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MAY 2024

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FUEL ON DEMAND

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A Michigan-based company takes business nationwide with strategic approaches to fuel distribution.

By Giles Lambertson

ON THE COVER

Focusing on long-term and short-term rental programs, Michael Truan and his team at On-Demand Rentals are set up and prepared to distribute fuel across the nation at a moment's notice. A service tailored to disaster relief. (Photo courtesy of On-Demand Rentals)



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Ted J. Rulseh
GUEST EDITOR

Everyone Needs It. Nobody Has It.

After a disaster, the supply-demand equation for mobile power generation equipment falls badly out of balance. Planning for availability is essential.

The storm has hit and moved on. The area is devastated. Utility power is down. You need portable generators.

Unfortunately, so does everyone else. And within hours or less, local vendors' supplies are tapped out. Now where can you turn?

This scenario plays out often after major disasters. But if you've planned carefully, you can avoid being caught short on the equipment you need. Any contractor or facility owner knows it's essential to plan. However, acquiring generators for a short-term, but urgent situation involves an array of variables that can be daunting.

THE KEY TO RECOVERY

Electricity is the lifeblood of disaster recovery — not much can happen until the lights come on. How fast recovery can proceed depends largely on how well government agencies and private businesses have prepared to supply emergency power.

If power is part of your responsibility, you'll need to know: Who needs generators? For what purposes? How many? In what capacities? What ancillary equipment will you need? Load banks? Bus bars? Electronic governors? Transformers? Distribution panels? Fuses? What about cabling? Fuel tanks?

Beyond those basics, how will delivery of electric power coordinate with other essential goods and services: medical supplies, food, clothing, household items, building materials? How do services that need power rank in order of priority?

And finally, who will set up and operate the equipment? Today's mobile generator sets are easy to use, highly automated and reliable, but that doesn't mean they completely run themselves. Someone needs to monitor their operation and make sure they are supplied with fuel.

TAPPING A NETWORK

No contractor can own a genset inventory large and

diverse enough to cover any conceivable disaster scenario. And many contracts lack the expertise to deploy and manage power for a storm or other event with widespread impact.

All this argues for allying with an emergency power supplier with a large network of dealerships. In that case, when demand has exhausted the genset supply in the local dealer's yard, that dealer calls on others from the region or across the nation to expedite shipment of the numbers and size of units required.

Dealers from that network can also deploy skilled operators to set up and run the equipment for as long as the event persists. And often, such dealers offer contracts with a right of first acceptance. The contractor pays a monthly retainer fee for specified equipment; in return the dealer agrees not to release that equipment to another party without the contractor's consent. This provides excellent assurance that critical equipment will be available in an emergency.

CUTTING THROUGH CHAOS

Disasters by definition are unpredictable. Even the best plan cannot account for every contingency. In any situation, an effective response depends on resourcefulness and sound judgment. At the same time, a well-considered plan accelerates recovery. It simplifies decision-making and provides a basis for prompt and positive actions as events unfold in what typically are stressful and chaotic situations.

A dealer partner with proven expertise in emergency power, a vast inventory and deep experience in disaster recovery can add significant value. **D**

Ted J. Rulseh is editor of Treatment Plant Operator, a sibling magazine in the COLE Publishing family. In a previous career, he had experience in the rental electric power, cooling equipment and air compressor market.

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FUEL ON DEMAND

A MICHIGAN-BASED COMPANY TAKES BUSINESS NATIONWIDE WITH STRATEGIC APPROACHES TO FUEL DISTRIBUTION

By Giles Lambertson | Photos Courtesy of On-Demand Rentals

Not every young, small company has a coast-to-coast footprint. But On-Demand Rentals does, though it was founded a mere seven years ago. In fact, company management sees more expansion in the near future.

“As things continue, if we keep our growth trajectory, we will be opening more facilities across North America as customer demand develops,” says Michael Truan, general manager of the Waterford, Michigan-based and family-owned company.

On-Demand is a niche rental agency in the forefront of changing how heavy equipment operators do business. Specifically, more and more operators of such equipment are opting for bulk deliveries of fuel to temporary storage tanks situated onsite. On-De-

mand Rentals provides the tanks.

The more traditional fueling scheme is called wet-hosing, meaning that at the end of a workday, fuel distributors visit construction sites or other places where heavy equipment is in operation and replenish the tanks of each piece of equipment directly from a fuel truck. That approach has fallen victim to the same labor shortage the rest of heavy industry is experiencing.

“The driver shortages and an aging driver trend have put a pinch on companies and hindered their services,” Truan says. “For greater reliability and more sustainable operations, it makes more sense to drop more fuel at one time rather than put 10 gallons of fuel in one excavator and 40 gallons in another and so on. It is a lot more efficient for fuel suppliers to drop off



W FOR SOME REASON, PEOPLE ALWAYS FORGET ABOUT HOW THEY ARE GOING TO GET FUEL DURING DISASTERS. ALL OF THE EQUIPMENT THEY HAVE, YET WITHOUT FUEL THEY CAN'T DO ANYTHING. WE TRY TO PUT OUR CUSTOMERS IN THE MINDSET OF PREPARING FOR EMERGENCIES BY HAVING ONSITE FUEL STORAGE."

– Michael Truan

a thousand gallons or 5,000 gallons, filling temporary fuel storage tanks at the site."

This is where On-Demand Rentals comes in. They have tanks of various sizes and configurations for use by contractors, trucking operators and government agencies working on temporary job sites — or in natural disaster situations.

WHERE IT BEGAN

On-Demand Rentals dates from 2016, when the Truan family went into business offering new and used

« A line of Western Global TransCube trailers ready for rental.

generators and power generation equipment — including fuel storage tanks. The demand and request for fuel solutions helped them sense a growing need for the containers. They quickly transitioned the company into a specialty rental outlet for fuel tanks.

"As we got into it, we realized it was more than a local business need," the general manager says.

The variety of clients needing temporary fuel storage is broad ranging from companies with equipment working in the aftermath of natural disasters to construction contractors, logistics companies, mining firms, fuel distributors and petroleum equipment installers, municipalities and property management companies. Not to mention On-Demand offers such customers the option of short- or long-term rental of the tanks. "We started by offering 500-gallon or 1,000-gallon tanks and then moved to other sizes," Truan says. "We now specialize in 2,300-gallon to 18,000-gallon models."

These are not traditional cylinder-shaped units. They are large metal boxes, either square or rectangular. Each tank has an integrated compartment at one end housing its pump and connectors. This is partly an environmental feature because it captures any dripping fuel at connecting points.

The sizes of the tanks are keyed to shipping container sizing rather than gallonage. A 10-foot tank holds 2,300 gallons, a 20-footer 8,000 gallons and a 40-foot container, 17,500 gallons. Each tank is certified to handle diesel, gasoline, Jet-A, JP8 and other fuels. In most cases, the fuel is



Jason Neilson, a fuel technician, services an external fuel pump inside the company's shop.



ON-DEMAND RENTALS

Waterford, Michigan

YEAR FOUNDED:
2016

SERVICES:
500- to 18,000-gallon fuel tank rentals, pumping systems, DEF solutions, and on-call contingency tank deployment

SERVICE AREA:
Nationwide

WEBSITE:
on-demandrentals.com



Western Global TransCubes fill the yard at the On-Demand facility.

diesel, with only a small percentage of On-Demand rental tanks used for gasoline or aviation fuel.

EQUIPMENT TO SUCCEED

On-Demand Rentals partners with various manufacturers for its inventory of certified, high-quality equipment. They include Western Global containerized tanks, Thunder Creek mobile fuel trailers, Bennett fuel dispensers and FMT fuel management systems.

The box-like configuration of the tanks helps On-Demand with the logistics of moving the fuel containers. First, the squared-off tanks are not oversized as rounded and cylindrical tanks sometimes are, so transporting them on public highways is easier. On-Demand partners with specialty transport contractors to deliver tanks to customers, and the design of the tanks gets a thumbs-up from the trucking firms.

Most of the rental tanks leave the equipment yard with the optional pump setup installed. The pumps can be custom-configured to deliver fuel to a single piece of equipment or to several machines simultaneously and to feed the fuel at a rate ranging from 20 gallons a minute to 300 gpm.

The units are double-walled, UL-listed structures acceptable to fire marshals in most jurisdictions and states. They are fabricated of heavy-gauge steel, and some are lined to better accommodate the needs of aviation fuel customers or distributors of specialty liquid products.

Tank technician Gary Thomason works on a refurbished fuel tank ensuring proper working conditions before it sees the field again.



HAVE A PLAN

Natural disasters are not a god-send to any company — no one wishes a hurricane, tornado, fire or flood on anyone — but the company nonetheless is prepared for “whatever Mother Nature throws at us.” More to the point, it counsels companies, government agencies and fuel distributors to prepare for such weather events.

“For some reason, people always forget about how they are going to get fuel during disasters,” says Truan. “All of the equipment they have, yet without fuel they can’t do anything. We try to put our customers in the mindset of preparing for emergencies by having onsite fuel storage.”

He cites a national report that gasoline stations in an area typically have enough fuel on hand at any given hour to fill up about half of the vehicles in the area. Consequently, when a storm approaches and people are asked to evacuate, the run on the stations quickly depletes underground storage.

“This is before the storm or wildfire even hits the area, yet the fuel already is gone. Then the disaster strikes and you’re already in a negative fuel supply situation with emergency equipment

on its way to clean up the area, which means more demand for fuel!”

On-Demand’s response to that scenario is what it calls its “contingency program” for customers. Basically, a customer is assured that tanks will be held in reserve for him. An On-Demand contract stipulates that needed tanks will be en route to a location within 24 hours of a customer calling and declaring an emergency.

What this means for On-Demand Rentals is that, on top of meeting the needs of business-as-usual customers, it always must have on hand additional tanks for immediate transport to companies or localities experiencing a crisis. The logistics behind such a contract seem fairly daunting.

“We pretty much make what needs to happen, happen,” the general manager says of crunch-time responses to customer emergencies. It helps that the company has a vast commitment with an extensive inventory of tanks in multiple locations. That is, not all the company assets are in Michigan. Instead, tanks are staged in various rental locations in population centers across the country for faster local delivery.

W **THAT IS WHY I AM PASSIONATE ABOUT CLEAN TANKS. THE USUAL STANDARD IS TO MAINTAIN ALL THE OTHER PIECES OF EQUIPMENT ON A PROJECT. WHY NOT THE FUEL TANKS?”**

– Michael Truan

W Routine inspection and maintenance is part of the business plan for Truan and On-Demand. Here he inspects a Thunder Creek trailer.





▲ A neat, clean and orderly shop is not an unusual sight at the Michigan-based facility.

▲ On-Demand employees move fuel tanks around the yard using Hyster lifts and Bobcat skid-steers.

TIP-TOP SHAPE

It is extremely important that fuel tanks and equipment remain in top serviceability. Because fuel is hazardous, hoses, filters, emergency venting and other items are regularly checked and replaced as needed. “Our top priority is to keep users safe and the environment protected,” says Truan.

And then there is the cleaning of tanks. A clean tank is a core value for the team at On-Demand.

“It’s a little bit crazy what many fuel distributors do. Their tanks can be

in the fleet for 20-30 years without ever being cleaned,” he says. “When I talk to clients, I ask them, ‘Is it a problem for you if your trucks don’t have the oil changed or otherwise aren’t serviced?’ Of course, it’s a problem. The same goes with a fuel tank.”

Truan goes on to say that a tank is a piece of equipment that affects every other piece of equipment in the yard. He tells the story of a contractor he knew who had 300 hydraulic excavators working on a large pipeline project. When a bad load of fuel was



delivered to the job site, half of the excavators were idled. The fuel distributor declined to accept any responsibility for the contaminated fuel and the contractor lost a huge amount of productive hours and who knows how much money.

“That is why I am passionate about clean tanks. The usual standard is to maintain all the other pieces of equipment on a project. Why not the fuel tanks?”

On-Demand Rentals’ tank-cleaning regimen is impressive. Each tank has a “manway” built into it — an opening through which a cleaning person can enter the tank. After every customer use, a cleaner runs a pneumatic vacuum over every inch of the interior to remove any residue from the previous load. Then, if a tank is used to hold diesel fuel, the tank is rinsed out using verifiably clean diesel. Each tank also is treated for bacteria contamination.

“Treating fuel storage vessels with extra care can enable a project to move forward without a hitch,” says Truan.

FUEL AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

On-Demand Rentals seems to be delivering what customers need, both for everyday operation and in emergency situations. This responsiveness was cited by a customer recently, according to Truan. “He told me, ‘You just take care of things. Whatever it is. We don’t even have to think about it.’”

Another On-Demand customer previously had a tank from another company and experienced problems with its pump not recording properly. “She said, ‘You gave us a proper system, a superior piece of equipment that works and we don’t even have to worry about it.’ That’s our goal. We are a solutions company, providing equipment that satisfies each customer’s need.”

And what’s the next solution the

PROMPT RESPONSE

Responding efficiently and quickly is the name of the game for On-Demand no matter what the disaster is.

The ability to keep heavy equipment routinely running in local emergencies is what sets On-Demand Rentals apart from other companies. It is structured to meet disasters with confidence. Plans are in place. Equipment — fuel tanks, specifically — are on standby. Bring on the emergency.

When Hurricane Dorian struck Grand Bahamas Island in 2019 with Category 5 strength, it was declared the worst natural disaster in the island’s history and On-Demand was there. “We had 16 container tanks down there to operate a power station using temporary power. We fueled it,” says Michael Truan, general manager.

There have been other hurricane responses. In another situation, the company quickly supplied tanks to a petrochemical company that had an urgent need for containers to store some hazardous product. Urgent though the situation was, it was business as usual for On-Demand Rentals.

“We can take care of people in emergencies and disaster scenarios because we are already there doing business day to day,”

says Truan. “It’s what we do, which is unlike storm-chasing companies.”

So, if a tornado strikes suddenly or a hurricane looms, a power failure jeopardizes a critical industry or an environmental remediation project suddenly is required, the fuel tanks to serve responding equipment are available from On-Demand Rentals because, chances are, the company already is working there.

Yet one of the biggest emergency challenges for the company was none of the above, according to Truan. Rather, it was the pandemic storm that swept onto the scene in 2019. Without warning, major companies and large utilities feared their fuel supply would be disrupted by the COVID shutdown bug. They quickly ordered tanks to hold procured fuel in the hope of staving off any interruption in production.

“They wanted to have a large reserve of fuel because of the instability of the situation,” Truan recalls. “We had a huge demand for tanks. It went on for four to six months before things calmed down. It was probably our company’s biggest stormish-related event.”

company will offer? Turns out, the next solution is on wheels: trailered tanks. The company has begun offering small fuel containers — with a capacity of 500-900 gallons — that are fitted to running gear so they can be towed to individual idled pieces of equipment on a site. Besides offering mobility, the multicompartmented tanks can be moved around a job site or a natural disaster scene by any employee. No CDL or a hazmat rating is required to move them.

More cost-efficient convenience, courtesy of On-Demand Rentals. **D**

MORE INFO

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Western Global
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A Convoy of Specialty

A shift in assets and company direction opened the door for lucrative business

By Tim Dobbins | Photos provided by Eudora Logistics



Portable and temporary service is not new business for Justin Kennedy, managing owner of Eudora Logistics, but the focus of the company's offerings has certainly changed.

The roots of the Georgia-based company and Kennedy's experience date back to the '90s, where for roughly 17 years they delivered and serviced a fleet of portable restrooms.

"We were originally in the portable restroom business and that eventually evolved into the event business," Kennedy says. One luxury trailer led to another as the event side of the business grew and after several years of restroom trailer business, they sold that part of the business in

2022 and took their equipment and efforts into the disaster relief sector.

The first trailer they purchased to supply events was from Lang Specialty Trailers. "We met the folks over there when we were in the portable and event business," Kennedy says. "And now still, we predominantly use Lang Trailers. They are driven folks over there like us. They listen, work with us and adapt."

PROVIDING VITAL SERVICES

Their relationship with Lang and customer needs has led Eudora to build a substantial fleet of trailers. Between the company-owned assets and those supplied by other companies they work with, they have

One of the many individual-stalled shower trailers the company can offer to disaster workers.





roughly 120 trailers at the ready for service.

“We provide base camp and support solutions for government entities, private organizations and everything and anything that could be affected by a natural disaster or storm,” Kennedy says. “Eudora is most always supplementing other organizations. We are never really the prime contractor, rather supplementing and/or partnering.

“We mostly deal with restrooms, showers and laundry trailers. We also do some bunks as well. Essentially anything contractors and disaster workers need to make a home of sorts in the field.”

Eudora Logistics works with state and federal agencies as well as with private sectors. Along with trailers, the company lives up to its name providing logistic management, adapting services to the specific needs of clients.

“This extends to site location, temporary utility setups, design of base camp, preparation, staffing and logistics for mobilization to demobilization of portable units and trailers,” Kennedy says. “Our understanding of logistical management enables us to be prepared for an immediate response with the ability to mobilize quickly to respond to declared emergencies.”

Eudora’s work begins well before a storm makes landfall. The company tracks storms and where they are predicted to make landfall. As soon as they know the trajectory of the event, they begin the behind-the-scenes preparation to mobilize

trailers in the right direction.

For supplying staff, it depends on the job. Some events they will keep employees in camps they set up, but others they are simply dropping off assets and coming back to service when needed.

And though located in Georgia, the limit to their service range is only restricted by oceans. “We are nationwide. Anywhere there is a disaster, we can be there.”

FILLING THE GAP

The unpredictability of disasters can clearly provide challenges to a business that focuses services on recovery efforts. Kennedy says business can be up and down, but overall things are good.

Maintaining as many trailers as the company owns is time-consuming and requires investment. And maintenance needs



« En route to a disaster-ridden location, this convoy of Eudora trailers has sunny skies for the journey.

“OUR UNDERSTANDING OF LOGISTICAL MANAGEMENT ENABLES US TO BE PREPARED FOR AN IMMEDIATE RESPONSE WITH THE ABILITY TO MOBILIZE QUICKLY TO RESPOND TO DECLARED EMERGENCIES.”

– JUSTIN KENNEDY



« With trailers set and ready for use, the Eudora team talks logistics with first responders.



“ANYTHING YOU CAN IMAGINE THAT NEEDS TEMPORARY FACILITIES FOR LIVING IS WHAT WE DO.”

– JUSTIN KENNEDY



One of the less thought about, but necessary services is the ability to clean clothes efficiently on the job site. With trailers plum full of washers and dryers, Eudora has that covered as well.

don't go away if there aren't any disasters. “The business can be feast or famine. It's lucrative when there are disasters, but it's definitely an interesting cycle of business.”

The advantage of owning a fleet of restroom, shower, laundry and bunk trailers is however that their use extends well beyond disaster-specific utilizations. Outside of disaster relief, Eudora supplies trailers and logistical services for industrial shut-downs, construction projects, camps and they are also involved with training exercises for the military.

Kennedy has also found business in the oil and gas industry. “In tough drilling sites, crews need a comfortable, convenient place to meet their sanitation needs. Having a portable trailer on site means workers can remain clean and refreshed.

“Anything you can imagine that needs temporary facilities for living is what we do.”

ROLLING WITH CHANGES

Things have changed over time with expectations for restroom and shower facilities and adjusting to those changes is fairly easy for Eudora with a lot of help from Lang Trailers.

“The people at Lang pay attention and are so involved with their customers to understand their needs to evolve and adapt,” he says.

Kennedy mentions how the recent COVID pandemic resulted in increased hand-washing stations as the new normal, along with changes in shower trailer builds. “Individual units or individual stalls in shower units are now standard. They really provide flexibility of use for the end user.”

Eudora Logistics has no plans to shy away from Lang Trailers. He hopes opportunities arise for the business to continue to grow and move forward. “They are just so well-built and durable.” **D**





SPOTLIGHT
by Cody Wiesner

PROGRAM DELIVERS COMPREHENSIVE SAFETY FEATURES, EVEN IN CELLULAR OUTAGES

Your safety procedures can never be too safe – not when electrical hazards, floods, fallen debris and more can become dangerous in a moment. That’s especially important for cleanups where workers are spread across the job site, and in environments where cellular connectivity is limited.

Launched in 2023, Grace Connected Safety is a comprehensive safety monitoring product and software suite designed to ease safety communication and automate distress alerts during emergency events.

“Our nonsubscription systems do not require any type of cellular connectivity at all,” says Dan Smith, vice president of business development at Grace Industries. “We have our own communications network. And that’s probably one of the biggest distinguishing factors.”

Here’s how it works: Workers carry a Grace Industries distress-signal device. When it goes off, whether by manual activation or motion sensing, a signal is sent via autonomous radio to other workers’ devices. For remote monitoring, a subscription-based satellite/cellular Grace Gateway can be added to communicate directly with an organization’s monitoring attendant via Grace Cloud Connect.

Smith says this approach eliminates the need for third-party call attendants unfamiliar with a company’s operating procedures.

Grace Cloud Connect’s features allow a monitoring attendant to manage employee check-ins and observe safety statuses, distress alerts and advanced mapping in real-time. Attendants can contact work crews using limited two-way text communication from the Grace Cloud Connect web portal dashboard.

Grace Safety Pendants serve a range of applications, Smith says. Workforce 1 and 2 models incorporate fall detection mechanisms for workers at elevation, while the TPASS 3 AM and SuperCELL SC500 are IP67-rated and certified Intrinsically Safe for use in hazardous and explosive environments.

“You don’t know what type of environment you’re going into,” Smith says. “Grace offers intrinsically safe pendants for disaster recovery operations.”

Smith says Grace Connected Safety is ideal for wide-scale year-round operations and those who approach disaster recovery as a side gig, such as hydrovac companies that rise up when disaster strikes. For these companies, Grace offers rental service.

“There’s not a disaster every day,” Smith says. “You need to have something that’s flexible.”

In fact, Grace Industries works with many industries to find solutions that work best for their specific applications. “Grace brings value in offering customized solutions,” Smith says. **724-962-9231; www.graceconnectedsafety.com** **D**

On-the-Spot Protection

Safeguard your business during contract transactions that happen on disaster sites

By Steve Strauss

As you know only too well, when disaster strikes, contractors often engage in “on the spot” contracts with businesses and harried government officials who are eager to 1) get some help, and 2) show that they are on top of the situation.

But doing business this way can be legally and ethically perilous for your business, in a variety of ways. You need to be careful.

LEGAL ISSUES

Let’s first look at the potential legal liabilities that can arise from “on the spot,” crisis-motivated contracts. (Full disclosure: While I am an attorney, I no longer actively practice.)

THE FIRST STEP TO ENSURE THAT YOUR REPUTATION REMAINS INTACT IS TO EMPHASIZE TRANSPARENCY AND OPEN COMMUNICATION. IN YOUR CONTRACTING, BE UPFRONT AND HONEST ABOUT YOUR QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERTISE, AND ANY POSSIBLE LIMITATIONS YOU MAY HAVE.



For starters, “on the spot” contracts can be held illegal in a variety of ways. It could be that they were made under duress, thereby giving the other party the ability to later have them voided. Or, what if the contract violates procurement regulations? Similarly, it can be said that such contracts may fail to adhere to standard bidding pro-

cesses, especially when contracting with governmental entities.

Even the rushed nature of such contracts without ensuring clarity and proper legal review may lead to misunderstandings and disputes down the road, potentially escalating into costly litigation.

And, last, but most certainly not least, the emergency nature of the event can mean that the work contracted for is done too quickly, or negligently, or worker safety is compromised. Any one of these issues can later lead to fines, litigation, invalidation, reputational damage or even financial ruin.

So let’s avoid all that. Here’s how:

PREPARATION IS KEY

Before disaster strikes, it behooves you to lay a strong foundation and that means being proactive. This can include any or all of the following:

LICENSING AND CERTIFICATIONS: Make sure that you possess all necessary licenses and certifications for the specific services you offer in your “on the spot” contract. These requirements can vary depending on the location and type of work, so thorough research is essential.

INSURANCE: Having, not just the right type of insurance, but enough coverage, is vital. You will be happy you have it if you ever need it.

STANDARDIZED CONTRACTS: Work with your lawyer to develop your contracts, outlining



or using the old “bait and switch” when it comes to product can only lead to problems for your business. Taking advantage of the desperation of affected communities is not only unethical but can also damage your reputation and invite litigation.

Finally, due diligence and following procedures is necessary:

- Verify the authority of anyone signing contracts on behalf of government agencies or utilities
- Don’t rush into agreements without proper verification
- Resist the urge to bypass standard procurement processes

the terms of engagement, scope of work, pricing, payment terms, dispute resolution procedures and termination clauses. Do not do this on your own. Having contracts created by legal counsel ensures they comply with relevant regulations and protect your interests, not the other party’s.

PRE-QUALIFICATION: Consider registering with federal agencies like FEMA or state/local emergency management bodies for pre-disaster qualification. Doing so lends your contracts more authority.

But, as indicated, legal and financial considerations are only part of the problem. There are potential ethical quagmires that need to be avoided as well.

ETHICAL ISSUES

It is too easy for the unscrupulous contractor, employee or subcontractor to exploit the vulnerability of affected communities for personal gain. And once lost, that trust between your business and the community it serves is almost impossible to regain.

So the first step to ensure that your reputation remains intact is to emphasize transparency and open communication. In your contracting, be upfront and honest about your qualifications, expertise and any possible limitations you may have. Clearly state costs, timelines and potential challenges. Don’t shy away from discussing potential roadblocks or unforeseen circumstances.

Next, and it should go without saying, emphasize to your team that you will not tolerate predatory practices: Inflating prices in your contracts, doing subpar work

MOVING FORWARD

Here are a few final practical tips to enhance your disaster response contracting journey:

NETWORK WITH RELEVANT ORGANIZATIONS:

Work to build relationships with emergency management agencies, community groups and other disaster response stakeholders beforehand. These connections can provide valuable insights, opportunities and support when needed.

SEEK LEGAL COUNSEL: Beyond your own contracts, it’s smart to have a lawyer who specializes in construction. Their expertise can help ensure your practices comply with legal requirements.

PRIORITIZE QUALITY OVER SPEED: While swift action is important, rushing contracts and neglecting proper due diligence can lead to legal trouble later. Remember, responsible practices and quality service ultimately benefit everyone involved.

Yours is a challenging profession; you do not need to be additionally challenged by legal issues. The good news is a little groundwork and a solid, ethical “on the spot” contract can almost always help avoid that. **D**

PORTABLE AND TEMPORARY SERVICES

By Craig Mandli

COMPRESSOR



■ KAESER COMPRESSORS MOBILAIR M255

The **MOBILAIR M255** portable diesel compressor from **Kaeser Compressors** is ideal for heavy-duty construction, utility and demolition use and is designed for maximum flexibility and reliability on site. It delivers 900 cfm with variable pressure from 75 to 205 psi. Its heavy-duty steel chassis and fully galvanized canopy ensure long life even when subjected to the harshest conditions. Both the canopy and solid steel flooring protect the motor, airend and critical components from dirt, water and other contaminants. Rugged construction and ideal cooling allow

it to operate in temperatures up to 113 degrees F. Units come standard with an easy-to-read control panel. The fuel tank has a large filler neck with overflow protection for safe, easy filling. The convenient lifting eye and adjustable-height tow hitch enable secure transport. A torsion bar suspension system and oversized tires provide superior road handling. **866-516-6888; www.us.kaeser.com**

GENERATORS



■ ECOFLOW DELTA SERIES PORTABLE POWER STATIONS

EcoFlow Delta Series Portable Power Stations provide flexible and reliable power solutions for big and small tasks alike when operating in off-grid and grid-compromised environments. Batteries range from 1 to 6 kWh of power storage with up to 7,200-watt output for single units, offering plenty of power for lights, power tools, network connectivity and critical devices. They can be tethered in a variety of configurations for greater power storage needs. With LFP chemistry, the power stations offer fast grid, solar, 12-volt vehicle and gas generator recharging capabilities for thousands of power cycles. **800-368-8604; www.us.ecoflow.com**



■ LION ENERGY SAFARI PORTABLE SOLAR GENERATOR

The **Safari Portable Solar Generator** from **Lion Energy** offers a 3,000-watt capacity, handling anything that would normally plug into a wall outlet. Tap into the sun's energy to keep devices and appliances running smoothly, ensuring worry-free power wherever you are. It's safe, silent and renewable. Its compact size ensures convenient storage and transport. With 3,000 watts, it energizes everything from communication devices to household essentials. It has a simple interface for stress-free use with multiple outputs. Crafted for emergencies and outdoor adventures, its durable construction can be counted on in harsh conditions. **385-375-8191; www.lionenergy.com**

HOLDING TANKS

■ POLYJOHN ENTERPRISES HOLDING TANK

PolyJohn Enterprises holding tanks are suitable for collecting waste from portable restrooms and may be a necessity for long-term restroom placements where indoor plumbing is not an option. Made from durable plastic, the design is functional and discreet. It's also compatible with other PolyJohn restrooms and sinks, and it can be easily configured with most types of plumbing, according to the manufacturer. It can be used for outdoor work sites or special events to complete a portable restroom area. Tanks are available in 250- and 300-gallon capacities. **800-292-1305; www.polyjohn.com**



■ T.S.F. COMPANY FRESHWATER SUPPLY

The lightweight, polyethylene 100-gallon **Freshwater Supply** from **T.S.F. Company** is 69 inches high and 24 inches in diameter, and allows users to see water level through the semi-transparent shell. It can be used for any job site or event where nonfiltered, nonpotable freshwater is needed. It can be placed in a field office or service trailer, and comes with two 3/4-inch spin welds to connect tanks together for added water capacity. **800-843-9286; www.tuff-jon.com**



HOUSING

■ DISC-O-BED XL

Through its disc system, the **Disc-O-Bed XL** is the sleep solution that is engineered for the extreme demands of emergency relief worldwide. Its modular design means cots ship virtually flat in the included carry bags to maximize shipping volumes. The small footprint ensures maximum shelter space, allowing users to help more people in need. It is a versatile option that can be used as a bunk, two single cots or as a sitting bench. With a weight tolerance of 500 pounds per single cot, it cradles the body and provides firm support, making it strong and comfortable. Its user-friendly design features a simple, no-tool assembly. The mat can also be removed and cleaned. Alternate mat options are available. The modular design increases the life-span of the cot by allowing the replacement of individual parts. **770-295-2292; www.discobed.com**



■ FOLDUM HOUSES

Foldum houses are a solution to the challenges of disaster relief worker housing. Designed for efficiency, these foldable units can be stacked, accommodating 10 units on a single truck. Each unit can comfortably sleep up to eight people thanks to the flat-packed Surebunk system. With just two trucks, sleeping arrangements are available for up to 80 individuals, ensuring a swift response to the immediate housing needs in disaster-stricken areas. These insulated units come equipped with air conditioning, offering a comfortable and climate-controlled environment. The steel construction not only ensures durability and resistance to the elements but also makes them easy to clean, maintaining hygienic conditions for relief workers. Additionally, each unit seamlessly integrates with solar, generator or grid power sources. **442-599-6762; www.foldum.com**





■ STOUT TENT 5M PRO TENT

Stout Tent's 5M Pro Tent portable shelter provides a reliable refuge in challenging environments. Crafted from premium weather-resistant materials, it ensures resilience against the elements. The sturdy canvas is built to withstand harsh conditions, making it a suitable choice for disaster-stricken areas. It is designed for swift setup, allowing response teams to establish a secure base rapidly. Its assembly system ensures efficiency without compromising on stability. Relief workers can easily set up a tent in about 15 minutes. With a generous 5-meter diameter, this tent offers ample space for disaster response purposes. Whether used as a temporary command

center, shelter or storage space, the interior layout is flexible to accommodate diverse needs. It can be customized to include partitioned sections for offices, storage or sanitation facilities. It provides a secure and dependable shelter for disaster response teams, ensuring they have a stable base of operations during critical times. **602-845-0609; www.stouttent.com**



■ RAPID DEPLOYABLE SYSTEMS SHELTERS

Rapid Deployable Systems (formerly Eureka!) specializes in shelter system solutions for disaster relief efforts. Their team consults on the best tent system (or mixture of tent types and sizes) to meet the immediate need. The products offer tactically superior designs that range from one-person shelters to larger, rapid deployment tents used to shelter thousands of people during large-scale disasters. They feature a truss-style frame system that is stronger and more durable than standard scissor-style frames. Additionally, the tents come in one package without any loose parts, which prevents component loss and results in user-friendly

installation. The tents are equipped with climate control, lighting and flooring. They can be used for training, MWR, accommodation, dining and TOC facilities. Systems are available in nine sizes, ranging from 100 up to 720 square feet and can be mission ready in under 12 minutes. **800-235-2607; www.eurekamilitarytents.com**

LIGHTING



■ J&J PORTABLE SANITATION PRODUCTS J-LIGHT

J&J Portable Sanitation Products offers two solar-powered motion-sensor lights designed for portable restrooms. J-Light 45 offers five cool-white LEDs emitting 45 lumens with a 3.2-volt, 600-mAh rechargeable battery. J-Light 65 has 10 cool-white LEDs emitting 65 lumens with a 3.2-volt, 1,200-mAh rechargeable battery. They are easy to install and fitted with a motion sensor to activate the

light and day/night sensor so they will not activate in daylight. They switch off after 45 seconds of inactivity. J-Light 45 requires a 1.5-inch hole, while J-Light 65 requires a 2-inch hole. **800-345-3303; www.jjportable.com**



■ MILWAUKEE TOOL REDLITHIUM USB HARD HAT HEADLAMP

Milwaukee Tool's REDLITHIUM USB Hard Hat Headlamp delivers up to 600 lumens of TRUEVIEW high-definition output, with hybrid, spot and flood modes. Powered by a REDLITHIUM USB battery, the headlamp stays brighter for longer, delivers 2X faster charge time, and includes one battery for multiple solutions, keeping contractors efficient during power outages, disaster cleanup and recovery efforts. The lightweight, compact design features 180 degrees of mobility, allowing contractors to optimize the position of the light or easily detach from the bracket to help get light into hard-to-reach places. The headlamp

includes four hard hat clips and features a rubber grip for secure attachment on a hard hat. IP54 rated for dust and water resistance and designed to survive impacts from up to 6 feet, this headlamp survives harsh conditions while waiting for power to be restored. Milwaukee Rechargeable personal lights are designed to adapt, perform, and survive the daily demands of professional use. **800-729-3878; www.milwaukeetool.com**

OFFICES

■ JAG MOBILE SOLUTIONS GUARDIAN

The **Guardian** family of command centers from **JAG Mobile Solutions** is the solution to a variety of administrative and management needs during disasters, special events and temporary meeting situations. The climate-controlled units offer applications for communications, security and lodging in a variety of temporary locations. With cabin lengths ranging from 15 to 40 feet and interior widths from 96 (no slides) to 120 inches (with slides) the centers provide brick-and-mortar accommodations in a temporary setting for utility companies, management groups, government officials and first responders. Units have a variety of functionalities including cellular or dish-driven communications and surveillance cameras on board. Additionally, lodging for one to 10 people can be integrated into design floorplans to provide sleeping and hygiene through sleeping spaces, showers and toilets. **800-815-2557; www.jagmobilesolutions.com**



■ SATELLITE SUITES 30-FOOT MULTI-PURPOSE COMMAND CENTER

The **Satellite Suites 30-foot Multi-Purpose Command Center** is designed to be the base of operations for any busy camp or work site. The mobile workstation features a roomy 13-foot slide-out that contains five private work areas with charging and connectivity, sleeping for up to five, a full bathroom with a large shower, refrigerator and microwave, couch and a 50-inch TV/monitor. It is an all-in-one solution for businesses that require a flexible and mobile workspace. It offers a safe and comfortable place for a crew to work, sleep, eat and relax, regardless of where the site is located. It means you no longer have to struggle to find a hotel for your crew in remote locations like camps, outdoor concerts, oil fields or film sites. This practical solution is ideal for companies seeking efficiency and security, especially for natural disaster clean-up efforts and construction sites. **800-883-1123; www.satelliteindustries.com**



SANITATION

■ WALEX PORTA-PAK MAX

Porta-Pak Max portion-control holding tank deodorizer from **Walex** contains 50% more color, 50% more odor control and double the fragrance of the original Porta-Pak. It is a suitable drop-in packet for units in high-traffic locations or hot climates. Its use can limit odor-causing bacteria from thriving in warm, moist environments, like a portable restroom holding tank sitting in the summer sun. **800-338-3155; www.walex.com**



CASE STUDY



■ SOLAR-HYBRID SOLUTION REPLACES FUEL GENERATORS

PROBLEM: A large construction company, with more than \$6 billion in international building projects, often has its crews arrive at project sites long before the electricity grid, so procuring reliable, remote power is a constant consideration. The company typically powers its construction site buildings using diesel generators, but generators require frequent maintenance and are prone to breakdowns. This can lead to costly power outages and unscheduled downtime. Recently, while working on site at a manufacturing plant in Texas, the company sought a cleaner, more reliable power alternative.

SOLUTION: The EWX Power Solutions Power Module is a portable solar-hybrid power solution capable of generating 80 kW of continuous power. It combines clean, reliable solar power with a backup generator to ensure un-

interrupted off-grid power, minimize downtime and reduce fuel costs. Panels capture renewable solar power that is then stored within a bank of batteries. In poor weather conditions, the backup generator can charge the batteries or fully support the load to guarantee redundancy. The module's rugged 8-by-20-foot container can be readily transported and installed anywhere.

RESULT: Since switching, EWX's Power Module has delivered 550kW monthly, easily replacing the fuel generators the company had previously used. With solar as its primary power source, the module's backup generator ran less than six hours a day, so the company saw a 42% reduction in fuel costs and avoided 4,500 kg of carbon monoxide emissions. Best of all, the company experienced zero downtime. **800-339-4352; www.ewxpower.net**

CASE STUDY



DISASTER CLEANUP & RECOVERY

DCR

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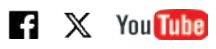
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OSHA Offers Training Help

Understanding unique circumstances, the organization has specific training options for disaster site workers

By Brenda Lange

“DEMOLITION, HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATORS, UTILITY WORKERS AND SKILLED SUPPORT PERSONNEL ARE NEEDED IN THE EVENT OF A HURRICANE, EARTHQUAKE, FLOOD OR OTHER DISASTROUS EVENT. THEIR WORK IS DIFFERENT FROM GENERAL INDUSTRY WORK, AND THEY ENCOUNTER SPECIFIC HAZARDS.”

– JAMES BROCK



About 20 years ago, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration recognized that its Outreach Training Program should be expanded to include cleanup services and recovery work conducted by skilled workers in response to natural or human-made disasters.

“Demolition, heavy equipment operators, utility workers and skilled support personnel are needed in the event of a hurricane, earthquake, flood or other disastrous event,” says James Brock, director, division of training programs and administration, office of training and education at OSHA. “Their work is different than general industry work, and they encounter specific hazards.

“There was a recognition by OSHA and others that these resilient workers encounter hazards that weren’t being addressed elsewhere in the outreach program, and they needed to provide that training,” he adds.

Congress created OSHA through the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970. As part of the Department of Labor, OSHA’s mission is to “ensure safe and healthful working conditions for workers by setting and enforcing standards and by providing training, outreach, education and assistance.”

While OSHA has operated a training program since 1971, it has focused on promoting workplace health and safety and educating workers about hazards in the workplace. OSHA also requires employers to provide further training on their specific industry and jobs and oversees implementation of safety standards.

The Disaster Site Worker Program is

another level of training within the outreach program. To become a trainer in the DSWP, individuals must have prior authorization in general industry or construction and attend additional classes at the OSHA Training Institute where federal and state compliance personnel are trained.

“The DSWP partners in these education programs with nonprofits and authorizes them to deliver OSHA training on their behalf,” says Brock. The 26 OTI centers are located around the country, generally at colleges and universities, labor unions and safety councils, training about 60,000 people annually.

“Currently, there are about 40,000 outreach trainers; about 1.2 million individuals have been through the program in all, with the bulk of them in construction. Disaster site training is a small percentage of that total.” Fewer than 2,000 have been through the program since 2016.

One of the OTI centers is located at Rutgers University School of Public Health in New Jersey. The center manager is Koshy Koshy, Ph.D., associate professor in the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health & Justice, Center for Public Health Workforce Development.

“OSHA’s Disaster Site Training started in 2005 and was developed to assist second responders tasked with cleanup after major disasters (natural or manmade),” he explains. “The related outreach trainer course, OSHA 5600: Disaster Site Trainer was developed shortly after Hurricane Katrina. A wide group of trainers attend the trainer course. They must have the 40-hour Hazardous Waste Operations and the OSHA Construction or General

Industry Trainer course as a prerequisite to attending OSHA 5600.”

To successfully complete the disaster-site worker training, workers must complete either a 7.5-hour program or one that takes 15 hours; the difference depends on the specific industry the worker belongs to. The trainee must have previously completed either a 10- or 30-hour class in either general industry or construction.

“This is an addendum to the regular outreach course,” says Brock. “Some of the hazards encountered will be the same; this training deals with specificities unique to disaster sites.”

Courses are offered in the fields of construction, general industry and maritime, the oil and gas industry, healthcare and small businesses. Information on OTI Education Center locations, course descriptions and a searchable course schedule can be found on the OSHA website.

OSHA also offers more than a dozen

fact sheets on its website, advising cleanup and recovery workers on hazardous spill cleanups, how to decontaminate an area or themselves, ways to mitigate dangers of electrocution when working around downed electrical wires, approaches to flood or oil spill cleanup, and even health and safety recommendations for those working with human remains.

OSHA training courses are not offered online. “These courses provide real hands-on activities that the instructor needs to closely supervise, monitor and evaluate, including inspection of air-cleaning respirators — and ensuring workers know how to properly put them on and take them off, for example” says Brock. “Instructors also teach traumatic stress awareness, an exercise where simulated disaster sites are established and students must identify the type of protection needed and come up with solutions, for example.” **D**

PRO TIP

BROADEN YOUR SAFETY TRAINING

Regularly review and simulate safety drills with diverse scenarios to ensure preparedness, efficiency and safety within disaster sites. Don't get complacent with the same routine safety talks.



“I need to make sure everyone is comfortable and good prior to going into a season. ... I want them to feel listened to, part of the team, engaged and like an active piece of what's going on.”

Ashley Painter
United Contract Solutions

TEAMWORK

Each month we will connect you with the latest industry news, FEMA regulations and opportunities, and a network of like-minded contractors.

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SATELLITE PORTABLE RESTROOMS



QUICK DEPLOYMENT

Fast sanitation deployment is paramount in the aftermath of a disaster. Satellite Industries' standard and wheelchair-accessible portable restrooms offer a convenient and quick solution, ensuring that people living in the affected area and first responders can access clean and functional restroom facilities. Providing these reliable and accessible amenities allows first responders to focus on their vital tasks without compromising on essential comforts and hygiene.



ONE STOP SHOP

