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Minnesota contractor has reputation for timeliness and quality work.

On the **JOB**

SUMMER 2019

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ONE MAN SHOW

OWNER-OPERATOR DOES IT ALL WITH COMPACT MACHINES

Bruce Riffard remembers the first time he operated a Cat® machine in 1989—at the tender age of five.

By the age of 12, Bruce started learning the trade and laboring. Working after school and on weekends, he helped out with his father's Hudson Valley excavation business.

“Cat yellow is in my genes,” says Riffard, now 35 and the president of Riffard Inc. in Ulster County, N.Y. “My uncle did excavation for 50 plus years—he was buying Cat machines in the 1970s from H.O. Penn, and my father started his business in the late 80s.”

As a youth, Riffard continued assisting his father (also named Bruce) until 2002 when he went to work full-time for the business. In 2013 he took over the lead role. Today his dad, 67, will help out on larger utility jobs and drainage work as he operates the equipment while Bruce installs pipe.

“I’m basically a one-man operation,” Riffard says. “My

dad raised me to be that way. Whether it’s installing manholes and rip-rap swales down a cliff or creating a backyard from nothing, I love a challenge. It keeps every day a new experience. If it’s out of the ordinary, the harder it is, I’m not afraid to take on that tougher job. And if I need assistance my father helps out.”

Riffard Inc. provides services in the Hudson Valley counties of Ulster, Rockland, Orange and Sullivan. His work includes excavating, grading, drainage, utility work, septic systems and boulder retaining walls.

Versatile compact machines

Cat machines comprise four of his five pieces of construction equipment. That includes a 259D Compact Track Loader, a 305.5E2 Mini Excavator, a 307E2 Mini Excavator and a 315C L Hydraulic Excavator.

“Every machine I have has a purpose—it all depends on what the job is,” Riffard says.

He uses the 259D for transporting materials around

a jobsite, and also for grading and loading trucks. In Rockland County, residential lots can be smaller than a quarter acre, and that's where the CTL comes in.

"It's a very strong machine for its size," Riffard says. "With the air suspension seat and fully enclosed sealed cab, it does make a difference in terms of operator comfort and the ability to work longer hours. You can set the temperature inside the cab to wherever you want. It can be 100 degrees outside—set the A/C on cold and you can wear a sweatshirt inside."

When Riffard needs to adhere to a stormwater protection plan on larger sites, he utilizes the 259D to grade and stabilize disturbed soil. "It's easy to keep a nice clean job site," he says. "I just jump in the track machine and take care of it."

Riffard prefers to use the 305.5 Mini Excavator to get into tight corners.

"For the size of the machine, it has a great amount of reach," he says. "And it is very strong. When I build a wall



in tight quarters, it can handle the larger rocks with no problems. And the visibility out of the machine is very good."

A 307E2 Mini Excavator represents Riffard's newest investment.

"That's my everyday machine right now," he says. "It's stronger than the

(Continued on page 6)



RIFFLARD, INC.

Employees: 1

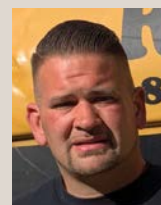
Location: Napanoch, N.Y.

Cat® equipment:

259D Compact Track Loader, 305.5 Mini Excavator, 307E 2 Mini Excavator, 315C L Hydraulic Excavator

WHAT HE LIKES ABOUT CAT® EQUIPMENT

"In 2004, we had a 304 CR Mini Excavator and we used it all the time," says Bruce Riffard, owner of



Riffard, Inc. "That machine was really the benchmark of how tough Cat equipment is. It was strong and powerful and there was never any major failure; it was a workhorse machine. In 2015 when I traded it in for the 305.5, the resale value was amazing—that machine didn't owe me a penny."

WHAT HE LIKES ABOUT HIS CAT DEALER

"My relationship started with H.O. Penn at the end of 2004 when we purchased the 304 CR Mini Excavator. Several months later, we purchased a 315C L. At the time, my sales rep, Scott, was the parts guy. His stellar knowledge of equipment made ordering preventive maintenance items and parts easy."



“H.O. PENN IS 100 PERCENT BEHIND ME—NO MATTER WHAT I NEED, THEY ARE ALWAYS THERE FOR ME, I CALL THEM MY GUYS, BECAUSE WHATEVER THE CASE MAY BE, THEY ARE RIGHT THERE.”

– BRUCE RIFFLARD
PRESIDENT
RIFFLARD INC.

305.5 and lighter than the 315C L Excavator. It’s the in-between machine that’s performing great for me right now. It is outfitted with a tilt-rotator attachment that has made the machine almost unstoppable.”

The compact size and versatility allows Riffard to use the 307E2 without having to transport other equipment to the site, which, as a one man operation, saves him time.

The 315C L Excavator is utilized for larger projects and new construction sites.

“The added reach and power handles the larger septic systems we install, and I’ll use it for loading dirt if we have a lot of fill material on-site,” he says. “We use it for jobs that require greater digging and lifting capacity.”

Built-in features

When he purchased the machine in 2005, Riffard’s 315C L Excavator came with a hydraulic quick coupler. At the time, he saw it as an added accessory that didn’t have much value to him. But soon learned the advantage of having one.

“I quickly discovered that I could drop and attach buckets from the cab in a matter of seconds,” he says. “We did a project where we dug the utility trench with the 24-inch bucket, and then switched to the bigger bucket to move twice as much gravel for backfill. It’s less wear and tear on the undercarriage because you are carrying more material and making fewer trips back to the stone pile. Instead of 40 trips, now you’re doing it in 20.”

The fuel efficiency he gets from his compact machines is another plus for Riffard.

“I will get at least two days or more out of a full tank,” he says. “They are definitely fuel-efficient machines, which means I can keep working without having to stop and refuel.”

Riffard performs his own equipment maintenance, and uses Cat Connect to stay on top of machine hours. He receives alerts when it nears time to service his equipment. For security purposes, he also likes knowing the status and location of his equipment, as sometimes the machines are left on jobsites.

“I can look at my equipment and know when they are close to being ready for service and obtain any parts I may need,” he says. “If there are any issues with one of my machines, a code would pop up on my phone, but it has never happened. That’s how reliable these machines are if you take care of them.”

As a sole owner-operator, he relies on his Cat dealer, H.O. Penn, for parts, service and support.

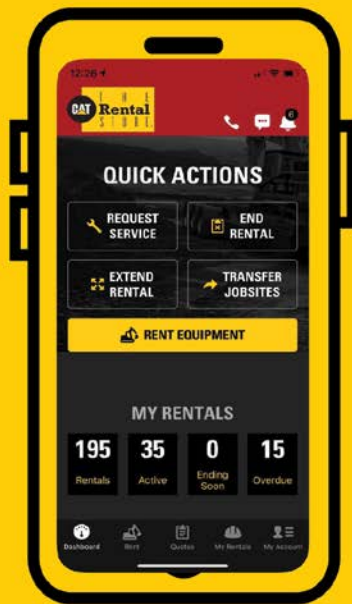
“H.O. Penn is 100 percent behind me—no matter what I need, they are always there for me,” Riffard says. “I call them my guys, because whatever the case may be, they are right there.”

“My rep, Scott Cortright, is an awesome salesman,” he adds. “It doesn’t matter what time of the day it is, he’s there. These guys are 100 percent stellar, I couldn’t ask for anything better.” **OTJ**



NEW RENTAL APP

ALL-NEW DIGITAL EXPERIENCE OFFERS RENTAL CONVENIENCE AT YOUR FINGERTIPS



UPPING OUR DIGITAL GAME

We spend a lot of time on our computers and our phones, and we want to be able to do just about everything there, from socializing to shopping.

Knowing that customers are going online for product research and for buying, it's important that businesses up their digital capabilities and provide easy, convenient solutions for customers to get products and services.

Combine that with a general shift in customers renting versus owning—think Netflix instead of buying a DVD or Uber instead of buying a car—and you have a strong need for an enhanced web and smartphone experience that meets the needs of the growing rental industry.

Recently unveiled, the all-new digital experience enables customers to not just rent equipment from their fingertips but also obtain customized prices, see how many rentals they have, extend a rental, end a rental early, request on-site service and contact their dealer on the spot via the messaging feature. It's been deployed for many North and South American dealers and

will roll out in other areas later this year.

"Enhanced digital capabilities are key to customer growth and customer loyalty," said Global Rental and Used Equipment Director Kurt Norris.

"Almost everyone has a smartphone. That's where people start when they have a problem to solve. Customers want an easy solution at their fingertips for everything they're doing, including renting through the Cat Rental Store. It's critical that we get this right."

Services are key to Caterpillar's long-term success since customers' needs extend beyond their purchase of a machine. Service options like renting and digital connectedness complement our retail strategies and widen our scope to people we might not normally reach.

"Customers want the ability to rent equipment today, and it has to be easy," Norris said. "Both the rental industry and customers' expectations are growing, so we have to be one step ahead." **OTJ**

RENTING MADE EASY

Major new features of the Cat Rental Store digital experience:

- Customer-specific pricing
- Modifying contracts: call off or extend rentals
- Request on-site service for unexpected events
- Contact your dealer via the messaging feature





ON **SOLID** GROUND

95% UPTIME KEEPS CONTRACTOR IN THE DIRT

As a family business owned and operated by three brothers, Ground Tech, Inc. specializes in excavation and site preparation within a 100-mile radius of the Twin Cities of Minnesota.

Pete Henslin brings 25 years of experience to his work in the field, while Steve handles the sales side, and Mike keeps all the technology running smoothly.

When Ground Tech started in 2006, Pete Henslin already had a decade of experience in excavation, so the business started there and soon expanded into sod delivery and installation, landscaping and snow removal.

Not long after, the recession hit and Ground Tech reduced overhead and concentrated on laying sod and doing landscape specialty work.

“We did the work no one else wanted to do, and it kept us going during the slowdown,” Henslin recalls.

Three years ago, Ground Tech transitioned to full-time excavation and site preparation, and has never looked back.

“A friend kept telling me the problems builders were having with their excavating contractors,” Henslin says. “And we were waiting for the timing to be right and housing to come back.”

Over a three-year period, the St. Paul-based contractor has built a solid reputation doing site preparation for homebuilders, excavating and installing underground utilities and cutting driveways. Working for both national and local homebuilders, Ground Tech performs sitework for entire neighborhoods and subdivisions.

“A lot of our work is word-of-mouth, based on what we do and how we do it,” Henslin says. “The work finds us. Contractors use us over and over again because they know they can trust both the timeliness and the quality of the work.”



Ground Tech's revenues increased by 42 percent last year, and are up another 40 percent so far this year.

"It's a matter of having the project ready when we say we will," Henslin says.

"The customer/builder needs to turn the project over, so we strive to deliver it every day and give them the service that we would want. We pride ourselves on trying to leave the jobsite cleaner than when we arrived."

On the move

With 24 employees, including four excavation crews and two grading crews, Ground Tech is constantly on the move, working anywhere from five to eight jobs at any given time.

"Moving equipment around is one of our main challenges," Henslin says. "We move the equipment every day, and are usually back at a job three to four times before we're finished."

Ground Tech's equipment fleet consists of 16 Cat® machines. The contractor has a mix of new, used and leased equipment, and utilizes Cat Financial for machine acquisitions.

"I believe in simplifying things, and our equipment fleet is all Caterpillar," Henslin says. "Cat Financial is easy to work with, and our Ziegler sales rep (Tony Thooft) tees it all up for us—it's quick, easy, and efficient."

GROUND TECH, INC.

Employees: 24

Location:

St. Paul, Minn.

Cat® equipment:

307D H2 Mini Excavator, 239D Compact Track Loader (2), 257D Multi Terrain Loader, 259D Compact Track Loader, 279D Compact Track Loader, 316E L Hydraulic Excavator, 316F Hydraulic Excavator (2), 323F Hydraulic Excavator (2), 928G Wheel Loader, 930K Wheel Loader, D4K2 Dozer, D5K LGP Dozer, CS34 Compactor

"And when we need parts, Ziegler stocks most all of them, and if they don't have it, it's there the next day," he says. "Plus, they have a store nearby in the north metro which works well for us."

Ground Tech utilizes GPS for excavating and grading.

"We use it to dig basements; we are gaining efficiencies and using technology instead of manpower,"

Henslin says. "The excavators have it built in from the factory. Instead of using labor—a guy with stake and a grade rod (laser)—one of the guys in our office creates the program for what we want to dig, and displays it on the operator's screen. The accuracy is phenomenal."

Cat machines stand up to the cold

The contractor works throughout the year, which means digging in frozen ground during the Minnesota winter.

"Our Cat machines always start and run when it's cold out," he says. "Cat equipment is engineered to overcome the cold weather we face here in Minnesota."

Ground Tech also performs demolition of residential homes, utilizing a Cat 316 Excavator.

"They're fast, powerful and precise, with good controls and ergonomics," Henslin says. "Our operators like the creature comforts."

Uptime for Ground Tech's Cat fleet averages 95 percent, Henslin says.

"And if there is an issue, Ziegler is always good about providing a machine to replace the one that goes into the shop, and coordinating that to make it all work—they keep us in the dirt." **OTJ**



WHAT HE LIKES ABOUT CAT® EQUIPMENT

"As far as we are concerned, Caterpillar's technology and product is some of the best out there," says Pete Henslin, co-owner of Ground Tech, Inc. "The touchscreens on the Cat Excavators and the ease of use for our operators are very user friendly. With the onboard computer and the GPS system combined with our ability to get things done inside the machine, it's fairly intuitive and easy to operate."

WHAT HE LIKES ABOUT HIS CAT DEALER

"Ziegler Cat is great, we have been dealing with them now for 14 years. Their service is second to none and their support is wonderful as well, which is why we keep coming back," Henslin says. "If we have an issue in the field, we make a phone call and they get it resolved promptly. They are also very knowledgeable about their products, that's why we use them."



WINNING BIDS

ONLINE TOOLS HELP TARGET YOUR EFFORTS

What's the best way to fine-tune your bidding skills? Just get out there and bid. It takes practice to develop the right process for your operation. Fortunately, there are plenty of online tools—both free and paid subscription sites—available to help you target your efforts and win more work. Here's a quick look at five of them, three for commercial projects and two for government jobs.

BIDCLERK.COM

A paid subscription to **BidClerk.com** gives you access to an online database of planned commercial construction activity, both public and private. It includes project details and contact information, as well as bidders' lists, plans and specifications, project maps and site photos when available. The site adds about 400,000 new projects—from large commercial to industrial, institutional and multi-residential buildings—in the U.S. and Canada each year. Search functions allow you to apply multiple filters, save searches and set up email alerts to receive information about new projects.

CONSTRUCTIONBIDSOURCE.COM

Created all the way back in 1992 to provide contractors and suppliers with data on construction projects out to bid in California and other western states, **ConstructionBidSource.com** has grown and evolved over the years—today delivering up-to-date information for projects across the U.S. It's free to search for projects by keyword or by state and county, or you can pay to access contact information and documents. You can also use the site to place Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) solicitations or request help with good faith efforts required by local, city, state and federally funded projects.

CONSTRUCTIONWIRE.COM

You'll find more than 420,000 mostly commercial construction projects—all with a total value of \$500,000 or more—on

ConstructionWire.com, including data on private initiatives that can be difficult to access. Several pricing options are available, including a regional portal that provides data for three states and a national portal that encompasses all 50 states. Once you choose your plan, you can access three types of reports: Project Reports offer leads on new projects in the planning, bidding and pre-construction stages. Company Reports include profiles of the organizations (owners, developers, tenants, architects, contractors and others) driving new projects. People Reports let you access detailed information about key decision makers.

FEDBIZOPPS.GOV

This free site lets you access more than 28,000 active projects posted by 134 different federal agencies. You can view the complete opportunities list, but since not every job here is for construction, it's better to conduct an advanced search. There, you can filter your search by type of contract, along with posted date, location, posting agency, keyword, project code and more. You can also access a calendar of outreach and training events designed to help small businesses learn about and transact business with the federal government.

GOVERNMENTBIDS.COM

GovernmentBids.com tracks bids, RFPs, RFQs and other opportunities from thousands of federal, state, local and other purchasing entities on a daily basis. You can browse bids by region, by category (such as architectural and engineering, construction or facilities and equipment services) or by an alphabetical list of products and services regularly purchased by government agencies. To view the posting agency, project description and bid documents, however, a yearly subscription is required. All subscription packages include a daily bid notification—an email with all the bids that match your business.

Browsing these websites shouldn't take you more than an hour—time well spent if one (or more) of them helps you improve your bid-hit ratio and your profitability. **OTJ**

MATERIAL HANDLING

**ELECTRIC UTILITY RELIES ON CAT® MACHINES
TO MOVE LARGE VOLUMES OF COAL**



As a utility company headquartered in Pineville, La., Cleco Power serves approximately 290,000 customers in 24 of Louisiana's 64 parishes through its retail business and supplies wholesale power in Louisiana and Mississippi.

Cleco Power owns nine generating units with a total capacity of 3,310 megawatts, along with 12,000 miles of distribution lines and 1,300 miles of transmission lines.

Cleco Power uses multiple sources of generation and fuels to serve its customers. The central Louisiana utility has received recognition from the Edison Electric Institute for diversifying its generation fuel mix, and also for its outstanding response in assisting other electric companies with power restoration after extreme weather events.

Cleco's roots go back to the 1906 installation of a 25 kW Corliss steam-driven generating plant in Bunkie, La. In 1914, Cleco added a 50 kW diesel engine to the plant to produce ice and light; and in 1935, it became part of Louisiana Ice & Electric Company, which today is known as Cleco. A tradition of operating excellence began in 1938 with Rea Station, the company's first power plant, in Bunkie, La. In 1951, Gulf Public Service Company merged with Cleco, doubling the size of the company.

Safe operation

Through the years, the company has steadily added generating capacity and evolved through changes in ownership and corporate structure. But one thing remains consistent: Cleco is an industry leader in the safe operation and management of its power plants.



As a facility that holds safety meetings on a daily basis, Cleco's Brame Energy Center achieved a company-wide milestone in October when it completed two million man-hours without lost time due to injury, according to Steve Lachney, a 35-year Cleco veteran who serves as manager of fuel handling at the facility.

Located 20 miles northwest of Alexandria, Brame Energy Center sits on 6,000 acres and uses man-made Rodemacher Lake as a cooling source for the plant's three generating units. Generation units at the site include:

Nesbitt Unit 1, completed in 1975, is 100 percent owned by Cleco. It is fueled by natural gas and can produce 440 megawatts.

Rodemacher Unit 2, completed in 1982, is jointly owned by Cleco, Louisiana Energy and Power Authority and Lafayette Utilities System. Cleco owns 30 percent or 157 megawatts of the 523-megawatt generating unit. Rodemacher Unit 2 is fueled predominantly by 1.75 to 2.1 million tons of coal per year from Wyoming.

Madison Unit 3, 100 percent owned by Cleco, is the company's largest generating unit and was completed in 2010. It is among the cleanest solid-fuel units of its kind in the nation. The unit is key to Cleco's strategy to be self-sufficient in its power supply and increase fuel flexibility. It can use multiple solid fuels including biomass, coal and petroleum coke, a byproduct of

the oil refining industry, to generate up to 641 net megawatts. The plant uses circulating fluidized-bed technology, and uses approximately 1.5 million tons of petroleum coke or coal and 500,000 tons of limestone annually.

Handling four million tons of coal

Handling up to four million tons of coal annually, Brame Energy Center utilizes Cat® heavy equipment to perform the task.

Manned by 165 employees and supported by up to 100 outside contractors, Brame Energy Center receives an average of 75,000 tons of coal per week. The fuel is moved with two Cat D10T Dozers, a D8T Dozer and 657 and 637 Scrapers, a



Cleco's Brame Energy Center

Employees: 165 (1,400 companywide)

Location: Lena, La.

Cat® equipment: 12G Motor Grader, 990H Wheel Loader; Dozers: D8T, D10T(2); Scrapers: 637G, 657G, 657G CS; 730 Articulated Truck

WHAT HE LIKES ABOUT CAT® EQUIPMENT

"When I first started here, we had a 1979 model 637 Scraper and a used, mid-1970s D8K Dozer, and at that time that was our only Cat equipment," says Steve Lachney, Cleco manager of fuel handling. "We had some other equipment brands, but when we started replacing the older equipment, we found Cat machines to be very dependable."

990H Wheel Loader along with another dozer. The Rodemacher 2 unit currently burns anywhere from 5,000 to 7,000 tons per day.

"Our primary goal is to get the best quality fuel to the unit, and protect the fuel that we stock in the yard—keep it dry, keep it secure so it doesn't run off, and then reclaim it as needed depending on what the generating unit needs," Lachney says. "The Cat D10s are our heavy production dozers whenever we need to move a lot of material a short distance."

On a weekly basis, the volume of primary fuels for the Madison 3 generating unit consists of 12,000 tons of coal, 22,000 tons of petroleum coke and 13,000 tons

of limestone—the latter is used for emission control to scrub the sulfur dioxide out of the flue gas.

To protect the coal from the elements, Cleco crews compact the Powder River Basin (PRB) coal with a Cat Wheel Loader.

"By compacting it with our Cat 990H Wheel Loader and keeping the air out of it, we eliminate the threat of combustion," Lachney says. "And compacting it also protects the coal from the elements."

When coal and petroleum coke must be moved over a longer distance, the Cat Coal Scrapers are utilized to haul material either to the yard or from the yard to the reclamation area.

"We've had good success with our Cat Scrapers and Dozers—they are durable machines we can count on to move large volumes of material," Lachney says. "Whenever we purchase a new one, Louisiana Cat gives us good trade-in value on it and it goes toward our new purchase."

Cost control

Beyond maintaining a vigilant approach to the safe operation of Brame Energy Center, Lachney says controlling operating costs is an important aspect of the business.

"To remain competitive in our market, we have to control costs," he says, "and our Cat equipment helps us do it. We know the life expectancy of the major components, and we can plan well in advance to schedule that maintenance."

WHAT HE LIKES ABOUT HIS CAT® DEALER

"The best thing that we have going with Louisiana Cat is the service technician who does the preventive maintenance on our equipment," says Steve Lachney, manager of fuel handling for Cleco's Brame Energy Center. "We see a lot of people here on a daily basis, and Art Casey is one of the most knowledgeable and professional guys that we've dealt with."



"The level of support we get from Louisiana Cat is great, especially as far as parts availability and service goes. We've developed a great working relationship."

"It helps us control the costs by letting our management know how much we expect to spend on upkeep on a year-to-year basis."

With its own in-house maintenance department, Cleco relies on Louisiana Cat for timely delivery of parts, which generally arrive the same day or next day.

Beyond parts, Lachney likes the flexibility of being able to rent a machine from his Cat dealer on an occasional basis with the option to buy it. In one case when capital funds were not available, he rented a D8 Dozer with an option to purchase it.

"I called Chris Snow, my rep at Louisiana Cat, and told him what we needed," he says. "I said, 'This is going to be a rental,

but I can't tell you for how long.' He offered us an RPO where we put part of that rental towards our purchase if we ever decided to buy, and it actually worked out well. I think we rented it for just a little over two years before we bought it."

Through the years, Cleco has developed a high level of familiarity and trust with members of Louisiana Cat.

"Whether it's parts, service or sales, we've known them for so long it feels like we're not just a customer—we're partners," Lachney says. "I don't want to feel pressured to do something, and with Louisiana Cat, that's never an issue. It's a great working relationship—we know we can count on them." **OTJ**

Brame Energy Center - Units 1, 2 and 3



WHEEL LOADER FEATURES

FOR IMPROVED OPERATOR COMFORT



Machine ergonomics isn't exactly a term we use on a daily basis, but it does play a role in your day-to-day work routine. When you're spending up to 10 hours a day in the cab of a wheel loader, comfort isn't just a luxury—it's necessary for your well-being and work performance.

The simplest way to help alleviate end-of-day aches and pains is to adjust your seat and cab controls to allow for full range of motion, lumbar support and comfortable positioning before you begin operating. This is especially important if you're operating a machine that is used by other operators throughout the work week, as they may have changed the settings.

WHEEL LOADER COMFORT & CUSTOMIZABLE FEATURES

As you may know, not all wheel loaders are designed with ergonomics top of mind. That's why we wanted to highlight specific features that are being integrated into today's wheel loaders to enhance operator comfort.

SEAT ADJUSTMENT — Some wheel loaders are now equipped with an air suspension seat that has an indicator that shows red if you are not properly adjusted, and green once the level is correct. It's also important to look for a wheel loader with an adjustable armrest, lumbar support and recline capabilities. Additionally, a heated seat option is especially comfortable when operating in colder climates.

JOYSTICK ANGLE & SEAT-MOUNTED CONTROLS — Joystick positioning is another critical comfort factor; look for a loader with a low-effort joystick that feels natural to the way your hand typically sits. Seat-mounted controls on some of today's small wheel loaders enable you to lift, lower, rack, dump, shift directions, control auxiliary flow and set differential lock—all from the joystick.

STEERING — This should never be the hardest part of your day! You want a wheel loader that doesn't require much force at all to turn or steer. For applications that require short-cycle truck loading, the quick steer feature on small wheel loaders boosts the steering flow so you only have to turn the knob about 15 percent in either direction to turn the machine—which helps reduce operator fatigue.

OPERATION CUSTOMIZATION — There are several technology advancements designed to provide a much smoother experience while operating the machine. The ride control feature provides an easier ride, as well as enhanced material retention, when operating or roading over rough terrain. Cylinder snubbing (also known as cylinder damping) slows down the implements before you hit full stroke or kick-out position to eliminate any jerking motions.

Hopefully, now that you've learned about some adjustment tips and comfort features available on today's advanced wheel loaders; having numb legs and an aching back should no longer be an inevitable part of your day. We hope machine ergonomics is a priority the next time you're considering a wheel loader rental or purchase.

To learn more about machine ergonomics and Cat® Wheel Loaders, visit Cat.com or contact our dealership. 



GREEN MACHINE

CAT® 289D A KEY PIECE OF TREE SERVICE FLEET



Based in Henry County, GA, 9 Oak Tree Service specializes in removing hazardous trees and pruning in tight residential spaces.

9 Oak crews have covered anything from small jobs and routine maintenance to disaster relief in the wake of hurricanes Irma, Matthew and Florence.

Currently serving a 25-mile radius around McDonough, Ga., 9 Oak Tree Service has grown over a short period of time by providing a reliable, quality service to homeowners. The company was founded in 2009 by Brandon Dwyer.

“We have a solid customer base that we’re very thankful for,” says Dwyer, who operates the business together with his wife, Katelyn. “We have a lot of repeat business and good referrals.”

Dwyer learned how to climb trees professionally when he was 15. That experience led him to start his own company when he was still in high school.

“What I love most about the tree care industry is that it is never boring,” Dwyer says. “I’ve always said I’d rather be a little stressed than bored, and the tree industry definitely never gets dull. It’s always exciting, always something new and intense. You have to focus to do it properly—it’s something new every day.”

Safety is a continual emphasis. Crew members are fully equipped with personal protective equipment, including special helmets, eye and ear protection, boots and reflective vests.

“We hold regular safety meetings, and our climber that does all the aerial work is well trained and always wears a helmet, a harness, and every kind of protection that he

9 OAK TREE SERVICE, INC.

Employees: 9

Location: McDonough, Ga.

Cat® equipment: 289D Compact Track Loader

needs,” Dwyer says. “He knows how to make the call if something is unsafe or too dangerous.

9 Oak’s crew has stayed together for a long time due to a positive work environment, Dwyer says.

“We all get along with each other, and we also have quality equipment. People prefer working with good equipment and we have newer, well-maintained equipment that’s a pleasure to work with on a daily basis.

“I think a key to our success is having a great team to work with—you can’t do anything big by yourself,” Dwyer adds. “We have a great team and a great set of equipment. You can’t complete jobs if your machines are breaking down, so we strive to maintain very reliable equipment.”

Going green

The company operates with four trucks, and 12 machines. One of the key pieces in 9 Oak’s equipment fleet is a Cat® 289D Compact Track Loader (CTL), which is painted a distinctive lime green to match the rest of its machines and stay consistent with its brand.

Once a hazardous tree is cut down, the tree is sawed into manageable pieces. The Cat CTL grabs a section of the sawed tree trunk or limbs with a grapple attachment and feeds it into a chipper, or loads stumps or brush into a truck bed. As part of the safety emphasis, 9 Oak crews feed the chipper with a machine attachment and never by hand.

“We have to move large pieces of trees and logs every day, and I think that Caterpillar definitely makes the best compact loader,” Dwyer says. “We chose



to go with the 289D Cat Compact Track Loader because we think the track machines have a lot more power,” Dwyer says. “And since we’re often working in turf, it distributes the weight of the machine better and it doesn’t rut a yard like a tire machine does.”

The standard, suspended undercarriage system on the 289D provides superior traction, flotation, stability and speed to work in a wide range of applications and underfoot conditions. The 289D is, in fact, a green machine: the electronically controlled Cat C3.3B engine provides high horsepower and torque while meeting U.S. EPA Tier 4 Final emission standards.

A backup camera is another important safety feature of the 289D.

“It has a backup camera and a very large screen—this is great for daily operation,” Dwyer says. “It eliminates all the turning around and the neck aches for our crew, and also it’s a great safety feature. You can see if someone is behind you, or maybe it’s a stationary object like a house or a fence. So it’s very helpful as we strive to operate in a safe, efficient manner.” **OTJ**

WHAT HE LIKES ABOUT CAT® EQUIPMENT

“We decided to go with Caterpillar for our track machine purchase because we think they build the best machine in comparison to their competitors,” says Brandon Dwyer, owner of 9 Oak Tree Service.

WHAT HE LIKES ABOUT HIS CAT DEALER

“Yancey has a great service department,” Dwyer says. “Not only is the machine solid, but if there are ever any issues, our Cat dealer can get us going quickly. They have a huge parts inventory. If you ever need anything, they can get it to you quickly. They are extremely responsive—they always answer the phone or call you back within 10 minutes.

“Something else that we really like about Caterpillar is their great financing options,” he adds. “Cat Financial offers great rates for good terms and they’re easy to work with.”

Ground Control

ENTREPRENEUR TRANSFORMS THE TILING INDUSTRY THROUGH INNOVATION

As one of the fastest-growing companies in the agricultural drainage business, the beginning of C&L Tiling dates back to a friendly game of cards in 1982.

At the time, Don Colclasure was a hard working Central Illinois farmer with first-hand knowledge of the stress put on crops by the lack of proper drainage. He was witness to low yields and total crop losses caused by an uncontrolled water table.

It was during a game of 10-Point Pitch amongst friends that one of the men proposed selling his trencher and tiling business. Along with a partner, Don and his wife, Susan, purchased the trencher and started their own agricultural drainage installation company.

Following the harvest season, C&L Tiling hit the ground running. Experiencing a tremendous demand for drainage installation, Don and his employees put in countless hours of hard work and dedication to build a successful business.

Previously, system drainage was installed in 80- to 100-foot intervals. By the early 1990s, C&L Tiling had reduced the spacings to 30 and 40 feet. The net effect was repeat business went from every five years to every other year when growers started seeing the positive impact it had on their crops.

“As he grew and applied his aggressive style of workmanship, it changed the way farm drainage was done in the Midwest,” said company VP Aaron Kassing, a farmer, himself. “It transformed tiling into something that in the past had been looked at as a luxury item. Today, many growers consider this a necessity. They

AG DRAINAGE, INC. (ADI)

Location: Golden, Ill.

Cat® equipment: Hydraulic Excavators: 314E L CR (7), 320 (2), 323; 420F2 Backhoe Loader; D6T LGP Dozer

realize that controlling the water table helps increase and improve crop yields.”

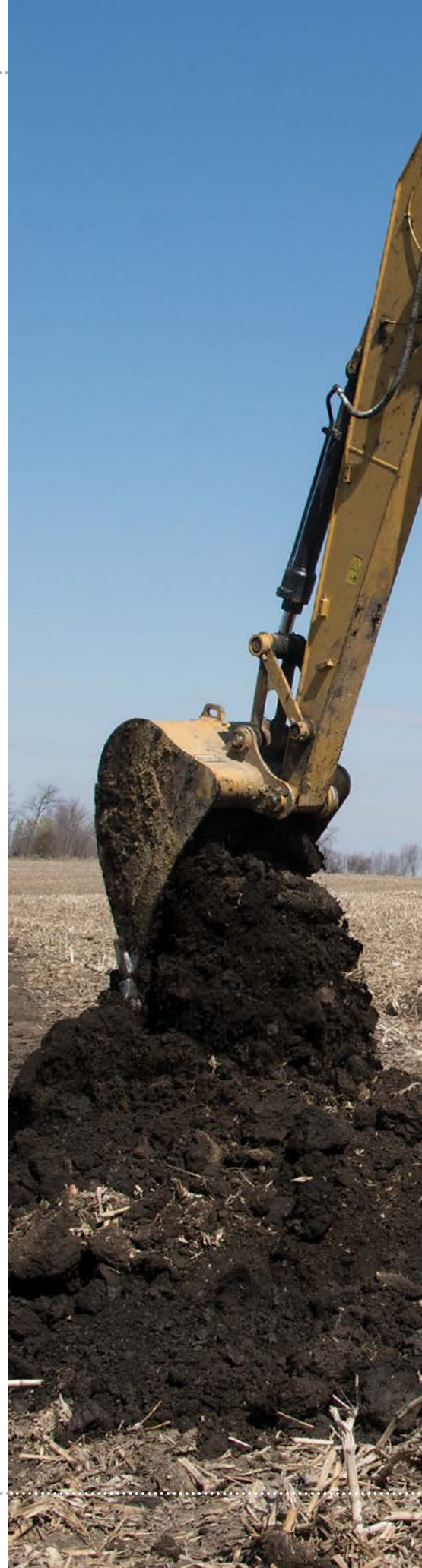
Controlling and leveling the water table in the farm field allows a corn plant to set down better roots in early spring when the ground is typically wet. This helps plants better utilize nutrients. A farmer can apply nutrients when they need to rather than having to apply them in the fall.

Vertical integration

In 1995, as business continued to grow for C&L Tiling, pipe suppliers were not able to keep up with the amount of pipe C&L was installing. In order to keep his customers satisfied, Colclasure made the decision to produce his own drainage pipe. With the purchase of an HDPE extruder, Timewell Drainage Products company was started in Timewell, Ill., manufacturing and supplying its own single-wall tubing.

With the ability to both manufacture and install drain tile, the company experienced another period of rapid growth. It wasn't long before requests started coming in from other installers asking if Timewell could begin supplying them with pipe. At this point, Timewell began producing pipe to supply other drainage contractors too.

(Continued on page 16)





"Based on the feedback from our operators in the field, it's the reliability, the power, and the versatility that really make the Cat 314E L CR a home run for ADI."

—AARON KASSING
VICE PRESIDENT



Drain tile is placed in trenches to improve drainage for higher crop yields.

As C&L Tiling continued to grow, the decision was made in 2001 to re-brand the installation division of the company in order to expand and reach broader geographic markets. Ag Drainage, Inc., more commonly known as ADI, took off immediately, rapidly increasing its footprint the Midwest.

Being both a pipe manufacturing company as well as a drainage installation company, the vertical integration opened up opportunities that no other company in the industry was able to offer.

Using Colclasure's extensive personal experience combined with rigorous product testing, ADI and Timewell paved the way for state-of-the-art drainage.

As owner and CEO, Colclasure continues to set the tone for his employees. Not only does he personally design the drainage layouts used by nearly every ADI installation crew today, he also has designed and had numerous plows and trenchers built to his specifications to maximize the efficiency of drainage installation and better serve the customer.

Making the Cat® connection

When installing drain tile in the field, one of the main machines they use is a Cat® 314E L CR Hydraulic Excavator. After a trencher makes a pass through the field, cutting a 30- to 36-inch-deep trench, the Cat excavator is called upon to make a

deeper, wider excavation for drain tile connection points.

"What it comes down to with any piece of equipment is not what the purchasing folks have to say, but what the operators in the field think," Kassing says. "And what we're finding out from our folks in the field is these small Cat excavators have a lot more versatility.

"They're able to track and dig at the same time, which is an option that was not available on some other brands of equipment," he says. "Based on the feedback from our operators in the field, it's the reliability, the power, and the versatility that really make the Cat 314E L CR a home run for ADI."

Beyond equipment performance, the deciding factor in ADI's decision to switch to Cat equipment several years ago was the service of the Cat dealer network.

Because ADI field crews work over a wide geographical area—ranging from the Midwest to the Southeastern U.S.—the company needs the ability to monitor its machines and provide timely service, when needed. This is accomplished through the use of Cat Product Link™, a remote monitoring system that helps take the guesswork out of asset management. Using telematics, fleet managers know where their equipment is, what it's doing, and how it's performing. Utilizing the VisionLink® interface enables businesses to maximize efficiency, increase productivity and lower operating costs.

"We can service their machines utilizing our own service department, and that of our neighboring dealers to make sure they are serviced when needed," says Craig Robeen, a sales manager with Cat dealer Altorfer in East Peoria, Ill. "We also are able to predict when a machine might be experiencing trouble and proactively address that.

"Being able to do this over an area covering Nebraska to the Carolinas has been a differentiator for us," Robeen says. "We couldn't do that without the reporting software, and also the ability

WHAT HE LIKES ABOUT CAT® EQUIPMENT

"I love the way you can track and operate the joystick at the same time," says ADI operator Jordan McDonald. "I couldn't do that with any other machine that I've ever run. The hydraulic system, just everything is fast responding. And the air-conditioned cabs are comfortable. It's just a very good piece of machinery."

WHAT HE LIKES ABOUT HIS CAT DEALER

"Time is money, and certainly when we have a machine down or we're having a problem with something we have to get it fixed right away," says ADI marketing VP Aaron Kassing.

"When the crops are out of the ground, whether it's the post-harvest tiling season or the pre-plant tiling season, we have to have our machines running," Kassing says. "And we have found that Altorfer has been very responsive in these instances. Craig Robeen and his team have worked with us very closely to make sure that the service levels that we receive are top notch."

to utilize the strength of the Cat dealer network and the service capabilities at all those locations."

ADI is proud of the fact that the product and service it provides helps improve productivity for farmers, Kassing says.

"I'm a farmer myself, and when you're in the field and you're watching your bean yields at 80 bushels an acre on the yield monitor and you see that drop down to 14, that hurts your quality of life," Kassing says.

"So what we do helps growers in innumerable ways, not just with their yield. There are things that help them with planting, getting in and having timely operations, and we're proud of what we supply. And we're proud to have Cat machines as part of that." **OTJ**



SPEED Matters

In the landscaping business, speed matters. It's about getting work completed and then getting on to the next project.

When you're balancing multiple crews, landscaping equipment and a number of machines, you need to count on the highest levels of efficiency to ensure deadlines are met and profit margins maintained.

You'll find everything you need in multi-purpose Cat® machines, which enable you to get more work done while minimizing downtime, and through a wide array of Cat attachments that are specifically engineered to help Cat machines accomplish a wider range of work.

Each machine is backed by our dealership with the reliable service and parts you need to keep running strong. Caterpillar also offers rental options to help you supplement your fleet in a budget-friendly way at busy times.

Our easy-to-transport compact landscaping equipment helps you navigate both rural and urban environments with ease, so you can make the most of each day, and be on your way to the next job in the morning.

LANDSCAPING EQUIPMENT YOU CAN RELY ON

Landscaping industry professionals know they can depend on Cat machines for high quality and the very latest technology.

Innovative Cat features like return-to-dig, ride control, dual self-level and creep control help operators perform tasks more quickly and with higher precision. Our commitment to continuous improvement delivers the uptime and efficiency that businesses need to grow and operate profitably.

Plus, it's all backed by our service, parts and expertise.

Certain attachments are essential in landscaping applications and with performance capabilities continuously improving, it is helpful to stay on top of the latest advancements when considering your next attachment purchase.

PREPARING THE GROUND FOR SPRING LANDSCAPING

From post-winter terrain issues to new home construction, many landscaping companies are tasked with ground preparation jobs in the early months of spring. Fortunately, there are several attachments available today that can make ground clearing and preparation applications easier and much more efficient.

» **MULCHERS** are designed to shred underbrush, sapling, shrubs and trees. Today's top tier mulcher attachments are engineered to minimize stalling. They also can improve recovery speed, lowering fuel consumption and completing the task faster.

(Continued on page 18)

- » **BRUSHCUTTERS** are extremely powerful attachments that can reduce vegetation, brush and trees with up to a three-inch diameter into manageable material.
- » **LANDSCAPE RAKES** are engineered to pulverize, aerate, level and condition soil. These attachments simultaneously collect and remove rock debris—serving as an ideal solution for preparing new homesite lawns for seeding and decorative work.
- » **POWER BOX RAKES** are another versatile solution for de-thatching, grading, leveling, raking, removing old lawns and weeds. They also function well for removing debris and preparing seedbeds.
- » **LANDSCAPE TILLERS** break up, mix and stabilize soils to prepare ideal conditions for healthy yard accent planting and growth.
- » **AUGERS** are commonly used for drilling holes and preparing the ground for fence posts. Top-tier auger attachments are engineered with ideal speed and torque to extract soil efficiently and prevent stalling in dense ground.

ATTACHMENTS FOR MATERIAL HANDLING AND TRANSPORTATION

Whether it's removing ground debris or transporting materials such as mulch, turf and pavers to various areas on the job site, material handling attachments are essential to getting the job done in an efficient manner:

- » **MULTI-PURPOSE (4-IN-1) BUCKETS** can be used for a number of tasks in addition to general bucket work, including dozing, grading, leveling and unloading material.
- » **INDUSTRIAL GRAPPLE BUCKETS** are designed with heavy-duty tines to hold contents in place, making it easier to transport bulky, non-uniform material. These attachments are ideal for removing fallen trees and other debris that has accumulated throughout the winter months.
- » **PALLET FORKS** are the solution for stable material transportation. Pallet forks with tall backboards can secure loads for improved safety and efficiency.
- » **MATERIAL HANDLING ARMS** serve as another method of efficiently lifting, carrying and loading a variety of materials and equipment around the jobsite.

PERFORMANCE MATCHING YOUR MACHINES AND ATTACHMENTS

Today's best compact machines are engineered with several advancements to help operators get the job done efficiently. Starting with control pattern options, it is essential to purchase a machine that you and/or your operators are most comfortable operating. Whether it's ISO pattern controls, H-pattern controls or hand and foot controls, it's good to know that some manufacturers offer more than one control pattern option for their compact machines.

Additionally, quick couplers mean operators can change out attachments quickly, reducing the amount of time it takes to complete tasks requiring the use of a variety of tools. Return-to-dig and work tool positioners allow operators to pre-set the attachment angle and automatically recall that setting when requested. This allows the operator to focus on the task at hand and let the machine position the tool with ease and precision each time.

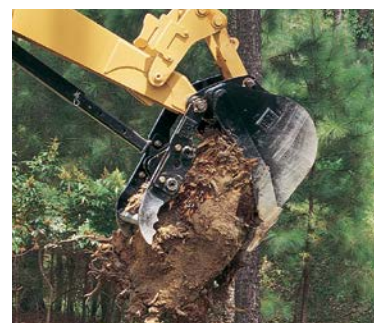
*To learn more about additional attachments for work in other phases of the landscaping industry, visit **Cat® Landscaping**. For additional information, contact our dealership. **OTJ***



Landscape Rakes



Stump Grinders



Thumbs



Vibratory Plate Compactors



Augers



Forks

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Louisiana Cat is a proud member of the **Louisiana Nursery & Landscape Association**, **Farm Bureau** and the **Louisiana Cattlemen's Association**. **If you are a member, you can take advantage of great discounts.** Choose from a variety of Cat® machine models and attachments for your landscape or farm operations. Our multi purpose equipment gives you the means to get through your daily work more quickly. That means more work and bigger profits for your business.

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Alexandria, LA 71303

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Lake Charles, LA 70615

5606 Industrial Drive Ext
Bossier City, LA 71112

2201 Ticheli Road
Monroe, LA 71202

42440 Jackson Road
Hammond, LA 70403

16613 Airline Hwy
Prairieville, LA 70769

RENTAL LOCATIONS

10414 Airline Hwy
Baton Rouge, LA 70816

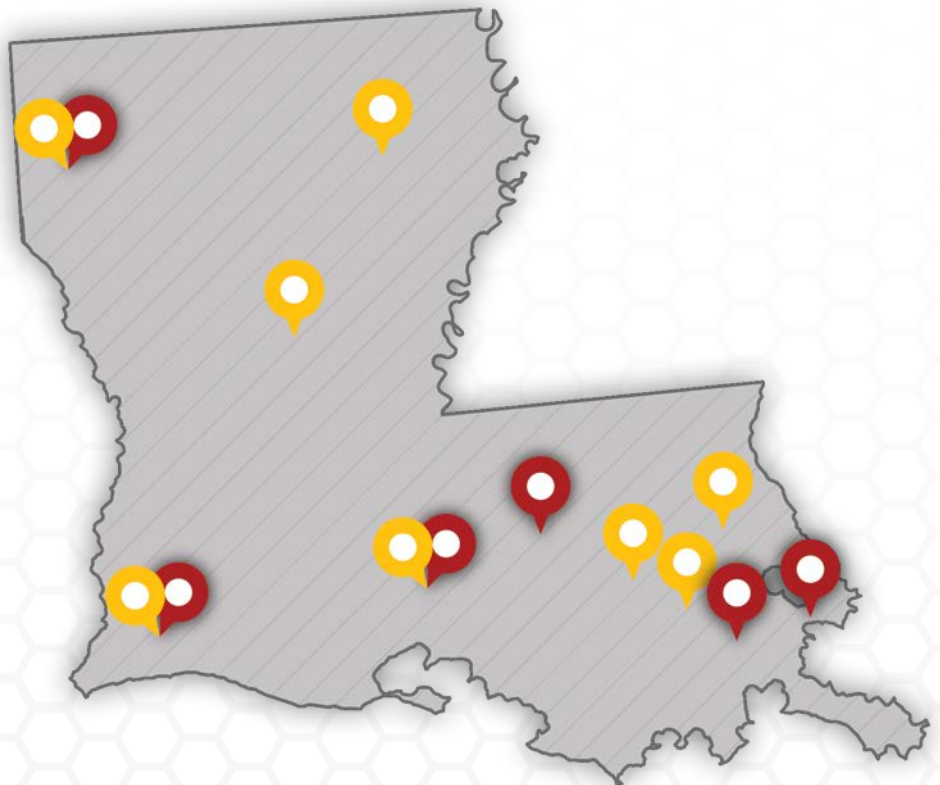
100 Boyce Street
Broussard, LA 70518

204 Engineers Road
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