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The American **DREAM**

Spirit and determination carry a young contractor across his home state to new opportunity Page 12

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Power Surge

RIDGID drain machine drums up revenue, boosts word-of-mouth referrals for Cleveland plumber.

- By Ken Wysocky



On the Cover

Bradd Conn, master plumber and owner of American Rooter Plumbing, uses a RIDGID SeeSnake to observe the condition of the drain after a routine drain cleaning at a home in Omaha, Nebraska. Beyond the typical plumbing work, Conn's company also offers hydrojetting, drain cleaning, camera inspections and sewer line cleaning/trenchless line replacement.

(Matt Ryerson/Ryerson Photography)

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Cory Dellenbach

Dealing With the Tough Customers

How you react to complaints could make the difference between keeping customers or losing them

We all know that not every customer is a happy one. It's a given that at least a couple times in your career you will run into a customer who has had a bad experience with plumbers or just isn't satisfied with the work that was done on the property.

If customers call to complain, it's important to understand that they want the problem resolved. They are unhappy, but they are giving you a chance to fix it. Fix it and do it fast. Take those calls; don't get defensive with them, even if you feel they are wrong. Your policy should be to handle every complaint with a positive attitude. Having that type of attitude will avoid the customer from taking it to a more public place, like social media.

There are several ways to de-escalate the situation if you do run into an angry customer: Use your listening skills, remain calm and apologize gracefully. Talk to your employees about each of these.

Listen Closely

When mad customers call, the best thing to do is just listen. Let them get it off their chest first, no matter how long they go on. While they are venting, take notes to better prepare yourself with an answer when you finally get to talk.

When they are done, summarize what you've heard and ask any questions to further clarify their complaint.

Remain Calm

When a customer starts yelling or being otherwise rude, there is nothing to be gained by responding in a similar manner. In fact, that will probably escalate the situation. Maintain control of yourself no matter how much you want to yell back.

After customers vent, they want to know you understand where they are coming from and how they feel. Express sympathy for their unpleasant customer experience. Respect and understanding go a long way toward smoothing things over.

When a customer starts yelling or being otherwise rude, there is nothing to be gained by responding in a similar manner. In fact, that will probably escalate the situation. Maintain control of yourself no matter how much you want to yell back.


Apologize Gracefully

Whether the customers' complaints are legitimate or not is irrelevant. If you want them to stay customers, you need to apologize for the problem they are having (or perceive to be having). A simple, straightforward statement is often all that's needed. Something like: "I'm sorry you're not happy with our product. Let's see what we can do to make things right."

Making Things Right

Customers get rude or angry for a variety of reasons — some justified, some not. But since you're in business to serve your customers, you'll likely encounter rude or angry individuals at one time or another. How you respond can make the difference between a customer who feels satisfied with the resolution and one who vows to never patronize your business again.

Following the steps above will give you a good start on how to find a solution between the upset customer and you. Last thing you want to do is lose a good-paying customer over something that could have easily been fixed.

What advice would you give to fellow contractors when upset customers confront you? Email me at editor@plumbermag.com or call 715-350-8436. 

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THE TEST OF TIME

Keep Your Family Business Thriving

The plumbing industry is full of family businesses spanning multiple generations. There are also plenty of businesses that fail without making it to the second generation. This online exclusive looks at how you can create a company culture that puts you in the former category rather than the latter. [▲ plumbermag.com/featured](http://plumbermag.com/featured)



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COMMUNITY MINDEDNESS

Minnesota Company's Charitable Project Completes a Sixth Year

We've profiled T 'N G Plumbing in the past and also have regularly written about the Pay It Forward project the company undertakes every year. Nominations are collected and the company selects a homeowner it decides is most in need of its services. Then a week-long volunteer effort produces tens of thousands of dollars worth of donated time and materials into a bathroom renovation and oftentimes many other home improvement flourishes. Read about the recipient of this year's Pay It Forward project in this online exclusive.

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◀ Bradd Conn grabs gear from his Mercedes-Benz Sprinter van.

The American DREAM

Spirit and determination carry a young contractor across his home state to new opportunity

By Giles Lambertson

Photography by Matt Ryerson/Ryerson Photography



American Rooter Plumbing, Omaha, Nebraska

OWNER	Bradd Conn
EMPLOYEES	4
SERVICES	Hydrojetting, drain cleaning, camera inspections, sewer line cleaning/trenchless line replacement, plus assorted plumbing services
SERVICE AREA	Omaha, Nebraska; Council Bluffs, Iowa, metro area; and surrounding region
WEBSITE	www.americanrooter.biz

The logo of American Rooter Plumbing features an American flag. Trucks and employees are dressed up in red, white and blue. The company's core values are synonymous with mom and apple pie. What's more, the family-owned company is literally the result of an entrepreneurial American dream.

"I had a dream of owning my own company," says Bradd Conn, American Rooter Plumbing owner and president. "I woke up one morning after two or three weeks of the dream and that day told my girlfriend (now wife), Sarah, that I was going to start my own business. She was finishing school with a business degree and told me she could help."

So they did. Six years later, American Rooter Plumbing is expanding throughout the region surrounding Omaha, Nebraska. The company website shows a picture of the couple and their daughter Eliza. "Sarah is the brains of the operation," Bradd Conn says. "She runs it all behind the scenes."

While this sounds pretty homespun and idyllic, the fact is the company is a result of initiative, hard work and, yes, entrepreneurial spirit. Conn didn't inherit the company. He paid his dues, learned the trade on the job, and was determined to make a success of it.

That determination first caused him to enter a plumbing apprenticeship program in Scottsbluff, his hometown of about 15,000 people in a far western county that abuts Wyoming. While an apprenticeship program in Scottsbluff introduced him to a potentially satisfying trade, the community was too small to offer him the full opportunity he sought.

So in 2002, he packed up and traveled 450 miles east to Omaha. Nebraska's largest city is perched on the banks of the Missouri River, with nearly a half million people in the city and 1.3 million in the greater Omaha region. It turned out to be exactly the opportunity he sought.

Nebraska has an unusual decentralized licensing system for plumbers. Each urban jurisdiction is its own licensing jurisdiction. Therefore, to offer his services to the general Omaha market, Conn acquired five master

plumber licenses — plus a Nebraska Grade VI backflow license — so he can serve customers across the Omaha metro area, as well as across the river in Council Bluffs and other Iowa communities.

“Right away, I got a couple calls from potential customers and snaked a drainline for the first time. After a couple more calls, I decided I was either all in or not in at all.”

Bradd Conn



► Bradd Conn performs routine water heater (Whirlpool) maintenance.



▲ Bradd Conn, master plumber and owner of American Rooter Plumbing, uses a RIDGID SeeSnake to observe the condition of the drain after a routine drain cleaning at a home in Omaha, Nebraska.

While this multiple-licensing requirement is a paperwork hassle, complying has afforded the company a larger market. Most of his customers are residential and have properties in Nebraska, but some are in Iowa.

GOING ALL IN

After completing his four-year apprenticeship, Conn worked for several plumbing companies before and after moving to Omaha. In early 2012, when he and Sarah elected to follow his dream, he kept his job as a plumbing employee and launched a drain cleaning business. He focused solely on drains in the beginning because he had not yet acquired a master plumbing license, which happened in October of that year. Soon he learned there were customers ready to give his new company some business.

“Right away, I got a couple calls from potential customers and snaked a drainline for the first time,” he recalls. “After a couple more calls, I decided I was either all in or not in at all.”

He decided to take the plunge and gave his boss notice of intent to leave. In a classic entrepreneurial gambit, with

\$5,000 in his bank account as capital, he traded his Ford Ranger pickup for a service van, married his sweetheart and business partner, and American Rooter Plumbing was born. Six years later, the company is cleaning up in the sewer and drain market and also with a full range of plumbing services.

When Conn began his drain work, he quickly discovered he needed a water jetter to completely satisfy the demands of customers. So two months in, he bought a RIDGID KJ-3100 portable jetter with 3,000 psi working pressure. It effectively cleans lines from 2 to 10 inches in diameter. Conn kept the new cleaning tool on his truck so that if a clogged line needed jetting, he could immediately do the job. Such readiness helped him earn the loyalty of customers: 80% of his calls now are from repeat customers.

Business expansion has required him to add more tools and employees. As of February, the company has four employees, four trucks including two Mercedes-Benz Sprinter vans, and numerous pieces of equipment including a Spartan Tool 740 hybrid jetter that produces 4,000 psi, and five pipeline inspection cameras.

“We started using the cameras right off the bat,” Conn says. “Every sewer or drain cleaning job begins with camera work. Every time we go to a main drain, we want to be able to leave the property with the drain fully open. Also, we want to educate our customers about what’s going on with their lines. With the cameras, we can show them.”

A portable RIDGID SeeSnake rM200 camera is assigned to each truck and operator. The company has a microunit for special situations.

▶ Bradd Conn, master plumber and owner of American Rooter Plumbing, gathers supplies in the back of his Mercedes-Benz Sprinter for a job at a home in Omaha, Nebraska.

“One thing that makes us different from some other companies is that we give a 99-year warranty on the pipe we install.”
Bradd Conn



Pipe bursting work is a growing segment of company business, according to Conn. “Each year, there is more and more of it. We get lots of referrals. One thing that makes us different from some other companies is that we give a 99-year warranty on the pipe we install.” Most of the pipe in the area is clay, and the company’s HammerHead Trenchless pipe bursting system makes short work of it.



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▲ Bradd Conn shows his clients the condition of their water as part of a water heater maintenance call.

“When we are hiring, we make sure anyone we hire will fit our core values. If it takes longer to find someone because of that, so be it.”

Bradd Conn

PROGRESS AND VALUES

The bigger expansion news for American Rooter Plumbing is that it is moving into a new office. The Conns started their company at home with a lone service truck parked in the garage. Two years in, they purchased a couple of acres to serve as a home base where they could park company trucks. In mid-February, the company closed on a building in Omaha and began to renovate and move into it as a storefront location.

Looking ahead, Conn expects to stay within his current service territory but hopes to add more employees, equipment and customers. He says he would be content with about 15 people and six or seven trucks in a smoothly functioning midsize operation.

The progress is evident for a drain cleaning company that started in the midst of a weak recovery from a severe recession “You know, that’s the thing. I didn’t know any better. What I did was go around and talk to a lot of plumbers about doing their drain cleaning. They saw the values we had about how to treat people, about customer service. They really liked using us for cleaning work,” Conn says.

Customer feedback seems to confirm that the values Conn voiced in soliciting work from plumbers continue to guide the company. “Customers talk about quality of work, about being trustworthy, about being efficient,” Conn says,

Continued ▶



▲ Conn uses a RIDGID drum machine to remove roots during a drain cleaning job.

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adding that he holds at least three training sessions per week for his technicians. “We teach them how to keep their trucks clean, keep things organized, pay attention to details. All the little things add up.”


Sarah Conn created a slogan for American Rooter Plumbing. The company is where customers can find “The Sweet Plumber.” The tie-in acronym SWEET means a commitment to Self-improvement, a Wow experience, Educating clients, Encouraging one another and Transforming lives. Hard-bitten big-city dwellers might dismiss such sentiment as too saccharine. Yet it accurately conveys the enterprise’s allegiance to what Conn calls “Midwestern values.”

“I would describe Midwestern values as being about your faith, your family, taking care of one another and treating people like you want to be treated. It’s about being hardworking and never giving up,” Conn says. “SWEET is our guiding philosophy. It is. When I am training our techs, I ask them to tell me about their ‘wow’ experiences. And we encourage one another. When we are hiring, we make sure anyone we hire will fit our core values. If it takes longer to find someone because of that, so be it.”

Conn picked up the values as a member of a large family in Scottsbluff. That’s also where he caught the entrepreneurial bug. He was mowing lawns early and otherwise helping make his way. He grew up admiring his mother’s father, who had his own office-cleaning business, as well as a business-

owning uncle on his mother’s side. “I definitely got the entrepreneurial gene from my mother’s side of the family.”

He has nurtured that genetic impulse — with help from Sarah — and turned it into an established, forward-looking plumbing and drain cleaning company.

“It comes down to being able in my life to make something bigger than me, something that can touch the lives of a lot of people,” he says. “And to be able to build something and pass it down to my kids.” 

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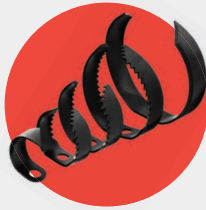
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Erik Gunn

Can You Make Money With Your Cash Reserves?

The low-interest savings environment is slowly changing. Explore these options for earning some dollars on your operating assets.
By Erik Gunn

If your finances are strong, you're holding three to six months of cash — perhaps more — to make sure you can cover bills easily without having to operate your business from check to check.

Cash reserves cover your ordinary bills along with the classic “rainy day,” such as when a truck breaks down and needs a major repair. Your reserves can be a lot of money, but you also need it ready at nearly a moment's notice. So what do you do with it?

Of course you can't put it in high-flying stocks. You can't take that risk if you want to pay your bills on time. The simplest and most risk-free option will be at a bank or credit union, where deposits are insured for up to \$250,000 by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. or the National Credit Union Administration. If you need more cash reserves than that, you may need more than one financial institution.

MAKING IT WORK FOR YOU

By now you might be feeling antsy. *Just leave all that money in the bank, to sit there? When I could be investing it in the market and making a lot more money on it?* Well, yes. Who wants to see their cash reserves nosedive along with that high-flying stock on one of those volatile trading days?

According to Bankrate, the average savings account nationwide is paying barely any interest (0.10% when this column was written) and the average checking account even less (0.08%). True, some banks offer special promotional interest rates on conventional checking or savings accounts. But those probably have fees tied to balance requirements or are limited to brand-new customers. Or the best rates might apply only up to a certain ceiling.

But there's good news. You don't have to park reserves in an account where they'll only deprive you of earnings you could make perfectly safely. The key? Don't keep all

your money in these safe but interest-stingy accounts. Treat them simply as a holding pen for the bills you're about to pay that month. For the rest of your reserves, there are better, and equally low-risk, choices.

MONEY MARKETS

Money market accounts, usually with check-writing privileges, are among the most popular alternatives for holding cash that needs to be liquid but can earn some interest while waiting to be put to use.

“A money market is like an interest-bearing account,” says Melinda M. Toy, CTP, vice president and director of treasury management for PyraMax Bank, a full service commercial bank in suburban Milwaukee. “It's 100% liquid.” It's also insured by the FDIC. And Toy says economic factors and competition are pushing money market interest rates into the range of 2% to 2.5%.

One consideration is that money market accounts limit you to six transactions a month. “It's not for paying frequent operating expenses,” Toy points out. But you could use such an account to hold your cash and simply make a single withdrawal once a month to cover all of your month's expenses.

Money market accounts also vary in minimum balance requirements. Some pay better returns tied to a higher minimum. As always, research the details of the account, shop around and compare several offerings.

CERTIFICATES OF DEPOSIT

Another federally insured instrument is that old standby: the bank certificate of deposit. CDs pay interest, too. Unlike the money market, CDs tie up your money in return for somewhat higher interest rates. The higher interest you want, the longer the CD's term is going to be — three months to five years or even longer.

For liquid cash, that probably sounds like a non-starter. But there's a workaround. One longtime strategy is to "ladder" CDs — staggering their expiration dates so that at any one time you may be within a month or so of being able to cash in if necessary.

Here's how it works: Suppose you have \$20,000. Instead of putting it all in a one-year CD, you might buy a three-month CD for \$5,000, a six-month CD for \$5,000, a nine-month CD for \$5,000, and a one-year CD for \$5,000.

As each of the lower-interest-rate, shorter-term CDs expires, you roll the money over into a new one-year CD at a higher return. That way, you'll have one that comes due every three months in perpetuity. Nine months in, all four CDs together will earn the equivalent of a one-year yield on your original \$20,000. But you can still get access to the money in \$5,000 increments every three months.

You can employ the same tactic over much longer terms, and you can time expiration dates so they're closer together. Of course, shooting for a longer maturity date, a shorter time between CD expiration dates, or both will take longer to make it all.

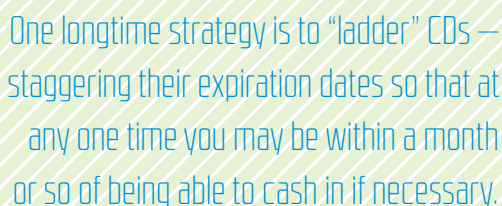
Toy points to another recent offering from some banks and credit unions: so-called liquid CDs. "It's a CD, but it's kind of like a money market," she explains. It offers the higher earnings of a CD rate, but allows additional, though limited, access to funds. For example, Toy has seen some that permit at least one withdrawal without a penalty over the term of the certificate.

If your financial institution offers such an instrument, consider it. It won't be as liquid as a money market account, so you can't use it as feedstock to cover those monthly bills from your business checking account. But it does offer a secure, money-earning harbor for an emergency stash.

Then there's another CD variation, Toy says, one for clients who want the security and high interest of a CD but don't need liquidity, and who are managing reserves that exceed the FDIC limit of \$250,000.

PyraMax Bank and other banks are partnering with other financial service agencies to offer CDARS. The term is short for the Certificate of Deposit Account Registry Service, and what they do is essentially divide the assets of the instrument among several banks so that each bank's share is at or below the \$250,000 limit.

For example, if you wanted to put \$2 million into a CD with your participating bank, the program could then turn that into eight individual security interests, each totaling \$250,000. Your bank might have one security interest up to \$250,000, and one would be imputed to each of several other participating banks. But instead of having to deal with all eight banks, you only have to work with your home bank, and on paper it is still a single account with all \$2 million.



One longtime strategy is to "ladder" CDs — staggering their expiration dates so that at any one time you may be within a month or so of being able to cash in if necessary.

ONLINE BANKING

Another option is an online bank. Bankrate reports savings interest rates of 2% or more from some online banks, which also offer money markets and CDs. Some can offer higher savings account interest rates because they don't have brick-and-mortar overhead costs. Bankrate periodically evaluates and rates the best of these banks; check their website at www.bankrate.com/banking/best-online-banks.

As with traditional banks, however, they might require a higher minimum balance for the best rates. And you must do all your business electronically, so you can't deposit cash directly, although online banks offer ATM access for cash withdrawals. Many even reimburse you (although there's a monthly cap) if the ATM you use charges a fee.

Before choosing an online bank, carefully research fees for transactions, monthly account maintenance or falling below a minimum balance. A miscalculation could undercut any financial advantages you gain. And consider whether you are more comfortable working with a banker who can give you advice on the unique circumstances of your business.

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INVESTING

If your objective is absolute safety, you're better off sticking with a bank account of some kind. But as long as your funds are spread around, you could consider some additional options. They might make you money, but they aren't insured the way banks are. So you could lose money, too.

Dividend stocks are one of those options. Companies that pay dividends on their stock are usually thought to be more stable overall, so in addition to paying periodic dividends, their price may appreciate in a generally favorable market. Think tortoise, not hare.

But never put money in any particular investment unless you can afford to lose it all. The most rock-solid company could be one catastrophic event away from collapse, from a natural disaster, financial scandal or unexpected competitive disruptor. So whatever you do, don't consider those your short- or even medium-term emergency reserves. **PI**



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WIDELY ACCEPTED

Historically alternatives to salt softeners have suffered from the inconsistent record of Magnetic devices. Aqua-Rex's advanced electronic products have been held back by this negative association in spite of their wide acceptance overseas. The lack of an acceptable performance standard has been a major obstacle to their adoption.

83% SCALE REDUCTION

The Rapid Scaling Test uses a small volume of water heated to a high temperature for a short period of time to generate scale on the heater which can then be accurately weighed. The average of four runs, with and without treatment, gives an average weight

of scale formed. The reduction of scale in Aqua-Rex's case was 83%. This result alone lays to rest the myth perpetuated by the softener industry that alternative technologies just don't work.

ENVIRONMENT FRIENDLY

There is an increasing clamour for softener alternatives to deliver environmental, economic and efficiency benefits. Chloride discharges from softeners have a significant detrimental effect on water quality reducing the opportunity for reuse in water deficient regions and prompting legislation for softener bans.

COST EFFECTIVE & ZERO MAINTENANCE

Aqua-Rex is now a proven effective alternative that can deliver the benefits of a softener at a much lower cost and with absolutely zero maintenance requirements. It uses ultra-high frequencies to cause scale to form in suspension in the water rather than encrusting surfaces. It breaks up old scale when retrofitted to an old system and it partially softens hot water as well, creating better lathering in soaps, improving laundry and reducing the use of detergents.

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Power Surge

RIDGID drain machine drums up revenue, boosts word-of-mouth referrals for Cleveland plumber *By Ken Wysocky*

To keep growing his 7-year-old plumbing business, Christopher Sbrocco — the owner of Pro Service Plumbing in Cleveland — invests in durable, revenue-generating equipment; turns up the volume, as in serving as many customers per day as possible; and aims to generate word-of-mouth referrals, the best form of advertising.

The RIDGID K-6200 drum drain-cleaning machine he bought earlier this year helps him pull off this trifecta on a weekly basis. It's a durable unit that amps up sales. It gets through clogs quickly, allowing technicians to make more service calls. And after the machine proves its mettle, grateful customers refer the company to friends and family, he says.

A good example is a root intrusion in a lateral line that had thwarted Pro Service Plumbing technicians' efforts to

remove it with another drain machine the company owns. Sbrocco had just purchased the K-6200, so he was "licking his chops" to get out on a job and use it, he says.

"I knew it was a root intrusion because there was a huge tree by a corner of the house, near a recently remodeled basement bathroom where the line was clogged," says Sbrocco, 34, who established his business in 2012. The company has six employees, runs four service trucks and does everything from new construction plumbing (residential and light commercial) to service-and-repair work and drain cleaning, all in the metro Cleveland area. "The first-floor powder room, located right above the basement bathroom, was blocked, too.

"The cable on the other machine was stuck, and the guys were nervous it would happen again," he continues.

"It was the perfect situation to break out the new machine. I got out there and slowly worked at it and got the line open.

◀ Christopher Sbrocco, owner of Pro Service Plumbing in Cleveland, poses with his RIDGID K-6200 drain drum machine at his company's shop. (Photo courtesy of Pro Service Plumbing)



“It was the perfect situation to break out the new machine. I got out there and slowly worked at it and got the line open. The roots were about a half-inch thick, but the K-6200 cut right through them.”

Christopher Sbrocco



COMPANY Pro Service Plumbing, Cleveland

OWNER Christopher Sbrocco

MACHINE RIDGID K-6200 drum drain machine

FUNCTION Unclogging 3- to 6-inch-diameter drainlines

FEATURES Compact footprint (29 1/2 inches long, 18 3/4 inches wide and 43 1/2 inches tall); weighs 180 pounds; holds 100 feet of 5/8-inch-diameter cable; 5.6-amp reversible AC motor (4/10 hp, 285 rpm); drum slows down if blade becomes lodged; audible blockage-detection warning; direct-drive technology; AUTOFEED cable control

COST Approximately \$2,750

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technician-retention tool in an industry where scarce labor is a constant challenge for contractors. “I want my guys to be set up with the best equipment and the right materials for jobs,” he notes. “And I’m willing to pay more for the best equipment. No technician likes to work with machines and tools that break down on the job.”

PRODUCTIVE AND DURABLE

Then there’s a little thing called productivity. Sbrocco believes that to be successful and achieve growth, Pro Service Plumbing needs to provide as many services as possible. As such, getting to the next job quickly is a high priority.

“We have a lot going on — we’re getting pulled in a thousand different directions every week,” he says. “So we want to get in on jobs and get out. Some guys want to park on a job — we don’t. The more jobs we do, the more customer interactions we have and the more people we have talking about our services.”

“We have a lot going on — we’re getting pulled in a thousand different directions every week. So we want to get in on jobs and get out. Some guys want to park on a job — we don’t.”

Christopher Sbrocco

“The roots were about a half-inch thick, but the K-6200 cut right through them,” he adds. “I was impressed by the power. This machine is a beast.”

MANEUVERABILITY MATTERS

Sbrocco decided to invest about \$2,750 in the drum machine for several reasons. One was its compact footprint (29 1/2 inches long, 18 3/4 inches wide and 43 1/2 inches tall), which is an asset when trying to maneuver through homes and operate in small bathrooms.


“Most times, if we can’t find an outside clean-out, we have to bring the machine into a house, and that small footprint makes a big difference,” he explains. “It also comes in handy if we have to pull the toilet (to start drain cleaning) and we can’t take it out of the bathroom because there’s carpeting outside the room that we don’t want to get dirty. But the K-6200 still is small enough to work in close quarters.”

Furthermore, Sbrocco wanted a machine that was small enough to be maneuverable but big enough to handle tough clogs. “I want to have confidence — be able to tell customers we have the right equipment for the job,” he says.

In addition, investing in new technology serves as a

The K-6200 aids productivity because the cables and heads can be swapped out quickly and easily. And so far, the machine has proved to be durable and reliable. “We haven’t had any downtime,” Sbrocco says. “And that’s very beneficial. There’s nothing worse than getting on a job and finding you can’t cable the drain.”

As his company grows, Sbrocco plans to keep buying K-6200s. Designed to clear 3- to 6-inch-diameter drainlines, the unit features 100 feet of 5/8-inch-diameter cable, a 5.6-amp reversible AC motor (4/10 hp, 285 rpm), direct-drive technology, an audible alert that sounds when the blade encounters a blockage and autofeed cable control. “It’s the perfect machine to keep on buying as we grow in scale,” he says. “It’s big enough to handle anything but small enough to work in close quarters.”

“My philosophy is let’s be professionals and invest in the right tools for the right job,” he concludes. “Customers hire us to get jobs done, and the K-6200 helps us do just that.” 



Randy Lorge

Backflow in Time

Teaching new standards to plumbers in areas where plumbing is substandard at best is a step in the right direction *By Randy Lorge*

Day in and day out we go about our lives as plumbers doing what we do best — plumbing. Whether it's new construction, remodels or service work, we simply go to work and get it done.

Not only do we get it done, but we correctly install the plumbing following a standard procedure or, basically, we install it according to our local plumbing codes and regulations.

TEACHING ASSIGNMENT

As many of you know, I have had some incredible opportunities to travel to various places around the world where there is a lack of plumbing. With my team, we have been able to change lives by simply improving the conditions we encountered by installing safe water and sanitation systems.

Via the Community Plumbing Challenge (www.commplumbing.org), I have relearned the importance of plumbing. My passion for this trade has doubled, and I simply cannot express enough to all of you how important the work you do every day is.

This was never more evident than recently when I traveled to Indonesia for a teaching assignment. From March 10-16, I taught a Train the Trainer plumbing course to 14 instructors from various islands of Indonesia. The course was held in Bekasi, Jawa Barat, at the PT International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials headquarters. The IAPMO hired me to instruct these trainers from various technical colleges and universities on the intricacies of teaching the country's newly adopted standard SNI 8153:2015, Plumbing Systems for Buildings.

THE COURSE

The course was laid out in such a way that four levels of certification could be achieved, beginning with the most basic understanding of the plumbing standard to an

They showed a dedication to not only learning the plumbing standard, but a desire to learn how to become better teachers for their students as well.

advanced level of design and plan submittal.

The goal was to teach the student/instructors the standard, certify them as trainers and then send them back to their schools where they would begin training their students in the use of the standard and eventually becoming certified plumbers.

The class and I worked six- to 10-hour days learning the standard and applying it to various types of designs. We covered the entire gamut of plumbing in 60 hours. Everything from water sizing, drain and vent, backflow, storm and layout was covered. It was an intense week of training.

The instructors who attended the class were an incredible group. They showed a dedication to not only learning the plumbing standard, but a desire to learn how to become better teachers for their students as well. While the common language of the country is Bahasa, these students/teachers impressed me by being able to communicate (both spoken and written) with me in English. That skill alone was very impressive and very much appreciated by yours truly who cannot speak 1 ounce of Bahasa.

A LITTLE REFLECTION

Prior to flying to Indonesia, I spent several months learning the SNI 8153:2015 standard. With the assistance of the IAPMO training department and members of the

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training and education committee, we put together several PowerPoint presentations, worksheets and training aids that assisted me with the presentation.

Now, I must remind you: I'm a plumber from Wisconsin where we have our own state-written plumbing code. SNI 8153:2015 was developed using requirements based on the Uniform Plumbing Code. I not only had to put the presentation together in a way that would be easier for the students to learn, I had to teach myself a new plumbing code. Then to top it off, I had to learn how to convert imperial measures to metric, which of course is the system used by almost every other country in the world except the U.S. Thank goodness for the converter app on my phone.

It was also during this time that I began to think about how the pioneers of our plumbing industry must have felt as they developed training materials for what has now become our modern-day plumbing apprenticeship training. Here I was in 2019 putting together presentations for a country that currently doesn't have a formal training program focusing specifically on plumbing. The importance of this training is something that each and every one of you can relate to.

How has plumbing been installed for all these years in Indonesia without this type of training? The answer is that

for the larger metropolitan areas of the country, it has been engineered and then laborers have installed it. For other areas outside of the cities, though, it was plain to see that plumbing was somewhat of an afterthought.

Lack of safe water and sanitation was front and center on several of the areas I visited while I was there. To simply say, "Don't drink the water" to this plumber is something I find unacceptable. We don't wear our "Plumbers Protect the Health of the Nation" badge only when we are here at home. It's a part of us we take everywhere we go. I had the incredible opportunity to go back in time to hopefully change the future of plumbing in another country.

Keep doing what you do; we can't afford to go backward. 📧

Randy Lorge is a third-generation plumber and the Director of Workforce Training and Development for the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials (IAPMO). Lorge is also a member of the planning team for the International Water and Hygiene Foundation (IWSH). This 501(c)3. Foundation has completed water and sanitation projects for those less fortunate in India, South Africa, Indonesia, and more recently, the United States. He enjoys time with his family and spending as much time as possible in his deer stand. To contact Lorge, email editor@plumbermag.com.

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Maximizing Profits for Any Shop Size

Implementing different technologies can keep your company profitable by allowing you to see what is happening *By Jared Raney*

Every plumbing contractor has down years where small dollars can make or break it. The best way to weather business downturns is to ensure your company is running lean while business is good.

That means implementing programs — like GPS monitoring and routing, digital invoicing and electronic infrastructure, not to mention the oft-touted preventive maintenance.

“The dynamics of doing what we do — the big thing in keeping our costs down — is trying to make everybody work smarter, not harder,” says Darrin Black, president of Black Plumbing in Abilene, Texas. “It’s more of an intentional thought process that they’ve got to be aware of. There are a lot of cost-saving measures to ensure the job is being done efficiently.”

EYE ON THE PRIZE

“GPS is a huge benefit, honestly,” says Justin Moe, CEO and founder of All Ways Drains in Minnesota’s Twin Cities. “I personally think it’s one of the best decisions we’ve ever made.”

Moe says he has had clients claim that a technician billed them for longer than they were at a job. With GPS, simply printing the GPS record clears up that issue quickly.

“The dynamics of doing what we do — the big thing in keeping our costs down — is trying to make everybody work smarter, not harder.”

Darrin Black



▲ A crew from Black Plumbing in Abilene, Texas, work on a job site in town. The company outfits each vehicle with GPS devices to track fuel usage and time on jobs in an effort to boost efficiency. (Photography by Cory Jones)

▶ Justin Moe, owner of All Ways Drains in Minnesota poses for a photo near his service van. (Photography by Brad Stauffer)

The same could go for the reverse, ensuring that GPS records line up with employees' time sheets and that they are only using their work vans for work purposes.

All Ways Drains uses Verizon Connect software for fleet management. GPS offers a number of benefits, not all of them apparent on the surface.

"First of all, you can obviously track them, watch their speed, their idle time — and the benefits don't stop there," Black says. "The thought process is not to cross paths for the guys going up and down the road all day long."

Black Plumbing, like most plumbing companies of its size, runs jobs through superintendents, who are in charge of directing individual technicians. This gives those superintendents a lot of potential for cost savings — or wasted time.

The GPS helps to determine the most efficient assignments and routes for technicians.

"There's a lot of logistical stuff that goes into scheduling jobs," Black says. "Being that we cover such a large area, if we're on the north side, then we try to schedule guys to stay on the north side and so on."

A NECESSARY EVIL

Preventive maintenance may seem paradoxical when it comes to saving money — paying someone by the hour to work on equipment when it seems to be working fine seems like throwing money away. In the long run, it makes equipment last longer, and when properly executed, it will save thousands of dollars by extending the life of your equipment. The cost of ongoing maintenance is a pittance when compared to replacing equipment due to premature failure.

"When a piece of equipment comes in from a job site, it gets serviced. It gets greased, oiled — it gets everything done to it after every use," Black says. "We don't drive little trucks. I mean, we're spending \$80,000 to \$90,000, so when they come in, we're maintaining them. The cost-efficiency is obviously: We keep them updated and maintained, and they keep running up and down the road."

Depending on the size of your shop, where to do maintenance and repairs can be a big influence on the bottom line.

"Regular maintenance needs to be done, just like anything else. It's always a good idea on any vehicle," Moe says. "We do have an in-house mechanic — rather than paying mechanic rates at shops, I'm getting by cheaper through having an in-house mechanic."

All Ways Drains runs between 15 and 20 trucks. The



"We've been pretty lucky. Things have gone pretty well, but we've worked very hard at it — there is no replacement for hard work. You have to work at this stuff. And we make mistakes too — all the time — and there's problems and hiccups."

Justin Moe

key is having enough work for an in-house technician to fill their time and justify the cost of retaining them, as well as managing resources for a mechanic shop.

DON'T LET DOLLARS FALL THROUGH THE CRACKS

The biggest difficulty in all these cost-savings methods is simply managing all the information, which is where a solid data infrastructure becomes a necessity. Black Plumbing recently began using electronic software to manage invoicing and job estimates and is in the process of choosing a fleet management computer system.

"We can enter everything into the computer system and keep track of our fleet better. We need to — we needed to five years ago. We just haven't decided on the program that we're going to go with just yet," Black says.

Most of a plumbing company's capital is sunk into inventory, so managing whatever type of parts requisition method effectively can have a huge impact on profits.

Continued ▶



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In the **SHOP**

Black Plumbing is moving in the direction of stock deliveries to save on downtime, as well as saving money on parts ordering and inventory.

They also have trailers that can carry more parts and supplies for large jobs.

"Going to a job site one time — making a good list of everything we're going to need for that job and getting it one time — it just alleviates the unnecessary trips to the supply houses," Black says.

There are a number of methods and technologies to save money on inventory.

Their digital system has been such a cost-saving endeavor that Black's only regret is that he hasn't been able to devote more man-hours to utilizing all the software features.

"As busy as we are — knock on wood — I wish we had more time to devote toward having somebody on staff to monitor that and look at it. We don't have the staff or manpower to monitor that as much as we need to," he says. "The cost savings, if we did, we'd probably prove to ourselves that it would be worth the manpower — it's just unrealized cost savings right now."

A lot of owners don't like thinking about the minutiae of nickel-and-dime cost savings, but Black points out that those small savings can add up quickly.

"For the most part, when I'm talking about cost-efficiency, we're at 90% efficiency. But when you're running 30 trucks, that 10% adds up to be quite a bit," he says. "Until you get something better-equipped within the system and within your grasp, it's really going to be hard to ever realize what's lost until the savings come back after incorporating something."

PROFIT REQUIRES CHANGE

Underestimating the impact of cost-saving efforts has been the bane of many plumbing companies, and at the end of the day, it's often a matter of putting in the due diligence on small matters like these.

"We've been pretty lucky. Things have gone pretty well, but we've worked very hard at it — there is no replacement for hard work," Moe says. "You have to work at this stuff. And we make mistakes too — all the time — and there's problems and hiccups."

To truly optimize cost savings, the only real solution is being proactive.

"A lot of it is continued education, continual communication between me, the guys, superintendents, our staff personnel," Black says. "Nobody wants change, but we went to the computer system last year. The nice thing is we went through the bumps and bruises, and I think now everybody sees the need." **P**

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JOAN KOEHNE

Finding Structure

There are advantages to both franchises and going solo; take a look at what best fits in with what you want

By Joan Koehne

A plumber who starts his own business has a lot of questions to answer. Is it best to go it alone? Work with a partner? Join a franchise?

Plumber Jim Dunn chose to operate solo. After working for other plumbers for 20 years, he opened Above and Beyond Plumbing in 2005. He specializes in residential service work in the Indianapolis area. His son David joined the business in 2011 and worked with his dad for four years. David, 20, passed away unexpectedly in 2015.

In contrast, plumber Jose Pina owns Mr. Rooter Plumbing of San Bernardino, California. Pina began his career as a carpenter but switched to plumbing in 2006. In 2016, he opened a plumbing business and joined the Mr. Rooter franchise the same year.

Two different plumbers with two different organizational structures. Although different in many ways, the two entrepreneurs had something in common: Both were tired of working for other people.

“The only way to have it the way I liked it was to start on my own,” Pina says.

CONSIDERING FRANCHISES

“You get in a big company and you’re just another number,” Dunn says.

Dunn worked for big companies that emphasized quantity. How many calls can one technician run? He emphasized quality and wanted to take time with each customer. He also wanted more control over his work schedule.

“The main thing really was having control over your own life,” Dunn says. “Having kids, I missed too many recitals, football games and soccer games working for other companies, so I started my own company.”

Dunn posed one question for plumbers considering a franchise arrangement: What can they do for me that I can’t do for myself? The same question works for partnerships. How can you benefit from working with a partner?

“The main thing really was having control over your own life. Having kids, I missed too many recitals, football games and soccer games working for other companies, so I started my own company.”

Jim Dunn

A franchise is advantageous for a plumber without business experience, Pina says. With a franchise, everything is laid out for you. “They’ve helped me create a system that I would never have had,” he says.

Contrast this to Dunn’s method of developing operations: “One hurdle at a time — basically one mountain at a time. I just kept jumping through the hoops and tried to figure it out,” he says.

When Pina has doubts or questions, he turns to his franchise consultant for reassurance and answers. “They helped me get through some rough periods,” he says.

LESSONS LEARNED

One of the rough periods occurred after Pina purchased a second territory in June 2018. For the first four months, none of the marketing was working. By October, the franchise’s marketing consultants turned things around and the area grew by tenfold.

“Stay on top of your marketing personnel,” Pina says. “Be on the phone; look over the paperwork; go over data with them.”

Dunn learned his own hard-knock lessons in marketing, especially when transitioning to digital marketing, search engine optimization and online reviews.

“Before, all you needed was a truck, tools, licenses and an ad in the phone book. The more money you threw at the phone book, the more money you’d make,” Dunn says.

Times have changed.

“It’s not easy,” Dunn says. “I’ve been burnt a lot of times. You really gotta watch it. Find someone you can trust to do the SEO.”

The power of franchise marketing put Mr. Rooter Plumbing of San Bernardino on a fast track to success. “Wow, we haven’t looked back,” Pina says, referring to 2016. “We ended up being Franchise Rookie of the Year and did over \$1 million in sales the first six months.”

The company grew from three to four employees to 10. Seven technicians are on the road, supported by three office personnel. Pina says he changed his future by becoming a franchisee.

“I could either be a plumber for the rest of my life working for my own company or I can be a business owner by starting a franchise,” Pina says.

ALL THE FACTORS

Before committing to Mr. Rooter, Pina considered the monthly franchise fee.

“Are franchises expensive? Yes. But do they give you the keys and knowledge to get to that point in your life when you’re finally stable? Yes,” Pina says.

A loss of identity is another factor associated with franchises.

“It’s important to create that identity because people want to know you’re a local,” Pina says. “I make it personal. If there’s any problems, I can knock on your door or make a phone call.”

As a sole proprietor, Dunn maintains his independence, operating the company the way he wants. He creates his own schedule, clustering jobs together in the same area whenever he can.

“The closer your jobs are together, the more you can get done and the less mileage you put on your vehicles,” Dunn says.

Dunn also answers his own phone calls. Above and Beyond Plumbing has three different phone numbers, each coinciding with a prefix in a local city. That way, customers call a prefix they recognize. All three lines forward to Dunn’s cellphone, and he speaks with customers directly.

“I noticed early on that people like actually talking to the plumber when they call,” Dunn says.

With lower overhead than a larger company, Dunn can charge less than the competition and pick up enough jobs to make a decent living. After 34 years as a plumber, Dunn says he’s not ready to retire.

“I could either be a plumber for the rest of my life working for my own company or I can be a business owner by starting a franchise.”

Jose Pina

“I like working with my hands. I like helping people out,” Dunn says. “That’s what you’re doing when you’re plumbing — helping people out.”

Creating the structure of a plumbing company involves personal, legal, financial and business considerations. Each structure has advantages and disadvantages, but the ultimate outcome is job satisfaction. **PI**

Editor’s Note

This is a series of business stories focused on helping plumbers start their own company. Throughout the year, we’ll offer different tips geared toward those looking at starting their own operation. If you have any suggestions, email us at editor@plumbermag.com.

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BRADFORD WHITE WATER HEATERS 725 Talamore Dr., Ambler, PA 19002 800-523-2931 www.bradfordwhite.com bwc.communications@bradfordwhite.com See ad on page 17 	AeroTherm Series		✓	✓								✓		
	ElectriFLEX HD	✓		✓										
	Infiniti K Series		✓		✓	✓					✓			
	PowerStor Series SS	✓	✓										✓	
	eF Series	✓			✓									

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Thinking Smart

Plumbers need to take a look at smart technology on the market as homeowners begin to want more of that in their homes *By Kim Bliss*

Home automation. You might think it's a futuristic idea with technologies controlling everything, from lights to lawn mowers. However, you may be surprised to learn these solutions — and the opportunities they offer — are already here.

Homeowners can now automate almost anything in their homes, including windows, blinds, appliances, clocks, speakers, doorbells, surveillance cameras, home security systems, garage doors, climate control systems, cleaning systems, sprinkler systems and even food preparation.

The reality of home automation is not in the future. It's now.

About one in 50 insured homes has a property damage claim caused by water damage or freezing each year, and water damage ranks as the second-most-common home insurance claim.

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN FOR PLUMBERS?

The industry has evolved to bring the Internet of Things to plumbing. There are now smart water technology systems that give homeowners real-time access to their plumbing, enabling them to learn about leaks as soon as they happen and offering the power to remotely shut off the water when they're away to prevent catastrophic leaks and costly damage.

Savvy homeowners looking to home-automation solutions for greater ease and reassurance in their lives would love to be connected to their plumbing systems. Think about it: What if a pipe bursts when they're on vacation? Or what about the toilet flapper that has been quietly wasting water (and money) for months?

Or how about those forgetful moments when someone accidentally leaves a faucet running (most likely the tub) and walks away to check on something, only to get distracted and return later to inches of water on the floor?

Water leaks and accidental water misuse are real. Nearly every homeowner has experienced a water incident at one time or another. As plumbers, you see this on a regular basis in your line of work.

To reinforce this idea, ponder these stats:

- According to the Insurance Information Institute, water damage accounts for almost half of all property-damage claims.
- About one in 50 insured homes has a property damage claim caused by water damage or freezing each year, and water damage ranks as the second-most-common home insurance claim.
- Of homeowners who have experienced a water leak claim in the past two years, 57% spent more than \$5,000 on cleanup costs and 15% spent \$20,000 or more.
- Forty-one percent of homeowners say a device that alerts them to water leaks is highly appealing.

If you haven't thought about it, now's the time. Smart water technologies are the next frontier in the connected home, and you can benefit greatly from this opportunity. Adding a smart water technology to your plumbing business will expand your reach into new customers' homes and also provide a valuable benefit for service work when leaks are detected.

It's a twofold opportunity. First, you can provide the technology to new and existing customers, then you can benefit from the technology when it detects a leak or some other plumbing issue and homeowners need service work.

These systems are a wonderful revenue generator for anyone in the plumbing industry — from the established contractor to someone just breaking into the industry. And they can apply to any type of application, from new

construction to remodels to repipes — essentially anywhere there's residential plumbing.

HOW TO GET STARTED

How do you add this opportunity to your business? First, do your research. There are varying levels of smart water technology systems on the market right now. Some are designed for the DIY homeowner, while others are specifically for the professional plumber.

The Phyn Plus smart water assistant and shutoff from Uponor, for example, is a connected plumbing device that is installed by trained, licensed plumbers. You apply online at www.uponorprosquad.com to be considered for membership into the Pro Squad nationwide network. Then, after acceptance, you receive exclusive training and ongoing support to ensure success throughout the installation, setup and continuing service process.

Being familiar with the internet and having some tech savvy is helpful, of course, when learning these new technologies. However, being part of a professional, exclusive installer network can provide you with all the training and support you need. All that's required is a willingness to learn and an eagerness to grow your business.

Smart water technologies offer unprecedented opportunity for plumbers, opening up an untapped market with homeowners while also providing an avenue for direct access to service work.

Savvy homeowners looking to home-automation solutions for greater ease and reassurance in their lives would love to be connected to their plumbing systems.

With these connected technologies, customers can contact you straight from their smart device's app whenever they need help. They no longer need worry about finding the right professional for the job. Meanwhile, it ensures a faithful client base for you.

So, if you're ready to up the ante in your business, why not offer a smart, water-leak-detection system? Think about all the positives it can offer. Consider how easy it

is to get trained and up and running on a technology that is going to be in demand.

Seize the opportunity, and be one of the first in your area to offer a smart water technology. It will give your current customers a valuable home-automation solution they will love while also opening doors to new customers you might never have otherwise encountered. **PI**

Kim Bliss is the content development manager at Uponor. She can be reached at kim.bliss@uponor.com.

Residential Plumbing/Water Quality and Conditioning

By Craig Mandli

Boilers

Bosch Thermotechnology Greenstar floor boiler

The 5% AFUE **Greenstar** floor boiler series from **Bosch Thermotechnology** is designed to upgrade cast iron floor boilers to an ultra-high-efficient condensing boiler at lower installed cost by simplifying the installation. There is no additional cost to build a wall or move the boiler outside a wall because it's floor standing. A coated heat exchanger also reduces scale buildup, reduces service, maintains high efficiency and extends the life of the boiler. **800-283-3787; www.boschheatingandcooling.com.**



Patterson-Kelley MACH

The **MACH** condensing boiler from **Patterson-Kelley** increases turndown, with emphasis on system efficiency, reliability and serviceability. By using a mechanical method to achieve higher turndown, it eliminates the need to add excess air, which can reduce the dew point of the flue gas and adversely affect efficiency. It is available with 10-1 mechanical turndown capabilities for natural gas models C750, C900 and C1050; and it is suitable for a variety of applications. It has the flexibility to match input to the building load, and better control over temperature differential between return water and exhaust temperature. **570-476-7261; www.harscopk.com.**



Coatings/Linings/Sealants

HoldRite HydroFlame sealants

HoldRite HydroFlame sealants include caulks, wraps, collars, putty pads and box inserts. The series complements its line of telescopic firestop products, making it a single-source solution for maintaining the fire resistance of rated and nonrated walls, floors and ceilings in new and retrofit construction. Nonsagging, nontoxic, high-performance intumescent sealants prevent the spread of flames and hot gases while allowing for dynamic movement. This economical, easy-to-use series accommodates plastics, insulated pipe, fiberglass, metal and other penetrative materials, helping plumbers increase profits and reduce installation times. **800-321-0316; www.holdrite.com.**



Pipe Lining Supply Quik-Coating System

The hassle of repeated cleaning of drain, waste and vent piping can be solved, permanently, with the **Quik-Coating System** for pipe rehabilitation from **Pipe Lining Supply** that complies with the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials' Uniform Plumbing Code and International Code Council standards. The system applies a modified polyurea resin to the surface of a cleaned pipe, plugging holes and providing a corrosion-free surface to protect the pipe from further deterioration and the buildup of scale and/or prevent roots from intruding through the leaking pipe. **888-354-6464; www.pipeliningupply.com.**



Controls/Control Panels

Aquaworx by Infiltrator Intelligent Pump Control Panel

The IPC Panel from Aquaworx by Infiltrator leverages simple pressure transducer technology to provide an innovative approach to enhance pump system performance. Easy to install, it is powered by an embedded microprocessor in the pump controller and a floatless pressure transducer in the pump chamber. It monitors liquid levels, controls pumping time intervals, logs events in real time and calculates daily system flow. It stores up to 4,000 events in a date/time-stamped event log. The Mountable and Removable Controller hand-held user interface is designed to program the unit. The MARC unit can be removed for use on multiple panels, offering a cost-effective solution with expanded capability. **800-221-4436; www.infiltratorwater.com.**



FloLogic System

The FloLogic System with CONNECT app-based operation delivers a comprehensive and smart leak control solution to homes and businesses with water service from 3/4 up to 2 inches. All systems offer real-time leak detecting abilities beginning at 1/2 ounces of water flow-per-minute, thanks to EverWatch leak-sensing technology. When a leak is detected, the water is shut off automatically and the users receive an alert through a smartphone app. The CONNECT module also features a thermometer, allowing low room-temperature alerts and automatic water shut-offs. **877-356-5644; www.flologic.com.**



Level Sense unit

The Wi-Fi-enabled Level Sense unit can be used in utility rooms, water heaters, kitchen sinks, sump pumps and crawl spaces. It not only senses temperature and humidity, but also functions as a water level measurement device, a leak detector and a high (or low) water alarm. The unit joins the customer's local home wireless network and sends notifications by email or text message. It has a 110 dB siren and rechargeable backup battery. The unit can be configured to send a copy of all notifications to the installer,

providing the opportunity to contact the customer and follow up with service. It has a relay output for integration into alarm systems and external valve control. **314-787-8059; www.level-sense.com.**

SJE-Rhombus Model 122

The Model 122 control panel from SJE-Rhombus controls two 120/208/240-volt, single-phase pumps in water and sewage installations. This panel includes a duplex controller for pump control, alternation and alarm. It includes float status LEDs, a control/ alarm power on/off switch with LED indicator, pump run LEDs, HOA switches, a pump lead lag selector switch and auxiliary contacts. It has built-in lag pump delay time, pump failure detection and float out of sequence. In addition, there are four user-selectable field programmable operations: alarm steady state or flashing; alarm auto reset or manual reset; pump failure notification; and optional seal failure alarm beacon notification or beacon plus horn activation. It is available in a NEMA 4X enclosure designed for easy installation and additional protection from the elements. It is UL/cUL listed. **888-342-5753; www.sjrhombus.com.**



Uponor Phyn Plus

The Phyn Plus from Uponor includes a web-based portal allowing users to understand water use, mitigate losses from leaks, and address water conservation and sustainability mandates across their portfolios. Managers can spot trends and efficiencies, as well as mitigate leak damage by shutting off water remotely. The system will also alert users to freeze pressure buildups anywhere in the home before a pipe burst occurs. The system is compatible with Amazon Alexa, allowing Alexa to provide updates on water consumption. This smart home technology offers a new app feature called Water Use Plus, providing homeowners with insights about water consumption by fixture type. **952-997-4238; www.uponorpro.com.**



Drains

Infinity Drain decorative shower drains



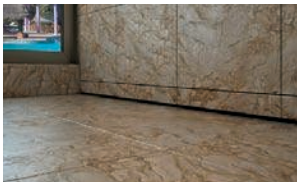
Infinity Drain decorative shower drains are available in eight distinctive designs or in a Tile Drain to make the drain disappear. A perfectly milled resistance fit holds the decorative plate in the throat without the need for setscrews or magnets. Three sizes, multiple stocked finishes, and standard or high-flow options are available. They are suited for residential and commercial applications. **516-767-6786; www.infinitydrain.com.**

LUXE Linear Drains Subway



Constructed of durable, hand-polished 304-grade stainless steel, the **Subway** pattern linear shower drain from **LUXE Linear Drains** offers a clean-lined, modern aesthetic. It fits all standard 2-inch clamping flanged floor drains, and the grate is easily removable for maintenance and cleaning. The V-shaped inner channel facilitates center drainage — up to a 9 gpm drain rate. It is available in standard 26-, 30-, 36-, 40-, 48- and 60-inch lengths in a standard satin stainless finish, along with custom lengths and finishes. The drain is installed independent of all waterproofing methods and procedures. It is tested and cUPC-certified and -approved by the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials for residential and commercial use in North America. **877-398-8110; www.lineardrains.com.**

QuickDrain USA WallDrain



The linear **WallDrain** from **QuickDrain USA** allows for the most seamless curbed or curbless (ADA) shower design possible — by installing the drain in the wall itself — rendering it virtually invisible. The drain's magnetic vertical cover is designed to accept an insert of the same tile or solid surface material used in the shower to yield a drain that virtually “disappears.” The integrated drain, combined with a presloped shower pan and waterproofing, represents a total shower solution for eliminating leaks and standing water. It has a 316L marine-grade stainless steel drain body and accommodates shower lengths of 26 to 96 inches. On-site adjustability permits shower lengths of 26 to 72 inches with a single drain and 56 to 96 inches with two drains linked together. It is ADA and UPC-approved. **800-321-9532; www.quickdrainusa.com.**

StainlessDrains.com sanitary drains



Sanitary drains from **StainlessDrains.com** are designed with the outlet being an intricate part of the drain body, allowing for no internal seams or welds within the drain. This helps eliminate harborage points for bacteria to grow. With the durability and strength of stainless steel, along with its ability to be easily cleaned, this drain is suitable for facilities requiring highly sanitary environments. All drains are corrosion-resistant and meet U.S. Food and Drug Administration standards. They can be customized to meet specific requirements and are made to interact with the company's trench drains, floor sinks, and catch basins to provide a suitable drain solution for each application. **888-785-2345; www.stainlessdrains.com.**

Faucet



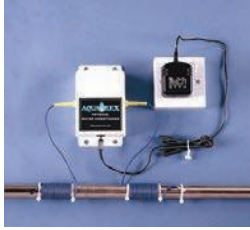
Water Inc. Ozone Faucet

Water Inc.'s Ozone Faucet instantly turns water into a powerful sanitizer. It quickly kills 99% of *E. coli* from produce, gets rid of *Salmonella* and sanitizes workstations. Ozone also reduces chemical and nonsynthetic pesticides from vegetables and fruits. An ozone generator box gets plugged in under the sink and then plumbed to a special faucet with a button. The generator sucks in ambient air and turns the O₂ into O₃, which gets injected into the faucet's water. The result is ozonized water — a powerful sanitizer — to clean your kitchen and food. **800-322-9283; www.waterinc.com.**

Filtration Equipment/Systems

Aqua-Rex

The **Aqua-Rex** helps prevent scaling in heaters. It was tested by IAPMO R & T Labs under the test protocol IGC 335 – 2018 Rapid Scaling Test, and has proved it could reduce scaling in Las Vegas water heated to 180 degrees F for 23 hours by 83 percent. It effectively clears out the old scale from the heater and general plumbing system, taking care of the whole house, including showerheads, faucets and work surfaces. It also softens hot water for washing hair and doing laundry. The unit only takes about 10 minutes to install, and it never needs any maintenance or servicing. **877-640-2170; www.aqua-rex.com.**



CORRO-PROTEC powered titanium anode rod

The **CORRO-PROTEC** powered titanium anode rod is a long-term protection solution for water heaters. As the sacrificial anode already in place in the water heater undergoes a high transfer of electrons in case of aggressive water, the life of the hot-water tank can be affected. By forming a protection layer on the tank walls and its weak points, the powered anode rod provides the water heater with permanent protection against corrosion, regardless of the water hardness. **819-690-7053; www.corroprotec.com.**



Eclipse Tools North America BoilerMag

The **BoilerMag** magnetic filter from **Eclipse Tools North America** combats the magnetite, more commonly referred to as black sludge, that forms when air and water react with ferrous components. It is an NPT-threaded air, dirt and magnetite separator used to control the buildup of sludge in hydronic heating systems. Its magnetic core ensures that despite the amount of contamination, it can never block, thus increasing energy efficiency, significantly prolonging the boiler life, protecting pipework and considerably reducing maintenance calls. Its user-friendly application can be easily installed in any heating system, residential or commercial. **800-260-2124; www.boilermag.com/na.**



Fittings

Caleffi North America TankMixer

The **Caleffi North America TankMixer** mixing valve includes a three-way angle-body thermostatic mixing valve, a cold-water cross with recirculation connection and an 18-inch flexible stainless steel connector that fits around a water heater flue pipe or fan. Its thermal shut-off function closes the hot inlet port in the event of a cold-water supply failure, and the tight-closing inlet ports eliminate potential temperature creep in domestic hot-water recirculation applications. The high-performance angle body also has a low 0.5 gpm minimum flow rate, which means accurate temperature control, even with high-efficiency, low-flow fixtures. It has union fittings for installation and service efficiency and is available with press, NPT or sweat tailpieces for pipe connection flexibility. **414-238-2360; www.caleffi.us.**



Champion-Arrowhead REDIGRIP fittings

REDIGRIP fittings from **Champion-Arrowhead** allow easy connections between copper, CPVC or PEX within seconds, with no soldering or glues required. Available in 1/2-, 3/4- and 1-inch sizes, the couplings, elbows, tees and end caps make repairs and installations fast, easy and painless. They are rated to 232 psi and 203 degrees F, are made from lead-free brass, and will work in most residential plumbing projects. Simply push the chosen pipe with a clean edge into the fitting, ensuring you achieve the proper insertion depth, and continue your project. If you need to readjust the fitting, use a REDIGRIP removal tool to easily remove the fitting. They are suitable for emergency plumbing repairs, home improvement projects and new plumbing installations. They use a high-quality O-ring to seal the tube and a stainless steel grip ring to prevent loosening. **800-332-4267; www.champion-arrowhead.com.**



Commercial Industrial Supply CPVC valves

CPVC valves from **Commercial Industrial Supply** are suitable for dealing with hot water. The material has a similar composition as standard PVC but gets treated with a free radical chlorination, which increases the chlorine content in the material. This additional chlorine allows it to withstand a higher range of temperatures. The valves help control the flow of water, whether it be stopping the flow completely with a ball valve or preventing backflow within the pipe with a check valve. There are several variations of these valves as well. They can come in compact one pieces or a true union style. The true union style can be taken completely apart for cleaning or repair without cutting into the pipe. **866-777-8001; www.commercial-industrial-supply.com.**



Fluidmaster 400A Universal Fill Valve

Fluidmaster's 400A Universal Fill Valve has an ergonomic adjustment screw, preinstalled components and an easy-to-follow booklet of step-by-step instructions. In less than five minutes, homeowners can repair the toilet fill valve, which saves time and money. The end result is a quieter tank that fills up faster. It is best for toilets that date prior to 1994 with flush volumes between 3.5 and 7 gallons per flush. The easy-to-install valve fits all brands, is made from corrosion-resistant materials and has an anti-siphon design. **949-728-2000; www.fluidmaster.com.**

John Guest USA Speedfit Angle Stop Valve

The **John Guest USA Speedfit Angle Stop Valve** provides an extra line off of an existing stop, giving the user independent water flow control and the ability to upgrade or repair accessories without shutting off the main water supply. The valve uses push-fit technology — allowing quick connection without the need for tools — and is offered in white polypropylene with food-grade EPDM O-rings. The valve connects between the riser to the main water supply line for applications in reverse osmosis, filtration systems, automatic coffee brewers and ice makers. The conversion adaptor can be threaded to either side of the valve to make configurations of 1/2-by-1/2-inch NPS or 3/8-by-3/8-inch

compression. The valves are intended for use with potable water systems and are not to be used in heating systems or with compressed air, explosive gases, petroleum spirits and other fuels. **800-945-4872; www.johnguest.com.**

Mainline Backflow Products Straight-Fit Backwater Valve

The **Straight-Fit Backwater Valve** from **Mainline Backflow Products** eliminates problems with snakes destroying gates when cleaning through the valve and allows easy access at any depth without the requirement of a manhole for access. Its Smart-Curve Gate technology allows sewer cleaning cables to pass in and out through the valve body without damaging the gate, while its Smart-Curve body cleat also allows drain cleaning through the vertical riser of the valve. The magnetic gate insertion couldn't make gate insertion any easier, as the technician simply needs to lower the gate into the vicinity of the holder and the magnets pull and direct the gate into the slot, assuring the gate is properly set each time. The extendable body with extendable gate makes this valve accessible at any burial height with easy ground level access. **877-734-8691; www.backwatervalve.com.**



REHAU EVERLOC+

The **REHAU EVERLOC+** compression-sleeve fitting system has 26 additional configurations, making transitions between pipe sizes more convenient in single-family and multifamily residential plumbing projects. The system comprises RAUPEX UV shield PEXa pipe in 3/8- to 2-inch diameters, polymer and lead-free brass fittings, and power tools for reliable and safe connections. Designed for no-leak security, the two-step fitting expansion and compression process is performed quickly in any weather, making installation faster than other PEXa cold-expansion fittings and copper. The NSF/ANSI 14- and 61-certified system delivers safe drinking water with no mineral buildup, allowing contractors to create healthy and sustainable residential environments in less time. **800-247-9445; www.everlocplus.com.**



StreamLabs Control valve

The **StreamLabs Control** valve stays one step ahead of leaks, providing homeowners with leak protection and automatic shut-off functionality.



The device can be opened and closed remotely using the StreamLabs app, with automatic shut off in the event of a leak. It uses ultrasonic technology and advanced sensors to measure water flow rate, water pressure, water temperature, ambient (air) temperature and relative humidity, providing real-time notifications, valve status alerts and freeze warnings. It also utilizes data analytics to provide water use history, conduct pressure decay testing and deliver user-configurable abnormal usage and leak alerts. In addition to Nest and Alexa integration options, it has home and away modes, as well as Smart Alerts that automatically detect unique water usage patterns and introduce appropriate leak setting parameters. Just one unit protects the entire home from costly water damage, giving homeowners complete control of their water from anywhere. **770-863-4083; www.streamlabswater.com.**

Fixture

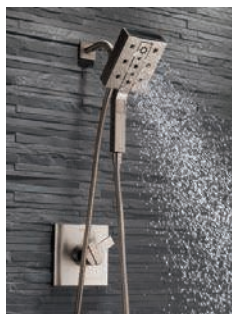
Viega Eco Plus

Viega Eco Plus dual flush carriers provide water-saving advantages versus traditional two-piece, floor-mounted toilets. The carriers, when combined with one of the compatible bowls, produce water savings that meet or exceed Environmental Protection Agency WaterSense standards. By moving the tank inside the wall, the carriers free up at least 6 inches of extra room while also making the bathroom easier to clean by eliminating the hard-to-clean spaces around the tank and bowl. They are durable, reliable and easy to maintain. An assortment of stylish and durable flush plates is available. **800-976-9819; www.viega.us.**



Showers

Delta Faucet In2ition two-in-one shower



The **In2ition** two-in-one shower from **Delta Faucet** has a detachable hand shower that can be used separately from or simultaneously with the showerhead, making it suitable for bathing loved ones and pets, as well as keeping the inside of the

shower and tub clean. This integrated dual-functionality gives users maximum flexibility without sacrificing warmth, as users can choose to have water streaming from the showerhead only, the hand shower only or both the showerhead and hand shower at once. It has H2Okinetic Technology that sculpts water into a unique wave pattern, providing three times the coverage of a standard showerhead. MagnaTite Docking uses a powerful integrated magnet to pull the faucet spray wand or hand shower precisely into place, staying docked when not in use. Soft, rubber Touch-Clean spray holes allow users to easily wipe away calcium and lime buildup with the touch of a finger. **800-345-3358; www.deltafaucet.com.**

Wedi modular shower systems

The **wedi** modular shower system range is known for customizability, modular simplicity in application, and inherent waterproofness in product and assembly. Remodeling contractors install tiled showers less frequently and can appreciate the system approach, with few components to install safely, fast and clean. The systems are 100% internally waterproof and can be tiled upon installation. **877-933-9334; www.wedicorp.com.**



Sink

Ruvati USA Verona series

Verona series workstation sinks from Ruvati USA combine a traditional apron-front design and the contemporary gleam of stainless steel with a commercial-grade brushed finish. Its generous proportions easily accommodate oversized pots and pans, while an integrated rack allows built-in accessories to slide quickly into place as needed. Smart features include a deep stainless steel colander for draining pasta or rinsing produce and an adjustable roll-up rack that is ideal for drying dishes. A cutting board of African mahogany fits snugly over the sink basin to provide for prep work while keeping countertops clean and clutter-free. A stainless steel rinse grid and drainer basket assemble are also included. They are constructed using 16-gauge stainless steel that will never rust or stain. The sink comes in single- or double-bowl configurations with sizes ranging from 24 to 36 inches. 855-478-8284; www.ruvati.com.



Sump Pumps

Goulds Water Technology, a Xylem brand, AGS Series

The Goulds Water Technology, a Xylem brand, AGS Series submersible axial grinder provides suitable performance against the challenging solids, flushables and trash present in modern residential wastewater applications. With a semiopen impeller design, including an eight-hole cutter plate and three-blade axial cutter, the grinder reduces waste to a fine slurry. The lobe-lifting technology lifts material away from the low-pressure center and redirects material for cutting. Built to last with a stainless steel volute, cast iron impeller and hard-faced silicon carbide on silicon carbide mechanical seal, it is versatile for residential and tough wastewater environments. Heavy-duty, balanced handles simplify installation, and the 2-inch discharge allows for easy sewage pump replacement, minimizing downtime and service issues. The series is available in single-phase 0.5 hp (115- or 230-volt) and 1 hp (115- or 230-volt) options to fit a variety of residential sewage applications. 866-325-4210; www.goulds.com.



Wolseley PROFLO

The PROFLO preassembled primary and backup sump pump from Wolseley provides the security and comfort in knowing your home is safe from flooding. The kit comes preassembled for easy installation and includes a 2-amp battery charger with overcharge protection and thermoplastic battery box. It includes an energy-efficient 1/3 hp split capacitor motor and lower amp draw, which allows the pump to run cooler and lasts longer. It has a cast iron pump base and housing, while the float switch has a piggyback plug for manual or automatic operation. Incorporated in the battery backup is a reinforced thermoplastic pump base and housing, efficient 12-volt DC motor, vertical float switch and nonclogging thermoplastic impeller. 905-335-7373; www.wolseleyexpress.com.



Toilet

Liberty Pumps Ascent II

The Ascent II macerating toilet system from Liberty Pumps allows easy installation of a bathroom in areas where no gravity sewer lines may exist. It is suitable for remodeling applications, eliminating the need for major construction or breaking concrete floors in basements to add a bathroom. Featuring a 1.28 gallons-per-flush, high-efficiency toilet, the system easily macerates sewage waste and other debris with Razor-Cut technology and then discharges it through a small, 1-inch-diameter line up to 25 feet high and 150 feet horizontally. It has ISTTM solid state switching, a built-in alarm, LED lights and an external touchpad for alarm silence and manual system override. The ADA compliant toilets — available in round front and elongated, have improved flush performance and carry the WaterSense mark. Both models offer insulated tanks to eliminate sweating. 800-543-2550; www.libertypumps.com.



Tools



Brasscraft Cobra Pro power auto-feed drum auger

The **Cobra Pro** power auto-feed drum auger from **Brasscraft** clears 1- to 2-inch sink, shower or tub drainpipes. The auger has a turning knob to quickly engage and disengage the auto-feed mechanism; and the wire is a high-carbon spring wire measuring 1/4 inch in diameter and 25 feet in length, with a reinforced nylon inner core. With the use of a power drill, the cable will feed automatically in and out of the drum. The drum housing is made of high-impact polyethylene and has a pistol grip for better control. 877-272-7755; www.cobratools.com.

J.C. Whitlam Gator-Bite Plastic Pipe Cutter

The **Gator-Bite Plastic Pipe Cutter** from **J.C. Whitlam** can be used to cut all types of plastic pipe and conduit through 2 1/2 inches, making it the largest two-handed plastic pipe cutter available. It cuts PVC, including thin wall, CPVC, ABS, PE, polypropylene (PP-R) and PEX, conduit pipe and tubing. It is constructed with a lightweight, but heavy-duty die cast aluminum body and high-carbon steel blade. Replacement blades and springs are also available. 800-321-8358; www.jcwhitlam.com.



Koul Tools Fitting Fixer

The **Fitting Fixer** from **Koul Tools** uses a 37-degree inverted cone with diamond-dust-coated lapping material to resurface the conical sealing area on JIC fittings. It allows the user to repair a leaky fitting on the spot when replacing it is not possible or would be a major undertaking — for example, a leaking bung on a tank. The fitting screws into a guide to hold it in place, and the lapping cone is attached to a drill. Simply spin the lapping cone on the fitting's sealing surface until the damaged area is repaired. It comes in 3/16- to 1-inch sizes and works on steel and aluminum fittings. 928-854-6706; www.koultools.com.



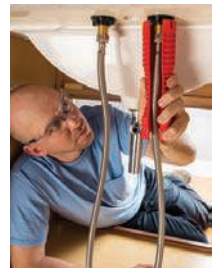
Milwaukee Tool 7-inch Magnetic Rafter Square

Milwaukee Tool's 7-inch Magnetic Rafter Square is built with rare earth magnets in the heel, which provides a secure hold on all ferrous surfaces, and the 1 1/8-inch heel provides more grip while working with rounded stock. The tool also has a high number of precision scribe notches (1 to 6 inch) of any rafter in its class, as well as a 1-inch pipe-cutting jack. This feature is new-to-world for rafter squares, helping to elevate and tightly hold materials such as conduit, copper and rigid pipe during cuts. The square is also made with more aluminum for extreme durability. 800-729-3878; www.milwaukeetool.com.



RIDGID EZ Change Faucet Tool

Alleviate undersink plumbing frustrations with the **RIDGID EZ Change Faucet Tool**, a multipurpose tool for installation and removal of faucets and sink strainers. Used to fasten and remove tab mounting nuts and supply line nuts, the tool has a short body for easy access in tight spaces and includes a shut-off valve wrench to assist with stubborn valves. The tool has a cubed insert that is compatible with a variety of common nut sizes and is suitable for most common two-, three-, four- and six-tab mounting nuts. In addition, it has a retainer for three or four slot strainer baskets and a 5/8-inch deep welled socket that is suitable for single-hole mountings. 800-769-7743; www.ridgid.com.



Wheeler-Rex Model 4992 Close Quarters Tubing Cutter

The **Model 4992 Close Quarters Tubing Cutter** from **Wheeler-Rex** is a suitable solution when a cut is needed but there isn't much room, as it requires minimal clearance to do its job. It is primarily used for copper, but it is also effective on plastic. It is suitable for working underneath vanities, close to walls, waste and overflows, and other confined spaces. It adjusts to cut a wide range of tubing sizes, ranging from small 1/4-inch tubing all the way to 2 3/8 inch. When it's time to change the cutting wheel, the user can quickly swap it out with the unit's toolless design. Simply push out the pin and swap wheels. 800-321-7950; www.wheelerrex.com.



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Water Heaters

Bradford White Water Heaters PowerStor Series SS

The **PowerStor Series SS** stainless steel single-wall indirect water heater from **Bradford White Water Heaters** is a suitable choice when working with a new or existing boiler. It offers improved protection against corrosion and a new, improved heat exchanger for better efficiency and performance. 800-523-2931; www.bwfortheapro.com.




Trutankless water heaters

Tankless water heating systems from **trutankless** offer 99% efficiency, with a self-flushing design that eliminates most maintenance requirements. They offer comfort and economy modes and feature ceramic insulation over a durable copper heat exchanger. Threaded elements are available for ease of service and replacement. Temperature and pressure monitoring and relief is available, with an iOS and Android app for remote temperature control, monitoring and usage reports. 855-862-8987; www.trutankless.com.



Water Storage Tank

Den Hartog Industries Ace Roto-Mold

Ace Roto-Mold polyethylene tanks from **Den Hartog Industries** are designed to provide a safe and durable means for the storage of septic system byproducts. Its entire line of tanks provide storage and are designed for belowground installation. These tanks are furnished with multiple fitting locations to accommodate a variety of plumbing configurations and two openings available for burial lids or access/inspection risers. The low-profile septic tanks are available in one- and two-compartments with 1,000, 1,200 and 1,500 gallons of storage and are designed to be backfilled empty. They have sectional ribbing designed to sustain vertical soil pressures of up to 500 psf at a maximum soil depth of 36 inches. 712-752-8432; www.denhartogindustries.com. 



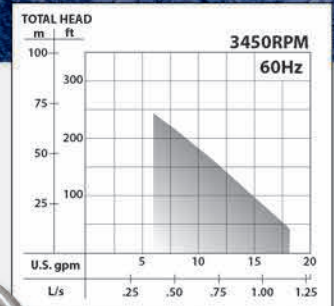
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Model	PGPT Upgrade Core
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RPM	3450
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Impeller	Stainless Steel
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Seal Design	Single Mechanical
Weight	150 lbs.
Liquid Temperature	104°F (40°C) Continuous
Shredding Ring	Hardened 440C Stainless Steel Rockwell® C-55
Cutter	Hardened 440C Stainless Steel Rockwell® C-55
Full Load Amps	12.5



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CRANE PUMPS & SYSTEMS

Residential Plumbing/ Water Quality and Conditioning

By Craig Mandli

On-demand hot-water circulation system delivers quickly and efficiently



Problem: A homeowner in Hull, Massachusetts, loved her tankless water heater but hated waiting for hot water. The system was in the garage and the master bedroom was on the second floor on the other side of the house. A 3-minute wait for hot water wasn't acceptable, and she wanted a system that quickly provided hot water when needed without wasting water or energy.

Solution: The homeowner and her husband found the WaterQuick Tankless from **Faster Hot Water**. The system is activated by turning on any hot-water faucet for one second, then off. The homeowners called their plumber, who upgraded them to the professional model **WaterQuick Premiere** and installed it in under two hours.

Result: Now after activating the system, the homeowners get hot water in under 45 seconds without wasting water or energy. A few months later, they added the Home Automation Module and can activate the system by telling Alexa to "turn on the pump." The homeowner saves time and money without wasting energy with a system designed specifically for tankless water heaters. 619-439-9638; www.fasterhotwater.com.

Tankless water heater an easy fit in residential laundry room



Problem: MLC Plumbing owner Matt Carver knew how a tankless water heater could resolve an issue for the owner of a 40-year-old, single-family residence in Kenner, Louisiana. The home's 40-gallon, gas-fired tank had begun experiencing leaks, warranting a replacement. However, swapping it with another tank unit would have required a drip pan, which would not fit well into the 5-by-8-foot laundry room.

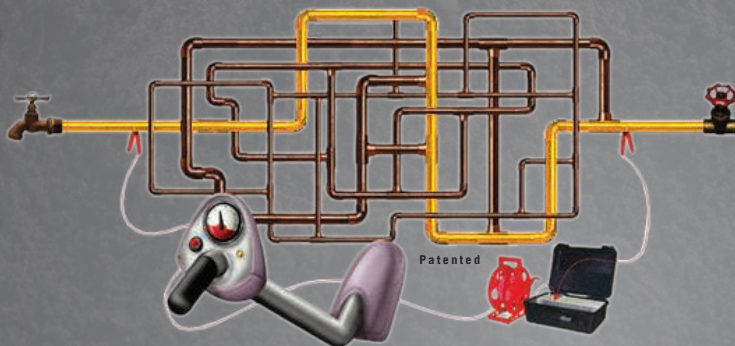
Solution: Carver convinced the homeowner to opt for a **Noritz America EZTR40** system, a direct tankless replacement for 40-gallon, storage-tank water heaters. For starters, the owner liked the space savings: The wall-hung tankless replacement takes up much less space than the old tank heater in the laundry room and requires no drip pan. The home's existing 1/2-inch gas line was quickly disconnected from the previous tank unit and, once the latter was removed, reattached to the tankless unit. Its top-mounted connections permitted easy hookup to the connectors used by the old tank unit. For venting, Carver threaded the 2-inch, flexible polypropylene tubing that ships with the tankless heater directly through the existing B-vent used by the old unit.

Result: The EZTR40 reduced installation time by 66%, bringing the total installation time to only two hours, including the removal of the old tank unit. The zero-footprint, wall-hung water heater also required only a fraction of the space of the old storage-tank unit. Thanks to the new, space-saving tankless heater, the homeowner was also able to freshen up the space to create a more pleasant environment in her laundry room. 714-433-2905; www.noritz.com.

Continued ▶

Pulsar 2000 Line Tracer

- ✓ Locate Lines
- ✓ Locate Water Leaks
- ✓ Training Video



The **Pulsar 2000** line tracer is designed primarily to locate metallic pipes. The Pulsar 2000 is a directional line tracer. Connect the Pulsar's powerful and unique transmitter to your target pipe and locate only that pipe. Locating can be accomplished under floors, in walls and in ceilings. The Pulsar 2000 does not require grounding.

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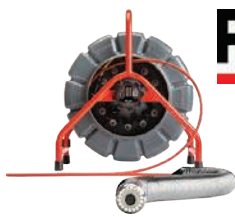
if you are not satisfied. If you want to learn more about the Pulsar 2000 and our leak locating equipment, please call **1-888-752-5463** or e-mail jsml@aol.com for a free demonstration video or CD and references of satisfied customers.

We have been using the **Pulsar 2000** along with the XL2 fluid detector and Geophones since January 1989 in our leak locating business. Our leak locates are **accurate 95% of the time**, but I can honestly say, the line we trace is always there. Our equipment is user-friendly and requires very little training, as you will see on the video. Purchase the **Pulsar 2000** line tracer, XL2 fluid detector and Geophones, and start locating leaks immediately.

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Firm uses grinder pumps to make outdoor baths more workable



Problem: Farmingdale, New Jersey-based ToddPod builds outdoor shower stalls and bathrooms in various models and configurations. The firm sought above-floor plumbing technology to accommodate its customers.

Solution: ToddPod’s enclosures are built specifically to accommodate the **Sanicubic 1** grinding system from **Saniflo - part of SFA Group**. The plumbing is not built into the enclosure, but installed later by a contractor hired by the homeowner customer. The grinding system handles up to 50 gpm from multiple plumbing fixtures — toilets, sinks or showers. Effluent enters the unit through any of four adjustable inlets, located on the sides and top. These inlets can accommodate pipes with diameters of 1 1/2- or 4 inches. Effluent entering through any inlet triggers the cutting and pumping system once it reaches a specified level inside. There, it is ground into a slurry before being discharged through a 1 1/2-inch rigid PVC or CPVC pipe connected to the top of the Sanicubic 1. Maximum pumping distances are 36 feet vertically and/or 328 feet horizontally.


Result: Dawn Samuels, owner of ToddPod, describes the happy experience of one customer, a resident of Waretown who lives “right on the shoreline and loves hosting outdoor parties during the summer. His home also happened to be built with an outdoor showerhead, so our enclosure was a natural fit,” Samuels explains. In this particular installation, the Sanicubic 1 was connected to that shower, as well as a sink and toilet, pushing effluent 12 vertical feet and 30 horizontal feet to the sewer line. **800-571-8191; www.saniflo.com.**

Boiler used to improve air system with hydronics



Problem: Wilfre Co. in Hebron, Maryland, received a call that a customer’s system wasn’t performing well. The large home had a heat pump system with supplementary heat supplied by hydronic coils in the ductwork. Below 30 degrees F, the system relies on a boiler for space heating. The existing boiler was oversized and piped incorrectly, reducing flow rate and causing the unit to short cycle.

Solution: The original boiler, installed in the garage, was old enough to warrant replacement. Martin Harrison, owner of Wilfre, planned to replace both the boiler and piping. He started with a Manual J heat load calculation. The home required 180,000 Btu/h at 10 degree F outdoor ambient. Wilfre installed a new **U.S. Boiler Co., Inc. - Burnham Brand Boilers - Alpine** condensing boiler and primary-secondary piping. The boiler offers up to 95% efficiency. “The five-year parts warranty was a big advantage to the homeowner on this job,” Harrison says. He used the U.S. Boiler Sage Zone Control on the job for precise control. It’s a circulator or valve panel that’s compatible with all U.S. Boiler condensing models, and it allows the boiler to start at low fire and only increase to the firing rate needed for the zone (or zones) calling.

Result: By hanging the new boiler on the wall, with cleaner piping, the homeowners now have more room in their garage. “There’s no comparison between this system and the original,” the homeowner says. “It’s more comfortable, and the boiler is very quiet.” **717-397-4701; www.usboiler.net.** 

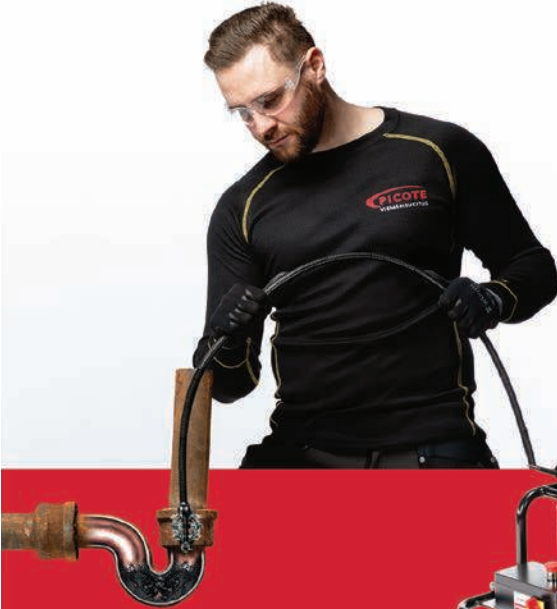
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Product Spotlight

Make the jump for a full inspection

By Jared Raney

A good camera system must tick a lot of boxes: visibility, durability and, last but certainly not least, flexibility.

Unfortunately, it's tough to fit all that into a single package, which is why a system that can easily thread house traps while delivering clear visuals over time is hard to come by.

Spartan Tool's new TrapJumper system was engineered to "provide both flexibility to navigate tight trap-bends and strength to be pushed the distance," says Mike Sekach, national sales manager. "We created the TrapJumper as a camera inspection system that meets the needs of drain cleaners who are jumping house traps on a regular basis. We like to refer it as the Swiss Army knife of cameras. Our target market for this unit is professional tradespeople who need a reliable push camera."

"At only 26 pounds, the TrapJumper is a lightweight, yet heavy-duty camera solution," Sekach says. "The TrapJumper is intelligently designed, with the sonde built into the camera. In similar camera systems, the sonde is built into the spring, which can hinder flexibility and exposes it to potential damage. The TrapJumper design gives the spring 360-degree-plus flexibility while protecting it from the elements and from damage, as the coil repeatedly flexes around the trap."



Automatic software updates via a wireless connection make operation even simpler for technicians.

"We designed the TrapJumper as a result of many conversations with our customers. The overwhelming takeaway for customers was that they were looking for a solution to jump a house trap and other systems in the market simply couldn't do it."

The system cooperates with an exclusive app from Spartan Tool that allows GPS plotting, wireless connection, survey sharing, premade map overlays and compatibility with Google Maps, all for increased functionality and survey value.

"Compatible with the Explorer modular control box, the TrapJumper is flexible enough to handle the tight bends and curves of a commercial trap pipe, while still being strong enough to be pushed the distance — up to 130 feet. Simply put, this camera solves a problem in the industry: being able to navigate through the dreaded house trap," Sekach says. "The TrapJumper was designed to do just that — jump traps. This is not the only application, as it can be used in day-to-day survey use. It has a lot of versatility." **800-435-3866; www.spartantool.com.**

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Dallas Specialty Green Drain drain trap seal

The Green Drain drain trap seal from Dallas Specialty is used to prevent sewer gases, odors and insects from entering through the floor drain grate or shower drain. The flexible gasket has sealing ribs for easy installation into a variety of drain openings. The seal opens to allow drainage and closes when there is no flow of water, and it can be used in either new construction or repair applications where there is no trap primer. Sizes are available in 2, 3, 3 1/2 and 4 inches. **800-222-5644; www.dallasspecialty.com.**



Reelcraft Industries Series 3000 ultracompact reels



Reelcraft Industries Series 3000 reels are all-steel construction and ultracompact for a wide range of bench mount or mobile applications with critical space requirements. These compact reels fit within a 1-by-1-foot space. The reels incorporate multiple slotted mounting holes to accommodate many configurations. An optional guide arm accessory is available for multiple adjustment positions of the hose or cord. The hose reel models are available with up to 25 feet of 1/4-inch or 20 feet of 3/8-inch air/water hose. The cord reel models are available with 30 feet of 12/3 cord with multiple cord ending options including a new quad box receptacle. **800-444-3134; www.reelcraft.com.**

CUES Pearpoint flexiprobe P540c portable push system

The CUES Pearpoint flexiprobe P540c portable push system is a user-friendly, reliable and dependable push camera system. Engineered to provide all-day use in rugged conditions, the system offers a variety of rods for different applications. The P540c is equipped with a new upgraded command module, which produces automatic survey reports. Also, the new command module can be used on any of the six available push systems and can be used continuously for up to five hours on a single charge. A choice of a 1- or 2-inch camera is available and can be used interchangeably between most systems, and a built-in 512 Hz sonde is provided for locating purposes. **800-327-7791; www.cuesinc.com.**



Isuzu 12-foot road-ready Supreme Spartan service body

Isuzu Commercial Truck of America announced the availability of a new road-ready service body for select Isuzu N-Series gasoline trucks. The expansion of the Isuzu Road-Ready Program with Supreme provides a wider selection of bodies to choose from. The 12-foot Supreme Spartan service body will be available for 109-inch-wheelbase NPR and NPR-HD models. Standard features include eight compartments with adjustable shelving for more cargo-organizing versatility and a spacious stand-up height interior with a standard street-side pipe door. Stainless steel D-ring compartment handles offer easier gripping with work gloves, and it offers two interior LED dome lights. **866-441-9638; www.isuzucv.com.**

Picote Solutions Super Midi Miller

The Super Midi Miller from Picote Solutions is small and light enough to fit inside industry-standard jetting vans. It has a digital electronic control box and electric safety clutch, and it features an emergency stop button and shielded foot pedal. The unit comes with a double shaft, where the outer casing is stationary and the inner core rotates between 500 and 1,500 rpm, eliminating the need for the operator to directly handle any rotating part. The Super Midi Miller comes fitted with a standard 65.6 feet of flexible shaft with the option to add an additional 32.8 feet if required, and it's designed to work in pipes from 3 to 6 inches in diameter. **219-440-1404; www.picotesolutions.com.**



General PipeCleaners 5R-10 sectional cable

The 5-foot-by-7/8-inch 5R-10 Force Multiplier sectional cable from General Pipe Cleaners/General Wire Spring is designed for many uses, including bathrooms, kitchens, basements and even roofs. The shorter 5-foot cable length provides better control, reducing the risk of spraying walls, floors, carpets and cabinets from exposed wet, spinning 15-foot cables. The short sectional design fits on 6-foot dropcloths without hanging over. The 5R-10 is compatible with General Pipe Cleaners/General Wire Spring's Root 66 and I-95 sectional drain cleaners. The Force Multiplier's R-connectors also fit other brands





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of machines, cables and attachments, and the open-wound hollow cables snap together in a second and can also be disconnected quickly and easily with a coupling key. **800-245-6200; www.drainbrain.com.**

Bosch Thermotechnology SM Rev C geothermal heat pump

The Bosch SM Rev C from Bosch Thermotechnology is the latest addition to the Greensource CDi Series. It features the new Heat Pump Control microprocessor, which communicates with the new Bosch EasyStart app. Bosch redesigned its SM Model with an intuitive user interface and advanced electronics controls to make it easier to communicate with the unit. The SM now comes with eight thermistors that relay temperature readouts such as entering water, leaving water, return air, discharge air, discharge refrigeration, freeze evaporate, freeze coaxial, and domestic water to the Heat Pump Control and EasyStart app. The local Wireless Interface Module allows for remote install and monitoring within a 20-foot unobstructed radius. **800-283-3787; www.bosch.us.**



RectorSeal Rooftop Pipe Support system

RectorSeal's Rooftop Pipe Support is designed for mounting HVACR, electrical, plumbing and condensate piping, or ductwork, walkway grates and solar panels on commercial flat rooftops without roof penetration. The RPS is a 15-inch-thick, ultraviolet-light-stabilized, weather-resistant copolymer shell with a high-density foam core that provides insulation, vibration isolation and roof membrane protection. It can withstand load capacities of up to 250 or 350 pounds each when used with universal strut channel. The RPS has five numbered slots to keep 2-inch and smaller pipe aligned and organized during installation, although it can accommodate larger pipe diameters. **800-231-3345; www.rectorseal.com.** 



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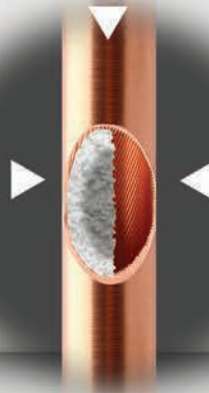
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Wynnchurch Capital's industrial platform rebrands as Midland Industries

Wynnchurch Capital announced it has rebranded its industrial distribution platform as Midland Industries. The platform is comprised of Anderson Metals, Midland Metal, Buchanan Rubber and Mid-America Fittings. Midland Industries distributes and manufactures valves, fittings, hoses, couplings and related products.

“The new name helps us better communicate our culture and broad set of capabilities to our customers,” says Vince Hodes, CEO of Midland Industries. “The new brand reflects the company’s commitment to a unified strategy, and we’re very bullish about the growth opportunities ahead.”

Electric Eel celebrating its 80th year

Electric Eel, based in Springfield, Ohio, since 1939, is celebrating its 80th year as a manufacturer of quality drain and sewer cleaning equipment. Electric Eel’s current product line includes a wide range of electric and gas-powered sectional drain cleaning machines, drum-style machines, high-pressure water jetters and pipeline inspection camera systems and locators.

Taco Comfort Solutions announces new manufacturer sales firms

Taco Comfort Solutions has announced two new manufacturer’s representative firms. R.F. MacDonald, based in Hayward, California, is now the exclusive Taco representative for Northern California. The company president is Jim MacDonald. Southwest Sales Reps, with offices in Mesa, Arizona, and Las Vegas, now serves Taco exclusively in Arizona and southern Nevada. The firm was founded by Earl Brockert in 2002.

Infiltrator Water Technologies purchases Presby Environmental Inc. (PEI)

Infiltrator Water Technologies announced the purchase of Presby Environmental Inc. (PEI). Presby Environmental manufactures the Enviro-Septic, Advanced Enviro-Septic, EnviroFin and other wastewater treatment technologies.

“We are excited to be able to expand our products with the proven Presby Environmental product line. The family of Presby Environmental products complements Infiltrator’s core business and helps to strengthen our industry leadership position. The combination of Infiltrator and Presby Environmental supports our vision to reimagine and revolutionize onsite water management,” says Roy E. Moore Jr., president and CEO of Infiltrator Water Technologies.



Bradford White mourns loss of Chairman A. Robert “Bob” Carnevale

Bradford White announced the passing of its Chairman A. Robert “Bob” Carnevale. He began his Bradford White career in 1961, shortly after serving in the U.S. Army’s 3rd Infantry Division in Bamberg, Germany. He started with the company as an inside order entry clerk while completing his education in a night school program at Penn State University. Carnevale rose through the ranks of Bradford White by immersing himself in all aspects of the business including sales, engineering, manufacturing and finance. He eventually attained the positions of executive vice president and then chief operating officer.

Carnevale, along with a small group of his colleagues, saw the opportunity to buy a portion of Bradford White from its then parent company to set the foundation for his goal of creating an American-owned, wholesale-only water heater company with its manufacturing facilities located in the U.S. His dream was ultimately realized in 1992.

A. O. Smith receives 2019 Energy Star Partner of the Year award

A. O. Smith was named a 2019 Energy Star Partner of the Year for its contribution and dedication to manufacturing high-efficiency water heaters. A. O. Smith’s accomplishments were recognized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy at a ceremony in Washington, D.C., in April.

MyTana Mfg. releases employee handbook template

MyTana Mfg. released an employee handbook template. The free resource provides explanations, instructions and sample text to help plumbing and drain cleaning business owners clarify policies and avoid legal problems. A free copy of the template can be downloaded at inbound.mytana.com/employee-handbook-template.

PRIER Products announces new production manager

PRIER Products announced the appointment of its new production manager, Beth Westmoreland, who will oversee the production personnel and activities on the plant floor. She started her career in the Air Force working on B-52 simulators. "I love solving problems and streamlining the process flow, which has led me to multiple opportunities throughout my career," she says.



Beth Westmoreland

Smith-Cooper International wins vendor award

Smith-Cooper International announced it received the Industrial Vendor of the Year award for 2018 from the wholesaler Winsupply. The company was chosen based on several criteria, including being a leader in growing the industrial segment's business at Winsupply in 2018. The company was also judged on selling to a breadth of locations and for providing strong support at the local level, as well as consistent volume and growth.

SFA Group acquires German pump manufacturer

Saniflo's parent company, SFA Group, announced the acquisition of Zehnder Pumpen GmbH, a German manufacturer of pump technology for industry, home and garden markets. Zehnder Pumpen's portfolio encompasses more than 1,000 pumps and pump systems for freshwater supply and sewage and wastewater disposal within two brands, ZEHNDER and blueZPring. The purchase was effective as of the first of this year. **PI**

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Visit www.worldplumbingconference.com

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Plumbing Heating Cooling Contractors Connect 2019,
The Westin Indianapolis, Indianapolis.
Visit www.phccweb.org

Oct. 16-18

Service World Expo, Paris Las Vegas Hotel & Casino,
Las Vegas. Visit www.serviceworldexpo.com

Oct. 24-27

American Society of Plumbing Engineers (ASPE) Technical Symposium,
Wyndham Grand Pittsburgh Downtown, Pittsburgh.
Visit www.aspe.org

Nov. 4-7

Plumbing Manufacturers International (PMI) Conference, The Don CeSar hotel, St. Petersburg, Florida.
Visit www.safeplumbing.org

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- Plumbing/Heating/Cooling
- Rehabilitation/Relining/Bursting
- Sewer/Drain Cleaning
- Dealer/Distributor/Manufacturer
- Septic System Installation/Repair
- Consulting/Engineering
- Other _____

WHAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR PRIMARY JOB FUNCTION?

- President/CEO/Owner
- Management/Supervisor
- Operator/Technician
- Other _____

HOW MANY EMPLOYEES DO YOU SUPERVISE OR WORK WITH AT YOUR FACILITY?

- 1-3
- 4-9
- 10-19
- 20+

HOW MANY VEHICLES DO YOU CURRENTLY HAVE IN SERVICE?

- 1-5
- 6-10
- 11-15
- 16-20
- 21+

WHAT IS THE APPROXIMATE POPULATION OF THE AREA IN WHICH YOU PROVIDE SERVICE?

- 1-10,000
- 10,001-50,000
- 50,001-100,000
- 100,001-200,000
- 200,001-500,000
- 500,001+

WHAT IS YOUR ANNUAL EQUIPMENT BUDGET?

- \$1-\$50K
- \$51K-\$75K
- \$76K-\$150K
- \$151K-\$250K
- \$251K-\$350K
- \$350K +

WHAT SERVICES DO YOU PERFORM ON A REGULAR BASIS?

- Plumbing Maintenance/Repair
- Sewer/Drain Cleaning
- New Construction - Commercial
- Pipe Bursting
- New Construction - Residential
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- TV Inspection
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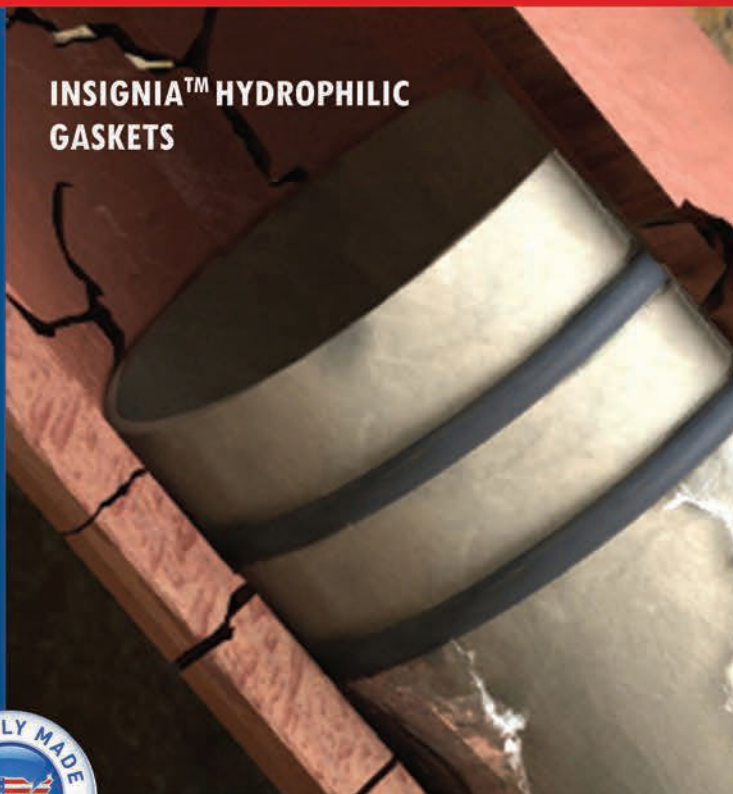
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