

Annual Meetings are Coming Soon!

Other than the snow removal crew and the shop, it's been a pretty quiet winter so far. We hope everyone is getting some much needed rest for their bodies and minds after 2 plus years of pedal-to-the-metal type work. But as the daylight starts to slowly stretch out, we are getting ready to get back at it and we thought it would be a good idea this year to actually get our annual meetings done in February since we have the time. We are changing it up a little bit this year and instead of having the whole group meet about general safety and policies, we are going to do it in smaller groups, just like the equipment walk-arounds. We will still meet as a large group on Monday, February 21st to go over the Alerus retirement, OSHA 10-hour review, and some defensive driving skills. On Tuesday through Friday, we will be meeting as operator groups and on the days you are assigned, you'll spend half the day in the classroom and the other half doing walk-arounds. All these meetings will be at the old Sacred Heart Temporary School (in the Southeast Corner of EGF Industrial Park). There will also be a sign up sheet to meet individually with the Alerus Financial representatives either at the Townhouse on Monday, or at their office downtown the rest of the week.

Like always, these meetings are mandatory. If you have a conflict with the meeting dates and times, please contact Dave. If you aren't sure which class to attend, just call the office. Please bring in your worn out vests and/or hard hats and we'll replace them. We look forward to seeing you there!

At the Townhouse in Grand Forks:

Monday, February 21st

Alerus Financial - 401K Review - 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.

OSHA 10-hr Review - 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

At the old Sacred Heart Temp School:

Tuesday, February 22nd

Dozers and Scrapers Training - 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

Wednesday, February 23rd

Backhoes, Blades, and Tractors Training

- 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

Thursday, February 24th

Volvos and Tri-axes Training - 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

Friday, February 25th

Pipe Crew and Supervisors Training

- 8:30 am - 4:30 pm



Spring Outlook

The flood talk has already started up around the region. It looks like there's going to be plenty of work to go around, so be ready. And besides the flood work, we have a few projects that need to be finished up this year that hopefully we'll be able to get a jump start on if spring provides us with some good working weather. Projects that need finishing are Oakport Phase 1A, Simplot PSD Lagoon Construction, Crystal ND Track Loop, and 48th St. in Grand Forks. A couple of other projects that haven't started yet but could go early are the levee construction in both Perley and Hendrum. The rest of the summer is still up in the air, but there seems to be some talk of work coming down the pipeline, especially in the Devils Lake area. So enjoy the winter hibernation, because pretty soon we'll be back at full speed.

Cellphone Change

Some of you on our cell phone plan may have gotten some text messages or letters in the mail telling you to pick out your new AT&T phone by such and such a date. Please disregard all this information as it does not apply to business accounts. We are in the process of meeting with AT&T and our local provider to work out the details of the switch. We will keep you up to date, but please don't do anything until you hear from us.

Left-over Coats

For you gentlemen that didn't make it to the Christmas party, the employee gift this year was a Stormtech winter jacket. If you haven't already, swing by the office and pick it up before spring comes so you can get some use out of it.

Moving Around? - If you have a change of address, please contact the office so we can update our records.

Insurance Switch

A reminder that MN Blue Cross Blue Shield is the health insurance provider as of January 1, 2011. All participants should now have their new member cards. To update & complete our records please complete and return the enrollment form mailed January 13th. Call the office with any questions and thank you for your prompt attention to the enrollment update.

"How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives." - Annie Dillard

Safety Central

The Scoop About Snow Shoveling

While shoveling snow can be good exercise, it can also be deadly for optimistic shovelers who take on more than they can handle. The Minnesota Safety Council offers the following tips to help you get a handle on safe shoveling:

Individuals over the age of 40, or those who are relatively inactive, should be especially careful. If you have a history of heart trouble, check with your doctor before shoveling.

Avoid shoveling after eating or while smoking.

Take it easy. Snow shoveling is a weight-lifting exercise that raises your heart rate and blood pressure. Warm up before starting the job and stretch both before and after shoveling.

If possible, shovel only fresh snow — it is easier to shovel

than wet, packed-down snow.

Push the snow forward rather than lifting it out of the way; pick up only small amounts when needed. Your back will thank you.

As with any lifting activity, use your legs, not your back. Legs should be bent and back straight. Bend and "sit" into the movement, allowing large muscle groups to do most of the work.

Never work to the point of exhaustion. Take frequent breaks. If your chest feels tight, stop immediately.

Dress as you would for any outdoor activity. Dressing in layers is best. Take extra precautions to keep hands and feet warm.

Cooter's Corner

Helpful maintenance tips from your friendly mechanic.

We are performing extensive maintenance on all the machines coming through the shop, trying to catch everything that needs fixing, but if you can think of anything that needs to get fixed on your piece of equipment, let us know and we'll get it on the list .

Construction Math:

1. How much dirt is in a hole that is 3 feet wide, 6 feet long, and 5 feet deep?
2. When things go wrong what can you always count on?

