

Plentiful power comes in a small package

Sam L. Sibert has a lot to be proud of — a close-knit family; a former pro-basketball career in the 1960s; and a company built upon hard work, dedicated employees and rugged equipment. Companies like S.L. Sibert aren't built overnight, but develop gradually by building on the success and recognition of quality workmanship that comes with each completed project.

Sibert started in the construction industry in 1983 working for someone else, then decided to start his own company, S.L. Sibert Co., in 1993. The company now works primarily in the Fort Worth, Texas, and surrounding metropolitan areas with an exclusive Texas Utilities (TXU) contract for gas, water, sewer and electrical work in new commercial and residential developments. Approximately 80 percent of the work is gas and electric, with the remaining 20 percent in water and sewer. Virtually 100 percent of the work takes place underground and that's where their eight 302.5 and two 301.5 mini hydraulic excavators come into play.

"We've found machines that are stronger and better than the competition," Sibert says. "We've been asking for these small units from Cat for years and now that they're here, they're exactly what we wanted."

He explains that tight work space comes with the territory. It is work that takes place between houses, near buildings, landscaping and other factors that could be seen as obstacles — although not with Cat Mini Hydraulic Excavators on the job.



"We use the smaller excavators — the 302.5 and 301.5 — instead of larger ones as they easily fit where we need them to go and they are easier to operate in tight areas, which is where most of our work occurs," Sibert says. "These units also have plenty of power, the power needed to do our job.

They're very easy to get on and off of the trailer and don't require a huge truck to haul them from place to place. They are also very gentle on the ground and surrounding landscape due to their lighter weight."

The controls are very logical, smooth and precise, the seats are comfortable and the overall package is well designed. Additionally, smooth boom movements allow Cat Mini Hydraulic Excavators to be operated easily in close quarters.

Sensitivity is key

"We do the new gas service and water lines in subdivisions, including excavation and welding," Sibert says. "Occasionally, we may use horizontal



"Plain and simple, we think Caterpillar makes good equipment and that's why we use it."

—Sam L. Sibert, owner,
S.L. Sibert Co.



CAT COMPACT PRODUCTS

The 302.5's small package easily fits into tight areas without skimping on power. It's also very gentle on the ground and surrounding landscape due to its light weight and rubber track.

When you've got your crews working in tight areas near houses and trees, the greater control afforded by the Cat machines helps prevent damage to people and to the surroundings."

Safety comes first and the last thing S. L. Sibert Co. wants to do is have an injured employee or have to repair damage to a homeowner's property.

Big power, small size, dependable package

Byrd continues that although S.L. Sibert Co. wanted a small excavator,

they could not afford to skimp on power.

"We needed something small with plenty of digging power," he says. "That's why the 302.5 works so well for us. It's bigger and stronger than the 301.5, which is still a good machine, and our guys really seem to love it. The 302.5 also has more power than the competition in a similar small package and it's dependable, versatile and easily serviceable — our mechanics certainly don't complain about them."

Sibert points out the importance of happy employees and Caterpillar factors into that equation as well.

"We've tried the competition, but found that our people just plain like the Cat machines best," he says. "The controls are very logical, smooth and precise, the seats are comfortable and the overall package is well-designed. They are easy to service, as well, which my mechanics like. So Caterpillar just makes sense for us — my people wouldn't want anything else!"

An ounce of prevention

All company equipment is on a strict preventive maintenance program to keep everything working in top condition. Company mechanics adhere to recommended service intervals, parts and techniques. Periodically, everything is even brought into the equipment yard and a service person from the local Cat dealer comes in to evaluate and service the equipment.

"Our local Caterpillar dealer has always been very helpful and attentive, getting parts to us quickly or answering questions," Sibert says. "Whenever we've needed something parts-wise, they've always taken care of us or have provided us with another machine to use until the part was there. Fortunately, though, we seem to have very little downtime and the good response we get from our dealer minimizes this even further. It's been a good association between our company and our Caterpillar dealer. We get good service and great equipment." ■

directional boring, but open cut is the preferred method and that's where our Cat excavators come in. Open cutting allows us to be sensitive to the surroundings and to what's already in the ground. It's important to open a trench gradually, being mindful of what's already there. We always have existing utilities located before digging so that we know what to work around, but open cutting, bucket by bucket with these small excavators, helps prevent any damage."

Tom Byrd, transportation and equipment manager for the company, points out another benefit of these mini hydraulic excavators — the fluidity of their movements.

"The smoothness of the controls as well as the boom operation is so important to us," he says. "Look around at some other excavators and you'll notice how jerky their boom movements are, but our small Cat mini hydraulic excavators make smooth motions, which make them much easier to operate.

