

MASONRY NEWS

Sponsored by:  **EZ Grout Corporation**

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Koper Masonry Completes Larger Jobs With the Grout Hog®

Doug Koper of Koper Masonry in Pittsburgh recently reported to us his experience through purchasing a Grout Hog. Koper states, "I used to do mainly smaller masonry jobs, but now with the Grout Hog I can bid and compete on larger jobs." The purchase of the Grout Hog has enabled Koper Masonry to take on larger jobs that require more grout without the added labor expenses that accompanies pumping or bucketing methods.

Doug Koper bought his Grout Hog from his local distributor Kevin Kozel of Scaffolding Consultants. Koper Masonry does subcontracting work in the greater Pittsburgh area and also parts of Ohio. With his new-found advantage, Koper plans on using the Grout Hog on any future projects to improve his ability to compete on today's demanding jobsite. Koper has called the Grout Hog "The best piece of equipment I have ever bought," and plans on trying other EZ Grout products in the future to revolutionize his jobsite.

Photos of Grout Hog® on jobsites.



(A message from the Mason Contractors Association of America)

Building Masonry's Future

Without a doubt, the influence of the masonry industry is strengthened by the unification of our contractors and suppliers. The Mason Contractors Association of America is a national trade association representing masonry contractors and suppliers in national legislative and regulatory affairs, codes and standards composition, workforce development, education, market promotion and general industry advocacy. All together, this means bigger market share for masonry systems, more work for our contractors and suppliers, and savings to the cost of doing business.

Our members have access to MCAA benefits including: a profile in our "Find-A-Contractor" function online, where their contact information and specialties can be identified by customers visiting the site nearly 5 million times annually; subscription to *Masonry* magazine; bi-monthly email newsletter; members-only access to OSHA, safety library, business resources and more online; and discounts on all Association publications, training materials, and registration to all MCAA events, including our Masonry Showcase and annual meeting. We also offer technical support and assistance, and when confronted with federal agencies, members can turn to MCAA's Washington office to assist in resolving those issues. Also, members benefit from the

MCAA/ OSHA alliance, which provides for training, a safer work environment, and an edge over competitors.

Much of what the national association does is intangible, yet extremely important. For example, what is the benefit to members when the MCAA can eliminate an OSHA regulation that requires every mason contractor to remove all materials from scaffolding at the end of every shift and then restock the scaffolding at the beginning of the next shift? What benefit is there when the MCAA can stem the tide of an ergonomics standard that would require up to 2 hours of additional work breaks for employees in an eight hour shift or limits the weight that a mason can install in a days work to 1,500 pounds? Intangible, but integral to the survival of our industry and businesses.

MCAA needs the support of every member of our industry to continue our fight. We believe the benefits are immeasurable for all of us. Join us today!

Call MCAA's Director of Membership, Melissa Polivka, at **800-536-2225** for more information.

Revolutionize your Company!

Attend a R.A.C.E. Presentation Oct. 15

- 7:00 a.m. Welcome – Coffee & Refreshments
- 7:15 a.m. Pay for Performance {Safety, Quality}
- 8:45 a.m. Break
- 9:00 a.m. Pay for Performance {Production}
- 10:30 a.m. Break
- 10:45 a.m. Pay for Performance {Production}
- 12:15 p.m. Lunch - Provided

Lang Masonry / EZ Grout's Equipment Ideas

1:00 p.m. Presentation: Finding a better way includes Low Lift Grouting and how the Grout Hog® came about. As well as other innovative equipment and ideas Lang Masonry and EZ Grout have brought to the masonry industry.

2:30 p.m. Break & Equipment Demo

3:00 p.m. Round Table Discussion: We ask that you be prepared to present your single best idea that has helped you in the masonry industry to share with the other masonry contractor attendees. And then your worst problem operating in the masonry industry so the other attendees can network and help you fix it.

Example: Do you use skid steer loaders: What type of equipment do you recommend? How do you track materials that are delivered to your jobsite for payment? Do you measure or shovel sand into your mixer? If you do measure are you seeing increased productivity?

4:15 p.m. Optional Tour of Lang Masonry Facilities & EZ Grout Factory – {Depending on length of Round Table discussion and interested parties}

We look forward to sharing ideas with you. If you have any questions even after the presentation, please e-mail Damian at dlang@langmasonry.com or call us at Carrie Weidner at 1 (800)-417-9272.

Call today : 1-800-417-9272 www.ezgrout.com

Masonry News - Safety First



(Info provided courtesy of Keller's Construction Toolbox Talks, Scaffolding, copyright 2003)

Scaffolding

In July, 1991, two employees were working on a pump jack scaffold doing roofing work. The scaffold became overloaded and broke. The employees fell 12 feet to the ground, resulting in one fatality and one serious injury.

During 1995, 9750 workers were injured in scaffold or scaffold-related accidents. Of those injured, 72% said the accidents were caused by:

- Planks or supports giving way (the most common cause)
- Employees slipping on the scaffold
- Being struck by falling objects

These types of statistics prompted OSHA to write a new, simpler, and more up-to-date scaffold standard. The new standard became effective in November, 1996. The scaffold regulations are found in 29 CFR 1926, Subpart L (1926.450-454).

The new rules cover:

-Scope and application-discusses how the standard applies to all scaffolds used in construction, alteration, repair, and demolition.

-General requirements-Requirements for capacity, construction, access, use, fall protection, and falling object protection when working on scaffolds.

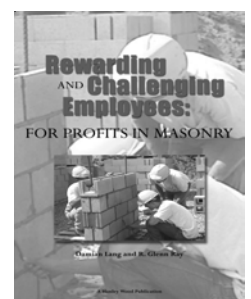
-Additional requirements to specific types of scaffolds-Pinpoints specific types of scaffolds in use and applies additional requirements for working safely with these scaffolds.

-Aerial lifts-Includes safety requirements for extensible boom platforms, aerial ladders, articulating boom platforms, vertical towers, and a combination of any such devices.

-Training-Provides specific training requirements for: (1) Employees who work on scaffolds, (2) Employees who assemble, disassemble, move, operate, repair, maintain, or inspect scaffolds, and (3) retraining.

You asked for it and it's finally here! An easy to read book on rewarding and challenging employees. See how Damian Lang, owner of Lang Masonry, has turned what once was a two man crew into a \$7 million masonry company largely due to incentive plans. Achieve a unique balance in safety, quality, production, and employees Compensation!

*Now Available!
\$39.95 + S&H*



For more information call 1-800-417-9272 and ask for Carrie Weidner

Masonry News Contractor Tip

by: Damian Lang, President, Lang Masonry Contractors & EZ Grout Corp.

Embracing technology:

Let's face facts. How many of you cannot use a computer? Or, maybe you have one for your secretary but it's not important for you to know how to use it. Most of us like to pretend we don't need computers and that our businesses will be fine without them. But, did you know that many companies today are requesting bids and submitting that information over the Internet? The time is nearing when computers will be a must in almost all companies. Yes, even mason contractors will need to learn how to use computers if they want to stay competitive in the future. Don't let time run out before you learn to use them. Sure computers cost money but they save you time. Think about it. Once you spend an hour on the phone with someone, that hour is lost forever. Wouldn't it be worth a small investment in technology to save that time and be freed up to make money? A few months ago, I came back from the Masonry Show in Vegas. After being out of town several days, I would normally expect to have 20 to 30 calls to return. Only two years ago, these return calls took me up to a day and a half to get through all of them. This time when I returned it was different. I had 40 e-mails with only four voice messages to address. I went through my all e-mail and returned my phone messages in about two hours & thirty minutes. Can you imagine how long it would have taken me to return 44 phone messages? I had more catch up to do than ever, however I was done in a fraction of the time it used to take me. Usually I can return three to five e-mails in the time it takes me to return one phone call.

Plus, e-mail is really simple. A lot of the answers people are looking for are simple yes or no. With e-mail you just type yes or no and send. Others just give me an answer and I don't even need to respond. Much of the extra conversation that goes along with a phone call does not take place in e-mails. It's quick, efficient, and easy. So how did I become so much faster at communicating than I was only a year ago? I'm certainly not an expert on computers or one with an extensive education. In fact, like many other mason contractors, I have only a high school education. My education has been in the field, better known as the school of hard knocks, and the best education one could ever ask for if you are in an industry like ours. As our business grew, I realized that to be efficient in the office our staff must embrace technology. So, a year ago I had the local college come and train myself and the members of our staff the basics - to type and use e-mail. Now, it is amazing the time we save everyday just by using e-mail alone. If one of us has something to tell the whole office staff of 13 co-workers, we can type the message and send it "company wide". This used to take much more time running up and down the halls to be sure everyone got the message. And, it is also in writing so later no one can claim they weren't informed of the details. Learning to type and e-mail is a necessity in business, maybe even more important nowadays than using the telephone. If you and your employees haven't embraced technology, I encourage you to do so. It's an investment that you won't regret and it could be the difference in getting bids and jobs in the future.



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