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## Sewer Maintenance: Myth Busting and Best Practice Training

*Focus on latest equipment and best practices optimizes cleaning, lowers operating costs, saves time, and increases crew productivity*

Sewer maintenance is an ongoing challenge for cities and municipalities. Moreover, gaps in best practice training can cost public works departments unnecessary time and expense in labor, water, and energy costs when cleaning sewer lines.

Making matters worse, our comprehension of sewer line cleaning has evolved alongside the advancements in hose nozzle technologies, which in some cases directly contradicts current practices. So, when conducting training classes across North America, Dan Story, an Operations Manager and national trainer at KEG Technologies, first addresses a common misconception. Many have been trained to quickly run sewer line hoses up the line to effectively remove debris. However, this “hurry up and clean” approach is counterproductive and can potentially redirect sewage flow into homes, commonly known as “blown toilets.”

“For years, sewer maintenance crews have been taught to shoot a nozzle up a line in a hurry and clean as they come back,” says Story, whose company provides Tier 1 to Tier 3 nozzles, chain cutters, floor cleaners and camera nozzle systems to the industry. “But this is not a race. If you are not slowing down to cover all the ground, it simply is not going to work very well.”

Instead Story trains sewer crews to “clean as you go in and rinse as you come out,” adds Story. “With this approach, 95% of the time you will clean a line in one pass instead of making a whole lot of passes.”

For Story, who travels across the United States and Canada conducting training on sewer cleaning techniques, misconceptions abound in the industry and often reflect a lack of understanding of the fluid dynamics of high pressure nozzles. Over time, additional best practices have been developed through a process of trial and error.



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As part of his training sessions, Story provides the following additional tips for sewage line cleaning:

#### “Read” the results

Story says you can learn a lot by paying attention to what is happening in the line going in and coming back.

“Crews need to be trained to understand what they are ‘reading’ coming out of the pipe. The information can tell you whether you are going too fast or too slow, how much debris is in the line, and whether the line is clean after the first pass – or not,” says Story.

When going up the line, for example, it is beneficial to observe the amount of debris present.

“If there is minimal debris returning, it indicates that the pipe is in relatively good condition, with a low accumulation of debris. So, I can accelerate my speed. However, an excessive amount of recovered material suggests the need to slow down. In such cases, the flow of water acts as a conveyor belt, effectively carrying the debris out.”

When the water flow confirms the pipe has been cleaned at the right speed, the maintenance crew can then lower the pressure in the hose to between 900 – 1,000 PSI and come back through the pipe at the same speed. This final single “rinsing” pass can leave the line totally clean.

“The trick is paying attention to your hose. Make sure your hose comes back clean, and then you know your pipe is clean. How much debris is in the first pass? This information can tell you whether you’re going too fast or too slow. Remember to never outrun your flow because your flow is your conveyor belt. If there is a lot of material on the hose, it is telling me to slow down. If my hose stays clean, I know I am moving at a good pace,” says Story.

Another common sewer cleaning misconception is that you don’t need to open the upstream manhole when cleaning sewer pipes. This can actually increase pressure in the system and lead to blown toilets, where sewer gases flow up the laterals and cause sewage water to overflow from residential toilets.

According to Story, approximately 95% of blown toilets can be attributed to how the operator cleans the lines. However, identifying certain signs can help mitigate these issues. For instance, a sudden rush of water during the return flow could indicate the upstream manhole was closed instead of being left open.

#### Protect your investment

Slowing down and observing the results allows for cleaning to be performed in a single pass, which helps safeguard the hose from potential damage.

“If you are going into each pipe once, rather than three times, to clean it, you are basically tripling the life of a three to four thousand dollar hose,” says Story.

Beyond the wear and tear on the equipment there are also operational costs to consider such as water, fuel, as well as the productivity of the operators. “Cleaning more efficiently and effectively means lowering the operating costs per pipe and increasing what a city’s public works department can do,” explains Story. “And today, everybody is trying to figure out how to do more with less.”

#### Nozzle selection matters

Story cautions departments not to overlook the importance of nozzles even when expensive trucks are purchased for providing a water supply. While a department may have invested a half-million dollars for a truck to clean sewer lines, its impact is only as good as the nozzle at the end of the hose. “If you are using a cheap hundred dollar nozzle, well now you have a hundred dollar truck because it is the nozzle that cleans all of the pipe, not the truck,” explains Story.

As is known throughout the industry, there are tiers of nozzles which are rated for water efficiency from Tier 1 (about 30% efficient), Tier 2 (50-60% efficient), to Tier 3 (75-98% efficient).

However, even within the Tier 3 category, there are significant differences in levels of efficiency. Opting for the lower end Tier 3 nozzle with 75% efficiency could still lead to additional trips to refill. Also, such units may not remove restrictive sewer buildup or blockage in a timely manner.

According to Story, a Tier-1, 30-degree drilled nozzle running 72 gallons a minute at 2,200 PSI will only exert 13 pounds of force to move debris nine feet away from the nozzle. In contrast, a very high-efficiency Tier-3 nozzle running 60 gallons a minute at 2,000 PSI will impact that plate nine feet away with 98 pounds of force.

“When you put the right nozzle on, you can do things that you never thought were possible,” says Story. “You will not have to sit there and spend all day doing what you need to do.”

What sets the most efficient Tier 3 nozzles apart from others in the category is fluid mechanics engineering on a par with the aerodynamics of race cars or jet fighters.

In the case of KEG’s Tier 3 nozzles, the high-performance fluid mechanics design leaves little room for power losses and excessive turbulence. After exiting the jetter hose, water travels into the body of the nozzle before moving through smooth, curved channels. This design enables the water to maintain its power and speed before entering the nozzle’s replaceable titanium ceramic inserts. Next,



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the water is funneled from a short conical shape to a larger, longer cylindrical shape, allowing a tight water pattern to emerge.

The internal workings of the nozzle, including the way the water gets turned, redirect the energy of the high-pressure water entering the nozzle as efficiently as possible. This results in what is needed for the task: more thrust and power using less water.

Optimal technique is key

Effective cleaning involves more than just using a powerful nozzle. It also entails understanding the proper position-

ing and placement of the nozzle within the pipe.

"We teach about the difference between laying a nozzle on the bottom of the pipe and centering it into the pipe," says Story. "We teach about the flows and angles based on the size of the pipe -and the condition of the pipe based on the last camera footage."

KEG trainers teach how to use a banked turn with the water hose to get more power with less water.

"If there is an issue with roots or heavy grease, you want to use a controlled rotation nozzle which will cut and chop it up enough to avoid debris going through the manhole and creating blockages downstream," says Story. He recommends using a nozzle capable of breaking up blockages to a particulate size small enough to go all the way to the treatment plant without creating a problem downstream.

The science behind best practices  
With the advancement of nozzle technologies, there is a need for municipalities to get everyone on the same page about the proper techniques for cleaning sewer lines.

"What surprises even experienced sewer and storm professionals is the science that is behind the best practices," says Story. "What we teach is based on understanding fluid dynamics. We look at the horsepower of your truck that drives the water pump for a rate of volume at a particular PSI level. We factor in the efficiency of the nozzle. What we want to get to is how to run the truck at a lot lower RPM and PSI that will clean the line easier, better, and more efficiently."

"We can show operators how to use less water, less fuel, and cause less wear and tear. Bottom-line, it's about how to get more work done while using fewer resources. And of course, this reduces the risk of the worst case scenario of blowing up toilets in people's homes," adds Story.

*For more information: call 866-595-0515; visit [www.kegtechnologies.net](http://www.kegtechnologies.net); or write to KEG Technologies Inc. at 6220 N. Pinnacle Drive, Spartanburg, SC 29303. [www.kegtechnologies.net](http://www.kegtechnologies.net)*



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# An Eye on Protection: Back-end Security Monitoring Centers Heighten Jobsite Security



*The pursuit of a zero-loss site: security monitoring trailers, combined with advanced back-end monitoring centers proved the holy grail for construction site security.*

The cost of building materials has skyrocketed, up almost 40% over the last 4 years. At the same time, vandalism and theft at construction sites are at an all-time high; now costing the industry more than a billion dollars per year. Due to these factors, among others, the need to secure commercial construction sites has never been greater.

To combat the issue, much of the focus has long been on the first line of defense. Items like physical barriers, access control points and closed-circuit TV cameras have been enlisted with some degree of success. While new, AI-enabled mobile security trailers are proving highly efficient at spotting a security

threat, the focal point is now shifting from bytes to brains. How humans within a security monitoring center react to those AI-triggered events is becoming the great differentiator for construction companies in pursuit of a zero-loss jobsite.

Advancing AI - which can quickly distinguish car lights, a stray cat, or even changes in cloud cover from a legitimate threat - will remain essential for mobile security. However, after a genuine security event is flagged, it is sent to a centralized monitoring location where each event must be assessed in real-time by humans to determine the appropriate next steps. According to construction executives charged with increasing site safety, too often this part of the equation has been delivering substandard results.

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"In the past, we've had occurrences where the person doing the monitoring must have fallen asleep or something because things went missing off a job site, but they never reported seeing anything," says Edward Glover, a Phoenix, AZ-based assistant project manager at Layton Construction – a nationally ranked commercial contractor.

#### *Asset security monitoring*

Like Glover, there are a number of construction companies making the switch from outmoded security monitoring firms – focused predominantly on setting up the hardware on a jobsite – to companies that deploy a centralized Security Operations Center (SOC with integrated AI capabilities). These facilities provide 24/7 alert monitoring, trained security response experts, and daily hardware checkups. In addition, some of these SOC providers even make weekly visits to the construction site to ensure operational efficiencies.

Layton Construction is currently working on a massive 100-acre industrial park in Arizona. The project has multiple buildings with numerous blind spots. They enlisted several security monitoring systems to guard the project and are currently recording about two alerts per week which have already been vetted by a monitoring expert.

"I get a text alert and then a phone call the moment



anyone attempts to come on-site," explains Glover. "A link is also sent, so I can view the footage and see why the camera went off. Then we determine what needs to be done, which may include calling the police. We've caught several perpetrators this way."

Recently, an incident occurred at the Layton industrial park project where someone onsite falsely identified themselves as a subcontractor. Glover was able to quickly review the onsite footage and its security monitoring team alerted the police who apprehended the individual.

"That is a prime example of a situation where if we did not have this type of advanced security monitoring in place, I can almost guarantee something would have been stolen," adds Glover.

#### *Protective preference*

While calling the police is one option, there are additional measures the security monitoring experts can employ. This is of added significance during the current nationwide shortage of law enforcement officers which could potentially increase response times. As an example, some security monitoring trailers provide a talk-down speaker that delivers impressive results.

"We had one case where we warned an active



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trespasser, who then started to leave,” recalls Jason Gratton, VP of Stallion Infrastructure Services – a national provider of mobile security, video surveillance and communications services. “But they were still holding a bunch of materials that they were trying to steal. So, our SOC operator yells out: <DROP IT, NOW!> And the guy actually does, and almost falls over while running to his car.»

While those instances demonstrate an effective approach to someone already trespassing on the jobsite, the primary goal for companies like Stallion is to intervene before the perimeter fence has been breached.

“We have seen instances where Stallion’s monitoring is picking people up beyond the fence,” says Mason Mellema, project manager at DPR Construction – a general contractor focused on highly complex and technical projects. “They are looking to stop an

unwanted entry before they actually step foot on the jobsite.”

#### *Adaptive security*

DPR is currently working on a high-profile healthcare facility in the Phoenix area which started out as a greenfield project.

“The first thing that went up were the fencing, screening, and secured access points,” explains Mellema. “Once the materials and equipment began arriving, we had a need for security and monitoring. Then as the building started coming up out of the ground and more assets arrived on site, our monitoring needs changed. This required us to reconfigure both the number and location of the monitoring equipment.”

“You have to be able to accommodate that type of change,” said Gratton. “Construction is such a



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dynamic environment—things literally change every single day.”

In this context, security monitoring experts function like onsite consultants. Through daily video exposure and weekly in-person check-ups, they can begin to understand the nuances of each job site, as well as the needs of each phase of production.

“The security monitoring team might say something like ‘Hey, you guys are getting ready to button up drywall—maybe it’s time to move the monitoring equipment,’” adds Glover. “What we are getting is really more proactive than reactive.”

Other times, it may be that the construction crew is trying to be extra vigilant but is actually causing visibility issues that need to be addressed.

“We have seen workers try to park equipment closer

to the camera thinking this is enhancing the security, but what they’re doing is they’re actually blocking the view of the camera,” explains Gratton.

When this happens, Stallion, for example, generates an immediate security ticket, regardless of the time. That ticket gets escalated quickly and security monitoring experts will get in touch with the relevant job site contact and get the view cleared.

“If we need a station moved and repositioned on the jobsite, they are quick to respond,” explains Mellema. “For us, it has worked out well and we feel our site is now more secure than ever.”

The goal for any construction project is to maintain a zero-loss site. That is increasingly dependent on how well security monitoring experts can address a threat and implement the right action plan.

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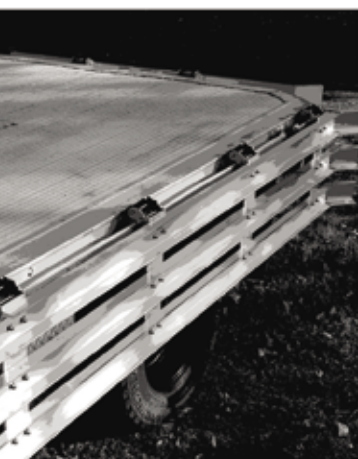


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### Features:

- Patented quick-release automated spring lock
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- Adds versatility to most flatbeds

*"Previously I had wooden side gates on my work truck. To remove them, you had to pick them up, set them to one side, and put them back, usually requiring two people — they're heavy! With HingePost, I just fold them down."*

*— Mathew Hughes, Uncle Shuck's Corn Maze  
Dawsonville, Georgia*

Introducing a new chapter in stake-post evolution, rights-holder HingePost has made a dramatic break with traditional designs. The main focus of this newly patented device for flatbeds is its automated locking mechanism and its speed of operation in folding downward 180°. Even its ease of installation and removal from flatbed pockets is notable.

### Necessity: the Mother of Invention

HingePost is based in Dahlonega, Georgia and established in early 2023 by Bobby Anderson. The concept was motivated by the desire to accelerate loading times and, also, to contain the payload safely. HingePost uses aluminum, mild steel, and high carbon steel—all 3/16in thick. **The first of its kind**, this new stake post defines a new direction in combining side gates with flatbed platforms.



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