

Bracebridge company's cleaning system getting international attention

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BRACEBRIDGE — Muskoka is known worldwide for its pristine lakes and beauty scenery.

One Bracebridge company may soon be known internationally for something else.

Clean pipes.

Envirologics Engineering Inc., an engineering company established in 2008, has developed an innovative pipe-cleaning and rehabilitating technology called the Tomahawk System.

The patented system uses abrasives of various calibres such as stone in a high-volume, low-pressure airstream to remove internal tuberculation, corrosion and other deposits along with old lining materials including bitumen and coal tar from pipes. After cleaning, the pipe is inspected using an air-driven camera device.

The procedure has already been used across Canada and parts of the United States over the past few years, and according to general manager Brian Thorogood, locales across the pond are looking seriously at the process.

“We have interest from the UK, Italy, Malaysia and Egypt,” he said. “I think the interest comes from word of mouth, because every industry is smaller than you think. There are also web searches,” he said.

Kevin Lillie, who is the operations managers for Envirologics, said the system was first designed in 2008, when the process used positive pressure to blow the clogged materials out of the pipes. But there were issues with material being blown outside of the pipes, making it difficult to contain the waste.

“Then when Brian came on board we started to transition to vacuum. We did some tests with it first and it proved to solve some of our problems,” he said.

Current pipe cleaning process such as water jets, according to Envirologics, can foul thousands of gallons of clean water and may require containment and treatment depending on its contents. That treatment may not remove all deposits to fully expose the pipe wall.

The Tomahawk System uses a dust-free environmentally friendly, trenchless process that uses little to no water, reducing waste by up to 98 per cent over a wet cleaning method. This also allows for an immediate liner application.

The liner application is something that interests the staff at Envirologics. Thorogood said they are moving ahead with the development of their own lining system that is currently awaiting approval.

“This lining product was specially developed for this airborne process,” he said. “We call it Tomahawk Airborne Lining. It has to be sent out for certification for contact with drinking water. We anticipate it is going to be a big part of our business moving forward.”

There is another Muskoka connection to this system, as the stone abrasives used in the pipe-cleaning process are bought from Hutcheson Sand and Mixes from Huntsville.

The company can provide the service — there is a contract approved by the District of Muskoka for cleaning of a section of pipe in Gravenhurst — but has already sold a number of systems to places on both sides of the border. Lillie had just returned from a trip to Texas to help supervise the administration of the system.

For more information on the Tomahawk System visit their website.



CUTTING TECHNOLOGY: Brian Thorogood and Kevin Lillie of Envirologics Engineering of Bracebridge say their Tomahawk System for the cleaning and rehabilitation of deteriorated water pipes is attracting interest from around the world. Brent Cooper/Metroland.