



Advanced Vacuum Services Cleaning Up Whatever is Needed

Company: Advanced Vacuum Services (AVS)

Address: 5062 W. Base Road, Greensburg

Telephone: (812) 662-7275

Web site: www.advancedvacuum.com

Management: John and Adele Corya, owners; Scott Moormann, general manager

Employees: 15 full-time; 5 part-time

Services:

Industrial cleaning services, including water blasting, hydro excavating and roof vacuuming. Environmental consulting and contracting services.

Getting started:

A sister business, Hygrade Excavating, found itself doing a great deal of underground tank remediation in the late 1990s. Frustrated by having to rely on outside contractors for the tank cleaning portion of the work, the Coryas started AVS. They were originally going to sell the truck they purchased after completing the work, but found that “this was an underserved business.”

Customers:

Power plants and factories were among the initial clients and remain today. The mid-summer and end-of-year periods when manufacturers idle their plants for a thorough cleaning are some of the busiest times for the company. AVS quickly added a second truck and high pressure water blasting equipment to give it additional capabilities.

The variety of work continues to grow. Flat roof replacements require the removal of gravel before the new roof is installed. AVS is working with a number of roofing contractors. Moormann notes the company is also getting “more and more calls to haul industrial waste.”

Keys to success:

“We have that typical small company mentality,” John Corya comments. “We’ve got to try harder; we’ve got to give that extra service. In this industry, high turnover is an accepted part of the business. We’re not going to get big enough that we fall into that trap.”

Moormann adds, "What makes us different is that we're right here. We develop a relationship with the folks we work with." Once that working relationship is established, customers often call with requests for a different type of job. Both AVS and the client learn about new uses for the vacuuming equipment.

Difficult, but interesting:

Emergency calls late at night or on the weekends are expected. Blizzards, fires, working in confined spaces and other hazards are also part of the equation. AVS utilizes extensive training and certification for its employees. It also conducts a safety evaluation prior to beginning each project.

Moormann says, "We do the best we can to let them know what they're getting into. A lot of people apply but decide that the work is not for them."

Some of the more unusual assignments have been helping put a mechanical cap on a broken pipeline still spurting fuel and using water to create a hole to allow others to pour concrete and plug up an eroding dam. Another involved using hoses on rail cars overloaded with soybeans. What would have taken several days by shovel was a several-hour job for AVS.

On location:

On the day of this interview, the company had two crews working in Crawfordsville on flat roof projects, another pulling water from an excavation site in Columbus and a 24-hour shift was taking place at a power plant in Sullivan. Most of the assignments occur throughout Indiana, although specific projects have taken the company into all the neighboring states.

Additional equipment is kept in the Terre Haute area, allowing service to clients in the western part of the state and quicker response time for emergencies.

Power play:

AVS now has four vacuum trucks, with the one in use depending on the type of work being done. Moormann says the days of bigger, stronger, faster trucks being developed are fading away. Current technology is focused on using less fuel and reducing the noise.

"We're finding more and more things we can do with water blasting," he states, citing concrete demolition and paint removal as two areas. "Sand blasting is used a lot now for the paint removal, but water is better and that technology is being developed."

Corya says "10,000 PSI will cut through blacktop" and the equipment will "suck anything that can go through a six-inch hose."

Hurricane help:

Like so many others in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Greensburg residents offered assistance. One of the AVS trucks was utilized, with supervisor Jonathon Moore organizing the relief effort with his uncle and helping drive a trailer full of supplies to the rural area of Poplarville, Mississippi.

The Coryas were happy to help when Moore came to them with the idea. It's an indication, they say, of the quality employees they are proud of.



Water blasting is being used for a wide variety of services.



Owner John Corya vows to maintain strong customer service.