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Featured in this issue:

KINDRED PLUMBING & HEATING, INC.

The focus of its work has seen some changes, but KPH's high standards have remained the same

See article inside...

Owner/President
Dean Merhiy

Featured in this issue:

MOLSTAD EXCAVATING, INC.

Grand Forks contractor
specializes in underground
utility work

See article inside...

Vice President Dennis
Molstad (left) and
President Gary Molstad

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DOWN TO EARTH

IN THIS ISSUE

MOLSTAD EXCAVATING, INC.

Read how specializing in underground work has helped this family-owned Grand Forks contractor grow and thrive.

KINDRED PLUMBING & HEATING, INC.

Although this utility contractor's emphasis has shifted during its 50-year history, its focus remains unchanged.

GUEST OPINION

A good safety program should not only prevent accidents, it should also address how to handle accidents when they do occur. Here are some tips on how to prepare for emergencies.

EQUIPMENT SECURITY

Heavy equipment owners' most frequently reported loss is theft. Learn the best ways to protect your equipment investment from thieves.

PERFORMANCE NOTES

Find out why the results of recent field tests show the Komatsu PC300 excavator holds significant performance advantages over other machines in the same size class.

NEW PRODUCTS

Take a look at Komatsu's new Dash-6 series of mid-size wheel loaders and the production and fuel-efficiency advantages they offer.

MORE NEW PRODUCTS

If you're looking for a powerful, fast and easy-to-use loader that combines unmatched compactness and maneuverability, you'll want to take a close look at Komatsu's new compact track loaders.

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KOMATSU

A SALUTE TO A CUSTOMER

MOLSTAD EXCAVATING INC.

Grand Forks contractor specializes in underground utility work

For Molstad Excavating Inc. of Grand Forks, N.D., it all started more than 60 years ago with a shovel and a strong back. Myron Molstad had just gotten out of the military in 1944 and was working for the railroad as a conductor when he started doing residential excavating by hand, putting in sewer and water lines.

"I was with him in the early years," said his son Gary Molstad, who now serves as President of Molstad Excavating. "We didn't have any equipment then. We didn't get our first backhoe until the mid-1950s."

Family-owned and -operated

Some six decades after Molstad Excavating was founded, it's still a family-operated underground utility contracting company, although the shovel has been replaced by more

modern machinery. While Gary continues to act as President, he describes himself as semi-retired. His brother Dennis serves as Vice President. Drew Molstad acts as General Manager along with a couple of key personnel in the office. Molstad Excavating has nine field superintendents in charge of the construction crews and field work.

"We focus on piping," explained Drew. "We try to stick with what we know instead of pouring concrete one day and laying sod the next. Our emphasis is on one thing and we try to do it well. Our work force and equipment are the main tools to being successful. That's where the Komatsu name shines."

"Basically, all we did was residential work when Dad was in the business," recalled Gary. "But in the last 15 years or so, we've mainly focused on commercial projects in the area. Molstad Excavating does many types of federal, state and local projects."

The early days were truly a family affair. Gary said his grandfather, Jim Molstad, would also assist. "We had three generations working together at that time," he said. "Dad would lay the pipe, I'd run the backhoe and Grandpa would hand the pipe down and mix the mortar. We worked for many years like that."

When Gary and Dennis took over the business from their father in the mid-1970s, Molstad Excavating consisted of only a handful of employees, but the two brothers had plenty of experience to fall back on. "Dennis was in-house doing the bidding, I was the one out in the field," Gary explained. "That's the way we acquired our work. Denny would go to every bid letting and he knew every contractor in the state. I didn't, so I stepped back and did the work that we bid. Now our sons are basically doing the same thing."

Molstad Excavating Inc.
Vice President Dennis
Molstad (left) and
President Gary Molstad
took over the business
that was founded by their
father more than 60 years
ago. Today, their sons help
manage the operations of
Molstad Excavating Inc.





At the controls of a Komatsu D85 dozer, a Molstad Excavating Operator backdrags dirt in Grand Forks.

Company Growth

Today, Molstad Excavating operates nine crews, but Gary said company growth has not come without challenges. The company built bridges for a period of time under the name Consolidated Bridge Company until the early 1980s, when an economic downturn made bridge work less feasible. Things had turned around by 1997, when heavy rains brought in a literal flood of business.

"Up until then, we were probably running three crews at the most," said Gary Molstad. "When the flood hit, we had to add crews."

During the past five years, Drew said Molstad Excavating has done a number of flood protection and reconstruction projects in Grand Forks. The company is finishing work on a \$10 million dollar water-line project in western North Dakota. The job includes laying 80,000 feet of 36-inch ductile iron pipe. "Last year we also did work on three separate Wal-Mart projects in North Dakota — one each in Bismarck, Grand Forks and Williston."

Dependable equipment

Completing such jobs in this day and age requires more than a shovel, and the Molstad family says they can count on Komatsu machinery. Molstad Excavating both purchases and rents Komatsu equipment from General Equipment and Supplies, working with Sales Representative Dale Hatfield.

"It's a quality product," Drew said of the Komatsu excavators. "We've found in comparable size classes it probably has the most overall power and lifting capacity compared to the competition."

Among Molstad Excavating's Komatsu equipment is a new PC400LC-7 excavator, D65PX-15 and D85PX-15 dozers and a WA380-5 wheel loader. The company also operates a couple of PC400LC-5 excavators.

"We try to run what's most productive and what's most reliable," Drew continued. "We have many Komatsu excavators that are surpassing the 10-year mark or more. We can count on them long term, so we've been very happy with them. I believe Komatsu puts a



Molstad Operator Ron Delorme uses this Komatsu PC600LC-8 the company rented from General to do the site work at a housing development in Grand Forks. "It's a quality product," General Manager Drew Molstad said of Komatsu



Using a Komatsu WA380-5 wheel loader, a Molstad Operator moves dirt at a housing development in Grand Forks.



Drew Molstad acts as General Manager for Molstad Excavating. "Our work force and equipment are the main tools to being successful," he said. "That's where the Komatsu name shines."



General Equipment Sales Representative Dale Hatfield (left) has been working to meet the machinery needs of Molstad Excavating Inc. President Gary Molstad for 15 years.

lot into research and development and they produce a nice, quality product."

A look ahead

For decades now, producing a quality product has also been the goal of Molstad Excavating. As the third generation of Molstads prepares to lead the company, Drew Molstad says he wants to continue building on that reputation.

"Our emphasis will remain on quality," insisted Drew. "We want to continue to grow and do quality work. That's what we take pride in." ■



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A SALUTE TO A CUSTOMER

KINDRED PLUMBING & HEATING, INC.

The focus of its work has seen some changes, but KPH's high standards have remained the same

Kindred Plumbing & Heating, Inc. has a long history of providing quality work for its customers, although the scope of that work has seen some changes during the past 50 years.

KPH's specialty is putting in heavy water, sewer and storm sewer piping. "We do a lot of developments and strip malls," said KPH President Dean Merhiy.

When the company was founded in 1952, it was a plumbing and heating company. Dean's father Smylie Merhiy bought the company in 1962, and by the late 1960s, KPH had begun doing commercial and residential underground work.

"It was a new adventure for us," Dean Merhiy recalled. "We were still doing the plumbing and heating and residential work, then we started getting into commercial projects. We did a bunch of projects in Pelican Rapids, Minnesota, including the hospital and the schools, and we did a couple other small schools in the area. Then we started getting into moving dirt. The business just evolved."

Dean Merhiy took over the company reins in 1980. Today, he estimates underground utility work makes up about 80 percent of KPH's work load, including site excavations. "Our mainstay is putting pipe in the ground," Merhiy confirmed. "That's our goal." Ten percent of the company's work load is highway work and the remaining 10 percent is the plumbing work upon which the company was founded. KPH serves as a subcontractor for much of its work.

KPH leadership

As a family-owned business, Merhiy and his wife, Cathy, who serves as KPH Vice President, say they are fortunate to have an outstanding group of employees. Doug Richards is

Superintendent for KPH, handling all of the bidding and scheduling. Randy Hendrickson, Allan Dunbar and Mike Thompson are foremen of KPH's three crews. Bob Mitchell handles the plumbing, heating and air-conditioning side of the business. Longtime employee Gary Olsgaard is a mechanic who also serves as an operator. From April through about Thanksgiving, KPH generally operates with three four- or five-man crews.

KPH does most of its work in a 60- to 70-mile radius of Kindred. "Probably the biggest job we did was replacing the entire water main in the city of Finley," Richards remembered. "We basically had two crews up there all summer long. We nearly had the whole town torn apart."

Convinced about Komatsu

To complete these jobs, KPH relies extensively on Komatsu equipment from General Equipment & Supplies, Inc. and Sales Representative John Gromatka. Among its fleet are four excavators (a PC120LC-6, a PC150LC-6, a PC220LC-7 and a PC300LC-7) and a new D61PX-15 dozer.

Continued ...



**Dean Merhiy,
Owner/President**



**Doug Richards,
Superintendent**

For pushing dirt and backfilling trenches, KPH relies on this Komatsu D61PX-15 dozer run by Operator Reuben Noriega.



Taking care of customers is KPH's top priority

...continued



Randy
Hendrickson,
Foreman



Allan Dunbar,
Foreman



Gary Olsgaard,
Operator

Merhiy said KPH Superintendent Doug Richards convinced him to buy his first piece of Komatsu machinery, a PC220, about a dozen years ago.

"Doug had run some Komatsu equipment with another contractor before he came to work here," Merhiy recalled. "He was impressed that the Komatsus were so fuel-efficient and still are today. We hardly ever have any problems with them either, they've been fabulous in terms of reliability. We've had a good relationship with General, too."

KPH crew members who operate the Komatsu equipment are equally enthusiastic about the machines. Foreman Randy Hendrickson is using the company's new PC220LC-7 excavator in Fargo to put in 1,000 feet of storm sewer pipe, 500 feet of water and about 150 feet of sanitary sewer. "I like that it's really smooth," he reported. "It's got power when I need it. It moves when I want it to and I can dig a nice grade with it."

Allan Dunbar, another KPH Foreman, is using the new PC300LC-7 excavator to lay pipe to a housing development in Mapleton. "For

its size, it has more quickness and power than anything I've ever run before," he described.

"The guys can really tell the difference with the new Dash-7s," confirmed Merhiy. "They're that much faster, and that's saying a lot when you're moving that kind of iron around. They're also very fuel-efficient."

KPH Operator Reuben Noriega has been running dozers for more than 20 years and said the D61PX-15 is one of the best. "I've run some competitive machines and they can't do anything close to what this will push," he claimed. "This is the Cadillac of dozers in my mind."

Merhiy said service after the sale is also a big factor in buying machinery and General Equipment has not disappointed. "Service is very important," he affirmed. "I know if you ask General Equipment, they'd agree that making sure the customer's satisfied is their number-one priority, and we're definitely getting that kind of service."

Taking care of customers

Merhiy said taking care of customers is also a KPH priority. Going the extra mile at a jobsite has helped KPH develop its reputation for quality customer service, and in turn, led to future job opportunities. For instance, the crew cleans up the jobsite at the end of each day.

"We tidy it up in case it rains. No one else does that, and that's part of our selling point," Merhiy explained. "We'll take care of the site while we're there."

"We've got some key builders and developers in Fargo that give us a lot of work. They'll call me up to say they are putting a team together, and we know we'll be a part of it. If they have a tight schedule, we're always asked to be one of the players."

Merhiy said the company is currently at a comfortable size, but if opportunities arise, he expects KPH will be there to take advantage of them.

"I think the employees will have a big role in determining our future," he predicted. "It's important to look for new adventures so we can continue to be versatile. We need to look at everything." ■



Foreman Allan Dunbar uses a Komatsu PC300LC-7 excavator to dig a trench on a jobsite in Mapleton.

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EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Having a crisis plan is an essential aspect of a quality safety program



George Kennedy,
NUCA Vice President
of Safety

Every jobsite should have a person designated to take charge in case of an emergency and every company should have an emergency management plan, according to NUCA Vice President of Safety George Kennedy.

No matter how hard a company tries to address every potential jobsite hazard, the possibility always exists that an accident will occur and evolve into a full-fledged emergency situation. If that happens at your company, you will be much better off if you've taken steps to develop a comprehensive emergency management plan.

Planning for an emergency involves first selecting a person to take charge, and second, creating a manual that provides step-by-step directions for handling crisis events.

The emergency manager should be a clear, quick thinker who is well-respected by the work force. Companies that have crews spread out over a large area may have to designate more than one person to take charge in case of an emergency. Of course, if fire and/or rescue services are called in, the senior officer on the scene will be the incident commander. However, your company will still need to have a person who represents your company's interests and knows what to do. If this person is properly trained, he or she will be able to take appropriate

measures to lessen potential long-term damage associated with an emergency situation.

Know what to do

The first step in creating an emergency manual is to have a group of knowledgeable individuals within your company identify and prioritize risks. Once this process is complete, determine and write down what resources are available and how each situation will be handled.

At minimum, every crew should have a list of emergency telephone numbers. It's important to point out however, that you cannot always depend on the local fire department or rescue team to be able to handle all emergencies. In the case of an injured worker, the family should be notified immediately and the company should arrange to have family transported to the hospital, if necessary.

Knowing what agencies to notify is also an important aspect of emergency management. For example, in the event of a worker fatality, OSHA must be notified within eight hours. The EPA, DOT and other agencies may also require notification, as might your insurance carrier.

Your company should also have procedures in place to address hurricanes, fires, floods, tornados and man-made disasters.

If you haven't thought about these things, now is a good time to do so. A comprehensive emergency plan can save lives and help avert disaster. ■



This Guest Opinion is a summary of an article that appeared in the August 2006 issue of Utility Contractor magazine—"Are You Prepared for an Emergency," by George Kennedy, National Utility Contractors Association Vice President of Safety. The summary is printed here with the permission of NUCA and Benjamin Media, Inc.

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The building industry has been booming the past several years with new housing and commercial construction on the rise. Many contractors have taken advantage of the robust economy to grow their businesses and take on additional equipment to keep up with demand.

With more equipment in the marketplace comes more risk, not only from liability and increased financing, but from theft. While the strong economy is good for contractors, it's been equally as good for thieves, who are increasingly taking more equipment from jobsites and equipment owners' yards each year.

According to National Equipment Register (NER), theft is the most frequently reported loss by heavy equipment owners, outpacing

Statistics show smaller, easy-to-move machinery is the overwhelming choice of thieves. Skid steers are the most frequently stolen items because their size allows thieves to easily load and transport them on a small trailer.



collision, fire, vandalism and other claims. There is no concrete number for what theft actually causes in terms of loss because many thefts go unreported, but industry estimates show it as high as \$1 billion a year. That includes the loss of machinery, insurance costs, downtime that can lead to penalties for not meeting schedule deadlines and other outlays that may result.

What's stolen

Statistics show smaller, easy-to-move machinery is the overwhelming choice of thieves. Skid steers are high on the list because their size allows thieves to easily load and transport them on a small trailer. A recent NER report showed skid steers were the most frequently stolen items, accounting for 33 percent of all thefts. Also popular among thieves are generators because they can be transported using a trailer hitch. Backhoe loaders accounted for 15 percent of all thefts because their versatility makes them profitable and easily sold, while pieces such as excavators and wheel loaders combined made up only 10 percent of thefts.

The reasons for equipment theft vary. According to the NER, the reward for a thief far outweighs the risk. Heavy equipment often has little or no physical machine or site security, so it's easy to steal, valuable and easy to sell. Recovery rates are extremely low, 10 percent to 15 percent, making the thief's risk minimal. When an item is recovered, often no arrest is made.

Adding to the thief's chances of getting away are the time and place of most thefts. Nearly all occur on jobsites during holidays and weekends, when no one is around to

monitor activity. That often gives thieves several days before anyone detects a piece of equipment is gone. Many jobsites lack strong anti-theft measures such as motion detection and lighting, video monitoring or even simple things such as fencing. The NER's report showed 70 percent of stolen equipment was taken from a worksite, while only 30 percent was taken from an equipment owner's shop or equipment yard.

So what's an equipment owner to do when it comes to loss prevention? There are several answers, many of which are easy to implement and cost little money compared to the costs associated with losing a piece of equipment.

GPS systems allow constant monitoring

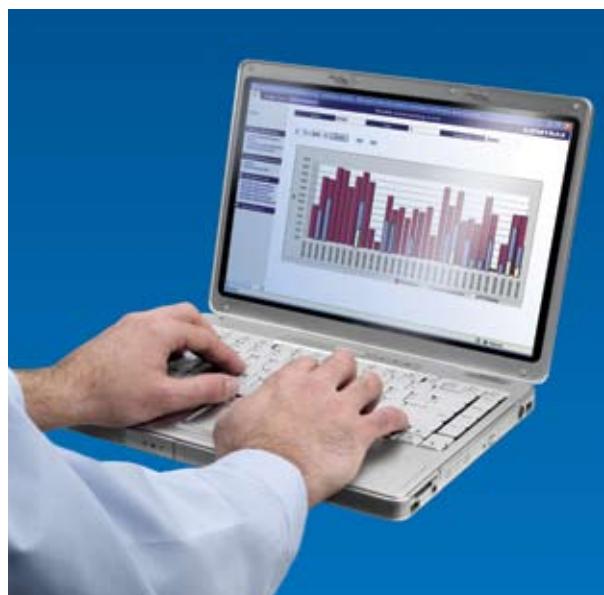
Experts agree that good fleet management is a key tool in reducing your chances of theft. By being vigilant, you can alleviate the risk of your machinery ending up in an auction or chop shop, and increase your chance of recovery if it is stolen.

It's essential to keep detailed records of your equipment, especially the Product Identification Number (PIN) or serial number of your machine and its main components. The PIN number is like the VIN on your car and allows for identification if a machine is stolen and recovered. Many experts believe in registering your equipment with groups such as NER, which keeps a database of equipment and can be used by law enforcement if it suspects a machine is stolen.

Among the more sophisticated management options are electronic means of tracking equipment. There are several GPS (global positioning satellite)-based systems on the market, such as Komatsu's KOMTRAX wireless monitoring system, which allow users to monitor and track equipment continuously. The machine is equipped with a device that is linked to GPS and users can go to their computers to find out vital information such as location, service-meter readings, and daily hours of operation as well as error codes, fuel consumption and fluid levels. While most GPS systems weren't designed to prevent theft, by their nature they are a deterrent to would-be criminals.



When not in use, equipment should be parked in a fenced-in area that contains barbed or razor wire, if possible. Fencing should have a heavy-duty gate with a case-hardened chain and high-security padlock.



GPS systems, such as Komatsu's Komtrax wireless monitoring system, allow users to monitor and track equipment continuously. If criminals know the machines have GPS tracking devices, they are less likely to take them.

If criminals know the machines have GPS tracking devices, they are less likely to take them. Some systems come with an automatic notification system that alerts the owner when a machine is moved during hours of nonproduction. Older machines can be retrofitted with the systems. Of course, if a machine is stolen, being able to track its location will make it easier to find.

Many newer systems come with such features as theft prevention through means of engine lock or "geofencing." Engine lock allows equipment users to prevent the engine from being started or continuing to run. Users can disable the engine during nonproductive hours, or turn the engine off remotely when an alert shows the machine is moving during

Continued . . .

Several methods deter equipment theft

... continued

these times. Geofencing allows the user to set boundaries for the machine and remotely disable it if an alert says it's gone outside the predetermined area.

Secure equipment

There are also several ways to secure a machine, such as using a locking mechanical device that prevents the controls from moving. You've probably seen something similar for your car on television. A bar-like device is put on the steering wheel to prevent it from being moved. The same concept is used for many pieces of heavy equipment, with most ranging in price from less than \$100 to about \$200.

Anchoring or immobilizing machinery by using a cable or chain can be an effective means of securing equipment as well. Other methods of immobilizing the machine include removing batteries or wires and lowering blades and buckets; removing tires for machines that won't be needed right away; and disabling or removing trailer hitches for towed equipment. Of course, don't leave equipment on a trailer unattended. Unload it and secure it to the trailer hitch with a cable or chain.

Other common methods of securing equipment when not in use include putting it

Securing equipment when not in use is vital. Avoid leaving a machine unattended on a trailer. Unload it and secure it to the trailer hitch with a cable or chain.



in as secure a location as possible and parking all equipment together in a single row so a missing piece would be noticed right away. You could position larger equipment in a circle, with smaller equipment inside the ring — or lift smaller equipment in the air with a larger piece.

Common methods are effective deterrents

Some of the most effective methods of theft prevention are the simplest, such as posting warning signs on the property and putting up fencing and maintaining it throughout the project. Fencing should be see-through, such as chain link, as high as possible and contain barbed or razor wire, if it's feasible. Don't pile materials on either side of the fence that would allow someone to climb it. Other barriers, such as low walls, posts, dirt berms or ditches, may prevent drive offs.

If possible, have only one entrance/exit to the site, and secure it with a heavy-duty gate. Spot-welding hinge pins will prevent easy removal, and a case-hardened chain and high-security padlock are essential. Limit the number of keys issued to the fenced area.

Limiting the number of keys for equipment can be helpful too. Make a note of who has keys and make it policy to remove keys from machines when not in use. Keep them in a safe or lockable storage area when not in the machine.

Whenever possible, use lights, including motion sensors, and video monitoring.

Report loss quickly

However you choose to limit theft is a personal decision, but there are some things that should be common among all equipment users. Similar to a jobsite safety plan, you should have a theft prevention policy and security plan that set procedures that limit your exposure to theft.

If a theft does occur, report it immediately and work closely with law enforcement, giving them as much information as possible. The sooner you report the loss, the better the chance of recovery is. ■



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PERFORMANCE NOTES

"FLAGSHIP" MACHINE

Komatsu PC300 demonstrates significant performance advantages in size class during recent field tests



Peter Robson,
Komatsu Excavator
Product Manager

Spec sheets are very informative and can certainly help guide a contractor who's looking for a new machine. But specs alone don't tell the whole story of how a machine is going to perform in the field. For that, you need field testing, which Komatsu recently conducted for its PC300LC-7 and PC300HD-7 excavators.

At the Komatsu Proving Grounds in Antioch, Ill., the product marketing group and the engineering test group brought in a highly experienced, independent operator to test the PC300s against two leading competitive excavators. The goal was to determine how the machines stacked up against each other.

"With the introduction this year of many new machines with Tier 3-compliant engines, we wanted to see for ourselves where we stood against the competition," said Komatsu Excavator Product Manager Peter Robson.

The Komatsu PC300HD-7, with its PC300 upper structure on a PC400-size bottom, demonstrated a 20-percent, over-the-side lift advantage over two highly regarded competitive excavators in a recent Komatsu-sponsored test of new Tier 3 machines.



"Specifically, we wanted test results for truck loading, trenching and lifting — and to see how we compared in terms of fuel economy."

With the results now in, Robson says it's clear that the Komatsu PC300LC-7 and Komatsu PC300HD-7 are "flagship machines" that have significant performance and production advantages over the top competitive brands.

The results

In the truck-loading productivity test, all the excavators loaded similar amounts of material in the same time frame, but the Komatsu units used 6 percent to 10 percent less fuel to accomplish the task.

"We suspected that our ecot3 engine was very efficient relative to the competition, and the test confirmed it," reported Robson. "Fuel efficiency is definitely on everybody's mind these days and it was one of our top priorities in developing the new engine. With the high cost of diesel fuel, 6 percent to 10 percent represents a considerable savings throughout the life of the machine."

In the trenching test, the Komatsu advantage was even clearer, with the PC300 pulling 77 feet in 15 minutes, compared to 65 feet and 62 for the competitive excavators. That's 18 percent more trench than one competitor and 24 percent more trench than the other.

"We attribute our trench-pulling success to two primary factors," explained Robson. "One is our Power Max function, which provides an 8.5-second power boost. If the operator uses it at the proper time, when he's going in for his first bite of material in the bottom

of the trench, it makes a huge difference in productivity. We strongly recommend that all operators experiment with Power Max to learn firsthand what a difference it makes. The other factor is our Komatsu bucket, which has an excellent trenching profile."

The lift test, conducted with buckets off and using a load cell, showed a distinct advantage for Komatsu's heavy-duty PC300HD-7, which features a PC300 upper structure on a PC400 bottom.

"Nobody else offers that type of combination," Robson pointed out. "It substantially increases stability in any lifting application, especially over the side. Our test showed a 20 percent over-the-side lift advantage with the PC300HD-7. The independent operator who tested the units for us said the two most important things to him when he's out on the job are machine stability and comfort, and he said the PC300HD really delivered on both counts. His quote was, 'I'd sure like to take that machine back to my place of work.'"

Komatsu harmony

In watching the equipment perform during the tests — and again, these were all highly regarded excavators with very similar specs — Robson said it struck him that the Komatsu advantage could be attributed to the way everything was designed to work together.

"The phrase that kept coming to me as I watched the PC300s perform was 'Komatsu harmony.' We make our own engines, our own pumps, our own hydraulics, everything. Because we control it all, we can design and fit all the components so they work perfectly together to produce optimum results. I'm convinced that the way those quality components integrate to complement one another is the real key to the Komatsu PC300 performance advantage."

A legendary number

A 300-class machine used to signify 30-metric tons. With operating weights now ranging from about 73,000-pounds up to about 86,000-pounds, it's clear that all manufacturers, Komatsu included, have



In a recent Komatsu-sponsored field test, the Komatsu PC300LC-7 and PC300HD-7 excavators showed significant production and fuel-saving advantages over two top competitive brands in the same size class. The units consumed 6 percent to 10 percent less fuel and were 18 percent to 24 percent more productive in a trenching application.

Brief specs on PC300LC-7 and PC300HD-7

Model	Horsepower	Operating weight	Bucket capacity
PC300LC-7	246 hp	72,432-77,298 lbs.	.89-2.56 cu. yd.
PC300HD-7	246 hp	82,453-85,868 lbs.	.89-2.56 cu. yd.

pushed the envelope a bit since those days. But while many other manufacturers have changed their model numbering system to reflect the larger size, as well as to help them market it as a larger machine, Komatsu has chosen to stay with the PC300 name and number.

"To us, the PC300 is a legendary number for a legendary machine, and changing it just wouldn't be right," said Robson. "It's like the greatest football players. John Elway is No. 7, Johnny Unitas is No. 19 and Jim Brown is No. 32. They couldn't be anything else. And so it is with the Komatsu PC300. It's an instantly recognizable name that has stood the test of time by continually evolving and setting a new standard every step of the way. We think our customers understand and respect that, and aren't going to be confused just because some other machines in the same class have a larger number." ■

For more information on how the PC300LC-7 and PC300HD-7 can help you be more productive and more cost-effective, call your sales representative or the sales office at our nearest branch location.



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NEW PRODUCTS

NEW MID-SIZE WHEEL LOADERS

Improved fuel efficiency is a key to Komatsu's new Dash-6 models

Fueling your equipment — or more precisely, paying for the fuel that goes into your equipment — is a little painful these days. With the price of fuel at or near a record high, equipment owners are looking for ways to maintain or increase production while limiting their fuel usage.

Komatsu's new Dash-6 series of mid-size wheel loaders (WA380-6, WA430-6, WA450-6 and WA480-6) fits the bill on both counts.

"Each of these new units has more horsepower and can do more work than its predecessor," said Komatsu Wheel Loader Product Manager Rob Warden. "But equally significant, if not more so, is the fact that they are more fuel-efficient."

Warden attributes the fuel savings primarily to Komatsu's new Tier 3-compliant, high-torque, ecot3 engine and variable displacement piston pump hydraulic system with CLSS (Closed-center Load Sensing System). "With our new engine and newly designed variable displacement piston pump hydraulic system that prevents wasted hydraulic flow, fuel efficiency is about 10 percent better than our Dash-5 models. We're confident that they compare favorably to competitive wheel loaders as well."

Helping to further improve fuel-efficient operation is an "E" (economy) operating mode for general loading; an automatic transmission with an "Auto Low" mode for low engine-speed operations; and an "Eco" indicator, which informs the operator when the machine is maximizing fuel efficiency.

"Fuel efficiency has always been important to equipment users, but now, with the price of fuel so high, it can actually be the difference between making money and losing money on a job," Warden pointed out. "At Komatsu, we

understand that and it's why we're producing machines that emphasize fuel savings."

Production advantages

Of course, saving on fuel is only half of the equation — the other half is productivity. The new mid-size Komatsu Dash-6 models have horsepower that is at or near the top of each size class (the units range from 191 horsepower up to 299 horsepower). Dumping clearances, reach and bucket capacity are also among the best the industry has to offer.



Rob Warden,
Product Manager

Continued . . .

Brief Specs on Komatsu Dash-6 Wheel Loaders

Model	Net hp	Operating weight	Bucket capacity	Breakout force
WA380-6	191 hp	38,760-39,260 lbs.	3.8-5.2 cu. yd.	39,860 lbs.
WA430-6	231 hp	40,840 lbs.	4.6 cu. yd.	40,333 lbs.
WA450-6	261 hp	49,090-49,390 lbs.	4.7-6.8 cu. yd.	43,160 lbs.
WA480-6	299 hp	54,500-54,830 lbs.	5.0-8.0 cu. yd.	47,660-55,930 lbs.

Komatsu's new Dash-6 series of mid-size wheel loaders, including the WA380-6 shown here, are about 10 percent more fuel efficient than the previous models, thanks largely to a new Tier 3 engine and torque converter.



New wheel loaders boost efficiency, productivity

... continued

In addition, the units feature excellent hydraulic cycle times (for example, 5.9 seconds to raise and 1.8 seconds to dump the rated bucket load for the WA380-6); a "P" (power) operating mode for maximum digging performance or hill climbing; and a kick-down switch, which when activated by the operator, automatically downshifts at the beginning of a digging cycle and upshifts when the machine is placed in reverse. The result is increased rim pull for better bucket penetration and reduced cycle times.

"When you put it all together — fuel efficiency, power and performance features — we believe these new mid-size Komatsu wheel loaders are true industry leaders that will improve a contractor's performance in a wide range of tasks at almost any construction or quarry site," said Warden.

Largest cab in class

All those production/performance capabilities aren't going to do much for you if your operator doesn't like to be in the machine. Nothing improves productivity like a comfortable operator, and Komatsu's Dash-6 wheel loaders are loaded with features designed to make an operator more comfortable and productive. It starts with the cab itself, which is the largest in its class, providing ample space for an operator of almost any size.

The cab is also extraordinarily quiet and provides great visibility, thanks to a wide, pillarless, flat-glass front window. Large cab

The new mid-size Komatsu Dash-6 wheel loaders feature outstanding horsepower and dumping clearance, as well as the largest cab in their respective classes.

doors are rear-hinged to open fully, offering easy entry/exit, and will not hamper visibility when operating the machine with the doors open.

Operation itself is a snap with PPC (proportional pressure control) levers that are on a column that can be slid forward or backward for optimum comfort, and a steering wheel that tilts and telescopes so it's always the perfect distance from the operator. The automatic shift in ranges two through four keeps production high and reduces the amount of manual shifting, thereby helping keep operators fresh throughout a long shift.

Maintenance made easy

Komatsu also took care to make the mid-size Dash-6 wheel loaders as easy as possible to maintain and service. One of the major advancements in this regard is a new main monitor that informs the operator of all machine functions and alerts him if an abnormality occurs. The monitor also stores information on any abnormalities to help technicians troubleshoot the machine for repair. In addition, the monitor informs the operator when it's time to replace oil and filters.

Other maintenance features include full, side-opening, gull-wing engine doors for ground-level engine service and daily checks; wet, multidisc service and parking brakes that are fully sealed to reduce contamination, wear and maintenance; and a reversible hydraulic cooling fan that helps keep the radiator clean when operating in adverse conditions.

The Komtrax wireless equipment monitoring system is standard equipment on all Dash-6 wheel loaders.

Komatsu-integrated design

Unlike some manufacturers, Komatsu designs, engineers and manufactures its products, including the new Dash-6 wheel loaders.

"From the engine to the hydraulics to the power train to the frame, our machines are all Komatsu," confirmed Warden. "We think that's significant because it allows all major components to work together optimally for maximum reliability and productivity. We believe the result is machines that are the best value on the market." ■





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MORE NEW PRODUCTS

NEW COMPACT TRACK LOADERS

High performance, high flotation, high value set these units apart from the competition

Komatsu recently introduced two new, compact, rubber-track loader models. The model CK30, with 2,485 pounds operating capacity, and CK35, with 2,755 pounds operating capacity, are Komatsu's first entries into the fast-growing compact track-loader market segment.

"Contractors are flocking to compact track loaders because they work in conditions where wheel-type skid steer loaders struggle," said Skid Steer Loader Product Manager Bob Beesley. "The low ground pressure (four to five psi) makes them ideal for any job, but especially in soft conditions or where minimum soil compaction is desired. That describes the lion's share of skid steer loader applications."

According to Beesley, Komatsu offers the best of both worlds in loader design too. The CK30 loader uses radial-lift-path technology, while the larger CK35 is a vertical-lift-path loader. The radial lift path is ideally suited to ground-engaging applications, while the vertical lift path, with its 129-inch hinge-pin height (eight inches more than the CK30), is more suited to material-handling and truck-loading operations. A Komatsu 84-horsepower, high-torque, turbocharged diesel engine powers both units.

Like all Komatsu machines, the new CK30 and CK35 compact track loaders are equipped for maximum comfort and productivity with PPC (pilot proportional control) joystick controls, which are easy for any operator to use. A two-speed transmission provides faster ground speed and loading cycles compared to machines with a typical single-speed transmission. Other comfort features include a flat floor, foot throttle and an optional enclosed cab with heater or heater and air conditioner.

Beesley also says Komatsu further separates itself from competitors when it comes to the undercarriage. Before adopting the final design, Komatsu engineers studied existing undercarriage and track systems and identified both strengths and weaknesses. "The result is a system that maximizes the life of the rubber track and provides an offset track-pad pattern for a smoother ride," said Beesley.

Finally, and maybe most important, is Komatsu's attention to service and maintenance. While most competitors' machines require daily greasing, these Komatsu units require lubrication at 250-hour intervals. A tilt-forward cab and engine cover provide access to all engine, driveline and hydraulic components and users can perform the everyday machine checks by simply raising the lockable engine cover.

"Komatsu compact track loaders are light on their feet. They're comfortable, productive, value-packed, service-friendly and offer state-of-the-art safety features," summarized Beesley. ■

Brief specs on the CK30 and CK35

Model	Operating Capacity	Weight
CK30	2,485 lbs.	9,546 lbs.
CK35	2,755 lbs.	10,053 lbs.

Komatsu's new CK30 and CK35 compact, rubber-track loaders offer versatility and productivity on the jobsite.



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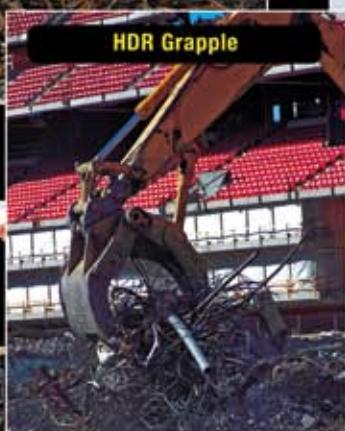
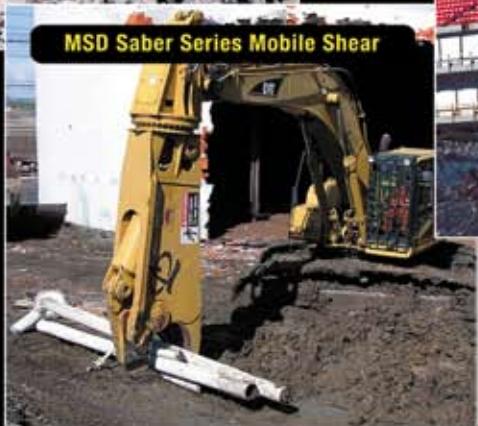
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EQUIPMENT INNOVATION

"SOLD" ON KOMTRAX

Contractor unexpectedly discovers benefits of Komatsu's equipment monitoring system

When Ralph Camputaro & Son Excavating of North Branford, Conn., bought a Komatsu PC400LC-7 earlier this year, it did so because it wanted the additional size and power the machine would deliver compared to the company's three PC300s. The fact that the PC400 was equipped with the KOMTRAX equipment monitoring system meant little to the company at the time.

"I knew what KOMTRAX was, but we didn't have it on any of our existing machines — and I can't say I was necessarily looking for a unit that had the KOMTRAX system in it," said Vice President Dennis Camputaro. "However, now that we've been exposed to it, KOMTRAX will absolutely be something I want on machines we buy in the future."

With KOMTRAX, Camputaro says he knows where his PC400 is at all times; he knows what it's doing; and he knows the service meter readings.

"I'm completely sold on the benefits of the KOMTRAX system," asserted Camputaro. "The major advantage is that it allows us to preplan our service and maintenance intervals, which makes us more efficient. By knowing in advance when we're going to have the machine down for service, scheduling is much easier and the whole rhythm of our operation runs much more smoothly."

Monitor productivity

Camputaro says the other thing he really likes about KOMTRAX is that it lets him monitor the productivity of individual operators.

"It helps me see which operators are more productive in different applications. Knowing

that, I'm better able to match the right operator with the right machine to the right job. Basically, I like everything about KOMTRAX and believe it's definitely an advancement that will help us be successful as we move forward."

KOMTRAX is standard equipment on almost all new Tier 3-compliant Komatsu machines and is available as a retrofit for older machines or non-Komatsu equipment. ■

For more information on KOMTRAX and how it can benefit your operation, contact your sales representative or our service department.

Like all Tier 3-compliant Komatsu excavators, this PC400LC-7 is equipped with the KOMTRAX equipment monitoring system. Although Dennis Camputaro says he wasn't particularly interested in KOMTRAX when he bought the machine, he now says, "KOMTRAX will absolutely be something I want on machines we buy in the future." He says he especially likes the ease of service scheduling and the production information he receives from the system.



Dennis Camputaro,
Vice President



KOMATSU & YOU

PRODUCT IMPROVEMENT

Komatsu Executive Vice President says innovation requires a commitment to R&D



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.

**Kazuhiko Iwata, Executive Vice President,
North American R&D Division**

Kazuhiko Iwata has always been fascinated with large equipment. After graduating from the prestigious University of Tokyo in 1975 with a degree in Mechanical Engineering, he joined Komatsu because, in his words, "That's where the large equipment was."

Iwata's first assignment with Komatsu was with the Research and Development (R&D) division's design engineering team, where he was put on a project to help develop the company's first 100-ton dump truck. In the late 1970s, he accompanied the prototype 100-ton truck to Spain for two years of mine site testing. After testing, the HD1200M was released to the market and has been a very successful product for Komatsu.

Since then, Iwata has served as design manager for articulated dump trucks, including a three-year posting in Norway — and as General Manager of Komatsu's Construction Equipment Technical Center #2 in Japan, where he oversaw the design of rubber-tire machines.

In August 2004, he was appointed Executive Vice President, North American R&D Division. In the position, he oversees the activities of Research and Development personnel in both Peoria, Ill., and Chattanooga, Tenn. "I still love big equipment, so for me, the position I have here in America is great because I get to work on mining trucks again — and equipment doesn't get much bigger than that," said Iwata.

When he's not on the job, Iwata enjoys playing golf. "I'm not that good, but it's fun for me. And like all golfers, I hope to get better."

QUESTION: How important is Research & Development (R&D) to Komatsu?

ANSWER: It's vitally important. That's why Komatsu spends more than three percent of total sales on R&D. That's a significant commitment year-in and year-out, but necessary for us to remain a leader in the equipment industry.

Globally, we are the No. 2 manufacturer of heavy equipment. For us to close the gap on No. 1, we must be innovative and we must develop new and better equipment before they do. At Komatsu, we don't believe in copying what somebody else has done. We consider ourselves a pace-setting company and R&D is a crucial aspect of that.

QUESTION: Give us some examples of recent Komatsu R&D successes.

ANSWER: Much of our emphasis in recent years has been on engine development to meet emissions regulations. Our Tier 3-compliant ecot3 engine is a good example of R&D success. It's in our newest machines and is working very well, delivering both better fuel economy and higher horsepower. We're very pleased with the way it's performing.

R&D is also a crucial part of Komatsu's "Unique and Unrivaled" products strategy, whereby we are producing specific machines that are clearly and demonstrably superior to any competitive products. Recent examples of those would be the WA600-6 wheel loader and D155AX-6 (Sigma) dozer, both of which are significantly more productive and efficient than anything else in their class.

QUESTION: In North America, what is Komatsu's R&D emphasis?

ANSWER: Komatsu operates under the concept of "Mother" Technical Centers. For most

products, the Mother Tech Center is in Japan, but our Peoria plant is Komatsu's Mother Center for mining trucks and Chattanooga is the Mother Center for small dozers, so those are areas of emphasis for us. Komatsu engineers are also involved at each North American manufacturing plant to customize and modify machines for this market.

QUESTION: What kind of things are you working on right now?

ANSWER: (Laughs) We don't want to give away secrets so we can't reveal everything. Also, it's called research for a reason. Sometimes the research tells us that certain plans will not work, so we don't like to talk a lot about what we're working on because it may not pan out. Generally speaking however, we're working hard right now on making our equipment more cost effective.

QUESTION: I would assume improving fuel efficiency is one thing you're working on to try to improve cost effectiveness.

ANSWER: Certainly. Fortunately, our fuel efficiency is very good relative to the competition, so it's not like we have to play catch-up — but yes, we are working to make our equipment even more fuel efficient.

It's important to note, however, that fuel efficiency is only one part of cost effectiveness as it relates to construction and mining equipment. Our real effort is to help customers lower their overall owning and operating costs relative to production. In other words, help mining customers reduce their cost per ton and construction customers lower their cost per yard. The high cost of fuel is a very important part of that equation, but it's still only a part. There are many other factors such as acquisition cost, repair and maintenance costs, capacity, cycle times and availability that also impact equipment cost effectiveness.

QUESTION: If you look into your crystal ball, what do you see happening in the construction equipment industry over the next decade or so?

ANSWER: I'm not sure there will be any revolutionary changes, but certainly there will be evolutionary improvements to equipment.



Komatsu's strong commitment to research and development (R&D) is evident at its factories, such as the Chattanooga Manufacturing Operation, and in "Unique and Unrivaled" products like the WA600-6 wheel loader.



Komatsu's Peoria, Ill., plant heads up the manufacturer's worldwide R&D efforts for large mining trucks like the 330-ton 930E.

For instance, I think there will be significant powertrain management advances such as hybrid or electric drive. The automobile industry will probably give us a good indication of where we might be going, especially for trucks.

QUESTION: When a contractor or mining customer hears the name Komatsu, what do you want to be the first word that pops into his head?

ANSWER: Reliability. A machine needs to work every day in order to deliver the best return to the customer, so when a customer says his Komatsu units are his most reliable machines — that makes me happier than anything else. ■

INDUSTRY NEWS

Upcoming shows slated for asphalt paving industry

A Asphalt paving professionals have a couple of industry-related educational opportunities available to them early in 2007.

The National Asphalt Pavement Association (NAPA) will hold its 52nd annual meeting February 18-21 at the San Francisco Marriott. Educational sessions scheduled include one entitled "Managing in an Environment of Material Shortages and Energy Price Volatility," while another will focus on "How to Attract, Retain and Motivate a Quality Workforce."

Other topics to be covered include sessions on management and leadership, funding issues at the federal level, the latest information on asphalt technology, and a variety of environmental and engineering

topics. You can register online at the NAPA Web site www.hotmix.org.

One month later, World of Asphalt 2007 will be held March 19-22 at the Georgia International Convention Center in Atlanta. According to organizers, the event will feature exhibits of the latest technologies and products from leading manufacturers and industry service providers, plus extensive industry-focused educational sessions. New for the 2007 show are operator certification programs and a tour of the National Center for Asphalt Technology, located at Auburn University in Alabama.

For more information or to register online, go to www.worldofasphalt.com or call (800) 867-6060. ■



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PARTS POINTERS

KOMATSU KMAX TOOTH SYSTEM

Cost and time savings are major benefits of patented, reusable locking design

As a Purchasing Agent/Warehouse Manager for Delrick Corporation, Inc. of Tazewell, Va., John Hicks's job is to make sure parts are always available for a good-size fleet of equipment. So he's always willing to try a product that may lighten his work load.

"It's not easy keeping up with the needs of our machinery, but it has to be done," said Hicks. "So when our sales representative offered me the chance to try out Komatsu's KMAX tooth system, I was open-minded. I'm glad I was because it's one of the best decisions I've ever made. By far, it's the best tooth system that anyone has ever come up with."

Developed by Hensley, the KMAX tooth system is revolutionary in design, and features a reusable locking mechanism that makes installation and removal fast and safe. Once a tooth is put on the bucket shank, it's locked in place with a 90-degree turn of a socket, eliminating the old and sometimes dangerous method of hammering pins out.

"We've already seen a cost savings," said Hicks. "We've used the KMAX teeth for almost two years without replacing any. They stay in place until you want them off, and you don't have to replace pins. When we changed a tooth before, we had to drive the old pin out, and then it wasn't usable again. At \$12 to \$13 per pin and about 50 pins a month, that adds up quickly."

Designed for long life

KMAX teeth have been tested and proven in the field under the most demanding and punishing conditions. Made of the highest-quality cast alloys, each tooth is heat-treated to the core for hardness and durability to maximize wear life and sharpness.

State-of-the-art, 3-D-modeling software was used to optimize the tooth and adapter shapes (five shapes are available) to fit a variety of machines and applications. All teeth have a similar elliptical shape that minimizes stress and maximizes material flow. The ease of installation and removal allows users to easily flip teeth in cases where working methods and conditions cause unbalanced wear.

Hicks has kept the trial set of teeth and ordered a second set. Soon he plans to have all his machinery converted to the KMAX system. "We know it works," he said. "The cost savings have been fantastic. The mechanics and operators love it because they're not risking injury by pounding pins. It's incredible." ■

The KMAX tooth system features a reusable locking mechanism that makes installation fast and safe. "They stay in place until you want them off, and you don't have to replace pins," said John Hicks of Delrick Corporation, Inc.



John Hicks,
Delrick Corporation,
Inc.



DISTRIBUTOR CERTIFIED

RELIABLE USED EQUIPMENT

Komatsu "Distributor Certified Used" excavator provides value for site-prep, highway contractor



Randy Mikkelsen owns and operates Mikkelsen Bros., an excavation company in Langdon, N.D. With a work force of about 20, the company specializes in site preparation and state highway work.

With a fairly large work load, Mikkelsen needs productive equipment that he can rely on to keep moving dirt. When he needed an excavator recently, Mikkelsen turned to General Equipment & Supplies for a Komatsu Distributor Certified Used machine.

"I asked General to find me a Komatsu PC120 because that size fits our needs particularly well," said Mikkelsen, who purchased a

Randy Mikkelsen, Owner of Mikkelsen Bros., uses his Komatsu Distributor Certified Used PC120-6 excavator for a variety of tasks in his site-preparation business. "The last few excavators we've bought have been new, but I had no problem purchasing this machine," he said. "I've run Komatsu excavators for a long time, so I was confident in the product. Plus, as a Distributor Certified machine, I knew General would stand behind it if there were any issues."



PC120-6 with 1,200 hours. "They offered this one or a new one that could be delivered in five or six weeks. I compared the prices and the number of hours and felt the used machine was the best value for us at the time."

He also felt comfortable knowing specially trained technicians had gone over the machine with a fine-tooth comb to make sure it was in top working condition. Komatsu Distributor Certified Used machines are thoroughly inspected and rated based on specific criteria including age, hours, component wear and appearance. Special finance rates and extended warranties are also available on many Distributor Certified machines.

"We don't generally buy used equipment," Mikkelsen noted. "The last few excavators we've bought have been new, but I had no problem purchasing this machine. I've run Komatsu excavators for a long time, so I was confident in the product. Plus, as a Komatsu Distributor Certified machine, I knew General would stand behind it if there were any issues."

The right fit

Mikkelsen also noted that the size of the 27,000-pound-plus PC120-6 often allows it to be moved without load restrictions. The company uses it for a variety of applications such as digging footings and utility trenches and loading trucks.

"It's worked very well, but then we expected that based on our past experience with Komatsu equipment," said Mikkelsen. "Our last PC120 had about 12,000 hours on it and was still running well when we traded it in. I expect we'll get the same kind of production out of this used machine." ■



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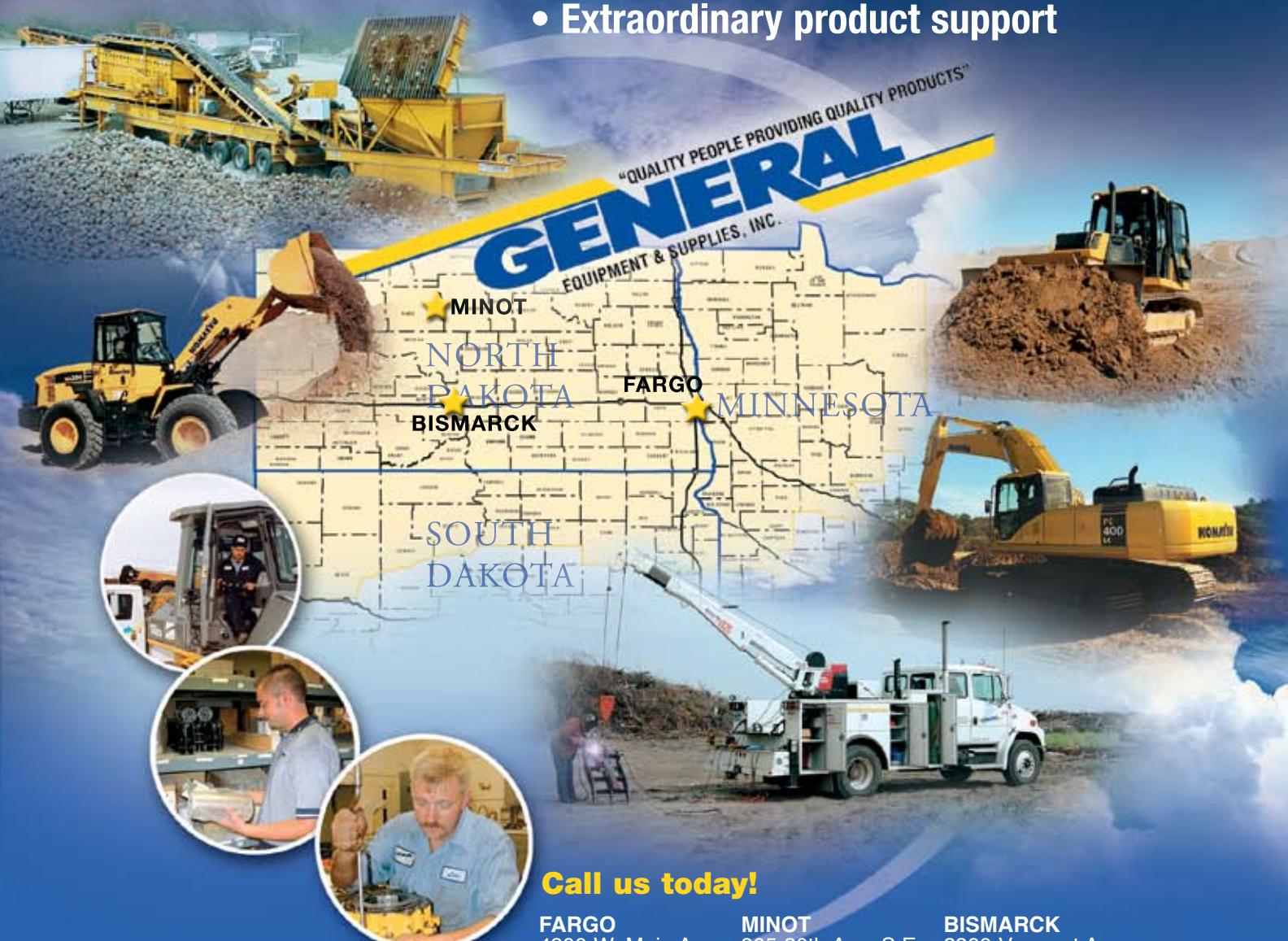
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