

Road Signs

January 2020



A publication for and about Road Machinery & Supplies Co. customers

RMSroadsigns.com



Mike Scheffler,
Manager

L&S Construction and Red Rock Quarry

Minnesota firms rely on small-town values to deliver big results

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A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



Dear Valued Customer:



Mike Sill II

Charles Dickens once wrote, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." Although that may be a bit of an exaggeration in relation to the current state of construction, it does seem somewhat fitting. During the past several years, the industry has enjoyed significant gains across nearly every market sector, and unemployment is low.

On the flip side is the continuing struggle to find construction workers, specifically equipment operators. Industry groups have taken steps to recruit and retain new people to fill the numerous open positions. As people retire or otherwise leave the industry, they take a wealth of knowledge with them.

Komatsu is committed to making new dozer operators as productive as possible, as quickly as possible with its new Proactive Dozing Control logic that interprets data and makes decisions that mirror seasoned operators. Read more about how this intuitive technology can deliver productivity gains within 6 percent of an experienced operator on select Komatsu dozers.

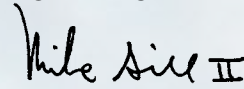
Speaking of dozers, if you are in need of a large, low-ground-pressure machine, Komatsu's new D155AX-8 LGP is a great fit. It's especially good for applications such as energy and pipeline work. Find out more inside.

There are a couple of interesting case studies in this issue of your RMS Road Signs magazine. One focuses on how a contractor gets jobs done faster and more efficiently with an *intelligent* Machine Control dozer. The second, takes a look at a governmental entity that's seeing similar results with a Komatsu GD655 motor grader.

Finally, I encourage you to check out the CONEXPO-CON/AGG preview that provides some insight into what you will find at the triennial event that will be held in Las Vegas in March. We've included a location map to help you find your way around. I hope you can make it to the "World's Largest Heavy Metal Show" in 2020.

As always, if there is anything we can do for you, please call or stop by one of our branch locations, or contact your RMS sales representative.

Sincerely,
ROAD MACHINERY & SUPPLIES CO.


Mike Sill II, CEO

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L&S CONSTRUCTION AND RED ROCK QUARRY

Minnesota firms rely on small-town values to deliver big results



*Mike Scheffler,
Manager*

Since the 1970s, the Scheffler family has delivered for customers in southwestern Minnesota. It all began when Herb Scheffler and his friend, Jim Lang, bought a gravel quarry in Sanborn, Minn., and opened L&S Construction. The duo provided gravel and quickly added other construction-related aspects to their profile as local customers approached them. Today, Herb's children, Mike and Kurt, are also involved with the business, which has expanded to include a variety of services.

"Gravel has always been a part of what we do," explained Mike, who serves as a Manager. "In addition, we do site work, digging, excavating, backfilling and anything else that customers need. We cover it all – from constructing pads for elevators to digging basements for houses."

L&S Construction has built a solid reputation, which allows it to work within a relatively small footprint in a one-hour radius of their location in Sanborn. With roughly 30 employees, the company provides gravel for 25 to 30 neighboring townships annually.

"We produce about 500,000 to 600,000 tons of gravel from our 11 pits each year," stated Mike. "The majority of that is used for roads. There are a lot of gravel roads in this part of the state, and townships will need a few thousand yards each year. We're happy to deliver it."

The firm's crews complete a handful of site-development projects as well. Recently, L&S Construction developed pads for Meadowland, a large cooperative grain elevator system, across multiple sites.

"That was a good project," noted Mike. "We performed the digging and backfilling – getting it ready for cement to be poured – and then came back when the project was finished and landscaped it."

"Traditionally, we've taken on most jobs that come our way," said Mike. "We have started to focus more on site development because we are good at it, and we have the most experience with it. We don't want to spread ourselves too thin or do jobs just to do them. That isn't fair to our customers, and it's inefficient."

Red Rock Quarry

One area that the Schefflers have expanded into is aggregates. The family, along with business partner Dave Milbrath, jumped at an opportunity to acquire a portion of land on a quartzite deposit and opened Red Rock Quarry in 2006.



A Red Rock Quarry operator uses a Komatsu WA600-8 wheel loader to load move quartzite boulders at the Sanborn, Minn., quarry.



► VIDEO

A Komatsu WA600-6 is used to feed the crushing spread at Red Rock Quarry's quartzite mine in Sanborn, Minn. "Anything this rock touches wears out quickly, but Komatsu wheel loaders last," said Manager Mike Scheffler. "We run them in some tough stuff daily. They can handle the abuse."

"In this area, aggregates contain a lot of shale and oxide, which makes it difficult to create cement and asphalt," said Mike. "Having access to a very hard material, like quartzite, is necessary for quality production. That's why the chance to open Red Rock Quarry was too good to pass up."

Mike estimates that 75 percent of what the quarry sells is quartzite. In 2019, with 13 employees the company produced close to 450,000 tons of it from the 29-acre quarry, frequently using L&S trucks for delivery. For an area that sees approximately 800,000 tons of material produced annually, Red Rock Quarry has succeeded in penetrating the market.

"It has kind of turned into a monster," he laughed. "We don't have a huge population to serve; however, we have become a trusted partner. We are happy with the growth, and there are a few larger projects coming up soon, so we see that trend continuing."

As long as there is a need for the quartzite, it is a safe bet that Red Rock Quarry will be able to provide it. The quarry plans to open a new section this year – one of many expansions the site will likely experience throughout its lifetime.

"We estimate the quartzite runs about 5,000 feet deep," said Mike. "We're currently at only 60 feet, so we have a long future here."

Trusted partners

In order to operate both companies efficiently, the Schefflers need equipment and a provider they can trust. For that, they turn to Road Machinery & Supplies Co. (RMS) and Sales Rep Mike Buchanan for Komatsu equipment.

"We've used RMS for years," said Mike. "They continue to deliver for us, whether it's parts, sales or service. On the equipment side, we abuse the machines, and Komatsu loaders hold up in the quarry and perform on the construction sites."

Red Rock Quarry primarily uses a fleet of four Komatsu wheel loaders that consists of two WA600s and two WA500s. Mike says the Komatsu loaders are designed to handle the unique conditions that a quartzite mine presents.

"Nobody has a harder bucket than Komatsu," stated Mike. "We do add our own liners and protection, and when we are done with a



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Continued . . .

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loader, we keep the bucket. That's unheard of with other brands working in this material. Anything this rock touches wears out quickly, but Komatsu machines last. On the chance that something does happen, and we need help, we know RMS will be there."

L&S Construction also utilizes a Komatsu WA500-8 wheel loader and a PC300LC excavator. As on the quarry side, the Komatsu equipment delivers at the jobsite as well as in the sand and quarry pits.

"The WA500 performs all day digging sand and gravel," said Operator Terry Schenk. "The cab is quiet and comfortable; the speed and handling are great; and the bucket is huge. I like it."

In addition to dependable equipment, RMS services the Schefflers' fleet conveniently as Resident Field Technician Jason Guggisberg (who is featured on page 9) operates out of Sanborn.

"Jason adds so much value to what Komatsu and RMS already offer," said Mike. "Knowing he's just six miles away in case something is needed gives us a lot of confidence. The combination of Jason, Mike and everyone else at RMS and Komatsu is awesome. We see them as partners in our business."

Staying local


There is something special about being a local institution in a small town. With a population of less than 500 people, Sanborn qualifies. L&S Construction and Red Rock Quarry have grown into fixtures in this area – a distinction that the Schefflers are proud to own.

"We use local fab shops, a fuel company and an oil guy – everything's local," proclaimed Mike. "Even RMS is local. It's important to us. It really does mean something to operate in a small town. Everyone's tied together."

Because of that, the Schefflers are proud to remain independent and operate their businesses with the family-company mindset that has helped it thrive.

"Larger corporations have approached us about the sand pits and quarry, but we decided it wasn't in anyone's best interest to go down that road," recalled Mike. "After talking to our employees, it was clear that

they weren't in favor of that. They value working for a company that sees them as more than a number and having a boss who they can call if they need something.

"We have amazing employees, and we want to do right by them," he added. "They are the reason we are successful. I think we're in a place that is special for that reason." 



Red Rock Quarry and L&S Construction Manager Mike Scheffler (left) calls on Road Machinery & Supplies Sales Rep Mike Buchanan for his parts, service and equipment needs. "We've used RMS for years," said Scheffler. "They continue to deliver for us, whether it's parts, sales or service."



L&S Construction Operator Terry Schenk uses a Komatsu WA500-8 wheel loader to move sand and gravel at a pit near Sanborn, Minn.



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JASON GUGGISBERG

Long-time Resident Field Technician returns to his roots working to make customers' days better

Finding a long-term job is rarely as easy as it was for Jason Guggisberg. He began his career at Road Machinery & Supplies (RMS) a few years after finishing school and has worked there for 20 years.

"After I completed trade school, I started working on farm equipment," recalled Guggisberg. "One summer, I was at a family reunion with my wife, Barbara. Her uncle, Ron Doerfler, was the shop manager at RMS, and he asked if I was interested in working on construction equipment. I went for an interview and got the job."

"It was a great move," he shared. "I've been in love with RMS and this industry ever since."

Guggisberg served as a Service Technician in the Twin Cities before moving to Sanborn, Minn., to become the Resident Field Technician for the southwest region of the state. The position was perfect for him.

"I'm from Sanborn, so when I took the job, I bought the house I grew up in," he said. "Having the opportunity to come back to the area has been great. I work with the people I knew as a kid; it's really neat."

Always learning


To ensure that he is able to meet the evolving needs of his customers, Guggisberg is committed to staying on top of emerging technology and advancements in the construction industry.

"Continuing education is a huge part of what I do," he explained. "When I started, electronics weren't a big thing. Today, a computer is my most important tool. Keeping up with training is so important; I'm never done learning. I can't just forget about any

aspect of my training, either. I might work on a new *intelligent* Machine Control piece in the morning and then fix a dozer from the 1980s in the afternoon. That variety is what I love about my position."

In addition to an extensive knowledge of equipment, Guggisberg says that having strong people skills is vital to his success.

"Typically, customers call me because a machine is down, and they need it up as soon as possible. In most cases, they aren't having a good day," he said. "They trust me because they know I am going to do everything I can to rectify their issues, and I value that."

Away from the job, he and Barbara enjoy spending time with their daughters, Lizzie and Lindsey. 



Resident Field Technician Jason Guggisberg is committed to helping RMS customers in southwest Minnesota keep their fleets operational and efficient. "Typically, customers call me because a machine is down, and they need it up as soon as possible. They trust me because they know I am going to do everything I can to rectify their issues, and I value that."

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'LARGEST HEAVY METAL SHOW'

CONEXPO-CON/AGG returns to Las Vegas with record number of exhibitors, exhibit space

The "World's Largest Heavy Metal Show in 2020" is right around the corner with the return of CONEXPO-CON/AGG to the Las Vegas Convention Center and beyond, March 10-14. Presented every three years, it is North America's biggest trade show and features the latest in equipment and innovation from every key construction-related sector.

In total, a record-setting 2,800 exhibitors are expected to converge on 2.6-million square feet of exhibit space. The show's

footprint has changed with the Gold Lot under construction, making it unavailable. Instead, CONEXPO-CON/AGG will use the Las Vegas Festival Grounds, located on the Las Vegas Strip adjacent to the Circus Circus hotel. The grounds will contain lifting (aerial and cranes), earthmoving, hauling and underground construction equipment, among other things.

"This show is shaping up as one of the best ever; attendees and exhibitors will not be disappointed," said Mary Erholtz, CONEXPO-

Continued . . .



CON/AGG Chair. “AEM (Associated Equipment Manufacturers, the show’s lead sponsor) and our show committees of industry leaders are working hard to deliver an outstanding event focused on the latest

innovations, technologies and best practices to succeed in our changing world.”

‘Smart city’ display

Similar to 2017, CONEXPO-CON/AGG will emphasize technology. The Tech Experience returns and focuses on three areas that impact the industry: modern mobility; sustainability and sustainable building; and smart cities, according to Al Cevero, Senior Vice President Construction, Mining & Utility at AEM.

Cevero and other members of the show planning team recently unveiled a 10 x 22-foot “smart city” replica scheduled for display. It demonstrates how a smart city, through sensors and analytics “will be able to transform information into digestible data, providing knowledge for the city to work smarter,” according to show organizers.

The smart city replica will showcase several scenarios, including various city grids and how a city responds to heat, wind and storms; connectivity, including 5G sensors, telematics and the internet of things (IoT); and the impacts of construction such as the jobsite of the future within the city and how equipment will communicate.

“The main goals of the Tech Experience are to drive awareness and adoption of new technologies and innovations, engage and attract the next generation of attendees and position the show as a thought leader,” said Cevero. “Our plan is to demonstrate how the three areas will transform the contractor’s business of the future.”

Multitude of education sessions, tracks

More than 150 educational sessions are scheduled throughout the week to highlight the latest topics and industry trends. They are grouped into tracks for ease in finding areas of interest. Tracks include aggregates; asphalt; earthmoving and site development; equipment management and maintenance; business best practices; how to attract, engage and retain talent; safety; and technology solutions.

CONEXPO-CON/AGG will be co-located with the International Fluid Power Expo, and new for 2020 is the opportunity to mix and match education sessions offered through both shows. Attendees can register for educational sessions as well as the show itself through the CONEXPO-CON/AGG website at www.conexpoconagg.com. 

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North America’s largest trade show, CONEXPO-CON/AGG will feature the latest in equipment and innovation from every key construction-related sector. It is slated for March 10-14, 2020, in Las Vegas.

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WHAT IS THE COST OF SAFETY?

Investing in workers' well-being is good for the bottom line, your company's standing in the industry

It may seem callous to look at worker safety from the standpoint of profit versus cost. Let's face it, there are those who don't see the value in making the necessary investment in jobsite safety. They may espouse "safety first" and have signage reflecting this message across their jobsites. Yet, when it comes to application, the message falls short, and they end up playing Russian roulette with their workers' well-being.

Hopefully you aren't one of those who subscribe to this perspective on safety. Even those who make a concerted effort to maximize safety on their sites need occasional reinforcement as to why this investment pays off. As for those who don't, here's a breakdown of the costs of worker injuries and fatalities in hard terms that might just prompt them to reassess their current approach.


By the numbers

According to National Safety Council estimates, the cost of work injuries per worker in 2017 was \$1,100 (this is not the average). The cost per injury requiring medical consultation/attention was \$39,000, while the cost per fatality was a whopping \$1.15 million. These figures include estimates of wage losses, medical bills, administrative expenses and employer costs, but not property damage, except that to vehicles.

Now, add the potential expenses of fines should an employer be found negligent in the incident. As of January 2019, the maximum penalty amount per willful or repeat violation was set at \$132,598 per violation. Keep in mind that most accidents on construction jobsites typically result in multiple violations. Such estimates are based on the direct costs of workplace injuries and illnesses. There are indirect costs that must be factored in as well.

Perhaps a better way to view safety is not as a cost but as a long-term investment in your company's profitability. One way safety has a direct impact on the bottom line is in workers'

compensation insurance costs. A company with a good safety record will typically pay far less in premiums per year than one with a higher experience modification rating.

To delve even further into the benefits, Dodge Data & Analytics began conducting studies on safety management practices in the construction industry in 2012. Conducted every three years, the study results consistently show that contractors experience a payback from their safety investments, including a positive impact on their budgets and ability to find new work, a reduction in reportable injuries and better staff retention, among other outcomes. Implementing safe practices is well worth the investment. 



*Becky Schultz, Editor,
Equipment Today*

Becky Schultz has served as editor of Equipment Today magazine since 1998. This article was excerpted from a piece that appeared on the For Construction Pros website. To read the article in its entirety, visit www.ForConstructionPros.com/20181057.



Becky Schultz says a commitment to safety has a direct impact on a company's bottom line and its reputation, making implementation of safe practices well worth the investment.



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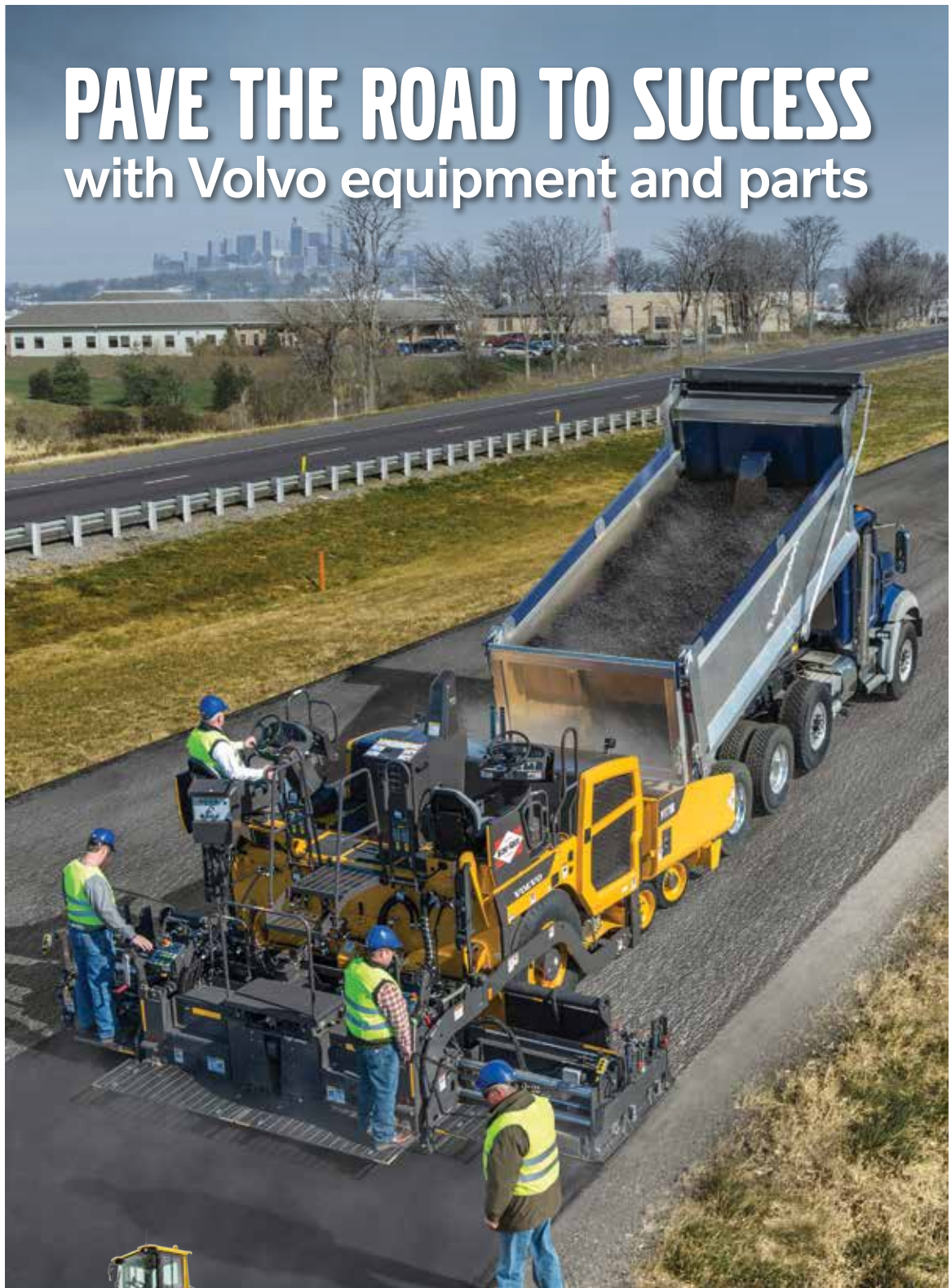
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PROACTIVE DOZING CONTROL

New intuitive technology uses real-time data collection to mimic actions of experienced operators

Construction companies continue to face a growing shortage of operators. Whether they retire or leave for other opportunities, firms often struggle to find new personnel with the skills and knowledge to replace them.

Komatsu aims to help bring newer operators up to speed faster with the intuitive technology of its Proactive Dozing Control logic. The GPS-grading system is designed to collect and interpret data and make decisions that mimic those of seasoned professionals. The system is available on four dozers: D51EXi-24, D51PXi-24, D61EXi-24 and D61PXi-24.

“Like an experienced operator, Proactive Dozing Control logic understands what the

terrain around the machine looks like and decides on the appropriate action such as whether to cut and carry material, spread or fill that material or whether it should be finish grading,” explained Derek Morris, Product Marketing Manager, *intelligent Machine Control*. “The system provides the real-time position of the dozer on the jobsite to create a highly accurate elevation for it to drive the blade to the precise grade needed.”

Improving productivity

Proactive Dozing Control logic can be used from first pass to last to perform auto-stripping, auto-spreading, high production

Continued . . .



Derek Morris, Product Marketing Manager, intelligent Machine Control



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Proactive Dozing Control logic understands what the terrain around the machine looks like and decides whether to cut and carry material, spread or fill with it or whether it should finish grade, just like an experienced operator. The integrated GPS grade control system works from first pass to last to perform everything from auto-stripping to final grading.

dozing and finish grading. Morris stated that it gives operators the ability to use dozers to their full capacity, leading to increased utilization, better return on investment and greater production.

Morris added that owning and operating costs are also lowered because wear and tear on the machine is reduced with automated operation, including minimized track slippage during operation, which lengthens undercarriage life.

"Proactive Dozing Control logic opens up a world of application possibilities for machine control technology," said Morris. "Traditionally, GPS machine control focused on finish grading, which meant that operators


only used the technology approximately 10 to 20 percent of the time. Proactive Dozing Control logic is a game-changer because the integrated system now lets operators use automation any time."

A difference in data

Morris emphasized that Proactive Dozing Control logic collects real-time data from the tracks, a significant difference from traditional blade-mounted aftermarket systems.

"Conventional systems only understand the position of the blade and capture data at the cutting edge, so when an operator backs up and raises the blade, he or she could potentially be capturing false data," said Morris. "Because our data is collected at the tracks, that's not an issue.

"We took the data that was always naturally available and provided it directly to the machine, making it highly intelligent and giving the dozer awareness of the terrain around it," Morris continued. "The result is an intuitive technology that delivers productivity gains of within 6 percent of an experienced operator.

"By using the tracks, we have created machine control that is far more advanced, offering an entirely new level of efficiency," he added. "Whether you are an experienced operator or someone new to the job, Proactive Dozing Control logic enables precision work every time, making operation easier and more productive." 

With Proactive Dozing Control logic, data is collected at the tracks and provided to the machine, making it highly intelligent and giving the dozer awareness of the surrounding terrain. "The result is an intuitive technology that delivers productivity gains of within 6 percent of an experienced operator," said Derek Morris, Product Marketing Manager, intelligent Machine Control.



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D65PXi-18 dozer checks all the right boxes, boosts productivity



Jeff Peterson,
President



Tim Peterson,
Vice President

James Peterson Sons, Inc., wanted to boost its productivity for a recent 200-acre site development project. To accomplish that, it required a dozer that could handle the varying job tasks while also moving serious quantities of dirt.

"We needed a machine that could push; cut and fill; place topsoil; shape slopes on ponds; and move a lot of dirt," said President Jeff Peterson. "The D65PXi checked those boxes."

When the dozer arrived in late 2018, it was the first Komatsu D65PXi-18 sold in the state of Wisconsin.

"We wanted a model that could do some heavy-duty pushing, and the D65PXi has delivered," said Vice President Tim Peterson. "We can move about 6,000 yards of material per day with it."

To hit those high production numbers, James Peterson Sons required every bit of the D65PXi's 220-horsepower Tier 4 Final engine and 24.4-ton operating weight. More importantly, it needed that muscle in the correct package. That's why the company selected the PX model, which features wider tracks and a six-way blade.


"We're in soft ground all of the time, so the float is very important," explained Operator Jay 'Snarf' Kleist. "Being able to get 36-inch grousers on a dozer with a six-way blade wasn't an option with the competition. That was a deal-breaker."

Added value

In addition to the size of the D65PXi-18, James Peterson Sons desired the added production that Komatsu's *intelligent* Machine Control technology offered.

"We replaced a competitive machine with the D65PXi, and we've seen production gains," Jeff said. "It's balanced, powerful, saves on fuel, the GPS system works great and the operators love running it."

The D65PXi-18 also delivers productivity beyond the traditional measures of material moved, gas and time.

"There are so many benefits," said Jeff. "We no longer need a person dedicated to checking grade. The machine keeps track of where we are. We can download information and know what volumes are being moved. It also allows us to change grades easily. Customers expect this technology on their jobsites. We couldn't do grading on this scale without a GPS dozer." 



James Peterson Sons, Inc., Operator Jay 'Snarf' Kleist uses a Komatsu intelligent Machine Control D65PXi-18 dozer to grade a jobsite. "The GPS is an amazing tool that works great," said Kleist. "The D65PXi is pretty smooth."



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PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENT

Motor graders enable Texas county to finish jobs faster at lower costs



Wesley Link,
Crew Foreman



Jay Clement,
Operator

If a road is located within Montague County, Texas, it's likely maintained by county employees. For nearly 220 miles of roadway, they handle everything from grading to ditch cleaning. About 10 percent of that roadway is pavement; the rest is gravel, which takes nearly constant maintenance to keep them in good condition.

Montague County Precinct 2 began using two Komatsu GD655-6 motor graders in 2018 to spread rock on roads and shoulders as well as to clean ditches. The GD655 has the longest wheelbase in its size class for fine grading. Additionally, it has a 25-degree articulation to allow the grader to maintain a tight turning radius of 24 feet, 3 inches.

"The visibility is better than the competitive graders that we replaced," said Crew Foreman Wesley Link. "You have a full view of the blade when feathering rock or cutting into ditches, so we're more productive. You can get the job done in fewer passes."


Eliminating stall outs

Link added that the GD655's dual-mode transmission makes a significant difference too,

because it delivers high ground speeds and tractive effort, while providing superior control at low speed, with the anti-stall features of a torque-converter transmission.

"Even at lower rpm, you get the full functionality and quickness of the hydraulic system," explained Link. "That gives us better fuel economy and when working at lower speeds, the grader keeps moving without stalling. With the competitive brand, we had to throttle up to get the hydraulics to work, and at idle the motor would, or almost would, stall out."

Operator Jay Clement shared that he values the relatively high road speeds of the 218-horsepower graders, which allow him to move from the maintenance yard to the project site faster. The GD655 has eight forward and four reverse gears and a top speed of 28 miles per hour.

"We drive them to and from wherever we are working, so having a machine that can get there faster means we can get to the job and finish it quicker than before," said Clement. "They are also comfortable with plenty of room in the cab." 



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Montague County Precinct 2 maintains gravel roads with its Komatsu GD655-6 motor graders. "Even at lower rpm you get the full functionality and quickness of the hydraulic system," said Crew Foreman Wesley Link.



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NEW SPECIALTY DOZER

Machine minimizes ground disturbance while providing high production on sensitive jobsites

Equipment users often balance the need to minimize ground disturbance while maintaining high production. That can be especially challenging for larger tracked equipment. Komatsu's new D155AX-8 LGP (low ground pressure) dozer strikes the right balance.

"The D155AX-8 LGP's newly designed eight-roller undercarriage distributes weight and provides optimum balance and traction while reducing ground pressure," said Komatsu Product Manager Chuck Murawski. "Previously, there were few machines with those attributes in this size class. Now, the D155AX-8 LGP is ideal for mining and reclamation operations, especially mine-site applications such as leach-pond cleanup, tailing, settling and drainage-pond work, as well as liner installations."

Murawski illustrated that despite a heavier operating weight than a standard model, the D155AX-8 LGP's longer and wider tracks maintain the lowest-in-class ground pressure of 7.7 psi. The ground contact area is increased by 72 percent, improving flotation in soft conditions and reducing ground pressure by up to 47 percent. The D155AX-8 LGP has a 12-percent wider track gauge and 9-percent longer track on ground than a standard D155AX-8.

Fewer passes to move more

"The D155AX-8 LGP is excellent for applications that require low ground pressure and can be especially useful for energy and pipeline work, as well as mining," said Murawski. "When equipped with 38-inch extreme service shoes, angle blade and towing winch, it has a higher operating weight compared to competitors. That increases usable drawbar pull when using a powerful towing winch."

Murawski added that the dozer can be equipped with either a 12.9-yard semi-u blade or a 9.6-yard angle blade. Optional rear attachments include a counterweight with rigid drawbar, hydraulic winch, long drawbar and a multi-shank variable pitch ripper.

"The D155AX-8 LGP can move large amounts of material, while the wider cutting edge reduces the number of passes needed when grading," said Murawski. "For applications that don't require an angle blade, the higher-capacity semi-u with dual tilt and pitch hydraulics is a great choice. For sandy soil applications, an abrasion-resistant spec with rotating bushing undercarriage is available."



*Chuck Murawski,
Komatsu Product
Manager*



Discover more at
RMSRoadSigns.com



Brief Specs for Komatsu's D155AX-8 LGP Dozer

Model	Net Horsepower	Operating Weight	Ground Pressure
D155AX-8 LGP	354 hp	92,800-100,000 lb	7.7 psi

The new D155AX-8 LGP's eight-roller undercarriage provides excellent traction and optimum balance while reducing ground pressure, said Komatsu Product Manager Chuck Murawski.



C30316

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MORE OPTIONS


RMS named BOMAG dealer in Minnesota for soil, asphalt and landfill compaction equipment

Road Machinery & Supplies Co. (RMS) was recently named an official BOMAG dealer for soil, asphalt and landfill compaction equipment. The agreement, which was announced last fall, makes RMS the dealer for the state of Minnesota with the exception of six counties in the southwestern part of the state.

“We’re excited about our recent agreement with BOMAG, which complements our existing products and allows us to expand our offerings to landfill customers,” said RMS Vice President of Sales & Marketing Andy

Schwandt. “The addition of BOMAG will help us better serve our existing customers while earning new ones throughout Minnesota.”

BOMAG has built a solid reputation as an industry leader in road building and compaction applications. The company has a staff of 2,500 employees to support its global dealer network of more than 400 dealers.

The agreement further strengthens RMS’s commitment to expanding its product offerings and support capabilities in the soil, asphalt and landfill compaction market segments. 



*Andy Schwandt,
Vice President of
Sales & Marketing*



Road Machinery & Supplies Co. was recently named the official dealer for BOMAG soil, asphalt and landfill compaction equipment for Minnesota.



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IMPROVING YOUR PRODUCTIVITY

Director of Parts Marketing Chris Wasik shares programs for minimizing downtime, operating costs

QUESTION: What does Komatsu offer beyond Komatsu CARE, which covers routine scheduled maintenance?

ANSWER: To help maintain peak performance and minimize downtime, we recently introduced Genuine Care to extend the benefits of Komatsu CARE, where services are completed by certified technicians using Komatsu genuine parts, filters and fluids. Customers can sign up with their distributors for customized solutions that best match their needs. That may be performing services on the same schedule as Komatsu CARE, or perhaps they prefer to have major services done every 1,000 hours. Options are definitely available. Genuine Care gives customers peace of mind knowing that services are done on time and on location with the right parts.

QUESTION: What other new programs can assist customers?

ANSWER: Recently, we launched the MyKomatsu website application that ties together machine telematics, manuals and online parts ordering. Customers can access information about their machines from any computer or mobile device. The web app allows owners to monitor their fleets and find the items necessary to maintain them. Parts can be selected from the parts book and dropped into a shopping cart. The order is then sent to a Komatsu distributor for quick fulfillment. MyKomatsu brings together initiatives such as KOMTRAX and eParts into a single location.

QUESTION: Does Komatsu still maintain its other support initiatives?

ANSWER: Absolutely. Many remain popular because they have been proven to save

customers time as well as keep down their owning and operating costs. For instance, overhaul programs for older machines offer scaled discounts, depending on how many components are rebuilt or replaced. That can be tied in with our Firm Future Order



This is one of a series of articles based on interviews with key people at Komatsu discussing the company's commitment to its customers in the construction and mining industries – and their visions for the future.

Chris Wasik,
Komatsu Director of
Parts Marketing

Earlier this year, Chris Wasik received a 20-year service award from Komatsu and shared why he has stayed with the company so long.

"It's the people I work with," explained Wasik. "We genuinely want each other to succeed. We all know, too, that our success is directly tied to our customers' success, so we are working toward a common goal to deliver the best equipment and support in the industry."

The northern Illinois native said he noticed this culture from the minute he joined Komatsu in 1999 to work on the initiative that eventually led to Komatsu's KOMTRAX telematics system.

In 2015, Wasik became Director of Parts Marketing, where he oversees programs to promote undercarriage, filters, batteries, reman products, kitting and more.

Wasik married his wife, Denise, the same year he joined Komatsu. The couple has a 14-year-old son, and Wasik enjoys coaching his son's baseball team and camping.

program, which enables machine owners to order major components several months in advance of their planned replacement. This locks in pricing at the time of the order and guarantees that genuine Komatsu parts are on-hand when the customer is ready to have the work completed.




Komatsu works with its distributors on inventory management (based on machine population and other factors) to ensure that parts are available when needed.

QUESTION: There are many aftermarket sources for parts. Why should owners choose genuine Komatsu parts?

ANSWER: Machines today are built to more exacting standards and operate under higher pressures and temperatures than ever before. Using parts that are not specifically engineered for a machine could result in performance loss, early wear and premature failure. In the end, it will cost more to use cheaper aftermarket parts.

Komatsu genuine parts come with a minimum 12-month warranty, which is exceptional in our industry. Customers are also getting the support of Komatsu and its distributor network. If a part fails, no matter where the customer is located, we have trained personnel who can repair it quickly. And, with nine regional parts depots and a master parts distribution center that is located close to a major FedEx hub, most parts can be delivered within 24 hours to any region of the United States or Canada.

We also collaborate with our distributors on inventory management. This ensures that the right parts (based on machine population in their territory and other factors) are available when customers need them. 



Chris Wasik, Komatsu Director of Parts Marketing, says genuine Komatsu parts should always be the first choice for service and repairs. "Using parts that are not specifically engineered for a machine could result in performance loss, early wear and premature failure. In the end, it will cost more to use the cheaper aftermarket part."

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Brian (left) and Thomas Cronin / Prosperity Construction / Jackson, MS



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EQUIPMENT BUYING MADE EASIER

Here's what Komatsu's Sourcewell certification means to purchasers

If you work for a municipality, not-for-profit or government agency, money and time are often tight. When it comes to purchasing new equipment, you need to know you're getting high quality, backed by good service. One of the easiest ways to do that is to join a cooperative purchasing agency such as Sourcewell. Membership is free, and there are no minimum contract requirements.


Among the largest government cooperative agencies in North America, Sourcewell (formerly the National Joint Powers Alliance) represents more than 50,000 member organizations that have access to hundreds of competitively solicited contracts covering a variety of products, solutions and services. With Sourcewell, the procurement process is simplified.

Ready-to-use contracts

Following an extensive evaluation, Sourcewell recently awarded Komatsu America a four-year contract to provide

members with access to more than 50 heavy-construction-equipment products, as well as Komatsu's technology, service and solutions. Komatsu's distribution network, which includes 34 dealers with collectively more than 200 branches across North America, will provide support to Sourcewell members.

"It stands to reason that if a well-respected agency, such as Sourcewell, thoroughly vets a manufacturer and selects it as a trusted heavy-equipment provider for governmental entities, then it meets the criteria for high-quality machines and world-class service," said Doug Morris, Director, Sales and Marketing, Komatsu America. "That should that give members and nonmembers alike confidence to source equipment solutions from a Komatsu distributor."

To learn more about Komatsu's contract with Sourcewell, visit komatsuamerica.com/sourcewell-cooperative-purchasing. 



*Doug Morris,
Director, Sales
and Marketing,
Komatsu America*



Sourcewell, one of the largest governmental cooperative agencies in North America, recently awarded Komatsu America a four-year national cooperative contract for heavy-construction equipment and related accessories, attachments and supplies.

ABOVE-AVERAGE WAGES

**Amid growing labor shortage,
construction earnings continue to rise**



*Stephen E. Sandherr,
AGC Chief Executive
Officer*

Average hourly earnings in construction recently hit \$30.73 per hour, surpassing other private-sector industries by 10 percent, according to an analysis of governmental data by the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC). According to AGC, the figure reflects a 3.2-percent year-over-year increase and is a measure of all wages and salaries.


The organization announced the data in July after figures showed a jump in construction employment of 21,000 jobs, compared to the previous month, and by 224,000 during the prior 12 months. Association officials noted that companies are increasing pay to attract new hires in an ever-tighter labor market.

“Construction firms continue to go to great lengths to recruit and retain workers during one of the tightest labor markets many of them have ever experienced,” said Stephen E. Sandherr, AGC’s Chief Executive Officer. “Making matters worse, relatively few school districts offer the kind of career and technical education programs that encourage students to explore careers in high-paying fields like construction.”

Little to no experience required

Sandherr noted that the unemployment rate for jobseekers who last worked in construction declined to 4 percent from 4.7 percent in June 2018, and the number of such workers decreased in the last year from 466,000 to 390,000. Additional government data showed the number of job openings in construction, last reported for May, totaled 360,000, the highest May total in the 10-year history of that category.

Association officials pointed out that in addition to rising pay and other benefits, many firms have increased their investments in training as they recruit workers with little or no prior experience in construction. According to AGC, federal officials could help attract more people into high-paying construction careers by boosting funding for career and technical education programs in schools and enacting immigration reform that allows more people with construction skills to legally enter the country.

“The nation’s education system continues to produce too many over-qualified baristas and not enough qualified bricklayers and other craft, construction professionals,” said Sandherr. “As a result of these educational imbalances, too many young adults are struggling to pay off college debts while many construction firms are struggling to fill job positions that pay well and don’t require costly degrees.” 



Average construction earnings recently topped \$30 per hour, surpassing other private-sector industries by 10 percent, according to an analysis by the Associated General Contractors of America. Organization officials noted that firms continue to increase pay as they attract new hires in an ever-tighter labor market.



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ASCE earns commendation for including stormwater in next report card

The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) and the Environmental & Water Resources Institute added a stormwater chapter to its 2021 Infrastructure Report Card. This is the first time that drainage structures and facilities will be graded by the organization, which issues the report every four years. In its most recent report in 2017, the United States' overall infrastructure condition earned a grade of D+.


Adding stormwater to the report drew praise from the Water Environment Federation (WEF), which conducted an analysis earlier

this year that showed an estimated annual funding gap of \$7.5 billion in that sector.

"The inclusion of stormwater to ASCE's report card will provide a much-deserved boost in visibility for infrastructure that is vital to communities across the country," said WEF Executive Director Eileen O'Neill in a recent Concrete News article. "We hope that adding stormwater to the report card will result in more resources and focus directed to this essential part of our infrastructure and subsequent improvements in water quality." 

OSHA's overall inspections down with fatality investigations increasing

The number of overall OSHA inspections conducted in its fiscal year (FY) 2018 decreased from the previous year, dropping by 1.2 percent to 32,023. At the same time, it recorded the highest number of fatality/catastrophe investigations in more than a decade, 941 from October 1, 2017, to September 30, 2018, a 12.4-percent increase from FY 2017.


Further reporting from OSHA showed that the number of agency inspectors had decreased to a record low of 875. The Department of Labor hired 76 inspectors, also known as compliance safety and health officers (CSHOs), in FY 2018 and has committed to hiring an additional 26 CSHOs for the upcoming fiscal year. 

Senate committee advances potential highway bill with VMT fee

A new five-year highway bill in the Senate would invest \$287 billion and may include a new funding mechanism if passed. Recently advanced by the Environment and Public Works Committee, the measure proposes examining a vehicle-miles-traveled (VMT) fee to fund road and maintenance projects.

According to the legislation, the Transportation Secretary would be tasked with testing the design, acceptance, equity and implementation of user-based alternative revenue mechanisms, including those which

vary by income and population. It also calls for public education to increase awareness of the need for road-use fees or other alternative funding proposals.

Currently, national fuel taxes fund the Highway Trust Fund. They were set in 1993 at 18.4 cents per gallon for gas and 24.4 cents for diesel. That's created a shortfall in funding because taxes have not kept up with inflation and more efficient vehicles. Senate committee members hope a VMT fee would address the issue. 



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Dawn Mallard / D.Grimm, Inc. / Conroe, TX

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BECOMING A REALITY

Groundbreaking ceremony in Bondurant marks beginning of era for central Iowa market

Nearly 50 people braved rain and chilly fall temperatures to attend Road Machinery & Supplies Co.'s (RMS') official groundbreaking ceremony for its new central Iowa facility, located outside of Des Moines, in Bondurant.

"This means a lot; it's going to be our new home," said RMS Vice President of Southern Operations Joe Schmidtlein, who is overseeing the project. "For our customers and employees, this facility is a great thing. It's going to be an awesome place."

RMS staff and customers, along with state and local representatives, were on-hand for the festivities in early October. RMS CEO Mike Sill II, President Russell Sheaffer and Bondurant Mayor Curt Sullivan spoke at the ceremony. The trio echoed each other's enthusiasm and optimism about the project.

"This is an exciting time as we continue to grow our community," proclaimed Sullivan. "RMS building here allows us to meet our objectives and goals from a community perspective."


"We hope to be a destination employer, and having this facility here will help that,"

commented Sill II. "With the East Moline facility in 2017 and the Cedar Rapids branch we are planning, we have made a significant investment in Iowa."

Plenty of room plus one surprise

The state-of-the-art, 25,000-square-foot building will feature 10 service bays and staff 35 employees. The shop will have 32-foot ceilings and a 20-foot door to accommodate larger aggregate equipment. The 14-acre site also boasts one very unique element.

"We are putting in a fishing pond," laughed Schmidtlein. "We needed some fill dirt, so we decided to build a pond to accomplish that. I think most of our employees are really fired up about it."

Initial construction began last fall, and Schmidtlein anticipates the branch will be operational this spring. "We are planning a six-month build, although when you break ground in Iowa in October, weather can always pose a problem," he noted. "However, we are optimistic that we will be in here when spring rolls around." 



*Joe Schmidtlein,
Vice President of
Southern Operations*



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RMSRoadSigns.com



▶ VIDEO

(L-R) RMS officials and guests Dale Jensen, Luther Braun, Abby Sill, Mike Sill II, Curt Sullivan, Joe Schmidtlein, Russell Sheaffer and Andy Denker dig the ceremonial first shovels of dirt at RMS' official groundbreaking event for its new central Iowa branch, located outside of Des Moines, in Bondurant.

DANNY MACKEY

New Service Manager at Virginia Rebuild Facility brings wealth of knowledge to position



*Danny Mackey,
Service Manager*

When starting a job with a new company, a person typically needs to navigate a few things while getting accustomed to his or her position. Learning standards and practices, assimilating into the culture and meeting co-workers can be a little daunting – unless you're Danny Mackey. The new Service Manager at the Road Machinery & Supplies Co. (RMS) Virginia Rebuild Facility needed very little time to feel comfortable in his new surroundings.

"I'm pretty sure I knew everyone in this building before I started working here," laughed Mackey. "I came from Hibbing Taconite Company, and we used Komatsu 830E haul trucks from RMS. Being so familiar with the people and how RMS operates made the decision pretty easy."

Familiar face

There was an added level of comfort to the transition as well. Mackey succeeded Bill Hodge, who was his also mentor and trainer at Hibbing Taconite.


"I look forward to building on what he accomplished here," Mackey added. "Bill set

the bar very high, and there is no need to reinvent the wheel. We're always looking for ways we can continue to improve."

Mackey brings extensive in-the-field experience to his role at RMS. After working primarily with the haul trucks at Hibbing Taconite, he is keenly aware of what customers encounter each day.

"I want to be a resource for our customers," explained Mackey. "We have a lot of data and experience with component life cycles, rebuilds and other areas to support them and help make their businesses successful. I want customers to come to us with ideas and questions so we can work together. We're here for them."

Mackey volunteers as a firefighter for a number of communities near Virginia and serves as the Fire Chief of Biwabik.

Away from work and the fire station, Mackey enjoys hunting, fishing and spending time with his wife, Shannon, and their four children, John, Nora, Ella and Lane. 



Before joining RMS, Service Manager Danny Mackey worked with Komatsu haul trucks and says he looks forward to being a resource for customers.



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