Power Curbers Inc., Summer, 2003

POWER CURBER PROFILES

News and information to make you more competitive

Learning Curve Behind Them

New England Contractor: Variable Barrier Success Will Expand Business

A variable barrier application by the Power Curber 8700 on Route 3 between Burlington, MA, and the Massachusetts/New Hampshire state line will enable a Massachusetts contractor to expand his slipform business.

"This is the first variable barrier application that NESC has poured," says Tony Petronio, who is in charge of business development for NESC of Salisbury, MA. "We're pleased with the equipment, and the owner is pleased with the product. Since this was our first experience with variable height barrier, we looked to Power Curbers for guidance in buying both the paver and the mold for the job."

The Route 3 project is the first "Design Build" project in Massachusetts. "As you can imagine," says Tony, "the state is looking at this project as a model for future work."

The barrier schedule set by Modern Continental Construction of Cambridge, MA, the general contractor, is an aggressive one, requiring 50,000 linear feet (15,250m) of barrier, varying in height from 32 to 60 inches (81 to 152cm), to be installed between April 2003 and October 2003. "I'm happy to say, that despite the initial learning curve and the inclement weather throughout much of April, we're ahead of schedule," says Tony.

NESC is installing the variable height barrier at a rate of 600 feet (183m) per day, and standard barrier at the rate of 750 feet (229m) per day.

Tony credits Wayne Irby, field service engineer for Power Curbers, with "walking us through this new work. I attribute a lot of our success to the technical service Power Curbers provides," he says.

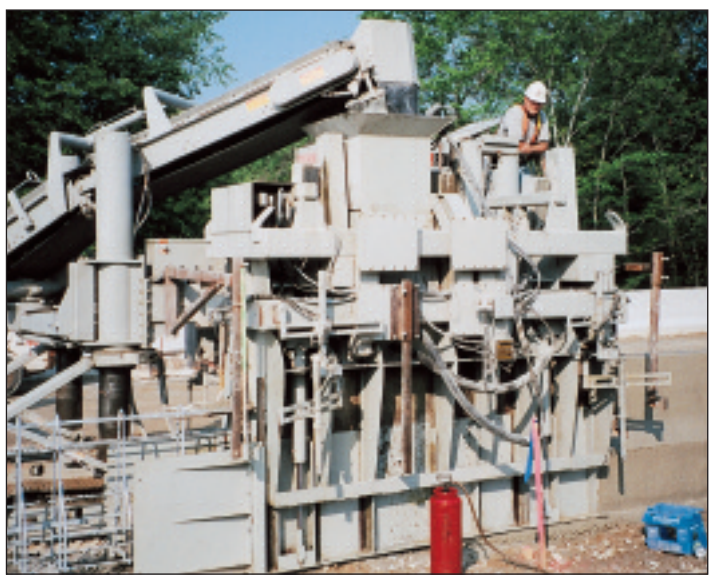
Included in the 50,000 feet (15,250m) of variable barrier is 9,000 feet (2,745m) of Mechanically Stabilized Earth (MSE) wall. NESC is using its Power Curber 5700-B to pour the footer. NESC equipped the 5700-B with a seat for a crew member who installs reinforcement dowels in the footer. Once the crew sets cages for the barrier on the footer, the Power Curber 8700 takes over the slipform operation.

With no other contractors in the New England states doing variable barrier, Tony says that the market looks good for NESC. "The state has variable barrier in its standard specifications," he says. "In the past, contractors have used either precast or cast-in-place barriers, both of which have their drawbacks. NESC offers an alternative method that is true to design and less costly to produce." PC

(You can contact Tony Petronio at NESC at 978-462-1825.)

150-foot (45.7m) radius is part of variable barrier project

Photos by Wayne Irby, Power Curbers Technical Support



Mold produces barrier that varies in height from 32 to 60 inches (81 to 152 cm)

'I attribute a lot of our success to the technical service Power Curbers provides.'

– Tony Petronio,
NESC, Salisbury, MA

The 5700-B (with seat added by NESC) slipforms footer for MSE wall as part of same project

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Good News

New York Machine Owner Leads Concrete Contractors

Tommy Ruttura, president of Ruttura & Sons Construction Co., Inc., in Farmingdale, NY, has been elected president of the American Society of Concrete Contractors.

Ruttura is a concrete, excavation and drainage contracting firm that was begun by Tommy's grandfather in 1918. Ruttura is a long-time owner of Power Curber equipment.

In one of its more unique applications, Ruttura & Sons uses its Power Curber 5700-B to slipform grade beams at construction sites where the ground is not soil supportive for construction. The concrete floor of the building is installed after this soil support system is in place.

"We came up with this scheme," says Tommy. "It cuts costs by thousands. Hand setting, you could do 20 to 25 yards (18.2 to 22.8m) with a crew of 10. Now, (with the machine) we do 160 yards (146 m) with a crew of 4.

The process involves driving steel or wood pilings into the building site and back filing that, says Tommy. The concrete grade beams are then slipformed on top of the piles. The 2-foot by 2-foot beams (.6 by .6m) are heavily reinforced with steel. The building site is again back filled around the beams and then a concrete floor is installed.

The engineers willingly re-design soil supportive systems for slipforming, Tommy says, because of the cost savings.

Ruttura recently slipformed the beams for four factories under construction. The beams are from 500 to 600 feet long (152 by 183m). "We would have been there almost a month if we didn't do it by machine," says Tommy. "It takes a week by machine."

The beams are 10 feet apart (3m) . When finished, the slipformed beam is a 2-foot square block (.6m) of steel reinforced concrete. The hopper box surrounding the mold is spread so that there is room for four vibrators to fit outside the steel. Vibration around the steel is required for this amount of concrete.

The factory designed the mold with a bolt-in keyway on the top side that is 2 inches (5 cm) deep and 4 inches (10 cm) wide in order for a 2x4 used for framing to fit into the finished beam.

Ruttura specializes in concrete and excavation work.. Tommy says that the curb machine "saves us a lot of labor. Curb is the hardest thing we have to do," he says. "It's the most laborious, out of all the things we do.

"If we do it by hand, it's back-breaking. If we do it by machine, it keeps the men happier. They don't have to work like slaves. Happy people mean better production…better everything.

"The machine makes the curb business more bearable," he says.

Follow Guidelines When Installing New Auger Flight Sections (P 7538) Power Curber 5700-B

- Clean the center shaft of the auger thoroughly. Leaving concrete build-up under the flight sections could cause cracking.
- Follow torque specs. Over-tightening of the bolts could cause the auger flight sections to crack or break.

'I've been around long enough to know that the Power Curber does better work'

Lee Garner of Garner Concrete in Snow Hill, NC, owns both a Power Curber 5500-B and a competitor's machine.

He and his dad, Gary, fight over who gets to run the Power Curber, jokes Lee.

"I've been around these machines long enough to know that the Power Curber does a little bit better work," Lee says.

He bought the competitive machine in 1999, but says that he really wanted the Power Curber at that time.

Gary Garner says there is quicker response time with the 5500-B's steering

"I was budget-minded, instead of going for quality," says Lee. "The other machine was a little bit cheaper. As soon as I started picking up work, I got the Power Curber."

Recently, the Garners slipformed 17,000 feet (5,185m) of curb and gutter in a three-day time period for a development on the Pamlico Sound on the North Carolina coast. Lee calls it "a pretty good run."

The 5500-B is "a bit more stable on the stringline and it puts out a better quality curb," says Lee. "It's a better designed machine."

The sensor arms are stationery on the competitive machine, while the 5500-B's sensor arms are on a pivot. "You can adjust them going around a radius," says Lee.

With the competitive machine, "you've got to get a wrench and loosen two bolts to slide the arm out," says Gary. "It doesn't have an adjustment."

He also says the 5500-B's trimmer seems to have a little more power.

Lee did site work with his dad before branching out into curb work in 1996. Since then, Gary has sold his business and is now helping Lee.

"Grading and excavating were what I grew up in," says Lee. "I know that business like the back of my hand. But the market is flooded with grading contractors. So when it came time to get into something for myself, I looked at specializing – supply and demand. There was a small supply of curb and gutter contractors and a large demand for their services.

"Grading work requires extensive amounts of time on the project," he adds.

"Projects can last two months upward to a year. The curb contractor can turn his jobs much quicker. Most jobs last only to 1 to 5 days. The ratio of jobs-completed to time-put- in is a key asset in the slipforming business."

Lee started out with a used machine that was manufactured in 1970, a year after he was born, he says. "It had been sitting in a pasture for a few years, but we got it going," Lee says, and he had found his livelihood.

The Garners chose the smaller, more compact 5500-B because it fit into their business plan. "This one is ideal for curb and gutter," says Lee. "Curb and gutter and sidewalk are what we try to stay in."

Lee Garner bought the machine that fit his business plan – the 5500-B

Compact 5500-B loads quickly to get to the next jobsite

Lee likes the side shift for the offset, which he says his competitive machine does not have. "If you need to offset off the edge of asphalt, the other machine couldn't," he says.

Gary says there is a quicker response with the 5500-B's steering than with the competitive machine. The electric switch on the other machine is "slow to move," he says.

The mold changes out a little quicker on the 5500-B, he says.

Also important to Lee is his relationship with his dealer, Southern Equipment Service in China Grove, NC. "They are an excellent bunch of guys to work with," he says. PC

'Helmets to Hardhats' Program Puts Ex-Military to Work in Construction

Having trouble hiring a crew?

Here's some information from the military that may be helpful. The article was written by Master Sgt. Bob Haskell of The Army News Service. It is reprinted, in part, with permission.

WASHINGTON, DC —- A new program called "Helmets to Hardhats" was launched in January to help soldiers find commercial construction jobs.

The intent is to help those with military experience get hired in civilian construction trades that the program's organizers claim are facing a critical labor shortage.

Soldiers who leave full-time military service, as well as current members of the National Guard, the Army Reserve and the four other reserve components, are eligible for assistance from the federally funded program.

"The construction industry needs to recruit 1.6 million new workers over the next five years to replace those people who will be leaving the labor force," said officials from The Center for Military Recruitment, Assessment and Veterans, citing several federal and industry projections. "Over 40 percent of the work force will retire in the next 10 years."

The center launched "Helmets to Hardhats" after a $3.4 million appropriation for the pilot program was approved by Congress as part of the 2003 Defense Appropriations Act.

Matthew Caulfield, a retired Marine Corps major general, and his son, Dan, a former Marine Corps officer who served during the Persian Gulf War, are the program's principal organizers.

> *'What better source of people to bring into the construction industry than those who have already been trained in the military?'*
>
> – Dan Caulfield
> Program Organizer

"We need people to maintain our infrastructure, our roads and bridges and dams," the general said. "The way we're going, in 10 years we won't have enough iron workers. What better source of people to bring into the construction industry than those who have already been trained in the military?"

Officials hope to recruit 23,000 people into the industry during the program's first year and 166,000 during the next two years. The program emphasizes jobs that offer higher than average wages and benefits.

The program is described as a way for the construction industry to find new workers who have already acquired the discipline and dependability as well as the leadership skills and the safety training that is stressed by the military.

"This is a match made in heaven, but the construction and military organizations don't know each other very well," Dan Caulfield said. "We have to educate employers about what the military does."

One message is that veterans want to work. The unemployment rate among military veterans is three times higher than the national average. That included a 14.8 percent unemployment rate during the first quarter of 2002 among veterans between the ages of 20 to 24.

The former soldiers offer the construction industry a stable work force. Many are looking for good jobs without having to go to college or enroll in a training program.

"They join the service when they are 18 and single, and they leave three or four years later married and with a couple of kids," Dan Caulfield said. "Johnny doesn't need a training program. Johnny needs a job."

"Helmets to Hardhats" can also help with military recruitment, its advocates believe, by ensuring people who are thinking about joining the military that they will be able to use their training to get a good job when they return to the civilian world.

"They put a marketplace value on military skills," Dan Caulfield said.

More information about the program can be found at www.helmetstohardhats.org. PC

Wall to Wall

5700-B's productivity cuts labor for the crew and saves on time

1. Arkansas Contractor Now Ready to Walk 'Right on Through' Barrier Applications

Photo by Sam Howard, Power Curbers Regional Sales/Service

4 days by machine would have been 30 days by hand on Texas barrier project, Lane Amos says

Lane Amos of Lane Amos Concrete Construction in Hamburg, AR, recently poured his first barrier with his Power Curber 5700-B, after concentrating on curb-and-gutter applications for the last five years.

"For a first experience, it went great," says Lane, whose son, Nicholas, is the machine operator. Another son, Mickey, is also in the business.

"I've done wall by hand, says Lane. "The machine cut out a tremendous amount of labor, saved us on plywood (for hand forming) and saved lots of time," he said. "We would have probably poured 100 feet a day by hand. It would have taken 30 days. We did it in four days with the machine. You better believe that's a savings."

The 42-inch Texas barrier, a total of 2,537 feet (774 m), also included a parapet with four expansion joints. The crew poured the parapet and then sawed 3-inch (7.6 cm) expansion joints.

Lane said the crew learned a lot on the first barrier job. "We will just walk right on through the next barrier," he says.

Lane switched to a Power Curber 5700-B from a competitive machine five years ago.

"To us, there's no comparison of the two machines," Lane says. "We have a lot of tight radius work, and the other machine wouldn't make those radius turns. I visited the Power Curbers plant and everybody treated us so nice. I'll give Power Curbers that. You sure do try."

Lane says that Sam Howard, his regional sales and service manager, has earned his respect because "he keeps up with his business." Lane says that he had a hard time getting a former dealer to check with his company. "Sam checks with us real often to see if we need anything," Lane says.

Lane estimates that his curb business has increased by 50 percent with the addition of slipform equipment. "If we didn't have a machine, we couldn't do but half of what we do," he says.

FROM OUR MAILBOX

2. Problem Solved, and Maine Machine 'Off Like a Rocket Ship'

DIRIGO SLIPFORM
Concrete Cart Paths • Concrete Curb • Concrete Sidewalks • Granite Curb

Power Curbers, Inc.
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When you own a slipform machine, you should be versatile and open-minded, as the pictures show versatility and flexibility is what was needed on this project.

This project is a Maine Department of Transportation bridge rehab. There are two bridges side by side at different elevations. We poured our wall on one bridge deck and it is not attached to the other.

The project was a very fast-track one. The penalties are $30,000 a day, if not completed on the given date.

The general contractor, CPM Constructors from Freeport, Maine, hired Dirigo Slipform to perform the task of slipforming the 48-inch (122 cm) barrier wall.

When we arrived on site, it looked as though the mold was wrong for the application. The state started checking elevations between the two bridges, and as we thought, there was grade difference of 4 to 5 inches (10 to 12.7 cm) from the plans. With Dirigo Slipform's and CPM Constructors' wisdom, we added an additional 4 inches (10 cm) to the bottom of the mold and ran the deck for one more time to make sure we were right. We found then we were going to meet the state's and CPM Constructors' needs.

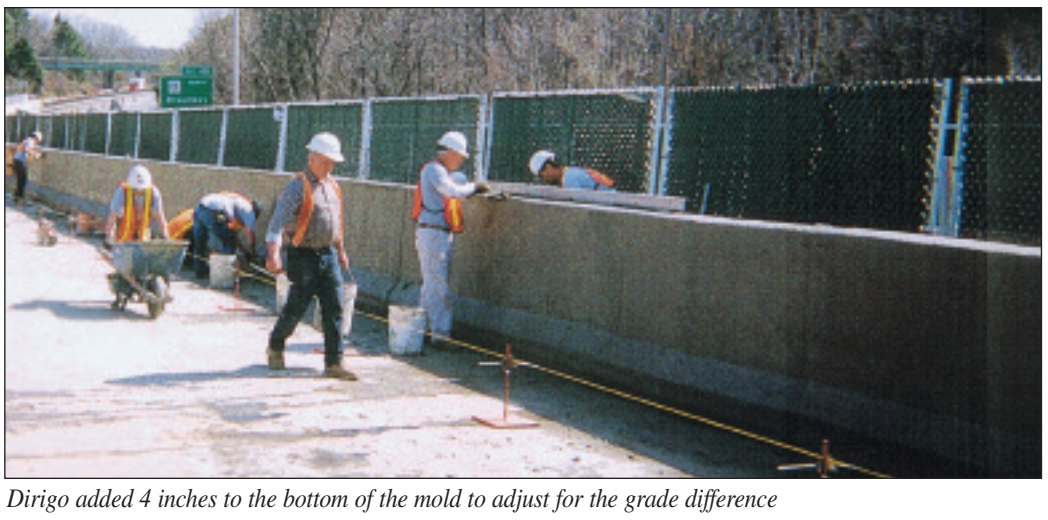
We ordered concrete and we were off like a "5700-B rocket ship" with the new wall height of 52 to 53 inches (132 to 134.6 cm), and 411 linear feet (125m) later, we were once again "Curb Man Super Heroes."

Thanks,

Jay J. Shorette

Photos by Dirigo Slipform, Hampden, ME

Barrier is part of bridge rehab work



Dirigo added 4 inches to the bottom of the mold to adjust for the grade difference

Pennsylvania Contractor Family: 'It's unimaginable how much we've increased our production'

The Engelman family – the dad, all four brothers and two sisters, plus two in-laws – will celebrate their 30th year in the concrete business in 2004.

They do residential, commercial, warehousing and industrial concrete work, as well as curb-and-gutter, but it wasn't until 1995 that they bought their first Power Curber.

"It's unimaginable how much it increased our production," says Bob Engelman. "We were probably doing 10,000 to 20,000 feet a year by hand (3,050 to 6,100m). Now, we're up to 100,000 to 150,000 feet a year (30,500 to 45,750m). The work was there. We just weren't able to get it without the machine."

Joe, Tom, Bob, and Jim Engelman, Mary Eastland, Kathy Scapellati, and Al Engelman

Engelman Construction, Inc. of Macungie, PA, was looking to not only increase its curb production when it bought the first machine but also to make life easier for the curb crew.

Before the machine, the curb crew had already moved away from the heavy steel forms and had tried lighter weight aluminum, to try to ease employees' loads. "We were looking at the age of our employees," says Bob.

In 1995, the Engelmans bought a used 5700-B, and three years ago, they bought a new 5700-B.

"Curbing seemed to be where the work was," says Bob. "It was a smart move for us."

The crew likes the speed of the 5700-B and the ease of operation, he says. The Quick Connect Mold Mount option is a good feature, Bob says, when the crew has to change from one style mold to another. This year, they plan to branch out into sidewalk applications.

Photo by Terry Duncan, Power Curbers Regional Service Manager

Engelman's 5700-B at work pouring tight radius

Bob is also pleased with service from the factory rep in his area. "Terry Duncan is the best guy you guys have working for you," Bob says. "He's more than willing to go out of his way to help us out."

Engelman Construction has 100 employees. The work is a good way to make a living, Bob says, especially if you grow up in the business. His dad, Alphonse, started the business and still stays in contact. Other family members working in the business include brothers Tom, Joe and Jim; sisters Kathy and Mary and their two husbands. PC

(Terry Duncan, service manager for Power Curbers in Pennsylvania, can be reached at 610-509-6636. Jay McNally, sales manager in that area, can be reached at 301-633-1200.)

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