabaster, Alabama

<b>OWNERS:</b>	Matt and Tina Calma
<b>FOUNDED:</b>	1999
<b>EMPLOYEES:</b>	93
<b>SERVICES:</b>	Installing/replacing/relocating utility lines, directional boring
<b>SERVICE AREA:</b>	Alabama
<b>WEBSITE:</b>	<a href="http://www.southerndirectional.com">www.southerndirectional.com</a>

**“WE WERE SO BUSY SATISFYING ONE CLIENT THAT WE WEREN’T BUILDING A COMPANY. IT FORCED US TO STEP BACK AND DECIDE WHAT KIND OF COMPANY WE WANTED TO BE — WHAT DIRECTION SOUTHERN DIRECTIONAL SHOULD GO. IT DEFINITELY WAS A PIVOTAL MOMENT.”**

Tina Calma

“So we stood that flagger in front of the whole group at a meeting and said, “This is what it’s all about,”” she notes. “Sometimes living a core value is something as simple as just being friendly.”

#### LEADERSHIP TRAINING, TOO

The company also provides in-house leadership training, which Calma says reduces turnover and indirectly leads to better customer relations through employees’ personal growth and professional development. Any manager who supervises more than two employees must attend ongoing training sessions, she says.

Those employees also meet once a month as a leadership team, usually to discuss a book everyone is assigned to read. Attendees also discuss challenges they face as leaders and what it means to be a leader, Calma adds.

Is the program, now in place for nearly two years, making a difference? Absolutely, Calma says, pointing to low employee-turnover rates. She also cites

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Philip James (left) and Josh Burr use a McElroy 4-inch butt-fusion clamp as they connect gas pipeline. They use a shaver to make the end flush to allow for a proper and quality fuse.

**“WE CAN ALWAYS TEACH SKILLS, BUT NOT CHARACTER — THAT’S SOMETHING THEY EITHER HAVE OR THEY DON’T HAVE. SO WE ASK QUESTIONS THAT TRY TO GET AT THEIR CHARACTER.”**

Tina Calma

the positive results of 360-degree reviews, in which employees provide their managers/supervisors with feedback about their performance.

“Plus, a lot of our people have been promoted and moved up throughout the company,” she adds. “I absolutely attribute that to our leadership program.”

Looking ahead, Calma says the company will continue to focus on building its teams and leaders, improving operational efficiencies and building business relationships — three primary cornerstones in the company’s success.

As for growth, she also expects more in the years ahead. But the company has no specific goals in mind. Instead, growth will emerge as a byproduct of building on the company’s core values, she says.

“If you invest in people and encourage personal growth, expansion happens organically,” she says. “And at that point, the sky is the limit.”

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# Focusing on Your Website

## THERE ARE SOME BASIC NECESSITIES THAT ANY UTILITY COMPANY SHOULD HAVE PROMINENTLY DISPLAYED ON ITS WEBSITE

BY ALICIA JOHNSTON

**W**hen someone visits your utility company's website because they have a problem that needs to be fixed, they're looking for the answers to the following four questions:

*Do you provide the services I need?*

*Do you serve my area?*

*How can I contact you?*

*Why should I choose you?*

These questions should all be answered before the customer even needs to scroll down the page.

Let's look a little closer at each question.

### 1. DO YOU PROVIDE THE SERVICES I NEED?

Customers may not know what services your company offers, so it's important to have your services grouped and listed on your website's navigation bar. For example, a navigation bar on the homepage could be listed like this: Directional Drilling/Boring, Hydrovac Excavation, Machine Excavation, About Us, Careers.

Make sure that your main navigation bar doesn't get too crowded with categories. Showing five or six categories is ideal. The categories should be listed in order of priority.

Take a look at your navigation bar. Is it too crowded? What can be consolidated?

### 2. DO YOU SERVE MY AREA?

It is absolutely vital to tell customers which areas you service. There's nothing more bothersome than when a potential customer takes the time to call your business and your customer service representatives have to turn them away or, even worse, have to send them to the competition. A good way to make sure someone knows which areas you service is to add a subtle location reference to your main headline near the top of your homepage.

For example: "Serving the Capital Region since 1944." That brief sentence tells the customer which areas you service (using regional vernacular), and it also builds trust (your business has been around since 1944).

### 3. HOW CAN I CONTACT YOU?

Do you have a phone number prominently listed at the top, in the middle, and at the bottom of your homepage? Believe me: You should. People are looking for it! Do you offer chat? If so, does it pop up immediately? Is a human or a robot managing chat messages? Do you have a web form available for customers to complete? Are the information fields short enough that your customer service representatives can get the basics and call the customer back to book an appointment?

So many questions for you, but here's the reason: The more ways you have for a customer to connect with you, the better. Allow the customer to connect

with you in the way they feel most comfortable. When they do connect with you, ensure that you make it as easy as possible for them to book a service.

### 4. WHY SHOULD I CHOOSE YOU?

Why should a customer choose you over a competitor? Answering this question on your homepage is how you get to showcase what makes your business special. Have you been in business a long time, and weathered economic crises before? Do you give a portion of proceeds to a non-profit organization? Do you specialize in eco-friendly practices? Think about value propositions beyond just being licensed, background-checked, and insured. How will a customer benefit by choosing you?

Your website walks a tightrope — it needs to serve both the customers' needs and allow the Google data collectors to experience your site in a way that will put you at the top of the Google search results page. When push comes to shove, you should always make decisions based on how customers will experience your website. However, since 90% of customers use Google, it's also important to play by Google's rules, in order for your site to gain visibility when someone is searching for you. There are more than 200 different

**IT IS ABSOLUTELY VITAL TO TELL CUSTOMERS WHICH AREAS YOU SERVICE. THERE'S NOTHING MORE BOTHERSOME THAN WHEN A POTENTIAL CUSTOMER TAKES THE TIME TO CALL YOUR BUSINESS AND YOUR CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES HAVE TO TURN THEM AWAY.**

factors that affect Google's definition of what a quality website is. It's impossible to keep track of all of them, so focus on what matters — your customers.

Make sure you clearly answer your customers' four major questions on your homepage. Make sure that your website is simple in design and navigation, but also allows people to get ahold of you on their terms. Your website's homepage will be a customer's first impression of your company.

Let's make it a great impression! ▼

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# Next in Line

## A CLEAR PLAN WILL KEEP YOUR BUSINESS AND FAMILY FINANCIALLY STABLE IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO YOU

BY JOAN KOEHNE

Imagine this scenario: A contractor named Charlie runs a successful business in his hometown. Everything operates smoothly until Charlie passes away unexpectedly, throwing things into chaos. The sudden death leaves Charlie's son, Joe, scrambling to keep the business afloat.

Joe searches through his dad's files and finds no will, trust or succession plan indicating what direction to take. Joe is swamped by grief and now has this big problem to deal with. "What would my dad want?" he wonders.

In a best-case scenario, Charlie would have prepared for the unexpected. A well-defined exit plan would have honored his last wishes and safeguarded his investment in the business. The plan would also grant authority to the right people to continue daily operations and keep customers happy.

The death of a business owner is both an emotional and financial blow. Businesses tend to struggle without the labor and leadership of their owner, not just immediately after a death but also long-term.

A British professor studied 341 Norwegian companies whose founder died, then compared the data to similar companies that didn't suffer a loss. The study shows that sales drop 60% and jobs are cut 17% following a death. Additionally, the survival rate for these companies two years later is 20% lower than companies in which the entrepreneur is living. Undoubtedly, business owners are the glue that holds things together.

### CREATE A CLEAR PLAN

Attorney Alison Petri, of Wisconsin-based Steimle Birschbach, encourages owners to create a clear-cut strategy describing what happens if they die or become incapacitated. The plan should be in place years before the owner wants to exit the business.

"People don't think ahead," Petri says. "I don't think it's something you can ignore until you plan to retire, because sometimes there might be other plans for you."

To start, she asks these types of questions:

- Do you want the business to close if you die unexpectedly?
- Do you want the business to be sold to a third party, family member or employee?
- Who will have the authority to make immediate, day-to-day decisions and long-term plans?
- How can the business stay open, at least short-term, for the sake of the employees and clients?

Estate and succession planning ensures the continuity of the business and protects business assets when an owner passes away, Petri says.

"The worst-case scenario is the business fails or folds. Then you're doing auctions of equipment, closing out accounts and perhaps not getting as much for your business as it's potentially worth."

### DETERMINE HOW TO EXIT

Owners may choose to transition their business to another party during their lifetime but should also develop a plan to take effect at the time of death. Where there's a will, there's a say.

"Whether you're leaving the business to family or leaving it to a third-party owner or potential purchaser, the transfer can be done in the most cost-effective and smoothest way to avoid business disruption," Petri says, referring to the value of advanced planning.

So, where do you begin?

"A will can be useful, but it doesn't necessarily deal with the continuity and efficiency that you would need to keep your small business running," Petri says. With a will, a personal representative or executor needs to be appointed before other action occurs.

"That's where you can lose continuity and potentially have issues related to business management," Petri says. Therefore, writing a will might not be the biggest concern for a business owner.

"It might be a different type of estate planning document, like a trust, or in the business, an operating agreement and organizational structure," she says.

**"WHETHER YOU'RE LEAVING THE BUSINESS TO FAMILY OR LEAVING IT TO A THIRD-PARTY OWNER OR POTENTIAL PURCHASER, THE TRANSFER CAN BE DONE IN THE MOST COST-EFFECTIVE AND SMOOTHEST WAY TO AVOID BUSINESS DISRUPTION."**

Alison Petri

### CRAFT A TRUST DOCUMENT OR DECLARATION

For a sole proprietorship, Petri recommends a trust document. With a trust, business owners can decide what happens to the business on their passing. Perhaps they want to transfer the business to their brother, not their spouse. Maybe they'd like to give an employee or family member the first option to purchase.

"If you're a sole proprietor, you could have it laid out in a trust or simple declaration of who it's going to pass to," Petri says. For an LLC, partnership or corporation, the successor could be lined up in an operating agreement.

### PUT THE RIGHT PEOPLE IN CHARGE

Choosing a successor ensures that the person taking over is familiar with the business; the spouse or children of the owner might not know where to start.

"A personal representative may or may not know anything about the business itself and now has an interest and stake in making decisions about the business," Petri says.

Plus, the representative would probably need to wait until the court gives permission to work on behalf of the estate.

“To ensure you don’t have to wait for the courts and have a person managing the business who is aware of all the ins and outs, have a successor lined up,” Petri says.

Equally important are the legal documents and management system authorizing individuals to do everything the business owner typically does. They can pay employees and invoices, serve clients, and keep the business humming.

“You want someone to get in there and do what needs to be done,” Petri says.

Furthermore, without a succession plan, the surviving spouse or children can lose the business equity the owner built over time. The business may be an owner’s biggest asset and only stream of income. When the owner dies, the surviving spouse or family might not have anything left.

“You worked hard with nothing to show for it, and then the income dries up on top of it.”

### WORK WITH ADVISERS

The ideal time to develop an estate/succession plan is at least five to 10 years before retirement. Petri recommends working with a team that includes an accountant, financial adviser and attorney. This team can handle the legal and financial aspects of succession to avoid a lengthy probate process and reduce taxes.

“Every state is a little bit different about what its rules are, but generally they’ll have some version of a trust or nonprobate transfer,” Petri says.

### STRUCTURE A BUYOUT

A buyout can be structured in lots of ways, and the advisers can explain the advantages and disadvantages of different strategies. The owner, the business itself, or a family member may want to purchase life insurance to help cover the purchase price. The purchaser can pay a lump sum in a buyout or provide the owner with a stream of income during retirement.

Although it may be tempting to find resources online and create your own plan, Petri warns against it because of the many pitfalls. For business owners, this is not the time to cut corners.

“Overall, you want to be working with an attorney to make sure you’re doing the best for your set of circumstances,” Petri says.

### GIVE YOUR SURVIVORS A BREAK

Families who are already grieving don’t welcome the additional stress of making decisions regarding business operations. Additionally, the business may lose value if a clear plan isn’t in place.

“If I run a small business, when I die and I don’t have planning, the value of the business can be lost completely or significantly diminished if there isn’t good advanced planning,” Petri says.

### PLAN AHEAD

Ultimately, these decisions should be made well before an unexpected death or disability shakes the business’ foundation and causes shock and grief. Creating the right plan is highly individualized, based on the business and the owner’s wishes. However, every estate/succession plan should:


- Be tax-effective
- Ensure continuity of operations
- Put the right people in charge to make critical decisions

- Avoid a lengthy probate process
- Alleviate stress for family and employees
- Safeguard the assets and investment built over time

### DO IT NOW

Creating a trust or nonprobate transfer is the ideal way to plan for the expected or unexpected transition out of a business. Do it now, before a sudden death or disability robs you of the ability to make those decisions. ▼

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PHOTO BY MATT RYERSON

Backlund Plumbing, located in Omaha, Nebraska, uses several vehicles with a bi-fuel option of CNG or gasoline, including 10 Ford E-250 Econoline vans, two Freightliner pump trucks, three Freightliner service body trucks and a Peterbilt crane truck that all operate with dedicated CNG motors.

## Looking Green

### CNG, ELECTRIC VEHICLES PROVIDE OPTIONS FOR CONTRACTORS LOOKING TO BECOME MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY AND SEE COST SAVINGS

BY TIM DOBBINS

If you're considering taking your business on an eco-friendly path, your vehicle fleet is a good place to start.

Embracing green vehicle standards is great for your brand name by showing existing and potential new customers that you value sustainable work practices. But not only does it boost your brand, it can be great for your bottom line and lead to increased productivity.

Technological advancements have provided amazing opportunities to progress the industry. Compressed natural gas vehicles are now a common scene cruising the highways and deliver a chance to embrace technological change for the advancement of your business.

About five years ago Chris Roseland, owner of Backlund Plumbing, saw the high fuel prices, decided it was time for a change, and purchased the company's first fleet of compressed natural gas (CNG) service vans. Since then its fleet has grown considerably. Backlund Plumbing now utilizes approximately five Ford Transits with a bi-fuel option of CNG or gasoline, 10 Ford E-250 Econoline vans, two Freightliner pump trucks, three Freightliner service body trucks and a Peterbilt crane truck that all operate with dedicated CNG motors.

"Immediately, the first two years we were saving well over \$1 per gallon," Roseland says. "I feel like in the first two years we probably paid off most of the investment." According to Ford, the equipment and conversion cost from gasoline to CNG will run owners approximately \$7,500 to \$9,500, depending on options selected.

Other manufactures like Chevrolet's Express vans and Chrysler's Ram 2500 heavy-duty pickups are also able to convert to CNG so an existing fleet can be used without starting completely over.

**"DOWN THE ROAD I AM WAY MORE INTERESTED IN CONVERTING OUR LARGER TRUCKS VERSUS OUR EVERYDAY SERVICE VEHICLES. THOSE SMALLER VEHICLES ARE ALREADY GETTING 20-25 MILES PER GALLON."**

Chris Roseland

Roseland also says that teaming up with local utility gas companies is something to look into to help cover the expense of converting. "The initial rebates were probably the biggest help for us to get it done," he says. "It was

close to a 50% match on the conversion of the vehicle. Along with a very low interest loan from our state agency for air quality.”

### EXPANDING AND CONSIDERATIONS

“Down the road I am way more interested in converting our larger trucks versus our everyday service vehicles,” Roseland says. His reasoning behind that comes down to miles per gallon. “Those smaller vehicles are already getting 20-25 miles per gallon.”

The larger municipal trucks for utility work that only get 3 to 4 mpg can become quite expensive to run when going through 50 gallons a day or more, especially when the cost of fuel is high.

One important consideration before CNG conversion is refueling options. Backlund Plumbing is located in Omaha, Nebraska, and fortunately, its plumbing shop is centrally positioned between two of 12 large natural gas filling stations across the city. This makes filling trucks as easy as driving to a conventional gas station, but depending where your business is located, it may not be so simple. Some companies that rely

**“THE CUSTOMER RESPONSE WAS GREAT ONCE YOU EDUCATED THEM. ONCE WE LETTERED OUR VEHICLES WITH CNG AND THEY FOUND OUT OUR VEHICLES ONLY RUN ON NATURAL GAS, IT WAS LIKE ICING ON THE CAKE FOR US.”**

Chris Roseland

heavily on CNG vehicles have made the investment to even install their own filling stations to ensure fuel supply at their facility.

With that in mind, even if you are located near a filling station or have one at your shop, it’s smart practice to make sure the tank is full before leaving for the day. “Sometimes we have to go fill up to go somewhere far to make sure we are able to get back. You can’t just go fill up wherever you want,” Roseland says.

### OTHER GREEN OPTIONS

Roseland adds that he is definitely interested in looking into electric vehicles in the future as more options become available.

Ford has plans to reveal a brand-new E-Transit in 2022 offering the first all-electric cargo van from a full-line automaker in the U.S. The E-Transit will be available in chassis cab, cutaway and cargo van models and come in three length choices and roof heights giving contractors yet another option for a green initiative.

Eco-friendly trucks and vans can even increase efficiency on the road in many areas. Certain states allow hybrid and electric vehicles to travel in the high-occupancy vehicle lane, so drivers have less chance of getting stuck in traffic.

Don’t forget one of the biggest gains of going green with your fleet — the publicity. Turning over a new eco-friendly leaf is a great marketing tool for your business.

“The customer response was great once you educated them. Once we lettered our vehicles with CNG and they found out our vehicles only run on natural gas, it was like icing on the cake for us,” Roseland says. “When you do everything right plus you show up in a green vehicle, you’re their go-to.”

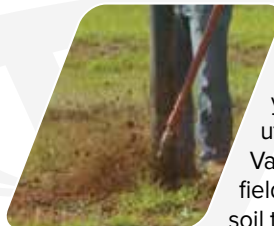
Environmentally friendly vehicles are definitely something to consider for your business when shopping for a new fleet or single service truck. Not only are they a clean means of transportation, they can lower fuel costs and boost your brand name. ▼

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BY CRAIG MANDLI

## Air Excavation Equipment

### RAMVAC Vacuum Excavators by Sewer Equipment AX Air Excavator

The AX Air Excavator from RAMVAC Vacuum Excavators by Sewer Equipment is mounted on a non-CDL chassis for operator efficiency. This truck series comes standard with a single-engine design with 12-volt electrical controls and manual hand valves for ease of use and maintenance while offering onboard water for the ability to excavate with both air and water. With payload capacities from 5,000 to 12,000 pounds, the hydraulic rear door allows operators to dump spoils quickly and easily. The blower can be customized to achieve the results needed in any applications, with capacities of 18 or 27 inches Hg, 1,400 or 3,000 cfm, and hose diameters of 4 or 6 inches. All water systems are contained within a single heated enclosure for cold-weather applications while also offering ample tool storage.



888-477-7638; [www.ram-vac.com](http://www.ram-vac.com)

## Drilling Fluid

### Wyo-Ben TRU-BORE

TRU-BORE from Wyo-Ben is a highly concentrated bentonite-based drilling fluid that stabilizes formations ranging from clay soils to sands and gravels. By forming a thin, tough filter cake, the



fluid loss to areas around the borehole is reduced. Its gel strengths allow it to be very efficient at suspending and carrying cuttings. These factors, along with being NSF certified, make it an effective risk management tool.

800-548-7055; [www.wyoben.com](http://www.wyoben.com)

## Horizontal Directional Drilling

### Akkerman 1525B/D

The 1525B/D hydraulically driven high-pressure pump from Akkerman is used for effective pilot tube and other pipe jacking operations particularly on larger-diameter bores. The large, 525-gallon tank offers in-tank agitation for continuous mixing, independent agitation, or agitate and pump to maintain optimal mud viscosity. It displaces a Marsh Funnel viscosity as high as 50 seconds with pump flow up to 10 gpm at 2,500 psi. It is powered by a 20.7 hp diesel engine with an 8-gallon fuel tank. Like its 325-gallon counterparts, it is simple, safe and reliable. There are few moving parts, no belts and a shrouded agitator. The stepped platform makes it easy for operators to access and fill the tank.



800-533-0386; [www.akkerman.com](http://www.akkerman.com)

## Hydroexcavation Equipment

### Ditch Witch HX30G

The HX30G vacuum excavator from Ditch Witch boasts high-profile power in a low-profile design that eases navigation in congested and height-restricted areas. It is powered by a 31 hp Vanguard



gas engine for optimal suction power and water pressure. To boost efficiency on any job, it comes with a powerful 542 cfm blower, 3,000 psi water pressure and 4.2 gpm water flow. It is offered with the choice of a 500- or 800-gallon tank for a variety of job requirements. The machine is available in multiple trailer configurations, including the VT9 trailer that, when equipped with the 500-gallon tank, does not require a CDL to transport.

800-654-6481; [www.ditchwitch.com](http://www.ditchwitch.com)

### Dynablast Pratissoli Pumps KT28ASPF

The Pratissoli Pumps KT28ASPF high-pressure water pump, distributed by Dynablast, is ideal for hydroexcavating. It offers 18.4 gpm, and 2,900 psi at 1,450 rpm. It is available with a T13 female spline shaft and SAE two-/four-bolt flange for direct mounting to the hydraulic motor. Reducing the pump speed to lower water flow for hydrovac use can result in increased pump life and reduced water bypass. It has a self-lubricating design, with no oiler kit or weekly oiling required. Its symmetrical crankcase makes it easy to reverse shaft the pump. Internal fins on the aluminum crankcase provide cooling to lower oil temperature. A tapered roller bearing provides improved lateral loading. Its two-bore ceramic plungers have thicker ceramic on the water end to prevent thermal shock.



905-867-4642; [www.dynablast.ca](http://www.dynablast.ca)

### Easy Kleen Pressure Systems Wildcat Heaters

Wildcat Heaters high-pressure, oil-fired hot-water/steam heaters and hydraulic pump systems from Easy Kleen Pressure Systems are designed for reliability and efficiency and are installation-ready for vacuum trucks and hydroexcavators. A full range of heater options includes dry steam, redundancy packages, Schedule 80 and 160 stainless steel or A53 boiler pipe, fine-tuned temperature and flow-control systems. All coils are manufactured in-house, with CRN boiler-approved coils now available. Heaters can be designed for mounting in a cabinet or supplied as a completed cabinet unit. They are CSA and ETL approved. Hydraulic pumping systems are available.



800-315-5533; [www.easykleen.com](http://www.easykleen.com)

### GapVax HV33

Designed to safely transport water and debris in urban areas, the GapVax HV33 is shorter, smaller and more compact than its predecessor. It is 30 feet long overall on a medium-duty chassis and includes a 600-gallon water tank, 6-cubic-yard debris body, 6- or 8-inch top-mounted telescoping boom with a 14- to 17.5-foot reach, 4,000 cfm power and an inverted, full-opening tailgate.



888-442-7829; [www.gapvax.com](http://www.gapvax.com)

### HotJet USA Vac 'n Jet Series

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



800-624-8186; [www.hotjetusa.com](http://www.hotjetusa.com)

## Rival Hydrovac T7 Tandem

The T7 Tandem hydrovac from Rival Hydrovac was designed primarily to be loaded with debris and driven within legislated road limits with most types of debris on board. The unit comes standard with a scale that reads real-time weights both in the cab and on the wireless remote to confirm weights prior to travel. It is operator friendly, according to the maker, and the operating system is engaged through one PTO switch. The remainder of the operation occurs from the rear panel or the wireless remote.

403-550-7997; [www.rivalhydrovac.com](http://www.rivalhydrovac.com)



## Presvac Systems Hydrovac

The Presvac Systems Hydrovac is designed for versatility and cold-weather operation with optional full compliance with U.S. Department of Transportation specifications for collection or transportation of hazardous materials. The high-vacuum blower allows extraction of all types of soils, gravel, rock, clay, water and silt material, with knockout features in the debris tank minimizing carryover. Modular filtration configured to blower size provides blower protection and minimal maintenance, according to the maker. It comes with a heavy-duty, 8-inch boom that extends up to 25 feet with six-way hydraulic power and wireless controls for all boom functions, a soft-start water pump, vacuum breaker and truck engine speed.

800-387-7763; [www.presvac.com](http://www.presvac.com)



## Soil Surgeon hydroexcavating tool

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

949-363-1401; [www.soilsurgeoninc.com](http://www.soilsurgeoninc.com)



## Super Products Mud Dog

The Mud Dog vacuum excavator from Super Products provides a safe and efficient alternative to traditional digging. It is designed for operator convenience and consistent performance even in the harshest environments. Units come standard as hydroexcavators with an optional air excavation package, which allows an operator to always choose the best application, water or air, for the job. It is available with 12- or 16-yard debris capacity and has a 1,500- to 2,000-gallon water tank capacity. Each model comes standard with tilt ejection unloading, and a rear-mounted boom that reaches 27 feet, has 335-degree rotation and can move in a 45-degree upward and 25-degree downward pivot. This allows for versatility within dig areas so that units do not need to be constantly readjusted into position.

800-837-9711; [www.superproductsllc.com](http://www.superproductsllc.com)



## Tornado Global Hydrovacs F4 ECOLITE

The F4 ECOLITE from Tornado Global Hydrovacs has a 12-cubic-yard mud tank and holds 1,550 gallons of freshwater. The unit is more than 7,000 pounds lighter than the company's older models and offers more than double



the payload. The boom has a 342-degree rotation and 26-foot reach. The smaller F3 ECOLITE is a 10-cubic-yard, 1,250-gallon tandem-axle unit that more than doubles older payload capacities. It features an 8-inch boom and 3,800 cfm blower. 877-340-8141; [www.tornadotrucks.com](http://www.tornadotrucks.com)

## Transway Systems Terra-Vex HV38

The Transway Systems Terra-Vex HV38 has a 12-yard debris tank with onboard scales for efficient hauling and offloading, complete with a 26-foot-by-8-inch telescoping boom. It has a one-touch-operated hydraulic half-door with a 3,800 cfm at 27 inches Hg hydraulically driven blower. Water pressure is achieved with a hydraulically driven triplex pump, delivering 10 gpm at 3,600 psi from a 1,000-gallon HDPE baffled water tank. The water is heated with a 420,000 Btu diesel-fired burner for cold-weather operation.

800-263-4508; [www.transwaysystems.com](http://www.transwaysystems.com)



## TRUVAC by Vector Paradigm

Designed for utility, municipal and contractor customers involved in the installation, maintenance and repair of underground water, sewer, gas, electric and telecommunications lines, the Paradigm subcompact vacuum excavator from TRUVAC by Vector can dig holes with water or air; vacuum, contain and dispose of drill mud; power pneumatic, hydraulic or electrical tools; and provide transport and storage of replacement parts, equipment and tools. The truck's Park-n-Dig design minimizes time between job site arrival and excavation, including the ability to dig up to 6 feet without additional pipe and hose. The air compressor powers utility tools such as jackhammers and tampers. The truck offers tool storage space, including a long-handle toolbox. The truck can tow up to 20,000 pounds.

800-627-3171; [www.truvac.com](http://www.truvac.com)



## Vac-Con X-Cavator

The X-Cavator hydrovac from Vac-Con includes a cold-weather enclosure for the water systems and control panel, as well as an interior area for operator seating and workspace.

Unit filtration is based off of the Titan combination machine, with a single-cyclone design and final cartridge-style filter. The redesigned boom is lightweight and flexible, rotating 310 degrees around the unit and moving plus 45 degrees and negative 22 degrees vertically. The durable rubber hose material can withstand harsh environments, according to the maker, and has a reach of 26 feet.

904-284-4200; [www.vac-con.com](http://www.vac-con.com)

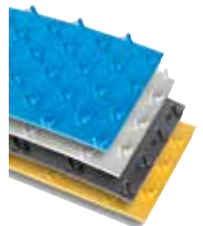


## Pipe Lining/Cutting

### AGRU America Sure-Grip

Sure-Grip liners from AGRU America are made of HDPE, HDPE-el, PP, PVDF or ECTFE, and serve as a long-term alternative to spray-applied concrete protection products. The liners prevent concrete corrosion and degradation, can substantially extend the lifetime of a structure, and by preventing exfiltration and infiltration, provide direct protection for the environment. The liners have anchoring systems that enable construction in areas of significant backpressure. Unlike spray-applied liners, which have to be reapplied regularly due to cracking or delamination, these liners are long-lasting, and are designed to avoid the residuals cost often associated with concrete spray-on liners, which require tank emptying and cleaning every few years for reapplication.

843-546-0600; [www.agruamerica.com](http://www.agruamerica.com)



(continued)

### Enz USA Milling Cutter

The Enz USA Milling Cutter offers a complete line of cutting solutions for the toughest projects. The milling cutters can remove the hardest deposits such as lime scale and concrete. They work with a percussion system of 600 to 3,000 impulses per minute and up to 15 tons of impact force. For lime scale, carbide teeth are recommended, and for concrete, diamond teeth. It can be used in pipes from 1.2 inches with the ML28 up to a 240-inch pipe. Most of the milling cutters work with recycled water. In many cases, the use of a percussion milling cutter is the only alternative to digging up pipes under foundations or roads. The diamond crown cutter can even remove protruding laterals.

877-362-8721; [www.enz.com](http://www.enz.com)



### Pipe Bursting

#### HammerHead Trenchless HydroBurst 100XT

Underground contractors can use HammerHead Trenchless HydroBurst 100XT static pipe bursting equipment as an effective method to replace existing water mains, gas pipelines and sewer lines. Pipe bursting follows the path of the existing utilities, reducing utility strike risks and eliminating up to 85% of excavation work compared to open-cut methods. Offering a tethered remote control, the streamlined unit pays out rod quickly due to its automated rod spinning assembly and the design of its hydraulic cylinders. The unit weighs just 3,200 pounds and is only 39 inches high by 30 inches wide.

800-331-6653; [www.hammerheadtrenchless.com](http://www.hammerheadtrenchless.com)



### Pow-R Mole Trenchless Solutions PD-33M

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

800-344-6653; [www.powrmole.com](http://www.powrmole.com)



### RODDIE R8

The R8 pipe bursting system from RODDIE is easy to use, lightweight, can be set up vertically or horizontally, and can also be adjusted to use three different size cables. This unit can replace 1-, 2-, 3-, 4-, 6- and 8-inch pipes with ease and speed. Inexpensive cable grabbing inserts last 70 to 120 jobs, which reduces costs. High-quality tool steels on articulating bursting heads promote rare resistance for long-lasting service. The pulling rate is 8 feet per minute and is hydraulically powered from your tractor providing a pulling force of 30 tons. The wireless remote system is reliable and has a signal strength that moves through any cellar wall. Maintaining the system is simple, as the user only needs to rinse off and re-grease six Zerk fittings.

888-406-3821; [www.rodzieunderground.com](http://www.rodzieunderground.com)



### TRIC Tools X30

The redesigned X30 puller from TRIC Tools includes a new top bridge (the piece with the upper grippers and the handle) that is reshaped to maximize strength and minimize weight. Coincidentally, this will also reduce production cost. The end result is a pulling unit that is lighter by at least 10 pounds (70 versus 85 pounds), stronger where it needs to be, and less expensive overall.

888-883-8742; [www.trictools.com](http://www.trictools.com)



## Tunneling

### Subsite Electronics Field Scout Mobile Bore Planning App

The Field Scout Mobile Bore Planning App from Subsite Electronics allows the user to walk the intended bore path of their next job and record waypoints and obstacles on an Apple or Android mobile device. From there, they can email a plan for approval or further action, and forward to a crew to show what daylighting needs to be done. They can even upload the plan to the Commander 7 HDD Guidance Display with ScoutView to reference while boring in real time. As part of the Green Ops HDD bore process, Field Scout can reduce risk and improve drill time efficiency, maximizing profitability on every bore.

800-846-2713; [www.subsitegreenops.com](http://www.subsitegreenops.com)



### Vermeer MV Solutions McLaughlin McL 24C auger boring machine

The McLaughlin McL 24C auger boring machine from Vermeer MV Solutions provides thrust and torque for installing casings ranging from 4 to 24 inches in diameter. Equipped with a 24.6 hp Caterpillar three-cylinder Tier 4 diesel engine for quiet and clean operation, it delivers 98,000 pounds of forward thrust and an auger torque of 6,339 foot-pounds. It has an Operator Presence Control hydraulic clutch to help reduce spinback and the risk of machine rollovers.

352-728-2222; [www.mclaughlinunderground.com](http://www.mclaughlinunderground.com)



## What's Your Story?

*Dig Different* welcomes news about a tough excavation, pipe bursting, trenching, boring or tunneling job you just completed for the Down & Dirty column.

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## Success Stories: Piercing, Bursting, Tunneling and HDD

BY CRAIG MANDLI



### Internal joint seal used to replace hole in water supply pipe

#### PROBLEM

On a project along the U.S.-Mexico border, a contractor damaged a pipeline while drilling into the ground. The drilling caused an 11-inch hole in the pipe that supplied water from the United States to Mexico.

#### SOLUTION

**Miller Pipeline** was called to install **WEKO-SEALS**, its **internal joint seal**. Once on site, the team conducted its usual safety assessment of the area for precautions it would need to take. As the technicians made their way into the 72-inch pipe, they smoothed the damage inside to ensure the steel-backing band would fit correctly. After fitting the rubber sleeve into place, the technicians secured two 72-inch seals, which expanded to provide a bottle-tight fit. Once the seals were in place, the technicians moved to the outside and applied a concrete mortar around the pipe to complete the patch.

**RESULT** Within a week of getting the call, the team had sealed the pipeline, saving many communities from water service disruption. **800-428-3742**; [www.millerpipeline.com](http://www.millerpipeline.com) ▼



### Blade a fit for drilling in rocky conditions

#### PROBLEM

Directional Trace LLC is a contractor based out of Thornton, Colorado, that has been working on production work for a fiber company in Fort Collins, Colorado, at the base of the Rocky Mountains. The conditions make for challenging HDD jobs with the varied types of ground conditions drillers are faced with.

#### SOLUTION

On Sept. 18, 2019, Directional Trace LLC decided to test out **Melfred Borzall's Red Diamond Blade** with the included Pit Bull Design features. This specific blade comes with more than twice as many carbides as the standard blade, and is specifically designed to hold up to varied, hard ground conditions in which a steer face blade is appropriate without switching to a hard ground bit. The Pit Bull feature utilizes engineered dowel pins that minimize the possibility of bolts getting sheared off since the solid dowels are taking the load instead of the bolts. It also helps guard against those same bolts rattling loose and losing the blade or product downhole.

**RESULT** Drilling with a 5 1/2-inch blade on a Vermeer 2330 Rig, the contractor drilled in the rocky soil conditions at the base of the Rocky Mountains with his Red Diamond Blade for over a year with the same blade. Only after 14 months did he finally return to HDD Parts Plus of the Rockies, the local Melfred Borzall tooling distributor, for a replacement. **800-558-7500**; [www.melfredborzall.com](http://www.melfredborzall.com) ▼



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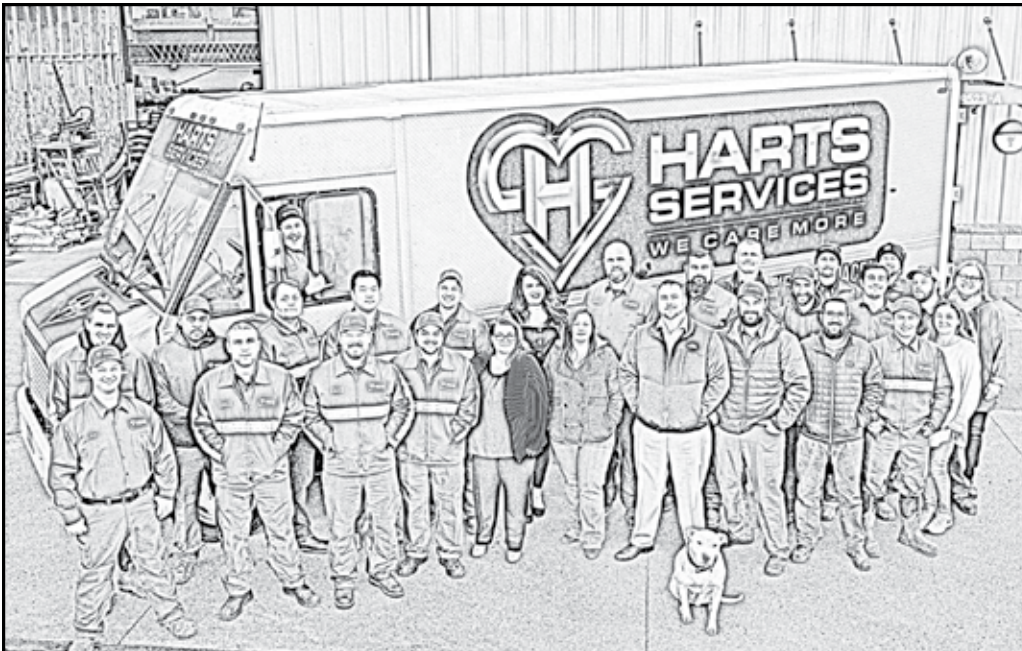
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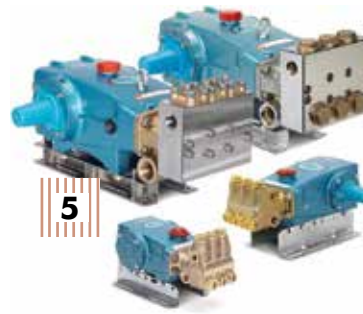
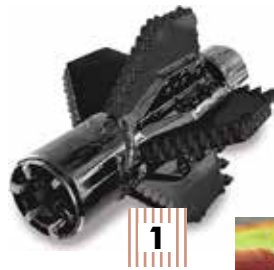
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# THE LATEST: Products



## 1. Vermeer replaceable wing PDC hole opener

The replaceable wing PDC hole opener from Vermeer's ground-up design joins the ever-growing line of rock-focused tooling from Vermeer, targeting consolidated rock formations less than 25,000 psi. From a single 2.875-inch API box by box body, contractors can interchange wing sets for cutting diameters of 8, 10 and 12 inches. With the ability to change sizes, users can maximize their investment in the single body. In the event of needing pushback during reaming, rotary backout cutters have been welded to the backside of each wing. **800-837-6337; www.vermeer.com**

## 2. Leica Geosystems iCON field software version 6.0

Leica Geosystems, part of Hexagon, has a new field software for the construction industry, the iCON version 6.0. It is designed to meet the needs of general contractors, concrete contractors, MEP and HVAC trades, and BIM/VDC departments, with simple, trustworthy and easy-to-implement technology that enables the verification of built parts in a building construction project. Version 6.0 provides the following improvements: integration of Leica Nova MS60 scan workflows into iCON field software; grid scan functionality from motorized iCON sensors (iCR70/80/80S, iCT30, and MS60); and in-field verification of point cloud data (MS60) and single-point measurements (iCT, iCR, iCB, MS60), versus elevations, surfaces and design model objects. **770-326-9500; www.leica-geosystems.com**

## 3. Boss Vac vacuum excavation trailer

Boss Vac's vacuum excavation trailer is ideal for removing wet or dry materials, cleaning emergency road spills or hazardous waste, keyholing, trenching, cleaning irrigation canals, drilling oilfields and completion sites, removing debris from catch basins, locating underground utilities without impact damage and much more. The tandem axle trailer is 9.5 feet wide and 21.5 feet long with the highest point reaching 7.5 feet tall with options for a gooseneck, skid or truck mount. Included on the trailer is everything needed to tackle the job from the moment it's received, including hoses, fittings and couplings, to tried and true engines. On the water side, a 9 hp engine pushes 4 gpm at 4,000 psi while a separate 24 hp engine powers a vacuum generating up to 300 cfm in either gasoline or diesel options. For debris storage, customers can choose between a 3.96-cubic-yard (800-gallon) or a 2.47-cubic-yard (500-gallon) storage tank. **405-885-1234; www.bossvac.com**

## 4. CUES QZ3 Advanced portable inspection camera

The QZ3 Advanced lightweight, portable, HD wireless video inspection pole camera from CUES can be operated by one person using any tablet. The camera is designed to provide safe viewing in industrial or environmental areas with no man entry. The QZ3 can also be used to locate lateral services or to identify blockages at manholes, access ports or other entry points without entering the line or structure. Added features over the basic model include motorized height and tilt, and laser distance measurements. The camera is mounted on a lightweight, telescopic carbon fiber pole that can extend up to 24 feet, and an optional 34-foot pole is available. The 1080p camera features a 360-to-1 zoom with built-in image stabilization, automatic focus and distance-to-defect measurement. Self-contained waterproof Multiple Aspheric Projection lighting, including six LED spotlights, works in pairs and focuses at different lengths, to provide enhanced, detailed viewing of cracks, breaks, pipe separations, scale and various defect conditions. The QZ3 Advanced also includes two diffused flood LED lights for evenly-lit manhole inspections. **800-327-7791; www.cuesinc.com**

## 5. Cat Pumps hydroexcavating pump

Over 50 years of high-pressure pump manufacturing experience has earned Cat Pumps a reputation of producing high-quality, long-lasting pumps. With its dedication to zero-defect manufacturing, ease-of-service and availability from stock, Cat Pumps designs and builds high-pressure pumps and systems to suit the demanding environments of the hydroexcavation industry. Popular models include Model 56 with 5.5 gpm at 3,500 psi; Model 56HS with 8 gpm at 3,000 psi; Model 660 with 10 gpm at 3,000 psi; Model 3560 with 20 gpm at 4,000 psi, or 25 gpm at 3,000 psi; and Model 3570 with 30 gpm at 3,000 psi. **763-780-5440; www.catpumps.com**

## 6. Landoll construction series detachable trailers

Landoll Corp.'s Models 855 and 860 construction series detachable trailers have a drop-side trailer option that features a 5-inch lowered track area and a raised center. This specialty option helps when hauling tall excavators, cranes or vehicles that must obtain the very lowest deck height possible. The outer track area is 14.37 inches from the ground with a 6-inch ground clearance when fully loaded. The track area is raised, wood-covered with 2-inch Apitong and is 24 inches wide into the main frame. The outside measurement of the main frame is 54 inches wide. **800-428-5655; www.landoll.com ▼**

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## This Issue's Feature:

### Hydroexcavation trailer provides big power in small footprint

BY CRAIG MANDLI

Large hydroexcavation trucks are great for those jobs where there's plenty of room to work. Many municipalities and contractors are finding that they need the services those rigs provide in smaller, tighter footprints, though. With that in mind, **Kaiser Premier** developed the **TerraVac Xpose800 hydroexcavation trailer** to provide big power in a compact footprint.

The TerraVac Xpose800 trailer measures only 21 feet long and 8 feet 6 inches wide, with a height of just 8 feet 8 inches. Equipped with an 800-gallon debris tank and 400-gallon fresh-water capacity, the unit has a feature set that makes it suitable for potholing, daylighting or material reclamation. The debris body is lined with a welded stainless-steel floor insert for long-term durability. A bolt-on deflector plate can be quickly replaced during routine maintenance. Conveniently located grease banks and an easily accessible oil drain reduce maintenance time.

"We wanted to offer a solution that was robust enough to operate in tough conditions, but in a compact footprint," Kaiser Premier marketing director Kenyon Sharp says. "The design and feature set of the TerraVac Xpose800 was dialed in as we received feedback from users in the field."

Operating power is supplied by a 49 hp diesel engine that enables a crew to easily cut through soil and clay with up to 4,000 psi of pressure at 4.5 gpm. The blower is rated for 960 cfm of suction, capable of 15 inches Hg vacuum with 5 psi positive pressure. A 30-foot suction hose attaches to the 4-inch loading port via a 4- to 3-inch reducer. The digging tool is a 6-foot dig lance, and a 36-inch wash gun is also included.

The controls feature an ignition reset for the water pump to prevent accidental damage or injury. When the engine shuts off, the water



TerraVac Xpose800 by Kaiser Premier

pump also shuts off. This safeguard eliminates the risk of the water pump accidentally being engaged when the engine turns on. The dump door is secured via a proven locking bar system similar to Kaiser Premier's CV Series Hydrovacs. An external door locking design ensures a tight seal without using grabbing claws or internal hydraulics. The dump door also features a 6-inch dumping port for positive pressure offloading.

"Feedback from the field tests is that the TerraVac Xpose800 is easy to operate, easy to unload, and easy to maintain," Sharp says. "This was exactly our goal in engineering the TerraVac with the operator in mind."

**970-542-1975; [www.kaiserpremier.com](http://www.kaiserpremier.com)**



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# Happenings

## CALENDAR

**March 28-April 1**

**NASTT's No-Dig Show**, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Florida. Visit [www.nodigshow.com](http://www.nodigshow.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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Super Products LLC

TruGrit Traction Inc.

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THE LATEST:

# News

## Vermeer acquires HDD technology from Normag

Vermeer announced it has acquired electric-powered horizontal directional drilling and fluid systems technology from Normag. Through this acquisition, Vermeer assumes the rights to develop, manufacture and distribute the fully electric HDD rigs, generator sets and fluid management systems, which are currently operating across Europe under the Normag brand.

## Custom Truck One Source to combine with Nesco

Custom Truck One Source has entered into an agreement to combine with Nesco, another leading provider of specialized truck and heavy-equipment solutions including rental, sales and aftermarket parts and services. Together, the combined company will operate on a national scale with over 1,800 employees, 46 company-operated locations and a rental fleet that will be nearly double in size with almost 9,000 units and more than \$1.3 billion in combined OEC. The company will also have more than 400 service technicians and 120 mobile service technicians available for support.

## Wastequip acquires ContainerPros

Wastequip has acquired Carlsbad, California-based professional waste services company, ContainerPros.

This acquisition enhances the existing cart assembly and delivery service offering provided by Wastequip's Toter brand by adding a team

with over 20 years' experience in providing cart assembly, delivery and maintenance services for waste haulers and municipalities. Additionally, the acquisition lays the groundwork for Wastequip to include the repair and refurbishment of steel containers as part of its service offering. ContainerPros' founding partners, Mark Merhab and Gary Lima, will remain with the company.

## Grand opening of Renegade Equipment, Sales & Consulting

Mike Grieco announced the opening of his new business, Renegade Equipment, Sales & Consulting, based in Longmont, Colorado. The company is a specialized construction equipment, sales and rental-based company committed to servicing the needs of buyers and sellers throughout the process of acquiring or selling specialized equipment.



Mike Grieco

## Vacuum Truck Rentals partners with Northern Safety and Industrial

Vacuum Truck Rentals and Northern Safety and Industrial announced their partnership to provide customers another avenue to access corrugated hose in the industrial cleaning industry, the Advanced Drainage Systems' Evac Hose. Through this partnership, VTR will be the exclusive reseller of the Evac Hose with NSI as the distributor. ▼

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