February 2007, Issue 1

focusing on Solutions

Brandeis

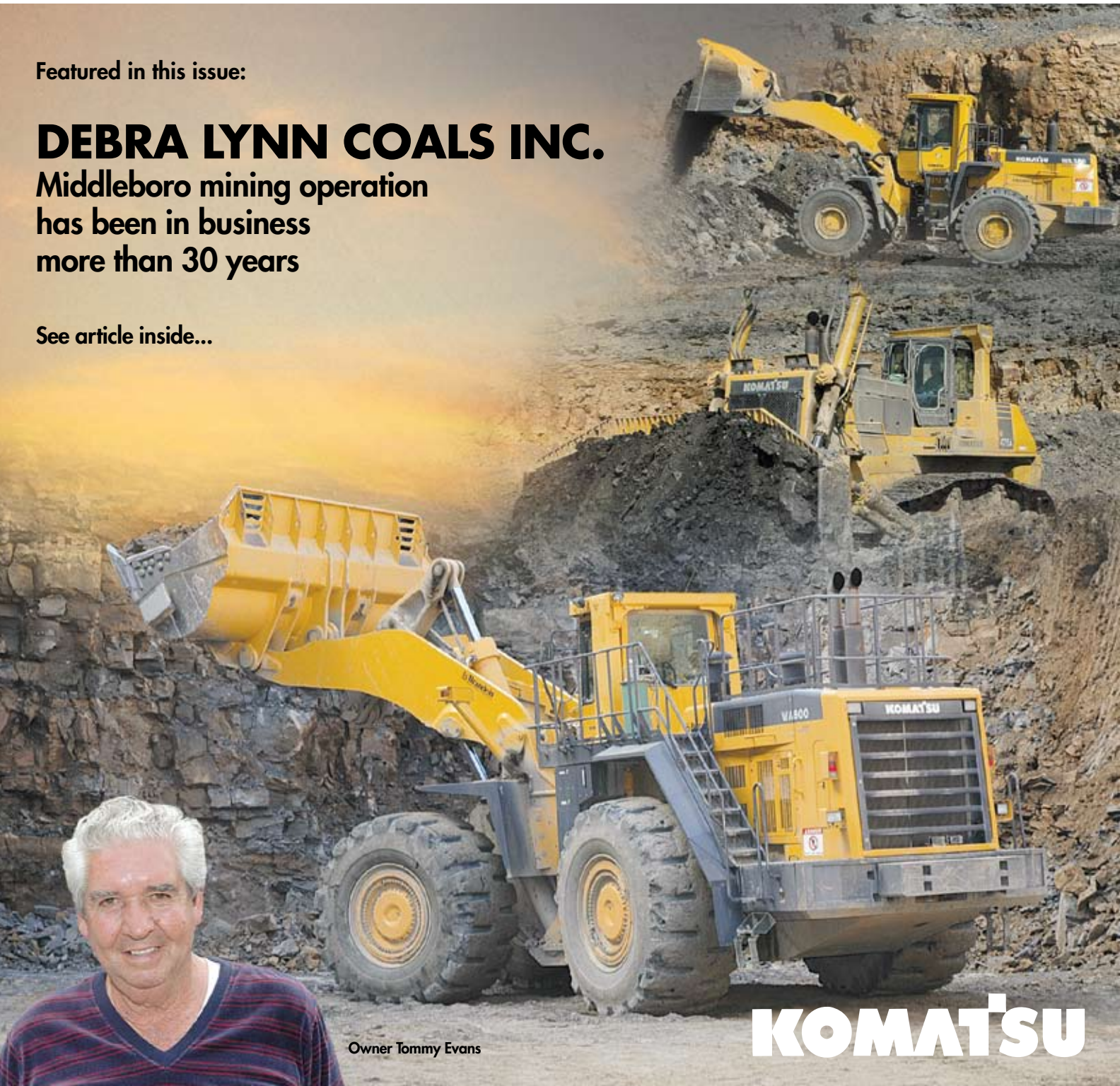
A publication for and about Brandeis Machinery & Supply Company customers

Featured in this issue:

DEBRA LYNN COALS INC.

Middleboro mining operation has been in business more than 30 years

See article inside...



Owner Tommy Evans

KOMATSU

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Gene Snowden, Jr.

Brandeis

RELIABLE EQUIPMENT

RESPONSIVE SERVICE

Brandeis

Dear Equipment User:

Each new year brings with it new opportunities, and 2007 will certainly be no different.

Except for housing, almost all other sectors of the construction and related economy remain strong and should provide a healthy amount of work for contractors this year. There's also a realistic hope that interest rates have peaked and may start falling this summer. If that happens, the excess housing inventory should begin to disappear and housing construction could start to come back as early as this summer.

At Brandeis Machinery & Supply Company, we're optimistic about 2007. We're gearing up for a substantial year in order to be ready to provide the reliable equipment and responsive service you need, when you need it.

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Whether your need is for equipment, parts or service — we hope you'll select Brandeis to be your distributor of choice. I can assure you, we'll do everything in our power to make your experience a good and profitable one.

Sincerely,
BRANDEIS MACHINERY & SUPPLY COMPANY

Gene Snowden, Jr.
President and Chief Operating Officer

focusing on Solutions

Brandeis

IN THIS ISSUE

DEBRA LYNN COALS INC.
Owner Tommy Evans says he has mining "in his blood." See how he's put his passion to work for 30 years.

GUEST OPINION
As Democrats take control of both legislative houses, there are bound to be changes that will affect the construction and equipment industries. Christian Klein, VP of Government Affairs for AED, provides his insights.

MANAGING YOUR BUSINESS
With Spanish becoming more prevalent on many work sites, employers need to know how to bridge the language barrier. Here are some ideas on keeping a bilingual workplace safe and productive.

EQUIPMENT DESIGN BENEFITS
Find out why Komatsu motor graders' visibility, blade geometry and ease of operation set them apart.

UTILITY MACHINES
Learn more about Komatsu compact excavators and how feedback from contractors helped improve this popular product line.

KOMATSU & YOU
Ted Ohashi, President and COO of Komatsu America Corp., provides an optimistic but realistic look at the 2007 construction scene

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KOMATSU

A SALUTE TO A CUSTOMER

DEBRA LYNN COALS INC.

Middleboro mining operation has been in business more than 30 years

Tommy Evans, Owner

Family plays an important role at Debra Lynn Coals Inc. of Middleboro, Kentucky, so it seems only appropriate that the business is named after the daughter of the company's founder.

"She works in the office taking care of the books," said Debra Lynn Coals owner Tommy Evans.

In addition, Evans' two sons and a couple of grandsons are part of the team for the company, which began as an auguring and surface-mining operation more than 30 years ago. Evans said at one point, Debra Lynn Coals owned and operated five mines with as many as 150 employees. Today, 26 employees manage the surface-mining operation at one location in Middleboro, producing about 15,000 tons of coal per month. Most of that is then sold to Bell County Coal and Kincaid Mining for processing.

An operator with Debra Lynn Coals Inc. loads trucks in the pit with a Komatsu PC600LC excavator.

Evans said Debra Lynn has been mining at its current location for 17 years and will probably continue there for at least another five.

"We decided to cut back into a smaller, family-run operation," Evans said. "This is a good size for us — I don't see us growing back to the size we were before."

Beginning in business

Evans said Debra Lynn began work at its first mine in 1974 near Harlan, Kentucky. At that time, Evans said the company involved him, his eldest son, and four or five other employees.

"I was first exposed to surface mining when I got out of high school and hauled coal from surface mines," he said. "I went from hauling to working on surface mines and then decided to go into business for myself."

Today's mining often requires going back to areas that had been mined years ago, and that means moving more yards of earth per ton of coal. Doing that requires larger machinery than 30 years ago, and Evans said he can count on Brandeis Machinery & Supply Company Sales Representative John Estill and Product Support Sales Representative Larry Jones for his large equipment needs.

Durable machines

Debra Lynn has a number of Komatsu machines in its fleet, including two D475 dozers, two WA500 wheel loaders, a WA800 wheel loader and a PC600LC excavator. "They're durable machines," Evans commented. "They've held up well."

In fact, Evans said his Komatsu machinery usually operates at 95 percent to 98 percent

availability, which is vital to the success of his business. "One of the best things about the Komatsu machines that we've noticed so far is the working time," he said. "That's what we want to see."

Debra Lynn Operator Paul Sneed said the Komatsu PC600 excavator is a reliable performer. "I think all of Komatsu's excavators are solid machines. The PC600 is really stout, so I can use a good bucket with it because it's a good-size machine."

Evans' grandson Thomas Evans also operates equipment for Debra Lynn. He said the Komatsu WA800 wheel loader compares well to other brands. "It has a lot of power and it's smooth. The WA800 seems to be a little bigger than some of the other brands I have run. We've had it for a year and it didn't take very long to get comfortable with it. It's a great machine to work with."

Debra Lynn's newer WA500 wheel loader is at work in the pit, loading coal. Tommy Evans says he's always used WA500s to load coal and still has the first one he bought 12 years ago. "It's a backup machine but it still runs well and has its original tires," he noted.

Service support

Debra Lynn mechanics handle routine maintenance issues, such as servicing, fueling, greasing and changing oils. But when more complex issues develop, Brandeis is quick to lend a helping hand.

"I've dealt with Brandeis for 18 to 20 years," Evans said. "They're good, local people who provide good service. In fact, it's one of the best service departments I could ask for.

"Working with a good service department that has parts availability when we need parts is crucial," Evans added. "That's one thing about Brandeis, if they don't have a part, they can usually get it that day from other branches close by. If not, they'll have it the next morning, and that's really important."

Stressing safety

Also important is the safety of Debra Lynn employees, Evans emphasized. All employees are required to participate in a safety training program every year.

Debra Lynn Coals uses a Komatsu WA800 wheel loader to load rock in the pit. After taking off the overburden, operators will be ready to load coal.

When the surface mining in an area is completed, Debra Lynn Coals returns the land to its original contour.

"Each man has to go through eight hours of safety training," Evans said. "New miners receive 24 hours of training before we can hire them. We've been blessed when it comes to avoiding serious accidents on the job. We've even received awards from the MSHA (Mine Safety and Health Administration) for going a number of months without any time lost to accidents. MSHA comes out and does the safety inspections on all our equipment and we work really well with them.

"When we can accomplish our work without losing any time to accidents or other safety problems, that's where we want to be."

Continued . . .

Thomas Evans, Operator

Brandeis

RELIABLE EQUIPMENT

RESPONSIVE SERVICE

Reclamation work is challenging but rewarding

. . . continued

Reclamation is important

Once an area has been safely mined, Evans said important reclamation work needs to follow. "Our final gradings put everything back to its original contour," Evans said. "It's expensive, but that's part of the cost of mining.

Debra Lynn Coals has two Komatsu D475A dozers in its fleet. "They're durable machines," Debra Lynn Owner Tommy Evans said of his Komatsu equipment. "They've held up well."

A Debra Lynn Coals operator moves material in the pit using a Komatsu WA500 wheel loader. "The WA500 is a good-size piece of equipment," said Debra Lynn Owner Tommy Evans. "That's what we've always used to load coal."

"We follow our permitted plan for reclamation. We put up a bond for the reclamation work and then we get it back in three phases. Phase one is after grading and seeding. We get another percentage back after phase two, when we have a certain amount of cover and trees growing on the property. In phase three, we remove ponds and other methods used to catch silt and other runoff. After a mining area is finished, the process usually takes anywhere from five to seven years."

Persistence pays off

Such work takes patience and persistence, the same qualities that have played a key role in the longevity of Debra Lynn Coals.

"Persistence and the challenge of the work keep me going," Evans stated. "Mining gets in your blood and it's hard to get away from once you get into it."

When he founded Debra Lynn Coals, Evans admitted he didn't envision he'd still be running the company more than three decades later. But even at age 66, Evans is out on the job every day and shows no signs of slowing down.

"I enjoy getting out and working every day so I'll keep doing it as long as I'm able," he declared. "Seeing what we've accomplished at the end of the day — making it all come together — there's a lot of satisfaction in that." ■

Debra Lynn Coals Inc. Owner Tommy Evans (left) can count on Brandeis Machinery & Supply for assistance with his equipment needs. Here, he takes a break from his daily duties to talk with Brandeis Product Support Sales Representative Larry Jones.

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NEW CONGRESS

What does the Democratic takeover mean for the construction industry?

Christian A. Klein

This Guest Opinion, which first appeared in the newsletter, ***Washington Insights,*** *was prepared by Christian Klein, Vice President of Government Affairs for the Associated Equipment Distributors. Mr. Klein can be contacted at caklein@potomac-law.com.*

With Democrats in control of both the House and Senate for the next two years, there are bound to be some changes coming out of Washington that will impact the construction and equipment industries. Here is some of what we think might happen.

Our association (Associated Equipment Distributors or AED) has long been recognized as a leading advocate for increased highway, airport and water infrastructure investment. Generally, Democrats have been more willing than Republicans across-the-board to support infrastructure programs and the user-fee increases necessary to pay for them. Democratic control of Congress may present an opportunity for an honest debate on crafting a new user-fee structure to pay for the highway system and to develop a consistent funding mechanism for water infrastructure, among other things.

Additionally, Democrats have generally supported capital investment incentives such as the depreciation bonus. If there is a drop-off in business investment in the next two years, we may find Democratic support for accelerated depreciation.

However, one of AED's biggest issues, the death tax, doesn't face a bright future under the new regime. Democrats have by-and-large opposed efforts to permanently repeal the death tax. While it is possible that Democrats will accept scaled-back death-tax relief to take the issue off the table for the 2008 elections, this is highly speculative. Other industry-specific tax priorities are not generally as partisan and will likely depend on the desire of lawmakers to delve into broader tax and budget issues.

Associated Equipment Distributors says Democratic control of Capitol Hill might mean some good and some bad for the construction industry.

Watching the "Blue Dogs"

There is much speculation about the role the "Blue Dog" Democrats will play in the new Congress. Blue Dogs generally support pro-growth tax and regulatory policy, limited government, fiscal responsibility and infrastructure investment. During the last two years, AED has worked aggressively to build relationships with members of the Blue Dog coalition.

We're hopeful that given the relatively slim Democratic margin of control on Capitol Hill, Blue Dogs will be able to temper the Democratic agenda and remind their colleagues in leadership that policies that hurt America's family businesses ultimately wind up hurting the people those companies employ. ■

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MULTIPLE LANGUAGES

Can becoming a bilingual employer help you boost productivity without sacrificing safety?

Much of the information for this article comes from a seminar presented at CONEXPO 2005 by J.R. Gonzales, a former President of the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Gonzales is also President of JRG Communications in Austin, Texas.

It's no secret that the United States is facing a labor shortage in the construction industry. Estimates show that in the next five years, the country as a whole will be short 8 million to 10 million workers, with construction being one of the hardest-hit industries. So where do employers turn to find the necessary manpower to keep up?

For many, it means hiring and training non-native workers, with the largest percentage coming from Spanish-speaking countries such as Mexico. Hispanic workers already make up as much as 25 percent of the country's construction work force with that number expected to rise to 47 percent by 2010.

Hispanic workers make up as much as 25 percent of the United States work force with that number expected to rise to 47 percent by 2010.

With the rise in Hispanic workers comes an increase in language barriers that must be overcome in order to maintain productive and safe jobsites. OSHA standards require employers to train employees in all safety aspects on the job, no matter what language they speak. Employers also must make sure employees comprehend the training.

The standards were put in place to protect all workers, but the language barrier faced by Hispanic workers often hinders understanding of safe practices on the jobsite. That lack of understanding is seen as one of the major reasons Hispanic injuries and deaths on construction sites have risen as the population of Spanish-speaking workers grows.

Statistics show that Hispanic workers account for nearly 20 percent of all work-related deaths in the U.S., the largest number of fatalities among ethnic groups. A language barrier is often the cause, as workers don't understand the task assigned to them or the risks associated with it. They are unlikely to ask questions or point out unsafe practices for fear of losing jobs. Many workers also come from countries where safety is not a priority and don't realize the emphasis the U.S. places on protecting workers.

Overcoming the language barrier

There are several ways to overcome the language barrier that will benefit both the employer who speaks little or no Spanish and Hispanic workers who speak little or no English. It's hard to say which method is best. Each company must decide what will work best as it prepares for a diverse work force.

"A key component in any business is good communication," said J.R. Gonzales, a former President of the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and President of JRG Communications, Inc. in Austin, Texas, during a session at CONEXPO in 2005. "Lack of communication leads to poor productivity and unsafe practices. It's important that companies find a way to bridge the language barrier. The growing number of Hispanics in the work force is a trend that will continue upward.

"The work force in the United States is growing more diverse, with Spanish as the primary language spoken among non-native workers," he continued. "Employers should look at it as a challenge and step up to meet it head-on."

Gonzales added that there are a number of ways to meet the challenge that require little financial outlay. Such an investment is especially economical because of the increased productivity that will result from workers who can communicate effectively with each other.

Seminars and conferences specifically tailored to the construction industry are available that will teach common words and phrases used on a construction site. These might be an initial step to consider for both English and Hispanic employees as they begin to work together. Such training can be a first step in learning a new language in order to eventually run a bilingual company.

Learning new language is beneficial

Many companies have arranged for Hispanic workers to take English classes taught by bilingual instructors. Classes are often offered at local community colleges and universities, as well as through community outreach programs. The courses are usually offered at night, leaving the worker free to be on the job during the day.

In conjunction, some companies are having their English-speaking staff take Spanish classes at the same time. This has proven especially useful for supervisors and foremen who oversee Hispanic workers. It aids in communicating safety issues and ensures the worker understands his or her assigned tasks.

Some classes are designed to bring English and Hispanic workers together to learn both languages at the same time. Often, one or more interpreters are in the room, along with the instructor to help enhance students' understanding. Some courses also offer students headsets that translate the instructor's words into English or Spanish. The advantage of having a combined class is that workers don't feel isolated and everybody gets the same information.

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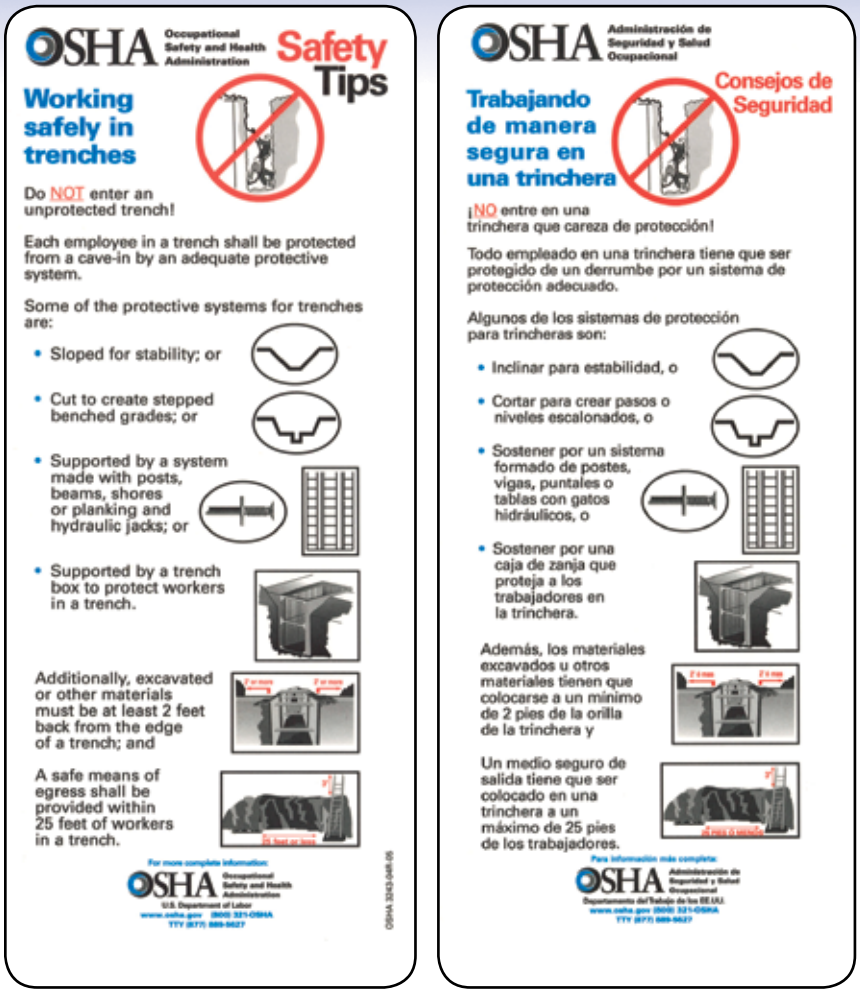

There are a number of useful resources available from a variety of sources, including OSHA's Web site (www.OSHA.gov), where you can download and print materials, such as this trench safety card, which offers information in English on one side and Spanish on the other.

Resources help employers educate workers

. . . continued

Useful materials

Other resources, including video presentations and publications in Spanish, augment language classes. Many can be obtained at little or no cost through organizations such as OSHA, the Associated General Contractors (AGC), the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) and NUCA (National Utility Contractors Association). Equipment manufacturers often provide materials in a variety of languages explaining how to use their equipment.

NUCA has bilingual safety instructors and consultants available to teach such practices as excavation safety and provide competent-person training and confined-entry-space training. OSHA has a Spanish-language Web page containing items such as posters, safety and health bulletins and other materials published in Spanish.

OSHA's Training Institute operates a number of education centers throughout the United States that offer Spanish-language safety-training courses. It also works with groups, such as the Hispanic American Construction Industries Association, to provide safety and health training.

Bilingual workplaces are becoming increasingly more common throughout the United States. There are numerous ways to ensure productivity and safety on all jobsites, despite a language barrier.

There are numerous Internet sites that supply online information in English and Spanish, and Web-based courses can be taken in a multitude of languages. Publications and safety materials, such as English-to-Spanish and Spanish-to-English dictionaries, are available online as well.

On-site practices can boost productivity

There are ways to help assimilate Hispanic employees into the work force that will minimize communication barriers on the jobsite. Once workers have been thoroughly trained and have a basic understanding of work and safety practices, it's best to assign tasks that appropriately fit their skills.

A best-case scenario is one where you have bilingual workers, who you can place in a group with English-only and Spanish-only workers. The bilingual employee can work as an interpreter, ensuring good communication between workers who only speak one language. As these employees work side-by-side, their skills at communicating with each other should improve. As mentioned before, helping workers become bilingual can pay big dividends in the long run.

If you don't have bilingual workers, group employees by their native language. In this way, each can communicate in his own language, lessening the chance of communication breakdowns between workers who don't understand each other. Supervisors should be bilingual in order to communicate effectively with each group of workers.

Always part of our culture

As more and more immigrant workers become part of the construction landscape, meeting the challenge of a diverse work force now will help ensure a safe and productive jobsite in the future.

"The number of employers and jobsites with non-English-speaking workers is constantly growing," Gonzales said. "Hispanics have always been part of the work force and will continue to be." ■

TOP GRADES

Visibility, blade geometry and ease of operation help set Komatsu motor graders apart

When it comes to operating heavy construction equipment, proficiency does not happen overnight. According to many industry experts, that fact applies to motor graders more than any other machine.

While wheel loaders and dozers use essentially one control stick to manage all functions of the machine, motor graders have more than a dozen different controls to monitor while moving at different speeds in forward and reverse.

"That's why, for many contractors and many government entities, getting a good blade man is so important," said Jenkins Davis, Director of Sales & Marketing Development for Komatsu America. "Many times, they will cater to grader operators because they're so valuable. It's very hard to replace somebody who's a good blade man, due to the operational skills it takes to do the job."

Direct drive and torque converter

With skilled operators in such demand, it makes sense to reduce the complexity of motor grader operation. Davis said the unique dual transmission of Komatsu motor graders helps do just that. At the flip of a switch, operators can go from Mode One, which is the direct-drive transmission, to Mode Two, which utilizes Komatsu's unique torque-converter transmission. The top four gears in Mode Two offer automatic shifting, making the machine easier to manage.

"It just simplifies the whole operating process," Davis described. "The best comparison I could make would be the difference of going from a stick shift to an automatic transmission in a car. Using a clutch and shifting in a car is somewhat similar to Mode One, which is the direct-drive concept. Mode Two, which is a torque converter, is similar to a regular power-shift car. It's easier to operate and that's especially beneficial for younger and less-experienced operators."

The current dual-transmission line of Komatsu motor graders has been out for several years now and, according to Davis, is tested and proven. "We were very successful with our previous line of motor graders," Davis noted, "but as we looked at the evolution of the product, we believed some major design changes would make the product even better. That's really what led to the development of our current line of graders."

Other Komatsu advantages

In addition to easier operation, Davis said Komatsu graders feature an advanced hydraulic system, excellent visibility and superior blade geometry, all of which combine to provide improved power and performance at a jobsite.

The hydraulics help maximize speed and responsiveness. A closed-center system of valves allows fluid to flow to each individual implement, providing outstanding operator "feel" and unmatched implement control.

Jenkins Davis, Director of Sales & Marketing Development, Komatsu America Corp.

Continued . . .

The GD555-3, with a 140- to160-variable-horsepower engine, is Komatsu's smallest motor grader.

Grader design features help boost productivity

. . continued

"Operators want an instantaneous response from the blade when they hit that lever," Davis explained. "We think the hydraulics on our machine are superior to anything else on the market."

The operator's ability to clearly see the work underway is essential in grade work, too, and the visibility of Komatsu graders sets them apart from competitors. The large front glass helps provide an unobstructed view of the moldboard and front tires. In addition, angled front and rear glass prevents dust buildup.

"The visibility to the blade is crucial," concurred Bob Lessner, Product Manager, Motor Graders for Komatsu America. "That's the working end of the machine and our visibility is probably equal to or better than any other manufacturer in the market today."

Blade geometry is also an important design advantage of Komatsu motor graders. The unique blade-suspension system improves reach and allows a wide working range, including true 90-degree bank sloping.

Another design feature is parts commonality. "Many parts used in our excavators, wheel loaders and dozers are incorporated into Komatsu motor graders, so parts are readily available and technicians are knowledgeable about the product," Davis pointed out. "That's a tremendous benefit if a part needs to be replaced."

Here's another benefit of Komatsu motor graders: the GD655-3 and the GD675-3 machines are now equipped with a Tier 3 engine, which offers greater horsepower and improved fuel efficiency.

"We increased engine horsepower slightly by 10 horsepower," Lessner said of the GD655. "It now has 180 to 200 horsepower with the Tier 3 engine. The other changes we made are in the cab. We have an electronic hand throttle now, whereas before it was a lever, so it's more user-friendly."

Operating options

Governmental work, including road maintenance and repair jobs, ditching and slope work, makes up 50 percent of motor grader sales in some areas of the country. "We have a motor grader to fit any job," confirmed Davis. "Komatsu is very committed to the North American market and the motor graders are a big part of our product line, along with dozers, excavators and wheel loaders. We want to do everything we can to promote this product line because we think we've got something very special here." ■

Brief specs on Komatsu Motor Graders

Model	Operating weight	Output	Overall Length
GD555-3 (Tier 2)	30,950 lbs.	140-160 hp	30'10"
GD655-3 (Tier 3)	33,069 lbs.	180-200 hp	32'4"
GD675-3 (Tier 3)	34,855 lbs.	180-200 hp	32'4"

Bob Lessner, Product Manager, Motor Graders, Komatsu America Corp. (left) stands in front of a Komatsu GD555-3 motor grader with Komatsu Motor Grader Consultant Jim Terrell.

The GD655 is slightly larger than the GD555 and is the biggest seller in Komatsu's grader line. The GD655 and the GD675 are now available with a Tier 3 engine.

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- Electronics, engine and hydraulics are optimized for maximum efficiency and minimum fuel consumption (10% reduction compared to –7 models).
- Multi-function LCD monitor provides critical operating information at a glance (and it can do this in 10 languages).

From enhanced safety features to extended maintenance intervals, the PC200LC-8, PC220LC-8 and PC270LC-8 show what happens when the best engineers put the latest technology to work. The results are always...

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KA03

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KA10

WORKING A NEW ANGLE

How feedback from contractors helped improve these popular compact excavators

In the 21st century, compact excavators are what skid steer loaders were in the late 20th century: highly maneuverable and versatile tools for the construction and landscape trades.

As is typically the case when a new piece of machinery is introduced into the market, contractors provide manufacturers with feedback that makes the machines more user friendly and productive. Komatsu relies heavily on customer feedback to engineer machines that meet the ever-expanding requirements of its customers. The Komatsu compact excavator line is no exception.

The market for compact excavators has grown more than 250 percent since 2002, and has exceeded the market for backhoe loaders. Part of the increase is due to economics, but a big part of the growth for these powerful products is the recognition by contractors that compact excavators are for real; they're productive, flexible and can do jobs and go places that larger machines can't.

A vast assortment of features

Komatsu compact excavators continue to advance by introducing features that contractors appreciate. To meet the wide range of customer requirements, Komatsu offers 10 models ranging from the 1,960-pound PC09 to the nearly 18,000-pound PC78MR. Features include:

- Pilot proportional joystick controls and load-sensing hydraulics that make operation smooth and effortless;
- Control-pattern changer that allows either backhoe or excavator operators to use the operating pattern they're most comfortable with;
- Boom offset that permits machines to work in very tight spaces;
- Three track options that allow customers to choose what's right for their business — standard rubber tracks, optional steel tracks for work in abrasive conditions, or optional Komatsu Road-Liner tracks that are ideal for work on pavement;
- A four-way, power-angle backfill blade option on PC35MR-2 and PC50MR-2 models that improves flexibility and backfilling productivity;
- A standard thumb-mounting bracket on the dipper arm (available in early 2007) that allows installation of a hydraulic thumb attachment without the need to weld on the arm;
- A significantly expanded range of attachments through a cooperation with Werk-Brau, a major manufacturer of excavator and backhoe attachments, will also be available in 2007.

With everything they have to offer, there's another reason to check out the lineup of Komatsu compact excavators. Now is the time to take advantage of Komatsu's zero-percent retail finance plans. ■

In 2006, Komatsu introduced the four-way, power-angle blade option on its PC35MR-2 and PC50MR-2 compact excavators to improve flexibility and backfilling productivity. This year will see the introduction of a standard thumb-mounting bracket on the dipper arm, as well as an expanded range of attachments.

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KA05

REALISTIC BUT OPTIMISTIC

Komatsu America President believes 2007 could start another upturn in construction

QUESTION: Following three years of extraordinary growth in the construction economy, there are questions about 2007. What is Komatsu expecting this year?

ANSWER: I would say we're realistic but optimistic about what 2007 is going to bring. Certainly, demand for equipment leveled off in 2006, largely because of about a 25 percent decline in housing starts compared to 2005. Our hope and belief is that the bottom of the housing market has been reached and that a rebound could well begin this year.

Of course, much depends on what happens with interest rates. Our hope is that interest rates are through climbing and may actually start inching back down in 2007. If that happens, the current excess housing inventory should get used up, which means more houses will need to be built.

QUESTION: Beyond housing, what's the construction economy like?

ANSWER: Remarkably strong. Non-residential building, highway construction and mining all had excellent years in 2006 and we expect more of the same for 2007. As always, the level of activity will vary region by region, but overall we are optimistic about the construction economy and Komatsu's place in it.

QUESTION: What is Komatsu's place as an equipment manufacturer?

ANSWER: We are the world's second-largest manufacturer and supplier of utility, construction and mining equipment. In North America, my goal as president is to help Komatsu America achieve steady and sustainable growth each and every year, and so far, we've accomplished that.

When you look at where we started from — a sales and marketing company that simply

Continued . . .

Ted Ohashi, President and COO, Komatsu America Corp.

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

Since graduating from the University of Tokyo in 1977, Ted Ohashi has worked for Komatsu in increasingly important positions. He's now beginning his fourth year as President and COO of Komatsu America Corp. and he's not looking to leave anytime soon.

"North America is the world's largest market for construction and mining equipment and as such, is very important to Komatsu," said Ohashi. "Being President of Komatsu America is certainly a challenge, but it's one I enjoy and I want to stay in the position as long as Komatsu wants me to be here."

With a strong background in engineering, including a master's degree from Stanford University, Ted understands the nuts and bolts of the equipment industry. He also understands what equipment users want and need. "Our customers want reliable equipment and they want outstanding support. Komatsu and our distributors are committed to providing both."

Ted's wife remains in Tokyo with their three sons, two of whom are in college, while the third is finishing high school. "It's an accepted part of life in Japan to go where your job takes you, so the long-distance marriage is not a major issue," said Ohashi. "Besides, I travel so much in my job that we would spend a lot of time apart even if she lived here in Chicago. As it is, she visits relatively frequently and I can plan my schedule to be home when she's here."

In his free time, Ted enjoys attending the Chicago Opera and playing golf. "On Christmas Day 2005, I hurt my back in a rather serious bicycle accident, so I wasn't able to play as much golf last year. But I hope to make up for it in 2007."

Komatsu focusing on solutions for customers

. . continued

imported dozers to sell in the U.S. — our growth in and commitment to North America is remarkable. We now offer a full range of products and services, and have several manufacturing plants here. Significantly, we also recently added the important R&D function for mining trucks and many dozers, which, in essence, makes the U.S. the center of the Komatsu universe for those products. So, although we are a foreign company, we also consider ourselves to be increasingly American, and I think our North American customers see that and appreciate it.

Komatsu has four manufacturing plants in North America, including this one in Candiac, in the Canadian province of Quebec. "Although we are a foreign company, the fact that we have a large factory presence, and have even moved some product R&D functions to the U.S. and Canada, demonstrates that we are becoming increasingly American, and I think North American customers appreciate that," said Ohashi.

Komatsu is taking steps to improve product support by increasing service personnel to aid distributor technicians as necessary. Komatsu is also working to certify all distributor technicians.

A slowdown in housing starts impacted construction in 2006. Komatsu America President Ted Ohashi is cautiously optimistic that the bottom of the housing market has been hit and that 2007 could start a new upturn.

QUESTION: Speaking of customers, what are American equipment users looking for from Komatsu?

ANSWER: Equipment users are very smart. They know that the cheapest price doesn't necessarily mean the best value. At Komatsu, we've always emphasized the life cycle of a machine. What's important is the production you get compared to operating costs throughout the life of the machine, which takes into account repairs, downtime and resale value. Komatsu customers understand that concept and understand that Komatsu provides it as well as, if not better than, any other manufacturer.

QUESTION: What is Komatsu doing to improve customers' experience with Komatsu products?

ANSWER: Our products have always been well-received and well-accepted by customers. Much of what we're emphasizing now is support related.

For example, we've opened six regional parts depots to complement our national parts distribution center to help us get parts to customers more quickly. We're taking steps to help our dealers improve their service technicians by training and certifying them based on their level of expertise. We've also increased the number of Komatsu service personnel to help our dealers out as needed. And we've put our GPS-based KOMTRAX monitoring system on all Tier 3 machines, which we constantly track right here at Komatsu America headquarters to help us support our dealers and our customers much more proactively.

QUESTION: When an equipment user hears the name Komatsu, what do you want him to think?

ANSWER: Solution provider. More than just a manufacturer of equipment, we want our customers to think of us as a partner who can help them succeed in their business. Our Working Gear Group, with its focus on developing equipment and attachments for specific industries, such as material handling or demolition, is a good example of our commitment to being a solution provider. In conjunction with our excellent nationwide distributor network, we believe we can help customers solve their problems, and in turn help them be more productive and more profitable. ■

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CELEBRATING 20 YEARS

Chattanooga Manufacturing Operation marks anniversary

Dignitaries and employees gathered to celebrate the 20th anniversary of Komatsu's Chattanooga Manufacturing Operation (CMO) in early November. The achievement was honored with the planting of a ceremonial cherry tree similar to the one planted on the site when it opened.

Today, the operation has a payroll of more than 300 employees who work to manufacture hydraulic excavators and articulated dump trucks for the North American market. In 2007, the 488,000-square-foot plant will roll out its 34,000th machine.

"This anniversary underscores Komatsu's commitment to the North American market," said Dave Grzelak, Chairman and CEO of Komatsu America Corp. "Throughout the past 20 years, we have enjoyed a reputation built on an experienced work force; a strong allegiance to our supplier base and to the Chattanooga community; and a commitment to the area's economic growth. As we continue to expand Komatsu's presence throughout the United States, we remain loyal to these initial principles upon which the company was founded."

In addition to Grzelak, several Komatsu executives and local officials made remarks, including Masahiro Sakane, President and CEO of Komatsu Ltd.; Dennis Riddell, General Manager of the Chattanooga Manufacturing Operation; Chattanooga Mayor Ron Littlefield and Hamilton County Mayor Claude Ramsey.

"I believe Komatsu can be very proud of its place in the local community," said Riddell, who has been at the CMO for more than 19 years. "The community has really embraced us and given the CMO a lot of help over the years. In turn, we've provided well-paying jobs with good benefits. It's been a great partnership between the CMO and the local community."

Throughout its two decades of history, the Komatsu CMO has seen several changes. The plant's first production models included wheel loaders, dump trucks and small crawler tractors. The plant also produced other machinery, including motor graders.

Continued . . .

Dennis Riddell, General Manager

The Chattanooga Manufacturing Operation's 20th anniversary celebration featured speakers Dave Grzelak, Chairman and CEO of Komatsu America Corp. (above left), and Masahiro Sakane, President and CEO of Komatsu Ltd.

Officials at the Chattanooga operation's 20th anniversary celebration planted a ceremonial cherry tree, similar to the one planted on the 53-acre site when it opened.

Komatsu's Chattanooga Manufacturing Operation produces hydraulic excavators and articulated trucks.

Partnership with community benefits both

. . continued

'A natural fit'

Today, the chief focus of the CMO is production of hydraulic excavators — which began in 1990 — and articulated trucks, which started in January 2005. The plant builds five excavators models (PC200, PC220, PC270, PC300 and PC400) and three trucks: HM300, HM350 and HM400.

"It's really a natural fit to manufacture both of those machines here," said Riddell. "There's synergy between the articulated truck and the excavator because, typically, those machines are paired together as a work team. It also made sense to bring production of the articulated trucks here because North America is the largest market for those type of trucks globally."

Currently, the CMO is manufacturing an excavator in a little more than two days, but Riddell noted that the goal is to drop that to less than two days. For custom-order excavators, the plant employs a "4W1D" approach. "That stands for four weeks and one day," Riddell explained. "Our goal is to have a custom machine built to the customer's specifications in that amount of time after we receive the order.

"Our lead time on articulated trucks is about two months," he continued, "but we expect to cut that down to one month soon. Our ultimate goal is to reduce it to a week."

General Manager Dennis Riddell (far right) often leads visitors on a guided tour of the plant.

Using an overhead crane, a worker installs the counterweight on a PC300LC-7 at the Chattanooga plant.

More than 300 employees work at the Chattanooga Manufacturing Operation. Many of those workers have been at the plant more than 15 years.

Workers install a hose on an articulated truck at the Chattanooga Manufacturing Operation, which began producing HM300, HM350 and HM400s in January 2005.

Quality conscious

Riddell oversees a skilled and experienced staff whose focus is on ensuring that every product is of the highest quality. The plant runs one shift per day for assembly, and three shifts in fabrication, which includes welding and machining of components.

"Our philosophy is to build quality into the product," Riddell noted. "Each person is responsible for his or her work. Each machine goes through several stations as it's being built. The workers at each station assume the workers at the next one are their customers. By doing that, each step has a quality focus. The end result is our distributors and end users get a product that's been built with the highest standards in mind."

Quality is further ensured once a machine has been assembled. Experts thoroughly test and inspect machines before they're stored on the 53-acre site prior to delivery to distributors and customers.

"We have several quality-control checks throughout the manufacturing process, but after the machine is built, we go over it with a fine-tooth comb," Riddell said. "For instance, two people check over the excavators, conducting a 90-minute inspection. One examines all the operational functions, such as boom speed, travel speed, and up-and-down arm movement. The other checks what I call 'the frills' — items such as the windshield wiper, radio and cigarette lighter. If they don't believe a machine is right, it doesn't go out."

That will always be the philosophy, according to Riddell. "We're very proud of the machinery we produce here, and 20 years is a great testament to the dedication of both Komatsu as a company and the people who work here. Chattanooga and Komatsu have become great partners and it's a relationship that will carry forward for a long time." ■

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QUARRY DAYS

Large machines take the spotlight at Komatsu proving grounds in Cartersville, Ga.

More than 200 equipment users from across the U.S. and Canada got an up close and personal look at numerous Komatsu machines designed for quarry, large construction and small mining applications at Komatsu Quarry Days late last year. The Quarry Days show was the first event to be held at Komatsu's new proving-ground site located at the Komatsu Training Center in Cartersville, Ga.

This 100-ton HD785 haul truck breaks the ribbon at the at the grand opening of the new Komatsu demonstration site, which hosted its inaugural event, Quarry Days, late last year.

Similar to the former Komatsu Field Days, the manufacturer will now stage Quarry Days and similar shows in the future in order to provide equipment users with the opportunity to talk to product managers and field test the equipment. The difference from Field Days is that, rather than have machines of all sizes at the same show, Komatsu will now host smaller events that focus on a particular size class of equipment. Generally speaking, quarry machines range from the large end of the construction class of equipment to small mining-class machines.

Machines at Quarry Days consisted of dozers, (D85EX-15, D155AX-6, D275AX-5 and the new Tier 2-compliant D475A-5), excavators (PC400LC-7, PC600LC-8, PC800LC-8 and the new PC2000-8), wheel loaders (WA430-6, WA500-6 and WA600-6), rigid-frame trucks

The Komatsu demo site is about a 12-acre area immediately behind the Komatsu Training Center in Cartersville, Ga. It easily accommodated 15 large machines for Quarry Days.

(L-R) Bob Satterfield of Corydon Stone and Asphalt, Ed Gun of Sellersburg Stone, Doug Flynn of Brandeis and Mark Winsor of Sellersburg Stone attended the show.

The new D275A-3 dozer with a Tier 3 engine was one of four Komatsu dozers at the Quarry Days event.

(HD605-7 and HD785-7), the HM400-2 articulated dump truck and the GD655-3 motor grader.

Complete lineup

Among the new machines at Quarry Days were the PC800LC-8 and PC2000-8, which replace the PC750 and the PC1800 in the Komatsu excavator lineup. Also new is the WA430-6 wheel loader, which replaces the WA400. Dozers at the show ranged from 264 horsepower to 890 horsepower.

"We believe our quarry-size group of machines is the most complete lineup in the industry and includes a number of units we consider to be unique and unrivaled products," said Komatsu Vice President of Product Marketing Erik Wilde. "We were pleased with the opportunity Quarry Days gave us to show these outstanding products to current and potential customers in a real-world environment." ■

Brandeis' Damon Fortune (left) and David Coultas (right) check out quarry machines with Don (Dom) Gengelbach, Mulser Crushed Stone.

The 956-horsepower PC2000-8 (above) is a new machine that replaces the PC1800 in the Komatsu excavator lineup. Similarly, the new PC800LC-8 (below), has more horsepower and greater stability than the PC750 it replaces.

The new WA600-6 wheel loader, which improves productivity while dramatically lowering fuel consumption, is a significant upgrade from the previous model and is considered to be one of Komatsu's unique and unrivaled products.

New Alert for "Gray Market" Machines

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has issued a new "gray market" enforcement alert, according to Associated Equipment Distributors. Gray market machines are imported from other countries and may not meet U.S. emissions or safety standards.

Under the Clean Air Act, the manufacture or importation of any nonroad engine is prohibited, unless the EPA certifies it and the engine displays the required EPA emissions label.

In the late 1990s, a gray market enforcement program was established by EPA and the Customs Service to combat a flood of illegal equipment imports. The latest alert is the first such action since that time. It is in response to a recent increase in imports of smaller equipment from Asia with illegal engines.

Imported equipment with engines that fail to meet EPA requirements is subject to seizure and exportation. The importers of such illegal equipment or engines can be fined as much as $32,500 per engine. ■

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CSPs include Komatsu Oil & Wear Analysis (KOWA), which uses independent labs to test oil for wear metals and contaminants; PM-PRO, which is a planned maintenance program in which a distributor technician comes to your jobsite to perform all routine maintenance procedures including oil sampling; and Preventive Maintenance Inspections (PMI), which consist of a walk-around inspection and diagnostic tests to measure engine speed and hydraulic pressure to ensure your machine is working up to its capabilities.

Also offered is a repair and maintenance (R&M) program that uses machine histories and a proactive "before failure" approach to changing out parts and components. With an R&M agreement, you can schedule and budget all repair and maintenance items in advance.

Komatsu's Track Management System (TMS) helps you get the most out of your undercarriage. This CSP manages undercarriage wear to help you maximize usage and avoid costly downtime.

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All Komatsu CSPs are designed to help you lower your owning and operating costs, improve equipment uptime and provide the longest productive life for your Komatsu machines. They also improve the resale value of your equipment by providing proof that the machine has been well maintained.

Feel free to talk to our service manager or a product support representative to learn more about Komatsu Customer Support Programs and how they can help you benefit your operation. ■

Oil sampling through the Komatsu Oil & Wear Analysis (KOWA) Customer Support Program is one of the best ways to reduce unexpected and costly equipment downtime and repairs.

QUALITY USED EQUIPMENT

How Komatsu Distributor Certified used machines have helped this utility contractor grow

Since starting an underground utility company in Fort Myers, Fla., about ten years ago, Jim Murphy has seen the firm grow from a handful of people to about 60 today. Certainly, some of that growth is attributable to a Gulf Coast economy that boomed during that period, but equally important is the quality of work that J.P. Murphy, Inc. is known for doing.

"Our philosophy is to get the work done fast and give the customer top quality for the dollar," said Murphy. "Whether it's commercial work, residential work or municipal work, we believe in providing value for the developer or municipality that hires us."

Jim Murphy, Owner and Founder of J.P. Murphy, Inc., owns more than a dozen Komatsu Distributor Certified used machines, including numerous WA320 wheel loaders. "With Komatsu Distributor Certified Used equipment, we get high-quality used equipment that's that been inspected and certified, and we know our Komatsu distributor is going to back it up."

Among J.P. Murphy's Distributor Certified Used machines is this PC600LC-6, which is the company's mainline utility machine.

A perfect fit

As his company has grown, so has his equipment fleet, most of which consists of Komatsu Distributor Certified used machines.

"We probably have at least 15 Komatsu Distributor Certified used machines," reported Murphy, whose fleet includes half a dozen Komatsu WA320 wheel loaders, numerous Komatsu excavators ranging up to a PC600, and a couple of small dozers. "I've always preferred to buy slightly used equipment to let somebody else pay for the initial depreciation, so the Komatsu Distributor Certified used program was a perfect fit for us. We get high-quality used equipment that's been inspected and certified, and because of that, we know our Komatsu distributor is going to back it up.

"The other thing that's important to me is the Distributor Certified pieces we buy tend to be very good, low-hour machines, so they qualify for extended warranties and special rates from Komatsu Financial," he added. "The low interest rates make an affordable machine even more affordable, and as a result, I've gotten some very good deals."

Murphy says most of the Komatsu Distributor Certified machines he owns were less than a year old and had fewer than 3,000 hours when he bought them. "I believe in buying good machines, maintaining them well, and holding on to them for the long term. With these Komatsu Distributor Certified pieces, I expect to get five to eight years out of them, at least." ■

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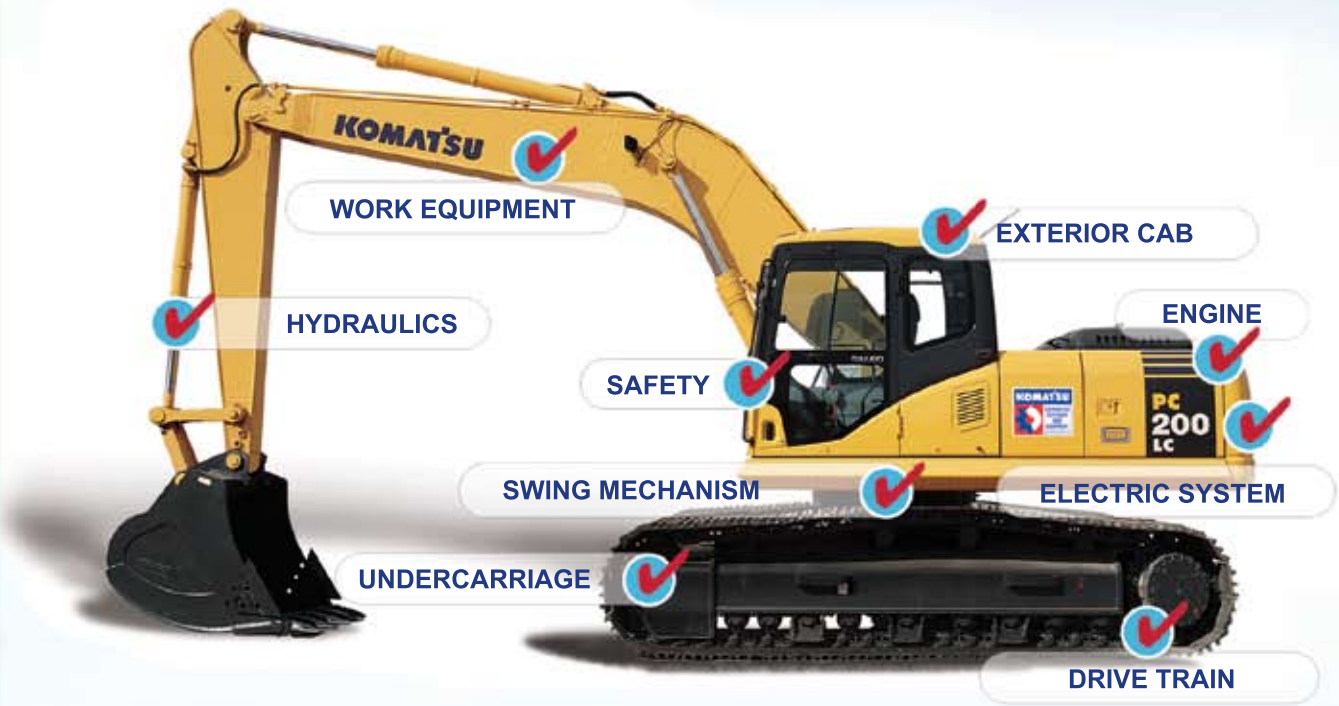

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Whether you're looking for a high-quality machine that will become part of your fleet, or for a machine that will get you through the busy season, Komatsu Distributor Certified Used Equipment is your best alternative to buying new.

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Purchasing Komatsu Distributor Certified Used Equipment makes sound business sense. You'll receive good value for your money and a reliable and productive machine that will get the job done for years to come — we guarantee it!

To learn more about Komatsu ReMarketing's Distributor Certified Used Equipment, contact your local Komatsu Distributor or go to our Web site at www.equipmentcentral.com and click on "used equipment."

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1995 Blaw Knox PF150, BT67, 113,038 hrs. $26,000
1997 Blaw Knox PF5510, BT6N05, 2,205 hrs. $32,000

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1995 Dynapac CA151PD, BT6218, 1,640 hrs. $44,000
1986 Cat CB514, U22782..... $12,000
1997 Dynapac CC122, U22901, 4,747 hrs. $8,000
1988 IR DA50, BT6015, 6,997 hrs. $8,500
1991 IR DD110, BT6207, 4,130 hrs. $20,000
1998 IR DD110, BT6316, 6,200 hrs. $26,667
1996 IR DD90, BP6805, 4,497 hrs. $25,500
1979 Case W110, U22681 ..... $1,467

CRAWLER DOZERS
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2003 John Deere 550H, BT6000, 3,355 hrs. ..... P.O.R.
1987 John Deere 750B, BT6816, 5,420 hrs. ..... P.O.R.
1989 Komatsu D21E, BT6001, 6,367 hrs. ..... P.O.R.
2002 Komatsu D32E-1, Consigned, 685 hrs. ..... P.O.R.
2002 Komatsu D39PX-21, BT5422, 4,512 hrs. ..... P.O.R.
1996 Cat D5H LGP, BT6008, 5,196 hrs..... P.O.R.
1987 Komatsu D65E-8, BT6604 ..... P.O.R.
1993 Komatsu D65EX-12, BT6006, 7,448 hrs..... P.O.R.

EXCAVATORS
2004 John Deere 200C LC, BT6609, 2,103 hrs. $126,000
2001 Cat 302.5, BT6700, 2,619 hrs. $19,000
2004 Cat 304CR, U22624, 1,602 hrs. $41,333
1994 Cat 320 L, BT6608, 9,901 hrs. $56,000
2002 Cat 320CL, BT6507, 3,504 hrs. $120,000
2004 Cat 325CL, BP6804, 3,628 hrs. $176,000
1992 Cat 325L, BT6936, 11,428 hrs. $50,000
2001 Hitachi EX330LC-5, U22881, 7,176 hrs. $104,000
1989 Sumitomo LS2800F2, U22998, 8,507 hrs. $13,333
2001 Komatsu PC150 LC-6K, BT6809, 5,166 hrs. $74,000
1997 Komatsu PC150LC-6, U014970-1, 4,366 hrs. $46,667
1998 Komatsu PC220LC-6, U22900, 8,134 hrs. $52,000
1998 Komatsu PC300LC-6, consignment, 7,000 hrs. . $110,000
2003 Komatsu PC300LC-7, U19092-1, 3,809 hrs. $180,000
2000 Kobelco SK135SRLC, BT6208, 6,128 hrs. $65,000

FORESTRY
1997 Prentice 210E, U22056 ..... $33,333
1998 Prentice 310E, U22781, 10,649 hrs. $25,333
1998 Prentice 410E, U22815, 3,169 hrs. $65,333
1998 Prentice 410E, U22895, 8,218 hrs. $34,667
2000 Prentice 410EX, U22528, 9,819 hrs. $60,000
2002 Timbco 425, U22702, 4,200 hrs. $206,667
1996 Timbco 425B, U22696..... $58,667
2002 Prentice 490, U22629, 5,886 hrs. $66,667
1995 Cat 525, U22703 ..... $26,667
1997 Tiger Cat 630, U21843, 4,000 hrs. $54,667
1998 Barko 885, U22634, 5,316 hrs. $34,667
1995 Cat 525, #U22703 ..... $26,667
1997 Tiger Cat 630, #U21843, 4,000 hrs. $72,000

FORKLIFT
2000 New Holland LM 435A, BT6617, 1,400 hrs. $42,000

LOADER BACKHOE
1988 JCB 1400B, U22965, 2,220 hrs. $13,333
2000 Komatsu WB140, U17885-1, 3,236 hrs. $24,000
2002 Komatsu WB140-24X, BT6907, 2,948 hrs. ..... P.O.R.

SKID STEERS
2001 Bobcat 753, U22700, 197 hrs. $18,400
2002 Komatsu SK815, U18681-1, 1,423 hrs. $12,667
1999 Bobcat 753F, BT6613, 3,442 hrs. ..... P.O.R.

TRACK LOADER
1984 Case 855, U22986, 8,883 hrs. $13,333

TRAILER
2004 Belshe T10, BT6N12 ..... $21,000

OFF-ROAD TRUCKS
1996 Haulpak 330M, BP1712, 17,500 hrs. $216,000

WHEEL LOADERS
2004 Cat 924G, BT6230, 2,712 hrs. $107,000
1990 Cat 980C, BT6916, 28,172 hrs. $58,000
1999 Volvo L220D, BT6918, 16,337 hrs. ..... P.O.R.
2003 Terex SKL873, U22897, 6,700 hrs. $53,333
1997 Komatsu WA180-1, UC5075-1, 6,767 hrs. $16,000
2001 Komatsu WA250PT-3MC, U18250-1, 5122 ..... $69,000
2006 Komatsu WA320-5, U21452-1, 720 hrs. $157,600

2002 Komatsu D39PX-21, #BT5422, 4,512 hrs..... P.O.R.

1988 IR DA50, #BT6015, 6,997 hrs. $8,500

2004 Komatsu HM300, 6X6, #C0201, 3,294 hrs..... $234,000

Most machines are available for rental-purchase option. All machines subject to prior sale. Year listed is year of manufacture.

For additional information, please call (502) 493-4380

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