

TAKING I&I TO SCHOOL

Grout school provides a hands-on education to help fight the flow of infiltration

By Luke Laggis

When it comes to training your crews and handling rehabilitation work in-house, you can learn some things from the contractors who serve your utilities.

Frank Klima knows a thing or two about running a business, and training his people to do the job right. The president of Lake County Sewer in Willowick, Ohio, makes sure his people get a thorough education at Municipal Sewer Grout School, because it helps his bottom line. It also helps his customers' manholes and sewer lines.

"It pays for itself in the long run," Klima says. "If you have a truck — especially the ones we build — they aren't cheap and can break if handled incorrectly. Just the basics regarding how the panel operates, how the packer is inserted in the pipe, there is just so much they can learn from the instructors. Every guy picks up a little something different from each school."

The school is a joint venture between Aries Industries, Avanti International, CUES and Logiball; they teamed up to develop the two-day school to educate contractors and municipal utilities on the process of grouting. The school covers everything from mixing and optimizing grout performance to specification requirements and live demonstrations.

"We need to educate everyone about what they are going to be doing. Avanti, Aries, CUES and Logiball have the program down where it's a teaching program. Whether the person has been in the industry forever or they are just

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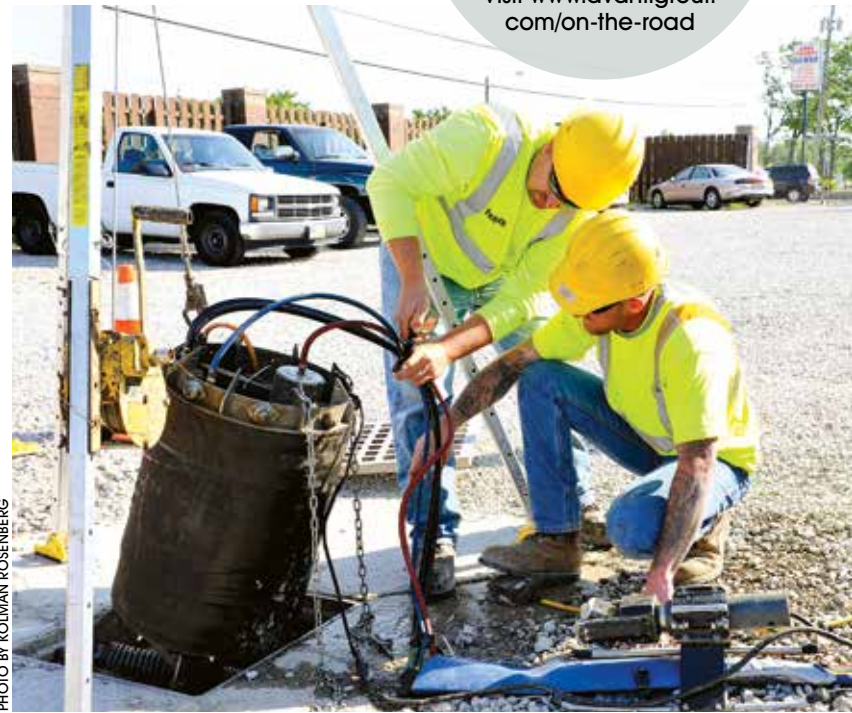


PHOTO BY KOLMAN ROSENBERG

Well-trained technicians from Ohio-based Lake County Sewer prepare to lower a grouting unit into a sewer line.

"The payback is there when it comes to that guy jumping on a grout truck and knowing how to run it to get the job done. The overall benefit outweighs the cost."

Frank Klima

starting out, we like the idea of keeping our team up to date with technology and anything else out there we don't know," Klima says. "The payback is there when it comes to that guy jumping on a grout truck and knowing how to run it to get the job done. The overall benefit outweighs the cost."

FINDING FOCUS

Lake County Sewer has several divisions, including manhole rehabilitation. The company got involved with grouting in 1991, and may have been



PHOTO COURTESY OF AVANTI INTERNATIONAL

Over 500 students have gained knowledge and know-how through Municipal Sewer Grout School sessions held across the U.S.



PHOTO COURTESY OF AVANTI INTERNATIONAL

Municipal Sewer Grout School students get hands-on experience with a lateral packer.



PHOTO COURTESY OF AVANTI INTERNATIONAL

Grout school students get a crash course in how everything in a grout truck works.

the first contractor in the U.S. to offer lateral grouting from the mainline. The work has since become a focus.

“Lateral grouting seems to be the big niche that’s going on now, with all the lining going on. Owners are learning that lining is not the answer to infiltration. Lining is a structural fix to a pipe and it’s just going to move the infiltration from that area to the manholes or connections. That’s what we are finding out and are learning from,” Klima says. “We usually end up grouting laterals and manholes after liners have been installed. The expense to grout a sewer is not cheap either but it’s about 1/3 of the cost of lining if you took a reality check on the cost of the two technologies. And I don’t know of anyone who wants to spend what it costs to line and grout, but it is certainly something that would make the lining work complete. When I say complete — here we structurally took care of the pipe but we didn’t stop the water from coming in. That’s something owners and engineers need to understand.”

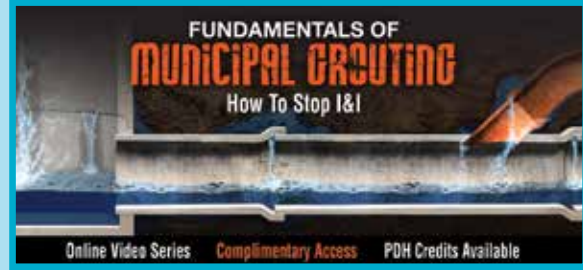
PROMOTING VALUE

Klima says that with the extra cost, it’s not always easy to convince the client this is the way to go. The check writers and committee-level people don’t always see the value in underground projects. “You can see a bridge. The bridge was deteriorating, and now it looks brand new and there are trees planted, and it looks all pretty. Underground is different — it’s out of sight out of mind.”



Frank Klima Jr.,
president, Lake
County Sewer

PHOTO BY KOLMAN ROSENBERG



ONLINE VIDEO SERIES PROVIDES INTRODUCTION TO GROUTING PRACTICES

Municipalities need economical, practical and long-term solutions to inflow and infiltration, and a new educational video series aims to help.

After years of collaborating on Municipal Sewer Grout School and other educational initiatives, experts from Avanti International, Aries Industries and Logiball have produced *Fundamentals of Municipal Grouting*, a 16-module video series designed to help those working to solve I&I problems.

“For over a decade, these three companies have prioritized education by hosting grout schools, webinars and live field-day presentations,” says Avanti president Daniel Magill.

Beginning with the history of sewers, the video series delves into grout chemistry and safety, conveyance technologies and techniques, and holistically targets all infiltration points of entry: mainline sewers, manholes, service laterals and connections.

The broadcast-quality video series features comprehensive content unlike any other resource in the trenchless technology industry.

Municipal stakeholders and specialty contractors now have a self-paced training and education resource available for both technical and operational personnel at no cost. For engineers requiring PDH credits, a \$49 administration fee is required.

Fundamentals of Municipal Grouting provides a good base knowledge of the practice, technologies and science behind injection grouting, and is a perfect primer for Municipal Sewer Grout School.

Visit www.municipalgrouting.com to view the complete video series.

It’s important to remember, he says, that for every gallon of water that finds its way into the sewer, that’s an extra gallon that needs to be treated. And that comes at a significant cost. The upside is that eliminating that extra flow creates significant savings over the long term. “Any project you put out to bid to eliminate infiltration will pay for itself in the first year, or even the first months,” he says. “So it’s a no-brainer.” **I&I**