

Giving a Lift

Cranes help technicians move heavy equipment to and from service vans, saving their backs and helping to prevent accidents

By Ken Wysocky

When technicians at Frank Bonetti Plumbing need to take a load off on the job, they head for their Dodge Sprinter service vans. They reach for a rear-mounted, 1,500-

The Vancrane, made by Pickup Equipment Inc., is bolted to the floor and roof and takes up minimal space in the rear corner of the van. Bonetti and his crew installed the cranes on all six of the company's service vans.

MONEY Machines

pound-capacity electric crane that helps them lift equipment. It minimizes equipment damage and keeps

The cranes earn their keep when technicians use the drain cleaners that each truck carries: Models 1065, 300, 100 and 502 from Spartan Tool LLC. The trucks also carry a Gatorcam digital pipe inspection camera, made by WCT Products, and an RD 4000 pipe



To prevent equipment damage and employee injuries, Frank Bonetti Plumbing of Castro Valley, Calif., has outfitted its service vans with the Vancrane, a rear-mounted, 1,500-pound-capacity electric crane made by Pickup Equipment Inc. (Photos courtesy of Frank Bonetti Plumbing)

MONEY MACHINES

OWNER:	Frank Bonetti Plumbing, Castro Valley, Calif.
FUNCTION:	Drain cleaning and plumbing
VEHICLE TYPE:	Dodge Sprinter van
PRIMARY EQUIPMENT:	Four drain machines (Spartan Tool LLC), Gatorcam inspection system (WCT Products), RD 4000 locator (Radiodetection/SPX).
COST:	\$46,000

the spring in the technicians' steps, says co-owner Dan Bonetti.

"The cranes lift our heavy sewer machines in and out of the vans," says Bonetti, whose company is in Castro Valley, Calif. "We've even used one to reset a fire hydrant.

"We had ramps for a while, but they weren't built in, so they always seemed to be in the way. Plus, even with a ramp, you still have to wheel the machine up or down, which makes you prone to injuries. Our workmen's compensation insurance rates never go down, but the crane helps to keep them from going up even higher."





MAKING WAVES

Dan Bonetti wanted to make a splash with a white 2007 Chevrolet Colorado pickup truck. The result is a vehicle that makes waves wherever it goes. Hand-painted waves that adorn the front of the truck.

"Everyone seems to put flames on trucks, but since we're in the plumbing business, we decided to use water," Bonetti says. Whether it's parked at a jobsite or on a golf hole sponsored by the company at a charity outing, the truck and its paint job draw admiring glances.

"When people find out it's not a vinyl wrap, they always step in for a closer look," Bonetti says. "They say they've never seen a plumbing truck like this before. It's pretty cool."

MORE INFO :

Adrian Steel Co.
800/677-2726
www.adriansteel.com

General Pipe Cleaners
800/245-6200
www.drainbrain.com

Pickup Equipment Inc.
800/382-6680
www.pickupequipment.com

Radiodetection/SPX
877/247-3797
www.radiodetection.com

Spartan Tool LLC
800/435-3866
www.spartantool.com

WCT Products
800/928-7763
www.wctproducts.com

locator, made by Radiodetection/SPX. The vans also have room for a portable jetter, if needed. The company relies on a General J-1450 (1,500 psi/1.7 gpm) and a General J-3000 (3,000 psi/4 gpm) made by General Pipe Cleaners.

Each van carries about \$4,000 worth of repair parts, organized in a bin-and-shelf storage system manufactured by Adrian Steel Co. The vans get about 19 miles to the gallon, versus 11 or 12 for the older vans they replaced. That boost in gas mileage easily justified the vans' \$46,000 price tag, Bonetti notes.

The vans offer another advantage: plain old creature comfort. The interior is tall enough so that technicians can stand up straight, instead of bending over and crawling into cramped quarters. ■

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