



Connection

A publication for and about Kirby-Smith Machinery Inc. customers
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BAKER & COMPANY CONSTRUCTION LLC

Staying closer to home, focusing on roadwork
pays off for Texas-based firm

The Komatsu logo, consisting of the word 'KOMATSU' in a bold, white, sans-serif font, is located in the bottom left corner of the page.

Brad Baker,
P.E.,
President

Seth Houston,
Project Manager,
Estimator



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Valued Customer:

CONEXPO-CON/AGG
— the largest equipment
show in North America —
recently completed its 2023 run. It
was exciting to learn about the latest
innovations in machinery and technology
for the construction industry, including the advent of
electric equipment designed to increase sustainability while
decreasing your carbon footprint.

John Arapidis The manufacturers that Kirby-Smith Machinery Inc. (KSM) represents
(Komatsu, WIRTGEN, HAMM, VÖGELE, KLEEMANN, Takeuchi,
Manitowoc, Broderson and many more) participated in the event, and as one of the
leading manufacturers at CONEXPO-CON/AGG, Komatsu showcased some of its
most innovative machines and Smart Construction solutions. On page 24, you will find
an article about how one user is saving valuable time and money by uploading files
remotely rather than driving to the job site, thanks to Smart Construction Remote.

For a decade, intelligent Machine Control (iMC) equipment has been at the heart of
Komatsu's Smart Construction solutions. See how Baker & Company Construction
LLC uses iMC dozers with integrated GPS grade control to reduce mass grading
time by as much as 50%.

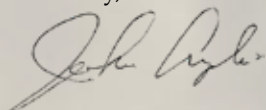
Aftermarket GPS systems can be just as valuable. Check out the article on BGT
Contractors LLC, which equipped its Takeuchi compact track loader with an
innovative GPS grading attachment to increase efficiency.

I think you will also enjoy reading Precision Concrete & Excavation LLC's story. With
a fleet of Komatsu equipment backed by full service from KSM, the Texas contractor
is growing to meet the demands of the expanding Dallas-Fort Worth market.

Even though new technologies increase efficiency and production, it still takes
the people who make up KSM and well-maintained machines to get the job
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of your machines to help keep them running like new. Call our service
department or your sales representative to set one up.

As always, if there is anything we can do for you, please feel free to
contact one of our branch locations.

Sincerely,



John Arapidis
President & CEO, Kirby-Smith Machinery Inc.



Connection

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PRECISION CONCRETE & EXCAVATION LLC pg. 10

Find out how this company provides customers with turnkey site construction services.

PAVING CORNER pg. 27

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CRANE CORNER pg. 29

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ASK THE PSSR pg. 43

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BAKER & COMPANY CONSTRUCTION

Staying closer to home, focusing on roadwork pays off for Texas-based firm

Baker & Company Construction LLC is currently in the midst of the largest state contract the firm has ever done. During the next year, it will widen shoulders and install structures and culverts as part of the safety improvements on an approximately 7-mile stretch of FM 859 in Van Zandt County, Texas.

"The amount of dirt to be moved is fairly small, only about 6,000 yards, but there is 4,000 feet of drainage pipe to lay and over 200 safety end treatments to set," said President Brad Baker. "There's probably over 100 rock and asphalt driveways that we'll be repairing and two bridge-class culverts that a subcontractor will extend for us. The scope of work fits us really well."

Baker & Company Construction crews expect to be on the \$3.8 million job for most of 2023, in addition to about nine other projects. Based in Tyler, Texas, the firm focuses on roadwork with projects typically



Brad Baker,
P.E.,
President

ranging in size from \$500,000 to \$5 million.

"We usually have about four active jobs that are real heavy and another four or five that are waiting on a punch list, or we'll have another subcontractor on them that we're

overseeing," said Baker. "We're either reconstructing existing roads, or we're building brand new streets that are part of a subdivision. We do the earthmoving, soil stabilization, rock placement, and we install all the drainage ourselves and all the storm sewer pipe. That's what we do project to project."

Baker & Company Construction hires subcontractors to lay asphalt and concrete.

Diversification is essential

Baker & Company Construction works across multiple sectors, including governmental and private.



Seth Houston,
Project Manager,
Estimator

"It doesn't matter whether we start with a bare tract of land or have to break or mix up an old road and build it back," said Baker. "Our experience allows us to do either equally well. The only real difference to us is that the TxDOT (Texas Department of Transportation) and municipal jobs are hard bid,

and the private ones are basically done for a mix of repeat customers who have come to trust us and new customers who have reached out to us because of our reputation. No matter what, we concentrate on delivering a quality finished product while meeting deadlines and budgets."

Baker & Company Construction has built a long list of satisfied customers during the past six years. Baker formed the company with a couple of partners in 2016. Three years later, he bought them out and removed their names from the company moniker.

"There was a lot of emphasis placed on design-build early on, and we followed the work wherever it took us," recalled Baker. "We had projects in Tennessee, New Mexico and West Texas and did everything from pre-engineered metal buildings to oil and gas projects to building railroad spurs. It got to be a grind being out of town so much. We made a conscious effort to stay close to home and concentrate on roadwork within 50 to 60 miles of our home office (in Tyler)."

Diversification within the roadwork market was also important to Baker.

"We didn't want to just concentrate on one aspect such as private," said Baker. "We intentionally started to go after public works projects a few years ago. It's essential that we do not have all our eggs in one basket, so if one market goes down, you can easily

With a Komatsu PC360LC-11 excavator, an operator loads a Komatsu HM300 articulated haul truck. "They are great all-around machines that give us good production," said Baker & Company Construction President Brad Baker.





► VIDEO

Operator Darryl McKinney pushes dirt with a Komatsu D61PXi-24 intelligent Machine Control (iMC) dozer with integrated GPS grade control. "It runs smooth, and it has plenty of power," said McKinney. "You just set up the base station, turn on the machine, calibrate and go. I also like the slant-nose design because you can see the edge of the blade."

move into another. Fortunately, they have all been fairly good recently."

Baker credits his approximately 25 employees for their roles in Baker & Company Construction's success.

"They are a tight-knit group that is willing to do whatever it takes to get the job done, whether it's laying pipe or running equipment," Baker said. "I believe they are the best in the business."

New iMC dozers reduce time, costs

In its earliest days, Baker & Company Construction mainly rented equipment, but during the last few years, it began purchasing equipment from Kirby-Smith Machinery Inc. (KSM), including its new Komatsu D51PXi-24 and D61PXi-24 intelligent Machine Control (iMC) dozers with factory-integrated GPS grade control.

"Our introduction came from a demonstration where we compared an iMC dozer and a competitive model with an aftermarket system," Baker said, noting that he chose PX models because they have wider tracks and lower ground pressure, which is ideal for working in sand and soft clay. "Komatsu was the clear winner. It was smooth where the other brand was jerky, and the fact that there are no masts or cables to deal with made it a no-brainer. We now have four iMC dozers that we rely heavily on from stripping to finish grade on every single job. Our productivity is higher, and our costs are reduced because those dozers allow us to move material once and more efficiently. Operators know exactly where to place, cut and grade because the plans are in the dozer, and it's automatically doing what's needed in relation to reaching

finished elevation. They have cut our mass grading time by roughly 50%."

In addition to iMC dozers, Baker & Company Construction uses Komatsu excavators for a variety of tasks such as clearing, installing pipe and structures, and loading Komatsu articulated haul trucks.

"They are great all-around machines that give us good production," said Baker. "Like the dozers, they are dependable, and that's important to us. We rented a lot of another brand of equipment, and over time, I could see that it wasn't giving us the value for the price, and it wasn't as technically advanced as Komatsu. From a service standpoint, I wasn't satisfied either."



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Continued . . .

'Komtrax has definitely increased our efficiency'

... continued

Baker continued, "Kirby-Smith has been outstanding in all aspects. They know how to match the machines to our needs, and they stand behind them with outstanding support. It's a great combination."

KSM Territory Manager Craig Doran assisted Baker & Company Construction with its recent purchases.

Product Support Sales Representative (PSSR) Jordan Washam helped Baker & Company Construction set up a My Komatsu account, so the firm could track machine data with Komtrax.

"I get a report every morning with information about the machines that I can use to better manage our fleet," said Project Manager/Estimator

Seth Houston, who builds 3D models for the iMC dozers. "It gives us the ability to see trends and adjust things faster. For example, if idle time is high, we can address that right away and reduce our fuel usage. Right now, that's extremely important. Using Komtrax has definitely increased our efficiency."

Looking far ahead

Baker is not opposed to growth, but he's not necessarily seeking it either. He said his focus is on stability.

"There's nothing really appealing to me about being big," Baker said. "Growing too fast can create problems and headaches, and in most cases, service and quality suffer. I'm committed to not letting that happen. I want to concentrate on continuing to give our customers the best service possible."

Baker added, "If times get tough, and we need to, we may look at self-performing more aspects of a project. For now, that's not an issue, and honestly, I hope it never is. We want to maintain those strategic partnerships with our subcontractors. I'm not in this for just the now. I'm taking a very long-term view." ■



(L-R) Baker & Company Construction team members Brad Baker, Cassidy Clark, Meredith Houston and Seth Houston meet with KSM's Jordan Washam and Craig Doran. "Kirby-Smith has been outstanding in all aspects," said Baker. "They know how to match the machines to our needs, and they stand behind them with outstanding support. It's a great combination."



Operator Joshua Cooper cuts grade on a road project in Tyler, Texas, with a Komatsu D51PXi-24 iMC dozer. "The accuracy is spot-on, and it always knows where it is in relation to finished grade," said Cooper. "That saves us time and material costs."





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BGT CONTRACTORS LLC

Concrete contractor maintains his passion for the industry, adapts to its changing times

Even though he's been doing it for decades, Trevor McAlevy hasn't lost his passion for pouring concrete.

"My dad (Bob) had his own concrete business, and I helped him out from a very young age," said McAlevy. "I love it, and I just could never see myself doing anything else."

His father's business was based in their hometown of Kearney, Neb. When he got older, McAlevy left home and went to work for a concrete company in Omaha, Neb. In 2011, McAlevy decided to go into business for himself.

"My dad was reaching retirement age, but he still wanted something



Trevor McAlevy,
Owner,
Managing Member

to do," recalled McAlevy. "He and my brother (Greg) joined me to form BGT Contractors. Dad stayed involved right up to the time he passed away in 2020. I bought Greg out even before that, so when Dad passed, I became the sole owner."

Through all its ownership iterations, BGT Contractors LLC kept the same business model. Based in Plattsmouth, Neb., the company completes turnkey commercial concrete projects. Currently, it's working for a general contractor that builds Dollar General stores from North Dakota to Kansas.

"We do 20 to 25 per year — pouring the footings, floors, sidewalks and parking areas," said McAlevy. "I have about 10 employees, and when we

do a job, we get after it. Generally, we have everything done in about a week."

Takeuchi cuts base prep time

Slab base preparation is part of BGT Contractors' service. About four years ago, McAlevy started looking for a faster way to grade.

"The general contractor I work with loves Takeuchi, so I demoed a TL12V2 track loader," McAlevy said. "The week I ran it, I was thoroughly impressed with not only the power but how smooth it was. We bought it, and now we have a second one."

McAlevy continued, "Our production is outstanding with them. Not long after we got the first one, I was on a job site where the dirt contractor couldn't complete his work. I said I would do it and graded out a 15,000-square-foot parking lot with anywhere from a foot to 18 inches of cut in about a day and a half using the TL12 and our GPS grading attachment."

McAlevy said the GPS grading attachment is one of several that allows BGT Contractors to maximize the TL12V2 compact track loader's versatility.

"The GPS is easy to hook up," McAlevy explained. "It's simply a 14-pin connector, and you're off to the races. I went with the high-flow model to open up that realm of attachment possibilities. We can switch from GPS to bucket to forks very easily."

Kirby-Smith Machinery Inc. (KSM) Territory Manager Jason Woods assisted BGT Contractors with its purchases.

"I can't say enough good things about Jason and Kirby-Smith," stated McAlevy. "Before we bought our first machine, I contacted

With a Takeuchi TL12V2 compact track loader, an operator moves dirt.





► VIDEO

BGT Contractors' Trevor McAlevy puts a parking lot to grade with a Takeuchi TL12V2 compact track loader equipped with a GPS grading attachment. "I was thoroughly impressed with not only the power but how smooth it was," said McAlevy. "Our production is outstanding."

another dealer. It took the guy two and a half weeks to get back to me. We work extensively in Kirby-Smith's territory, so I contacted Jason. He had a price and paperwork for me the following day, and we set up the demo. The Takeuchis are well built and designed, so we haven't had any issues, but I know based on my experience with Jason and Kirby that if there ever was one, they would be right there to help. Their service is outstanding."

Ready for what lies ahead

Using technology for subgrade preparation and concrete pours — as well as an approximately 13,000-pound, 111-horsepower loader — are among the changes McAlevy has seen in the years he's been pouring concrete.

"I remember when a 100-yard pour was a big deal. Now, we're doing 400 to 500 yards," said McAlevy.



BGT Contractors' Trevor McAlevy (left) talks with KSM's Jason Woods on a job site in Tonganoxie, Kan. "I can't say enough good things about Jason and Kirby-Smith," stated McAlevy. "The Takeuchis are well built and designed, so we haven't had any issues, but I know based on my experience with Jason and Kirby that if there ever was one, they would be right there to help."

"It's going to be interesting to see the progress the industry makes in the next few years. We're ready for whatever lies ahead." ■



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PRECISION CONCRETE & EXCAVATION

Texas contractor ramps up quickly to meet the burgeoning demand for site development services north of Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex

Residential growth north of the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex has been explosive, according to Precision Concrete & Excavation LLC Vice President of Operations Todd Osborn.

“The pace is off the charts, and we’re continually ramping up as fast as possible to meet customer demand,” Osborn explained. “During the past few months, we’ve added employees, and our revenue stream quadrupled in just under a year. We just keep popping.”

Demand for Precision Concrete & Excavation continues to grow because



Todd Osborn,
Vice President of
Operations

the company provides customers with turnkey site construction services. Osborn said when a client managing a development gives the company a project, they can be assured it will be done on budget and on schedule.

“We take a piece of bare ground where maybe there were cows grazing at one point and leave with a finished product ready to build on,” Osborn said. “Our services include clearing, mass grading, utility installation, retaining and screen wall construction, putting



Bryan Poché,
Director of Business
Development

pads to grade, and both concrete and asphalt paving. There is very little we can’t do. Our customers like that because they don’t have to coordinate multiple contractors.”

Experience to meet the challenge

While most of Precision Concrete & Excavation’s growth has come during the past year, it has steadily been building its resume since owner Jeremy Gosselin founded it about five years ago. Osborn, who had his own business and subcontracted utility installation for Precision Concrete & Excavation, joined the company around the time its demand increased. Bryan Poché came on board as the director of business development.

“Experience is one of our greatest strengths and a big reason why we have been able to build so quickly,” stated Poché. “Jeremy has about 20 years in the industry, and Todd and I brought several years to the table. We know how to plan, sequence and execute in order for projects to go smoothly from start to finish. That’s helped us develop some excellent relationships that have turned into mainly repeat work.”

Osborn estimated that Precision Concrete & Excavation typically has about 15 jobs in the works at any one time across a territory that covers around a 70-mile radius of its headquarters in Celina, Texas.

“Fortunately, most of our jobs right now are within about 25 miles, so we haven’t had to travel too far, which has been attractive to new hires,” said Poché. “That’s helped us build an excellent staff of people who we can depend on, which only increases our abilities and success.”

An operator digs a utility trench with a Komatsu PC360LC-11 excavator.





► VIDEO

On a job site near Celina, Texas, an operator moves dirt with a Komatsu D85EX dozer. "We love the reliability of Komatsu," commented Precision Concrete & Excavation Vice President of Operations Todd Osborn. "It performs day in and day out with excellent uptime. The durability is great too."

During the past couple of years, Precision Concrete & Excavation crews have completed, or are in the stages of completing, several large undertakings. One of the biggest and most complex is a subdivision project in Celina, Texas, where crews have moved about 500,000 yards of dirt and installed approximately 30,000 feet of utilities.

"We don't shy away from challenges, and that one definitely meets the criteria," stated Osborn. "There are places where we laid 36-inch gas pipelines 30 feet deep, and there were existing energy transfer lines that we had to contend with. There's rock at about 25 feet deep, so we're laying 3-foot sewer pipe 30 feet deep. There was some soil conditioning as well. From start to finish, it's about a year-long job."

Building a Komatsu fleet with KSM

Precision Concrete & Excavation turns to Kirby-Smith Machinery Inc. (KSM) for Komatsu equipment

and support. KSM Territory Manager Matt Probey assists with acquisitions, and Product Support Sales Representative (PSSR) Jordan Washam helps coordinate service and parts needs.

"Based on our experience, we have a good idea of what we need in terms of machinery, but the Kirby-Smith team has also guided us in using equipment that may be more effective and efficient on certain projects," said Osborn. "For instance, putting a versatile dozer like a (Komatsu) D71 on a job that can handle everything from stripping to final grade may be the better choice than using a large dozer for mass excavation and then bringing in a smaller one to finish. They have really helped us build up our fleet and increase productivity in a relatively short timeframe, as well as been a great resource when it comes to financing and putting packages together. We have significantly reduced the percentage of competitive machines we own thanks to them."

Poché added, "Kirby-Smith separates itself from the competition through service. We rarely have issues with Komatsu equipment, but on the occasions we do, they respond right away. Kirby-Smith understands how valuable it is to keep downtime to a minimum because, bottom line, it affects all of us. In some cases, we haven't seen that with other equipment dealers."

Precision Concrete & Excavation currently utilizes about 30 pieces of Komatsu equipment from KSM. In addition to dozers, it has varying sizes of excavators, wheel loaders and trucks.

"My experience with Komatsu goes back a long way, even before I joined Precision, so I know they are



Discover more at
KirbySmithConnection.com

Continued . . .

'The level of service we get from Kirby is unmatched'

... continued

quality machines that get the job done," said Osborn. "We love the reliability of Komatsu. It performs day in and day out with excellent uptime. The durability is great too. Some of our work can be hard on equipment. We're ripping rock, not baking cakes, and Komatsu has always been up to the task."

Plus, KSM technicians perform routine maintenance for the first 2,000 hours or three years through Komatsu Care.

"Kirby tracks the machines and contacts us to set up the services when it's convenient for us — again, to minimize downtime," said Poché. "They track the hours with Komtrax, and they have worked with us to use Komtrax as well, so we can monitor hours, fuel usage, machine utilization and more. The level of service we get from Kirby is unmatched."

More of the same

While it is Precision Concrete & Excavation's preference to do

full site packages, the company does occasionally break out its services and do stand-alone clearing, utility, paving and dirt jobs. It's also not solely focused on residential construction.

"We have done some light commercial and a little bit of municipal, but residential is our bread and butter," said Osborn. "There's so much more of it right now, and most sites are open with no existing utilities or structures to deal with, so we can get in and get the job done quickly and move on to the next."

Osborn and Poché don't foresee any change in the current plan and continue to look forward to Precision Concrete & Excavation building on what it has accomplished.

"We see the growth pattern continuing for the near and long term," said Poché. "In fact, it's likely we will branch out farther and develop more relationships with developers. Another thing that won't change is our commitment to doing the best for our customers. We believe there are a lot more projects where we can partner up because there just doesn't seem to be any slowdown in this area." ■



KSM Territory Manager Matt Probey (left) and KSM PSSR Jordan Washam (right) talk with Precision Concrete & Excavation Director of Business Development Bryan Poché on a job site. "Kirby-Smith separates itself from the competition through service," said Poché. "Kirby-Smith understands how valuable it is to keep downtime to a minimum because, bottom line, it affects all of us."

Precision Concrete & Excavation utilizes a diverse fleet of Komatsu equipment acquired from KSM, including wheel loaders, dozers, excavators and trucks.



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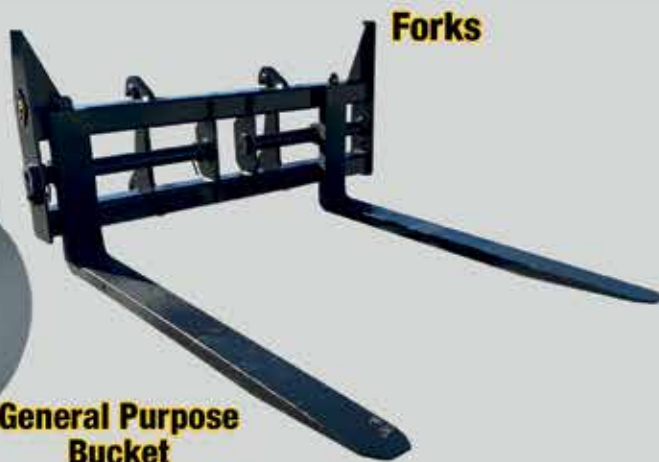


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INDUSTRY OUTLOOK

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law positively impacts transportation, overall forecast is mainly flat due to inflation concerns

In late 2021, President Joe Biden signed the \$1.2 trillion Infrastructure and Investment Jobs Act (IIJA) into law, which was a historic investment in the nation's infrastructure and transportation funding. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law has had a positive effect and will continue to do so in 2023, according to several construction industry professionals as they forecast this year's outlook.

During testimony before the Environment & Public Works (EPW) Committee in late 2022, American Road & Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA) President and CEO Dave Bauer told senators that 29,000 transportation improvement projects are moving forward thanks to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Bauer highlighted ARTBA's economic analysis, showing that highway formula funds supported 2,500 more safety, mobility and maintenance improvements in 2022 than in 2021, while the number of \$100 million projects increased from 18 in 11 states to 24 in 14 states.

"Though each project has a unique story of need and solution, they are all tangible illustrations of the impacts underway from the leadership of this committee in delivering generational investments through a multiyear surface transportation program reauthorization," said Bauer.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law reauthorized surface transportation programs for five years, investing \$110 billion in America's aging roads and bridges.

ARTBA estimated that highway and bridge construction spending will increase 13.4% this year to a total of \$119 billion, according to the article "2023 Forecast: Markets are Mixed for Year Ahead" published by Engineering News-Record (ENR). Dodge Data & Analytics Inc. is

even more optimistic, predicting new starts will be as high as 20%, thanks to infrastructure funding. That would be an increase beyond the 23% rise Dodge forecast for the end of 2022. Dodge Chief Economist Richard Branch pointed out that only 19% of funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law had been allocated by late last year.

"There's a lot of money still on the table waiting to be spent," said Branch in the Equipment World article "Dodge Economist: Prepare for a Rocky First Half of 2023." "We continue to think 2023 and 2024 are the best years for infrastructure construction. But, I could foresee, again, if we have appropriation delays, that maybe 2024 and 2025 are the best years."

Modest downturn, quick recovery

Infrastructure projects are bright spots in the overall construction industry, which has been slowed by several factors during the past year. Dodge sees it as relatively flat in 2023, with a slight decline. Fails Management Institute (FMI) forecasts a 1.3% decline.

"I don't think this is another great recession," said Jay Bowman, Principal of Industry Management Consultant for FMI in the ENR article. "I'll take flat over down any day of the week."

Branch noted that inflation will be a big factor going forward, along with other causes for concern such as the war

Continued . . .

Multifamily housing appears to be a bright spot in the residential sector. Dodge predicts a 1.4% rise in starts, while FMI sees a nearly 6% jump.



'Inflation is expected to remain high'

... continued

in Ukraine and oil production cuts by the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Branch's forecast assumes that core inflation will improve, and there will not be any major shocks.

If his predictions are correct and everything remains stable, Branch believes a "technical recession" could be avoided with economic stabilization and recovery starting in the latter half of 2023. He added that a strong banking system and undersupplied housing market are favorable for the construction industry.

"We're sitting at 14- to 15-year highs in the Dodge Momentum Index, so it should provide some semblance of confidence and reassurance that developers and owners are continuing to put projects into the queue despite

the fact that we're concerned about what might happen when interest rates keep rising and the economy slows down in 2023," said Branch.

In its most recent outlook, the Portland Cement Association (PCA) projected a near-term demand decline of about 3.5% for 2023, the first decline in 13 years. It expects the slowdown to be short, with growth returning in 2024.

"Due to inflation and rising interest rates, economic growth is expected to remain sluggish through mid-2023 with unemployment reaching 4.7%," said Edward J. Sullivan, PCA Chief Economist and Senior Vice President. "Inflation is expected to remain high, leading to further monetary policy tightening through this year and into early next."

Sector gains

While both Dodge and FMI predict overall construction starts to be down in 2023, both foresee increases within several sectors. Dodge predicts a slight increase in total residential construction, including 1.4% in the multifamily category. FMI anticipates a nearly 6% jump in multifamily, despite overall residential starts being lower.

Dodge and FMI have opposing outlooks on total non-residential as well. FMI is optimistic of a 4.4% rise, led by the manufacturing sector with a jump of 15.4%. It sees lodging, amusements and recreation, education, health care, commercial and public safety all getting boosts. Dodge predicts increases for hotels and motels, stores and shopping centers, and education. ■

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will give a boost to projects such as roads, bridges, canals, broadband, utility upgrades and more in 2023, according to industry forecasters. ARTBA estimated that highway and bridge construction spending will increase 13.4% this year to a total of \$119 billion. Dodge is even more optimistic, predicting new starts to be as high as 20%, thanks to infrastructure funding.



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PRODUCT INSIGHT

Which tight tail swing excavator is right for the job?

Ensuring high production when digging in tight spaces and confined job sites can be challenging. Machines with traditional counterweights may not be ideal because of the likelihood they could swing into an obstruction, making tight tail swing excavators a much better fit. However, with so many tight tail swing sizes and models available, choosing the right one for the job takes some careful consideration.

“Tight tails allow operators to be more efficient because they typically have better situational awareness and can concentrate on the task at hand while reducing the chances of swinging into an obstruction or into a lane of traffic,” stated Kurt Moncini, Senior Product Manager, Komatsu. “Typically, the upper structure is revolving within the confines of the undercarriage,



Kurt Moncini,
Senior Product
Manager,
Komatsu

which is why they are great for a variety of tasks in urban areas, or where space is limited.”

What's the digging depth?

According to Moncini, digging depth is an important consideration when choosing the right-sized tight tail swing excavator.

“Pipe typically comes in multiples of 8-foot sections, so taking that into consideration, I always like to look at the 8-foot level bottom digging depth because that's the maximum depth I can dig and excavate an 8-foot flat bottom section of trench,” said Moncini. “As an example, if the required pipe run trench depth is 10 feet, my most efficient machine size will be one that can excavate an 8-foot level bottom to that depth. I need to size the machine accordingly and try

to go with the smallest tight tail that will do the job most efficiently.”

How much do I have to lift?

Lift capacity is another major factor in choosing the right excavator. While you want to be able to move the machine as little as possible, you need to consider what you may need to move on-site in addition to digging.

“If you are excavating utility trenches in an urban environment, there is a good chance you will have to handle trench boxes and set steel plates to cover up the trench at night, or you may have to pick up and install heavy concrete pipe or structures,” said Moncini. “It's vital to have a machine with sufficient lift capacity to handle the job. Ideally, I

Continued . . .



Editor's Note: To learn more about Komatsu's tight tail swing excavators, visit <https://www.komatsu.com/en/products/excavators>.

Komatsu manufactures eight tight tail swing models, ranging in size from the approximately 6,800-pound, 24.4-horsepower PC30MR-5 to the roughly 54,000-pound, 165-horsepower PC238USLC-11.



'Tight tail swings can be excellent tools'

... continued

really want to be able to handle over the side as much as I can lift in front."

Moncini added, "The heavier the required loads become, the bigger the machine I'm going to need. Having a machine that can also lift the materials off the trailer when they arrive is important too. I need to be able to lift, handle and place materials until it's time to use them, then have the ability to rehandle and lay them in the trench."

Do I want versatility?

"Most smaller machines come standard with a blade, which extends versatility," said Moncini. "The ability to push material and backfill is an added advantage and may be able to eliminate an extra machine on the job."

Moncini also added that a blade can help you get better over-the-front lift capacity.

To increase versatility, consider adding attachments such as blades or breakers to your tight tail swing excavators. Most of the machines are already plumbed and ready to run the right-sized attachments.

Additional tight tail swing versatility can be achieved by equipping the excavators with attachments such as breakers, but you must properly size them to the machine.

"If the job calls for breaking up old pavement or other concrete structures, you should first size the breaker for the task, then ensure the excavator is big enough to handle it and has the correct hydraulic flow to operate it," said Moncini. "There are a wide range of attachments — from compactors to mowers and more — that you can use with a tight tail swing. The good news is that most are already plumbed and ready for attachments."

Which boom design is right for me?

Komatsu manufactures eight tight tail swing models, ranging in size from the approximately 6,800-pound, 24.4-horsepower PC30MR-5 to the roughly 54,000-pound, 165-horsepower PC238USLC-11. There are five MR (minimum-radius) models and three US (ultra-short) models.

"The MR excavators have a swing boom, and the US models have a standard boom," Moncini noted. "Our MR design allows the operator to pivot the boom left or right to get right next to a structure and dig parallel to the tracks, so they are much more versatile. The advantage of a standard boom is that it's a little lower price point. Additionally, the standard boom overextends toward the back of the machine to tuck the bucket in tight."

What about tracks?

Track selection may play an important role when working in urban environments. You want to avoid breaking up pavement, damaging sidewalks and ruining grassy areas.

"Having to fix an existing surface could be a major hit to your profit," said Moncini. "Our smaller tight tail swing excavators come standard with rubber-belted tracks. Not only do they minimize ground disturbance, but they are quieter and faster than steel tracks. Road liners, or conventional tracks with rubber pads, are very popular in our midsized to larger models when working on improved surfaces."

Who can I talk to?

For additional information, Moncini suggests consulting with your Komatsu distributor.

"Our distributors have the knowledge and expertise to help you determine the right-sized machine to most effectively get the job done," said Moncini.

"Tight tail swings can be excellent tools for limited-space job sites and can also offer high production in open areas too. If you are not using them, consider checking them out to increase your versatility." ■





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MAKING THE GRADE

Smart Construction solutions, iMC help Castle's Renewable Energy Division move earth faster with decreased costs

The company known today simply as Castle was originally founded as Progressive Pipeline in 1999 by Mike Castle Sr. His business focused on providing service to the oil and gas industry with jobs done with integrity, on time and on budget. That strategy proved highly successful, and within three years, the company landed its first multimillion-dollar contract, which led to the creation of more divisions within the firm.

In addition to Pipeline, Castle's divisions now include an Integrity Group, a Facility Group, Directional Drilling, Environmental Reclamation, and its latest undertaking: Renewable Energy, which focuses on sitework and other services for wind and solar projects.

"Castle saw the transition to renewables and wanted to be a part of that," said Vice President Chris Scheve, who joined the company about a year ago and has helped



Chris Scheve,
Vice President,
Renewable Energy

spearhead the formation and expansion of the Renewable Energy Division. "With our skilled workforce and our equipment, it's a nice fit to move over and do the renewables effort."

Joel Brewton, Vice President of Asset Management & Centralized Services, added, "Outstanding service is our hallmark, and that's really built around doing things safely and efficiently. We believe that goes hand in hand with delivering solid production. We are always seeking ways to improve our practices. Technology — such as the Komatsu Smart Construction machinery and solutions we now use — is playing an increasingly bigger role for us because we see the benefits it is delivering in terms of cost and time savings."

Brewton and Scheve emphasized that the two large solar projects that Castle's Renewable Energy Division recently took on in Wisconsin are prime examples. About a year ago, Castle began site preparation, including putting the sites to grade, building basins, and handling



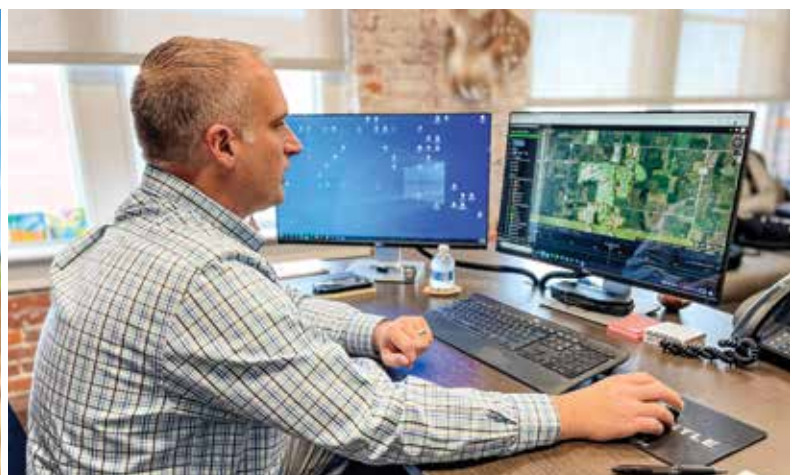
Joel Brewton,
Vice President of
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erosion control. Between the two, Castle team members moved about 700,000 yards of dirt.

"Our Onion River project, which is the bigger of the two, involved about 18 different sites, so it was pretty spread out," explained Superintendent Rocky Hartwick. "We started in July and had the mass grading done by the end of the year. Our Crawfish River project began earlier, and the grading was basically done within a relatively short timeframe."

Hartwick continued, "These projects were our first ones using Komatsu's intelligent machines, and we were very impressed with the ability to use the integrated GPS from grass to grade. Using traditional methods, we cut approximately two acres to grade each day. Komatsu's intelligent machines allowed us to do 10 to 12 acres without the need for a grade checker because the machines always know where they are in relation to final grade. The accuracy and efficiency are spot on."

Komatsu's Jason Anetsberger (left) uploads data from the Smart Construction Drone flights to Smart Construction Dashboard. Castle's Joel Brewton (right) uses Komatsu's Smart Construction Dashboard in his office in Meridian, Miss., to check the progress of Castle's job sites in Wisconsin.





► VIDEO

An operator cuts grade with a Komatsu D71PXi-24 intelligent Machine Control (iMC) dozer on Castle's Onion River project near Adell, Wis. "We were very impressed with the ability to use the integrated GPS from grass to grade," said Superintendent Rocky Hartwick. "The accuracy and efficiency are spot on."



Using Smart Construction solutions

Throughout the projects, Castle has used Komatsu intelligent Machine Control (iMC) dozers and excavators, as well as Smart Construction Drone, Smart Construction Dashboard and Smart Construction Remote. Castle also purchased its own drone, and staff members received training from Komatsu, so they could conduct flights independently.

"Komatsu corporate has been a big part of helping us learn the intelligent system as well as incorporating drone flights to verify that what the machines are seeing is exactly what we're seeing," Scheve explained. "We've made drone flights a standard, so before we ever move a speck of dirt, we do an initial flight of the sites to make sure we have accurate models to work from. CAD (computer-aided design) files are developed from those, and those models are uploaded to the intelligent machines. We do subsequent flights about a month

apart to check progress and verify how much dirt was moved, and that gets uploaded to Dashboard. That information helps us put together as-built models we can show to the customer and keep accurate records."

Brewton said that level of accuracy has been impressive to Castle and its customers.

"We are a very schedule-driven contractor," Brewton stated. "When we make a schedule, we want to stay on it. Drone flights let you verify a site within a matter of hours rather than days with the old methods of walking the site and staking it. Instead of taking maybe 20 shots with a rover and a stick within a 10-foot section, the drone is shooting thousands of points in that same area, so it's delivering a more accurate picture. Billing is another advantage we see. We don't want to overcharge our customer or be underpaid. With the drone, you can verify exact quantities, and you get paid for exactly the work you've done, and that's what we want."

Additional adoption

Increased productivity and efficiency with Komatsu iMC machines and Smart Construction solutions on the Renewable Energy Division's Wisconsin projects have encouraged the Castle team to expand their usage of technology.

"Recent legislation is only going to put additional significant dollars into renewables, and we have customers asking us for commitments for several years out; making the investment makes sense," said Scheve. "We see the applications for the machines and solutions in our other divisions too, such as Pipeline, so we are looking into how to adopt it for those going forward." ■

***The opinions expressed here are from the end users who are quoted.*



Watch the video

SMART CONSTRUCTION

Tomahawk Construction utilizes Komatsu's Smart Construction Remote to control costs and maximize efficiency

A mix of private, commercial and Department of Transportation (DOT) work keeps Tomahawk Construction and its approximately 90 employees busy year-round in Fort Myers, Fla. Established as a premier site development firm nearly 20 years ago, Randall Hendra came on board in 2014 to oversee surveying operations.

"I had my own surveying company and saw early on how GPS technology



Randall Hendra,
Project Surveyor

cut into my traditional role of surveying and staking sites," said Hendra. "Instead of fighting change, I decided to learn what GPS could accomplish. Since joining Tomahawk, we've transitioned from staking jobs to utilizing GPS technology for all of our projects."

With multiple active job sites spread across the greater Fort Myers area, Hendra is constantly monitoring job site progression. He relies on Komatsu's Smart Construction Remote — a software

system that allows you to transfer files, support operators and locate machines from your computer — to work efficiently and keep projects on schedule.

"We do a lot of subdivision work, which means plans are continuously updating and changing throughout the build," noted Hendra. "The demand for housing in the area means we're out the door and on the ground digging lakes and ponds before the plans are 100% finalized. With Smart Construction Remote, I'm able to update changes to our models and remotely send them to our GPS-equipped Komatsu machines without having to separately drive to each machine and install the file with a thumb drive."

Hendra continued, "As soon as I upload the file to the machines, the operator can see the new plans and get to work. It's a huge time saver because I'm not driving an hour to each job site and tracking down each machine — it's just the stroke of a key, and I've saved myself half a day of work. From the operator's perspective, they're not wasting half a day following plans that have already changed. You can see how the cost savings and efficiency quickly build when you have multiple changes throughout the life of a project."

Expanding equipment

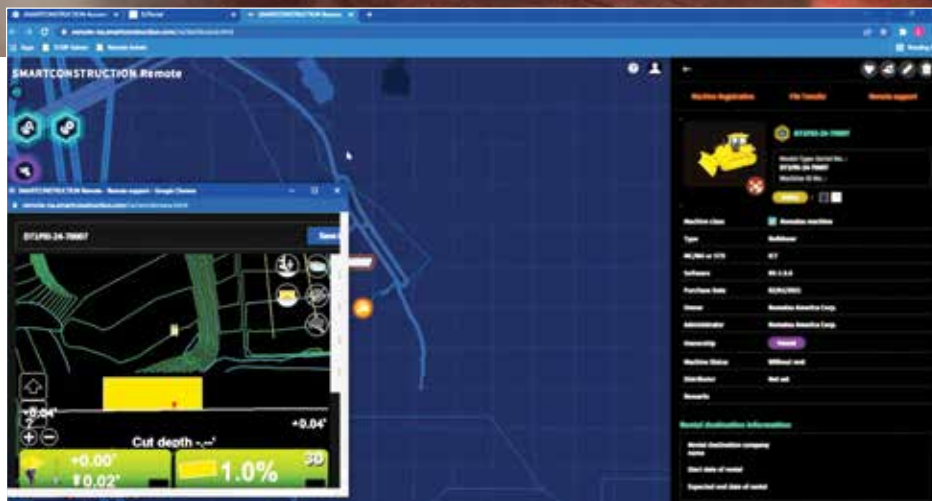
Tomahawk Construction currently utilizes approximately 10 Komatsu intelligent Machine Control (iMC) dozers and excavators. Soon, the firm will have about 30 machines capable of utilizing Smart Construction Remote because it works on Topcon systems as well as iMC machines.

"We've tried all brands of GPS-equipped machines, and in our experience, nothing works as well as Komatsu," stated Hendra. "You don't have to fix cables or masts or make little



A Tomahawk Construction operator cuts a road in the early stages of a project with a Komatsu D51PXi-24 iMC dozer. "In our experience, nothing works as well as Komatsu," said Project Surveyor Randall Hendra. "With Smart Construction Remote, I'm able to update changes to our models and remotely send them to our GPS-equipped Komatsu machines without having to separately drive to each machine and install the file with a thumb drive."





VIDEO

Project Surveyor Randall Hendra monitors Tomahawk Construction's Komatsu iMC machines as well as its Topcon-equipped machines from his desk with Smart Construction Remote. "Between tracking machines, uploading files and remotely supporting our operators, Smart Construction Remote paired with Komatsu iMC equipment has greatly increased our efficiency," said Hendra.



Watch the video

adjustments — you just set the dozer up, and it runs. You're also able to track where your machines are located, which impacts everything from efficiently moving machines between jobs to helping technicians locate machines for routine maintenance."

Operator support

When an operator has a question about a project, Hendra can often use multiple Smart Construction Remote capabilities to resolve the problem quickly.

"Through Smart Construction Remote, on the monitor in my office

I'm able to see exactly what an operator sees on the screen in their cab," explained Hendra. "If an operator calls and explains that he's grading a road and it's not a 2% cross slope, I'm able to see what his screen shows and see exactly where he is located on the job site. I can take that information and compare it to the model, make any changes, then upload a new model to the machine with the proper cross slope without leaving my desk."

Hendra added, "I can also control the screen for any machine. If an operator gets into a different

machine than they typically run and wants the screens to look a specific way, I can remotely adjust that for them. I can also update menus and delete old files to make sure our operators are using the most up-to-date version. Between tracking machines, uploading files and remotely supporting our operators, Smart Construction Remote paired with Komatsu iMC equipment has greatly increased our efficiency." ■

***The opinions expressed here are from the end users who are quoted.*



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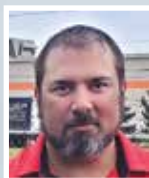


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PAVING CORNER

HAMM's new HX Series rollers achieve high degrees of precision in asphalt compaction with intuitive operation

HAMM has a new flagship in its fleet. Designed for asphalt compaction, the recently introduced HX Series pivot-steered tandem rollers have intuitive operation with Easy Drive, high-performance data, comfort features, sustainable operation, and the Smart Compact digital compaction assistant.

The HX Series rollers are available with approximately 17,000-pound (HX 70i) and 20,000-pound (HX 90i) operating weights. The rollers can achieve high degrees of precision on large construction sites and on tasks such as compaction in curves thanks to their pivot steering with a large turning angle, large track offset and four steering modes. There are nine total versions, including models with two vibrating roller drums, a vibrating roller drum and a set of wheels, and a vibrating roller drum and an oscillation drum.

HAMM's Easy Drive operating concept combines an ergonomically

optimized operator's platform with a sophisticated operating structure, including self-explanatory operation for the HX Series. Machine function and operation is intuitive and quickly learned. Steering is performed with the steering wheel, while all other important functions are operated via the joystick or the multifunction armrest.

Smart Compact decides compaction automatically and individually for each drum. Operators only have to enter whether a base, binder or asphalt surface course is to be compacted. The digital assistant evaluates data about the condition of the asphalt and has the option to incorporate local weather data from an integrated weather station. This means that HAMM is the first manufacturer in the world to automate the separate settings of individual drums and is therefore raising process reliability and the quality of the compaction and surface to a new level.

Fuel savings, sustainability

The rollers' engines work at a lower speed, which reduces fuel consumption as well as noise and exhaust gas emissions for more sustainable compaction. Powerful travel pumps ensure high compaction power, and the automatic engine stop switches the engine off after an extended period of inactivity. Smart Compact additionally saves up to 15% of fuel by switching off the vibration or oscillation as soon as it is no longer useful. Rollers can be operated with diesel or hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) fuel.

A foundation for high compaction quality is the intelligent drive control with automatic reversing. In combination with the electrically adjustable seat operating unit, it guarantees quality and comfort. It also brakes and accelerates the rollers quickly and smoothly. Plus, the seat turns automatically in the direction of travel when reversing, which is a unique market feature. ■

HAMM's HX Series models feature the Easy Drive operating concept that combines an ergonomically optimized operator's platform with a sophisticated operating structure. Smart Compact can be used, which decides compaction automatically and individually for each drum.





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Grove TMS800-2 truck-mounted crane boosts productivity with easier roading and more power

Increased power and torque, a more efficient job site setup, and a new ergonomic cab boost productivity in the new Grove TMS800-2 truck-mounted crane. It boasts a wide range of enhancements covering load charts and is ideal for a variety of taxi applications covering renewable energy, cell tower installation, and road and bridge work with a maximum capacity of 80 tons and excellent roadability.

The redesigned, lightweight carrier transforms the TMS800-2 into a true taxi crane that can carry its full 28,000 pounds of counterweight and remain within axle and tire limits without a fall-off load. In areas with stricter roading laws, the TMS800-2 can carry 18,000 pounds and remain under 100,000 pounds GVW (gross vehicle weight) as well as 25,000 pounds per axle while being in a taxi configuration. The absence of wing weights contributes to the crane's slim 8.3-foot travel width. These changes yield

substantial transport savings over the crane's lifetime.

A new outrigger design makes the job site setup simpler and faster. The rear outrigger box is raised by just under 5 inches to improve the departure angle to 18 degrees, while the front outrigger jacks are raised 3.5 inches to improve ground clearance. This also makes it easier to slide outrigger mats underneath.

More power, torque

Several improvements have been made to the crane's powertrain, with the switch to a six-cylinder turbocharged diesel engine boosting power output by 25 horsepower to 475 horsepower and a maximum torque from 1,550 pound feet to 1,700 pound feet.

The operator's access to the superstructure cab is simplified by five access/egress points around the chassis. Using the Crane Control System (CCS) platform, the dual-axis ergonomic joysticks

allow fine control of the load from the comfort of the adjustable seat with hydraulic suspension. CCS incorporates a full-color graphic display that is vertically mounted for better visibility and hosts a camera relay that gives the operator a bird's-eye view of the deployment of up to 653 feet of rope from the main hoist, at speeds of up to 370 feet per minute. The auxiliary hoist, which is also viewable on the display, offers a cable length of 420 feet. The updated carrier includes more storage areas, including outrigger pad stowage.

"The flexibility of the TMS800E (the TMS800-2's predecessor) made it a firm favorite with operators who do multiple smaller jobs a day," said Grove Truck-Mounted Cranes Product Manager JJ Grace. "Now, with the aid of these proven upgrades in terms of productivity, the TMS800-2 gives them the opportunity to squeeze in extra picks each day to maximize utilization – and do so in greater comfort." ■

Grove's new TMS800-2 truck-mounted crane features an 80-ton capacity and several improvements, including more horsepower and torque.



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TECH TALK

Five ways drones can help reduce costs and increase efficiency on construction sites

As technology continues to change the construction industry, a potentially dynamic investment companies can make isn't iron on the ground, but a drone in the sky.

Drones are more accessible than ever with relatively affordable prices and simple operating controls, which make it possible for any organization to start drone operation.

If you're ready to expand your fleet, here are five ways drones can help reduce costs and increase efficiency on your job sites.

1. Streamline communications

Being able to streamline information and connect your entire staff can help increase your workplace and job site efficiency.

With a timeline function, drones can take photographs from the same coordinates during the duration of a project to provide a timelapse of the progress. This can keep everyone up to date on the project's status.

"The drone technology allows us to have somebody go out and drone sites two to three times a week," said Greg Sutton, Vice President of Operations at Aspen Earthworks Inc. in Reno, Nev. "Even if I can't get out here and see what production has happened on a site, I still feel like I visited the job site through the drone technology."

2. Spend less time surveying

Depending on the site, conventional surveying can take days — with drones, it can take minutes.

"I think the greatest change after adopting drones or being exposed to drone usage is using the high accuracy survey grade data that they provide," said Jason Anetsberger, Director of Customer Solutions at Komatsu.

"Instead of having to walk a site or drive a site to map it terrestrially, they can now fly the site in a much larger area, in much higher resolution, in much less time, and get a highly accurate survey of that terrain. It has opened a whole new world for contractors to extract value from utilizing a drone."

A company can quickly and accurately collect objective data of its job site with a drone, and that information can be used to help increase productivity and efficiency in the field.

Continued . . .

With a drone, a company can quickly and accurately collect objective data of its job site, and that information can be used to help increase productivity and efficiency in the field.



'It was incredibly easy to get started'

... continued

3. Get accurate material estimates

Having the incorrect number of materials for a project can waste time and money. On construction sites, drones can quickly provide a precise representation of the area, so you can get an accurate estimate of everything you will need for the project.

During a preconstruction flight, you can compare the real site to the engineer's model, which allows you to fix any miscalculations. By correcting those errors, companies can quickly see a return on investment.

"We had a customer recently who realized they had to move 40,000 cubic yards more than what the engineer quantities were saying they needed to do at the beginning of the job," said Jim Petry, Construction Project Modeler for Komatsu. "For them, that was a big revelation. That was the first time that they used a drone. They quickly found a lot of value in it. They can see where their cut and fills are on the site, where that is taking place, and if it's a large site, they can make better decisions on equipment."

With more accurate measurements in the early stages of projects, companies can adjust their fleets accordingly to help increase

production and have more precise data collection throughout the process.

"Komatsu's Smart Construction Drone has enabled Aspen Earthworks to reach new levels," said Aspen Earthworks President Ryan Dustin. "With day-by-day information, it's enabled us to really dial in our estimating and our production rates that I believe have helped put us near the top of our market, and it was incredibly easy to get started. With that moment-by-moment information and real-time data, we can work with our project manager and superintendents to help us reorganize and redo the way we approach our dirt and utilities projects to increase efficacy."

4. Connect clients to every site

You can also use drone technology to quickly and accurately connect beneficiaries to the job site, which can help save time, avoid future headaches, and secure repeat clients.

"With drones, you can give clients confidence that they're getting the production that they're paying for," said Anetsberger. "That could help contractors secure future business. There's more trust in that relationship if you're feeding them near-real-time data or opening a digital twin, so they can follow alongside."

Plus, drones can reduce the amount of time spent providing documentation for invoices.

"Instead of spending a day doing that conventionally, you're doing the flight in just a few minutes and can accurately compare that against the last flight to be able to put their invoices forward and get paid as progress moves along," said Petry.

5. Create dynamic marketing content

Aside from using drones for surveying, they can also be used to collect photographs and videos on job sites, or even at the office, that can be used for marketing, recruitment and public relations campaigns.

The maneuverability of drones can create dynamic photographs and videos that a person on the ground simply cannot easily replicate. Also, you don't have to cut into your marketing budget for a camera.

While any drone can adequately survey, photograph and record a job site, Anetsberger and Petry recommend a robust model if you want high accuracy with good stability to get the most out of your investment. ■

Drones are more accessible than ever with relatively affordable prices and simple operating controls, which make it possible for any organization to start drone operation.





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PRODUCT IMPROVEMENT

Proprietary iMC 2.0 promotes significant productivity gains and is now available on Komatsu PC490LCi-11 excavator

Designed to lessen the skills gap between new and experienced operators and help improve the bottom line for contractors, Komatsu's largest intelligent Machine Control (iMC) 2.0 excavator, the PC490LCi-11, offers sophisticated productivity-enhancing automation. An excellent match for excavation, trenching, slope work or fine grading, the PC490LCi-11 helps minimize over-excavation to empower operators to dig straight to grade quickly and accurately.

Built on Komatsu's iMC platform and developed with input from leading construction companies, iMC 2.0 offers additional new features.

Upgraded iMC monitor

A new 10.4-inch iMC monitor features increased memory capacity, processing speed and pinch-to-zoom functionality in a smaller lightweight package for improved performance and ease of use.



The PC490LCi-11 is Komatsu's largest intelligent Machine Control (iMC) 2.0 excavator. It's an excellent match for excavation, trenching, slope work or fine grading. New features include an upgraded iMC monitor and bucket angle hold control.

Bucket angle hold control

The new bucket angle hold control helps operators reach final grade with speed and precision. It automatically holds the bucket angle to the design surface during arm operation, enabling operators to perform finish grading using only arm input.

Both features build upon the semi-automatic functions that were part of the first generation of iMC excavators, including the

ability to switch from manual to semi-automatic mode. The existing technology and new features can help increase production and efficiency while reducing costs. ■



Learn more

Quick Specs

Model
PC490LCi-11

Net Horsepower
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SAVINGS FOR YOU

Reman NOx sensors deliver optimal performance while lowering costs, controlling emissions and promoting sustainability

Equipment users often think of remanufacturing when it comes to engines and large components because the cost savings are significant, and they are getting “like-new” with a warranty. However, you could also save resources with smaller remanufactured items you may not have considered.

“NOx (nitrogen oxides) sensors are a great example of a high-quality, low-cost replacement option that help avoid breakdowns and reduce owning and operating expenses,” said Komatsu’s Goran Zeravica, Senior Product Manager, Reman. “A Reman NOx sensor protects your diesel engine’s aftertreatment system and promotes optimal performance with the added benefit of lowering emissions and promoting sustainability.”

Komatsu genuine Reman NOx sensors meet original equipment



Goran Zeravica,
Senior Product
Manager,
Reman,
Komatsu

specifications, assembly processes and test procedures to match the performance of a new part. They help equipment users stay in compliance with regulations while maintaining productivity.

Komatsu genuine Reman NOx sensors can also help you:

- Avoid maintenance issues with new/upgraded probe tips fitted with an anti-seize lubricant that is pre-applied to the sensor threads
- Reduce wear with watertight inline connectors that verify electronic continuity between the probe and the control module
- Operate predictably with limited data from the control panel, including temperature, mileage and hours
- Reduce waste and save natural resources by reusing and salvaging components

Get the credit you deserve

Zeravica noted that sensor probes are a common failure, so remanufactured NOx sensors are fitted with new probe tips. Once the sensor probe is replaced, Komatsu Reman NOx sensors are calibrated and bench tested. Reman components are backed by a one-year, unlimited-hour warranty.

“We highly encourage that you return your used NOx sensor, so you get full core credit, even if the probe has been cut,” said Zeravica. “Contact your Komatsu distributor for additional details and work with them to acquire the right sensor and for proper installation.” ■



To learn more about Komatsu Reman, visit <https://www.komatsu.com/services-and-support/equipment-reman-assembly/>.

A Komatsu genuine Reman NOx sensor protects your diesel engine’s aftertreatment system and promotes optimal performance. The low-cost, like-new replacement can help you avoid breakdowns and reduce expenses.



PROACTIVE APPROACH

Preventive maintenance clinics ensure your equipment is calibrated to optimum levels for high production

Many factors impact your equipment's productivity and health, including ambient temperatures, the operating environment, operator habits, regular maintenance, the quality of fluids and filters, and working applications.

Ignoring any of these can accelerate component wear and cause costly, unexpected failures as well as unplanned, extended downtime. Overall performance and operating efficiency can also be affected when pressures and speeds cause longer cycle times. A heavier burden on mechanical systems drives up fuel burn rates too.

A thorough preventive maintenance (PM) clinic provides



Chris Wasik,
Director,
Life Cycle Solutions,
Komatsu

a detailed inspection of your equipment, including a look inside to measure pump pressure, engine speeds, blowby, idle and cycle times, oil quality, internal component wear, and more.

Minimize downtime

"The United States Department of Energy estimates a good proactive preventive maintenance program paired with thorough machine recalibration and inspection, such as a PM clinic, can significantly save operations and maintenance costs compared to a reactive approach during a machine's life," said Chris Wasik, Director, Life Cycle Solutions, Komatsu.

When pressures or speeds deteriorate beyond adjustable

ranges, planned replacement strategies for key parts or components can bring the machine back to a nearly new level of performance as well as minimize repair costs and downtime, according to Wasik. Measurements taken are compared to Komatsu's recommended operating ranges and can usually be calibrated to optimum levels for better machine performance.

"For a more detailed list of system measurements and checks performed during a standard PM clinic, consult your specific machine's shop manual," Wasik advised. "Check with your Komatsu distributor or dealer for specials and incentives when they conduct a PM clinic on your Komatsu equipment." ■

A preventive maintenance (PM) clinic provides a detailed inspection of your equipment. Measurements are compared to Komatsu's recommended operating ranges and can usually be calibrated to optimum levels for better machine performance.





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TRAINING PROGRAM

Fast Track accelerates technician training and certification for increased efficiency and decreased downtime

It's no secret that there is a technician shortage in the heavy equipment industry, but companies such as Kirby-Smith Machinery Inc. (KSM) are diligently working to remedy that by recruiting and training new technicians — including getting them Komatsu-certified. KSM has teamed up with other distributors to create the Fast Track program to accelerate the process.

"The traditional two-year tech program at OSUIT (Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology) that we participate in is outstanding for those with little or no experience, and we are actively recruiting new people all the time for it," said Ben Sitton. "We also have a high number of new hires who already have been in the industry and worked on equipment or had training in the military on



Casey Zbinden,
Instructor,
Komatsu

systems such as hydraulics. Fast Track is geared toward that group. It condenses the traditional two-year program into 16 weeks."

Technicians going through the Fast Track program must have a strong background on machinery or have completed training at a technical school. That allows them to be Komatsu-certified at an accelerated pace compared to the traditional program.

"The advantage is obvious; we can take a technician with a mechanical background and a good work ethic and have them fully trained in a few months with the information they need to be a Komatsu-certified technician," said Sitton. "That's good for us, and it's good for our customers' uptime because they not only have general knowledge, but Komatsu-specific knowledge that's going to better help them quickly

diagnose and fix any issues with their machines."

Training in Cartersville

Fast Track technicians spend time at OSUIT, KSM and Komatsu's Training Center in Cartersville, Ga., where they get classroom training and hands-on experience. Classes are led by distributor trainers and Komatsu instructors such as Casey Zbinden.

"Fast Track is beneficial because of how fast the technicians are brought up to speed, so they can excel more quickly in their job when they return to the field," said Zbinden. "Because they are already grounded in the fundamentals, we can give them additional deeper testing than they normally would get in a traditional training environment. Additionally, when they come to Cartersville, they get an opportunity to spend almost an entire day operating equipment in our demonstration area and a day to tour the Chattanooga

Ray Medrano (left) looks up information during a hands-on Fast Track training session at Komatsu's Training Center in Cartersville, Ga., while Dylan Tidwell checks over systems in a classroom session. "I now understand what each component is for, what it does, how it works, and how to troubleshoot it," said Tidwell.





► VIDEO

KSM technicians diagnose an issue with a Komatsu dozer during a Fast Track training event held at Komatsu's Training Center in Cartersville, Ga.

Manufacturing Operation. Those experiences add value to a very unique program."

Technicians appreciate the program

Technicians such as Waco-based Dylan Tidwell are perfect candidates for Fast Track. He completed a two-year program and worked for an equipment manufacturer before joining KSM, so the Fast Track program builds on what he already knows.

"I'm getting machine-specific training and a lot more about how Komatsu utilizes its hydraulic technology to separate itself from other manufacturers," said Tidwell. "It gives me a better understanding when I walk up to a machine. I now understand what each component is for, what it does, how it works, and how to troubleshoot it."

Ray Medrano grew up working around a mechanic shop and turned his experience into a career. The Fort Worth-based diesel mechanic started out repairing and maintaining small machinery for rental companies before joining KSM about a year ago.

"It's a great career for me because I love tearing things apart and putting them back together," Medrano stated. "I got familiar with Komatsu working at Kirby-Smith, and the Fast Track program really gave me more insight into it and how the components and systems work together."

Medrano added that the program helped him learn more about the troubleshooting process, so he can solve issues with more confidence.

Ciro Suaste has been at KSM's Dallas branch as a service technician since 2016. He graduated from a technical program and started out

performing pre-delivery inspections and installing attachments.

"I worked my way up to oil changes, then customer repairs and troubleshooting," said Suaste. "I came to the Fast Track program to get certified and improve my troubleshooting skills. This program helped me be able to tell why I was able to fix it and what was the cause, what that component actually does — which is nice because it kind of makes more sense in your head when you actually troubleshoot because you know what you're looking for. You can just pinpoint exactly what you need from step A to step B. Fast Track is a great program." ■



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ASK THE PSSR

Roddy Conner explains how proper inspections and maintenance can help extend the life of your dozer's undercarriage

Dozers tend to move more than other machines on job sites because they are used during all stages of the project, from stripping to final grade. It's no wonder that the undercarriages that propel them are one of the most important parts of the machine to properly maintain.

An undercarriage is made up of several components, including the tracks, top and bottom rollers, idlers, sprocket segments, grouzers and more. It's important to do at least daily checks of these — if not more often, depending on the conditions and materials that you are working in — according to Roddy Conner, Product Support Specialist – Waste for Kirby-Smith Machinery Inc. (KSM).

"The undercarriage is typically the most expensive maintenance item throughout the life of a dozer," said Conner. "It's vital to consistently check both sides to make sure all components are in working order."

Conner said a critical item to check is track tension. Tracks that are too loose or too tight can affect performance, wear prematurely and lead to expensive repairs. According to Conner, adjusting the tension can be very different from machine to machine, so it's best to consult your operator's or owner's manual, or contact KSM to see how to maintain proper tension.

"If you have done a walk-around and found nothing out of place, then you are good to operate," stated Conner. "Once you are in the cab, there are tell-tale signs that



Roddy Conner,
Product Support
Specialist – Waste,
KSM

something is wrong with the undercarriage such as vibrations and odd noises. If you notice skipping or banging coming from the undercarriage, stop immediately."

Periodic inspection

Conner added that it's most likely you will never have an issue with proper inspections and care. It's important to be vigilant about track cleaning because mud and debris will affect performance, track life and proper tension readings. Conner recommends cleaning the machine as often as necessary, depending on conditions, but at least once a day. Doing so at the end of your shift should be part of your daily routine.

Conner also suggests a periodic track inspection by one of KSM's

trained product support sales representatives (PSSRs). During the inspection, they will measure all components and look for signs of premature failure.

"We can see where you're getting your most wear," said Conner. "We can take steps to prevent that. If you're wearing one side more than the other, it may be an operational issue that we can sit down and talk about and try to find operational practices that will help out with undercarriage life."

KSM recommends that you get your dozer's undercarriage inspected by a PSSR every 500 hours — or more often if you are working in highly abrasive materials. ■



Discover more at
[KirbySmithConnection.com](https://www.KirbySmithConnection.com)



▶ VIDEO

To ensure your dozer's undercarriage has a long life, you should clean it daily, get routine track inspections, and do a walk-around to check the machine's components before operating.

WORK SMARTER WITH TRACK TRUCKS

Tight conditions meant Tarrant Regional Water District had to stockpile materials far away from their trench during pipeline installation. After heavy rains, only rubber-tracked machines could finish the job. Tarrant rented several Terramac crawler carriers.

“Dump trucks of any kind were really not an option. We ran the Terramac machines on some really sloppy, nasty ground, and they floated right over it. They helped us complete the project on time.”

Mike Weaver

*Pipeline and Right-of-Way
Supervisor*

TARRANT REGIONAL
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FACES OF KIRBY-SMITH MACHINERY

Helping customers increase productivity, better manage fleets motivates Dallas-based PSSR Jordan Washam

Jordan Washam knows about teamwork. The Louisiana native played a lot of baseball in his youth and competed at the collegiate level at Louisiana Tech University, where he graduated with a degree in business.

“Unfortunately, I had some shoulder issues and wasn’t able to move on to the next level,” recalled Washam, who grew up on a rice farm. “I decided to start my career, and I took a customer support role with an equipment dealer in Louisiana. I was there about two years and heard what a good company Kirby-Smith was, so I checked it out. What really stood out to me during the hiring process was the team atmosphere the company has. That was very important to me.”

Washam joined Kirby-Smith Machinery Inc. (KSM) about three years ago as a product support sales representative (PSSR). Based out of the Dallas branch, he covers South Dallas down to Waco and east to Texarkana.

“As a PSSR, I provide after-sales support that helps customers continue to get the most out of their machines, whether that’s with a service plan, ground-engaging tools, attachments, telematics information or something else,” said Washam. “We wear many hats and deal with all brands of equipment, from the large Komatsu machines to Hensley teeth and everything in between.”

Building relationships

Building customer relationships is what Washam enjoys most about being a PSSR.

“I think the interactions we have are fun, in addition to being valuable to them and me,” said Washam. “Helping customers

quickly solve equipment issues and more efficiently and cost-effectively manage their fleet are what it’s all about — bottom line. Any way that I can do that, I’m here for them.”

That means being available 24/7, according to Washam.

“Time is money, and not everything happens between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday,” said Washam. “We’re almost always available. I’ve picked

up and delivered items late at night and early in the morning. It doesn’t matter, as long as it helps them.”

Washam is an avid hunter, especially ducks and turkeys. Although he no longer plays baseball, he does hope to get back into it someday.

“I know one of these days I’ll have a wife and kids, and Lord willing, I’ll be able to coach baseball or softball,” he said. “For now, I enjoy hunting and spending time with friends.” ■

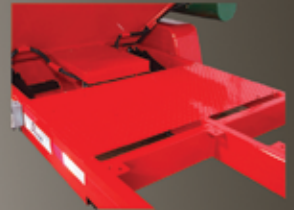


Product Support Sales Representative (PSSR) Jordan Washam uses Komtrax on his smartphone to pull up machine data. “As a PSSR, I provide after-sales support that helps customers continue to get the most out of their machines, whether that’s with a service plan, ground-engaging tools, attachments, telematics information or something else,” said Washam.

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NEW PRODUCT LINEUP

KSM becomes authorized distributor for Thompson Pump in Oklahoma, Texas

Kirby-Smith Machinery Inc. (KSM) now carries Thompson Pump heavy-duty, diesel-powered bypass and dewatering pumps throughout Oklahoma, North Texas and West Texas.

In this region, terrain and geography can be tricky, according to Thompson Pump's National Sales Manager Pat Broderick. Thompson Pump's more than 50 years of experience in manufacturing pumps and operating its own rental branch locations has helped it build heavy-duty, portable pumps that hold up to the area's rigors.

Broderick added that KSM's superior service in the territory for more than 40 years makes the partnership a natural fit.

"We are very excited about this partnership as it brings Thompson

Pump's products and name recognition to a region with plenty of competitors," said Broderick. "Kirby-Smith is one of the premier equipment dealers in the central U.S., and the continuity of products and services it provides to this market is key to our growth in the area."

"Partnering with a company like Thompson Pump, which is known throughout the industries for its reliability, support and value, allows us to expand our reach and connect with customers in an entirely new way," stated Sam Schneider, KSM General Manager, Industrial Equipment. ■



KSM now carries Thompson Pump heavy-duty, diesel-powered bypass and dewatering pumps throughout Oklahoma, North Texas and West Texas.

KSM is now Magni Telescopic Handlers' dealer in Oklahoma, West Texas

Kirby Smith Machinery Inc. (KSM) has added the Magni Telescopic Handlers product line to its robust lineup of equipment solutions that meet customer needs for productivity, efficiency and safety.

"Magni's line of rotating and heavy lift telehandlers are game-changing products for many of our existing construction partners and gives Kirby-Smith a chance to develop relationships with new partners that normally operate outside our core product range," said Colin Brown, KSM Oklahoma City Branch Manager. "We are all very excited about the opportunities that lie ahead."

The Magni Telescopic Handlers line includes rotating telehandlers (RTH),

fixed boom telehandlers (TH), and heavy lift telehandlers (HTH). All models come with (LMI) Load Monitoring Systems, touchscreen displays, digital load charts, RFID attachment recondition, and a remote-control feature.

"Kirby-Smith's unwavering commitment to their customer success and strong safety culture is in alignment with our philosophy," said Joe Leinwol, Chief Sales Officer, Magni America. "They're a great addition to our nationwide dealer network and we're looking forward to a productive partnership."

KSM has been fully trained in the application, sales, parts and service of Magni's products, and is ready to introduce the benefits of Magni to customers. ■

KSM is now an authorized dealer of Magni Telescopic Handlers' product line in Oklahoma and West Texas.





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AED AWARD WINNER

Chairman Ed Kirby recognized for his commitment to the equipment industry; the only recipient of two awards in AED's history

Kirby-Smith Machinery Inc. (KSM) Chairman of the Board Ed Kirby received the Morton R. Hunter Distinguished Industry Association Contribution Award from the Associated Equipment Distributors (AED) for his longtime dedication and contributions to the principals and goals of AED and to the equipment industry.

"I've been in the industry for 56 years, and I've always emphasized that customer support is our most important function," said Kirby. "As a company, we have kept that as our highest ideal, in good times and in bad. AED holds those same values through its industry advocacy and education, and I encourage participation not only from our staff but other dealers as well."

Kirby joined AED in 1987, and ever since then, he has encouraged KSM team members to attend AED events and especially to take advantage of

its training programs. He believes both benefit dealer personnel's growth, which leads to better customer service and a stronger industry. Recently, he helped establish the AED Foundation's Vision 2025 initiative that's focused on creating a pipeline of skilled workers. It includes three areas of emphasis: schools with a heavy equipment technology program, students within the programs, and AED dealer members.

"Ed exemplifies excellence in all he does, from building a strong company to supporting the industry as a whole," stated Robert Henderson, AED's Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. "AED wouldn't be where it is today without his wisdom and contributions. He has been especially instrumental in building up our AED Foundation's educational and training initiatives."

The award comes as KSM celebrates the company's 40th anniversary of when Kirby helped found it in Oklahoma City with a focus on selling used equipment. Under his leadership, KSM has expanded throughout Oklahoma and into Texas, Kansas and Missouri. KSM now carries numerous machinery lines to service a wide range of applications.

Double recipient

The Morton R. Hunter honor is the second award AED has given Kirby, making him the organization's only double recipient. In 2017, he received the Lester J. Heath III Award — named after the first AED Foundation president — for his distinguished service and commitment to training and education in the equipment industry.

"Being recognized by my peers and friends is a great honor," said Kirby. "I feel fortunate to be part of such a great organization." ■

KSM Chairman of the Board and Founder Ed Kirby addresses the crowd at AED Summit after receiving the Morton R. Hunter Distinguished Industry Association Contribution Award from AED President Brian McGuire for his longtime dedication and contributions to the principals and goals of AED and to the equipment industry.



NEWS & NOTES

Recycled PPE can strengthen concrete, according to new study

Engineers at RMIT University have developed a method that uses disposable personal protective equipment (PPE) to make concrete stronger. They investigated three types of PPE: isolation gowns, face masks and rubber gloves.

The studies found that shredded PPE could increase the strength of concrete by up to 22% and improve crack resistance. A field project is in the works.

"While our research is in the early stages, these promising initial

findings are an important step toward the development of effective recycling systems to keep disposable PPE waste out of landfills," said Dr. Rajeev Roychand, joint lead author. ■

Interior Department allocates \$560 million to clean up wells

The United States Interior Department is giving \$560 million to 24 states as part of an effort to start cleaning up high-priority derelict oil and gas wells. It said up to 10,000 wells could be dealt with as part of an orphan well cleanup program that was created under the

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which was passed in 2021.

"(The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law) is enabling us to confront long-standing environmental injustices by making a historic investment to plug orphaned wells

throughout the country," said Secretary Deb Haaland.

According to the Interior Department, more than 129,000 orphaned wells have been identified on state and private land. It said the number is expected to increase with more research. ■



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TOP OF THE HEAP

Komatsu's D85EX-18 earns first place in EquipmentWatch's Highest Retained Value Awards for large dozers

Large construction and/or small mining companies want dozers that are built for high production, as well as solid value when it comes time to trade in or sell them. Komatsu's D85EX-18 fits the bill and received a Highest Retained Value Award for large track dozers for 2022 from EquipmentWatch.

The 264-horsepower D85EX-18 has a five-year residual value of 72.71%, according to EquipmentWatch, which was about 10 percentage points higher than the overall average for the category. EquipmentWatch added that retained values are calculated using market data, depreciation standards and a proprietary algorithm.

"For EquipmentWatch's Highest Retained Value Awards, the retained value is a prediction for the value of a piece of equipment five years from now," said Don McCloud in the article "Komatsu D85EX-18: The Large Dozer with the Highest Retained Value for 2022" published by Equipment World. "Analysis was limited to models sold in 2022 to ensure these results can be applied to buying decisions today."

When Komatsu introduced the D85EX-18 in 2015, it came with a new automatic transmission as well as the advantages of greater power-train efficiency and lower fuel consumption — even though its operating weight increased by nearly 10%. Two gearshift modes — automatic and manual — can be easily selected to fit the application: automatic for general dozing, and manual for dozing and ripping rough ground. For added efficiency, operators can choose E mode for all general dozing, leveling and spreading. E mode provides adequate speed and power, while saving up to 10% on fuel usage.

Options available

The D85EX-18 features Komatsu's high-capacity, 9.4-cubic-yard SIGMADOZER blade with power pitch. This improves performance and increases productivity by up to 15%, compared to a conventional

Semi-U blade. The SIGMADOZER blade's unique front design rolls material to the center of the blade and increases soil-handling capacity. Digging resistance is reduced for a smoother flow of material, so larger amounts of soil can be dozed with less power. You can customize the D85EX-18 to your preference with additional blade options.

In addition to the standard D85EX-18, Komatsu manufactures a D85PX-18, which is designed for low ground pressure. There are also intelligent Machine Control (iMC) versions — D85EXi-18 and D85PXi-18 — as well as purpose-built D85EX-18 WH and D85PX-18 WH waste handling models. For more information on these and other dozers, visit www.komatsu.com/products/dozers. ■



Discover more

With a five-year residual value of 72.71%, the 264-horsepower Komatsu D85EX-18 dozer won a 2022 Highest Retained Value Award for large track dozers from EquipmentWatch.



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BATTERY MAINTENANCE

Proper storage and handling of your equipment's batteries ensure safety, help maintain peak performance

Batteries are crucial to your equipment's productivity, and properly caring for them can ensure their performance and longevity. Here are some tips to prepare batteries for storage, so they are ready to work when you are.

"Safety is of utmost importance because batteries generate explosive hydrogen gas," emphasized Komatsu's Veronica Vargas, Product Manager, Parts. "Always wear safety glasses, a face shield and proper gloves when working on or near them. Batteries also contain corrosive sulfuric acid that can destroy clothing and burn the skin. Neutralize acid spills with a paste made of baking soda and water or large quantities of water."



Veronica Vargas,
Product Manager,
Parts,
Komatsu

To stay safe when handling batteries, remember these tips:

- Keep sparks, flames and cigarettes away from batteries
- Do not connect or disconnect "live" circuits
- Always turn charging and testing equipment off before attaching or removing clamps to avoid creating sparks
- Perform work in a ventilated area
- Never lean directly over a battery while boosting, testing or charging it

Always store batteries in a cool, dry place, and do not store batteries outside or high on racks. Add demineralized water to non-maintenance-free batteries as required.

Test, inspect

When it's time to use the batteries again, testing should be done prior to installation. Use load testers to simulate starting, and test for conductance and voltage. Charge batteries, if necessary.

"Just as you do with batteries, it's important to maintain testing and charging equipment," said Vargas. "Clean the terminals and cable ends. Check for correct output, check leads for corrosion, and change leads annually. As you prepare to test the batteries, check them for any signs of damage, and if there is any, or if there is any doubt about their safe usage, replace them immediately as usage may lead to severe consequences."

Vargas concluded, "If you take care of batteries, they will take care of you. We recommend that when it's time to replace them, you use genuine Komatsu products from your Komatsu distributor." ■



Proper battery care ensures your equipment's productivity and long battery life. If you are storing batteries, it's essential to follow safety guidelines.





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SERIAL # K019.0007, 4,190 HRS., STOCK # KL15002X
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