

# PETERSBURG PLUMBING & EXCAVATING, LLC

## Innovation keeps this company ahead of the pack



**Brian Vogt,  
President**

When customers in central Illinois need sanitary sewer pipe installed in a tough environment, they turn to Petersburg Plumbing & Excavating, LLC.

“Personally, I think we are the best at working on jobs that other companies are afraid to take on,” said President Brian Vogt. “We don’t usually get the easy job calls. Instead, we get the nasty stuff that requires us to go deep into bad dirt or work around a lot of utilities.”

While Vogt may be biased, his statement has merit. The Springfield, Ill.-based company, started by his great-grandfather in 1936, has installed sanitary sewer pipes since the 1970s and is very good at it. Recently, it put in 10,000 feet of 30-inch sewer line 25 feet deep for a project in Taylorville. Vogt estimates that the company installed nine sections of the pipe a day, roughly tripling the industry standard.

In Springfield this summer, it installed 72-inch concrete storm sewer pipe 20 feet deep under a three-block stretch of residential street. To complete the work, the company had to bore 20 feet beneath the existing 36-inch water main and 48-inch sanitary sewer lines.

“We take pride in our ability to complete those jobs,” stated Vogt. “We have excellent crews, great equipment and a lot of experience.”

Today, the company employs 25 people and handles storm and sanitary-sewer installation, water-main construction and directional boring. It also performs sewer cleaning and vacuum work in addition to closed-circuit television-camera pipe investigation.

Petersburg Plumbing & Excavating went all-in on the underground side of the business in 2011 after Henson Robinson purchased it.

“We had a mechanical division that performed commercial plumbing, heating and cooling, but after the market crashed and residential construction slowed, the company struggled while the underground carried us,” recalled Vogt. “We became a subsidiary of Henson Robinson. The mechanical division folded into theirs, and we focused on the underground work. It’s been a great relationship.”

### Switch to Komatsu

For Petersburg to succeed on challenging projects, it needs the best equipment available. That’s why Vogt turns to Roland Machinery Company and Sales Manager Chris Ingram for Komatsu excavators and wheel loaders. That wasn’t always the case, however.

“We were very loyal to another company and almost every piece of machinery we owned, both for the company and the family, came from them without a second thought,” said Vogt. “Henson Robinson had a relationship with Roland, so when we needed some new equipment in 2013, I decided to meet with Chris to see what Komatsu could offer. We liked what we heard and went with a PC360LC-10 excavator.”

Vogt was even more impressed by how the machine operated, and it didn’t take long for Petersburg Plumbing & Excavating to add more Komatsu machines, as it bought a PC210LC



**Russ Carlstrom,  
Field Superintendent**

A Petersburg Plumbing & Excavating operator uses a Komatsu PC138USLC excavator on a sewer installation project in Springfield, Ill.





On a project in Taylorville, Ill., this Petersburg Plumbing & Excavating crew uses a Komatsu PC490LC excavator to dig out a trench and a PC210LC excavator to backfill. “The Komatsu excavators are fast and have a lot of power,” said Superintendent Tim Graves. “The difference between the Komatsu excavators and their competitors is noticeable.”

excavator a few days later and a PC490LC excavator after that.

“We had some pushback from our operators initially, but once they ran the Komatsu excavators they were blown away,” said Vogt. “The icing on the cake for us was the PC490. It replaced our top excavator. The operator was skeptical, but after digging for one section of pipe 15 minutes faster than he could with the previous machine, he stopped, opened the door and yelled that the PC490 was amazing.

“The excavators are fast, smooth and reliable,” added Vogt. “We know when we start a job, we have the right equipment to help us do it quickly and with precision.”

The fleet also includes a WA320 wheel loader and a PC138USLC excavator.

Vogt appreciates Komatsu CARE, which includes complimentary maintenance on Tier 4 machines for the first 2,000 hours or three years of operation, and KOMTRAX, a telematics system, which Roland and Komatsu provided.

“To get these services at no charge was great for us,” shared Vogt. “Our maintenance costs went down dramatically because of KOMTRAX and Komatsu CARE, and our production numbers improved. Chris and everyone at Roland have been great to work with. They are dedicated to our business, and we appreciate that.”

## Looking ahead

Vogt knows that the current rendition of his family’s company is far different from the one that opened four generations ago, and he understands that further change is coming. It’s the nature of the industry.



Using a Komatsu PC360LC excavator with a reversed 54-inch bucket, a Petersburg Plumbing & Excavating operator fills a truck on a residential street project in Springfield, Ill. “Our operators love the PC360 because of its power and comfort,” said President Brian Vogt.



(L-R) Roland Machinery Company Sales Manager Chris Ingram and Springfield Territory Manager Cody DeGroot meet with Petersburg Plumbing & Excavating President Brian Vogt.

“We’re always looking for ways to be more competitive,” he noted. “I think one thing that will help us remain successful is our ability to complete the extremely difficult projects. We want to be the one to call when someone has a really nasty job. If we continue to deliver, we’ll have a strong future.” ■



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