

MASONRY NEWS

Sponsored by:  **EZ Grout Corporation**

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Thompson Masonry Contractor, Inc. makes money with EZ Grout Equipment

Ronald W. Thompson, President of Virginia based Thompson Masonry Contractor, Inc. wrote John Honaker with Prime Masonry Equipment, one of EZ Grout Corporation's distributors to let him know how much he liked the equipment he purchased from EZ Grout.

"First of all, I would like to tell you about a couple of our earlier purchases. The very first piece of equipment was a Grout Hog®; not one but two Grout Hogs®! One was hydraulic and the other was gas engine powered. Pouring grout had been a problem for our company for years. We own a concrete pump and have used it for most of our grouting. When we purchased our Grout Hogs® we started making money on grout. When you can pour grout with 2 to 3 men instead of 10 to 20 men the Grout Hog® was a "no brainer."

The first mixer we bought was a 20 cu.ft. Mud Hog®; I could not believe I was going to pay that much for a mixer. I soon found out that was one of my best investments. This mixer is still in use today after five years, and without a doubt, this is the best mixer in the industry.

I am "SOLD" on EZ Grout Corp. equipment. I know I'm buying the best equipment on the market. I know Damian Lang and I know he stands behind all of his equipment. Thompson Masonry currently owns six (6) Grout Hogs®, nine (9) Mud Hogs®, fourteen (14) Poly Troughs®, and two (2) pallets of Hog Leg® Wall Bracing. And you know the best news is I get to buy more equipment from EZ Grout Corp.; WHY? Because it makes Thompson Masonry **money.**"



Photos Courtesy of Prime Masonry Equipment

Enter to Win \$

Last year our calendar contest was such a success that we are doing it again! The calendar featured the best 12 jobsite photos submitted that featured EZ Grout equipment. The twelve finalists will receive \$50 each and the cover winner will receive an additional \$100! The more photos you enter, the more chances you get to be selected. All entries must be submitted by October 31, 2008. By submitting photographs contestants certify that EZ Grout may reproduce, distribute, publish, display, edit, and otherwise use the material for any purpose, in any form and on any media. Winners will be contacted in November and listed in the December Masonry News. Submissions can be sent to EZ Grout Corp., 405 Watertown Rd., Waterford, Ohio 45786 Attention: Linda or electronic submissions in 300 dpi resolution can be sent to lhart@ezgrout.com. Along with the submissions the following information is required: Name of your company, date, jobsite, how long that particular piece of equipment has been in use, and what other EZ Grout equipment does the company own. If you should have any questions, contact Linda at 1-800-417-9272 ext. 108.



Manufacturer's Cash Back Coupon

Since 1998, EZ GROUT CORPORATION has been designing and producing quality, labor-saving equipment for masonry professionals. By focusing on end-user needs and job-site solutions, EZ GROUT has built a reputation for being innovative and reliable. Now, you can save even more with

\$200 CASH BACK COUPON

Offer valid on new **MH9**
Mud Hog® Mixers purchased between
September 1st- October 31, 2008

To receive your \$200 cash back, fill out this form and fax it along with a copy of your receipt for your EZ GROUT equipment purchase to: EZ GROUT CASH BACK 1-740-749-0602.

Please allow 4-6 weeks to receive your check.

COMPANY _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

EMAIL _____ TELEPHONE _____

Serial # _____

DIRECT PURCHASE DISTRIBUTOR: _____

Yes, contact me I have an idea or need for other masonry equipment.

Offer terms and conditions: **EZ Grout rebate is not valid for distributors.** This certificate must be accompanied by a receipt. One rebate coupon per equipment. Certificate must be postmarked by 11/15/08 TO BE VALID. Offer void where prohibited, taxed, or restricted by law. Offer is good only in USA. **This offer is not redeemable at distributor location.**

Masonry News - Safety First



Concrete Construction - Impalement Protection

OSHA requires that employees are protected against impalement hazards from exposed rebar. In the past (and possibly even today) the practice of using some type of plastic mushroom cap was an option. However, studies conducted by the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health show the general ineffectiveness of rebar caps as impalement protection under requirements in 29 CFR 1926.701 (b).

Manufacturers of the mushroom caps agree that those caps were designed to provide SCRATCH PROTECTION ONLY and were never intended to prevent impalement, even at grade. OSHA goes on to say "Considering the serious nature of the hazard, the standard mushroom style plastic rebar caps should not be used for protection against impalement. Protective devices capable of withstanding at least 250 pounds dropped from a height of ten feet should be used. OSHA doesn't approve products, but there are steel reinforced covers and plastic and wooden troughs available that provide the needed protection."

What should you do?

- Identify uncapped rebar hazards: Keep a lookout for unprotected rebar. Let your supervisor know the location of this rebar and of any other hazards.
- If working above rebar: Make sure you are using fall protection if you are working above exposed rebar. Fall protection/prevention is also applicable when the rebar is below grade (e.g., footings or other excavations) and where a fall into a trench would present an impalement hazard.
- Install rebar impalement protection: If you are trained and authorized by your employer to install the rebar impalement protection caps or devices do so immediately.

While there are no specific training requirements for protecting workers from rebar impalement hazards, workers need to know the hazards of working around unprotected rebar. Explain to them how to protect themselves and go over situations and locations on the jobsite where they could be exposed to these hazards. Discuss who they should contact if they discover unprotected rebar. Remember certain states have more stringent regulations that go above and beyond the OSHA standards.

Where to go for more information:

29 CFR 1926.701(b) - Reinforcing Steel

OSHA Letter of Interpretation, 05/29/1997 - Mushroom style plastic rebar covers

(Info provided courtesy of Keller's Construction Toolbox Talks, Site Safety - General Overview copyright 2003)

Need a new way to make money in a down economy?

Attend one of Damian Lang's R.A.C.E. seminars and learn how he has taken his businesses from start-ups to doing over \$20 million in sales. Due to request from mason contractors across the country, Damian will host a seminar based on his book, "Rewarding and Challenging Employees: For Profits in Masonry" on October 8-10, 2008. Due to limited seating, the first 30 paid attendees will be accepted. For more information and to register contact Linda at 1-800-417-9272 ext. 108.



Masonry News Contractor Tip of the Month

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

“No Beans To Pick”

If the work isn't there, it just isn't there! Are you seeing contractors pricing work so low that you are tempted to drop your drawers and prove you can do it just as cheap and still make money? Or, maybe you have thought to yourself, “Maybe these guys are not making any money, just robbing Peter to pay Paul”. There comes a time when we have to face it, “If the work isn't there, it just isn't there”.

From the time I was 9 until I was 18, I spent my summers working on a truck farm. After discovering there was very little money in crop farming, Mike Story, who was my boss at the time, went to work at a local plant and put me in charge of the farm at 14 years old. One morning he gave me a job, “Take three other helpers to pick the third picking of green beans.” Now, if you have picked green beans before, you know that the first picking is pretty good, the second is worse, but the third is not even worth going after. As I recall it was a bad year for crops and Mike just wanted to get any harvest he could to make it better. So he said, “Go pick green beans”. Although I knew there were no beans left to pick, I took my crew and went to the field. I worked as hard as I could all day with my crew of three and amazingly we picked 8 bushels of beans. (I had actually picked 5 of the 8 bushels myself, but if this had been the first picking of good green beans, we could have picked 24 to 32 bushels all total.) When Mike came home and found we only picked 8 bushel of green beans, he jumped all over me about only having 8 bushels picked. Being exhausted, and instead of telling him there just isn't any beans out there to pick, I just told him to

“Pick your own ‘blanking’ beans”. Not the right thing for a 14 year old kid to tell his boss so he fired me right on the spot. Then, before I got in trouble from Dad, the next day he called me back to work. When I got back, he sat me down and gave me a heart to heart talk. He said “I better never tell him to pick his own ‘blanking’ beans again. And, if there aren't any beans in the field, don't waste the whole crews' day trying to pick them; find something else to do or just go home so it doesn't cost us more for labor than we will yield out of the beans.” He explained that we had \$42 worth of beans picked and he paid \$60 to get them picked.

This experience early on in life has stuck with me for the last 30 years, and contracting is no different in this instance. I have contractors tell me daily that there isn't enough work out there. My advice to them is: “If there isn't any beans to pick, go home so you don't have more labor in picking the beans than you will get out of them.” You may have 100 people working but if there's no work, scale back to 50 until things pick up again. Keep the top 50 producers as it should be easier to make a profit with them and cut 50 of the worst temporarily. This will relieve the pressure to find so much work and you should get better money out of the jobs you do pick up. When the work isn't there, work smarter and focus on earning a profit with the best producers you still have.

Damian Lang is a mason contractor in Southeast Ohio who has four companies that do combined sales of 20 million. He is also the author of the book “Rewarding and Challenging Employees for Profits in Masonry”. To order a copy of his book or to attend one of his seminars held specifically for mason contractors, call Linda Hart at Lang Masonry 800-417-9272.



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