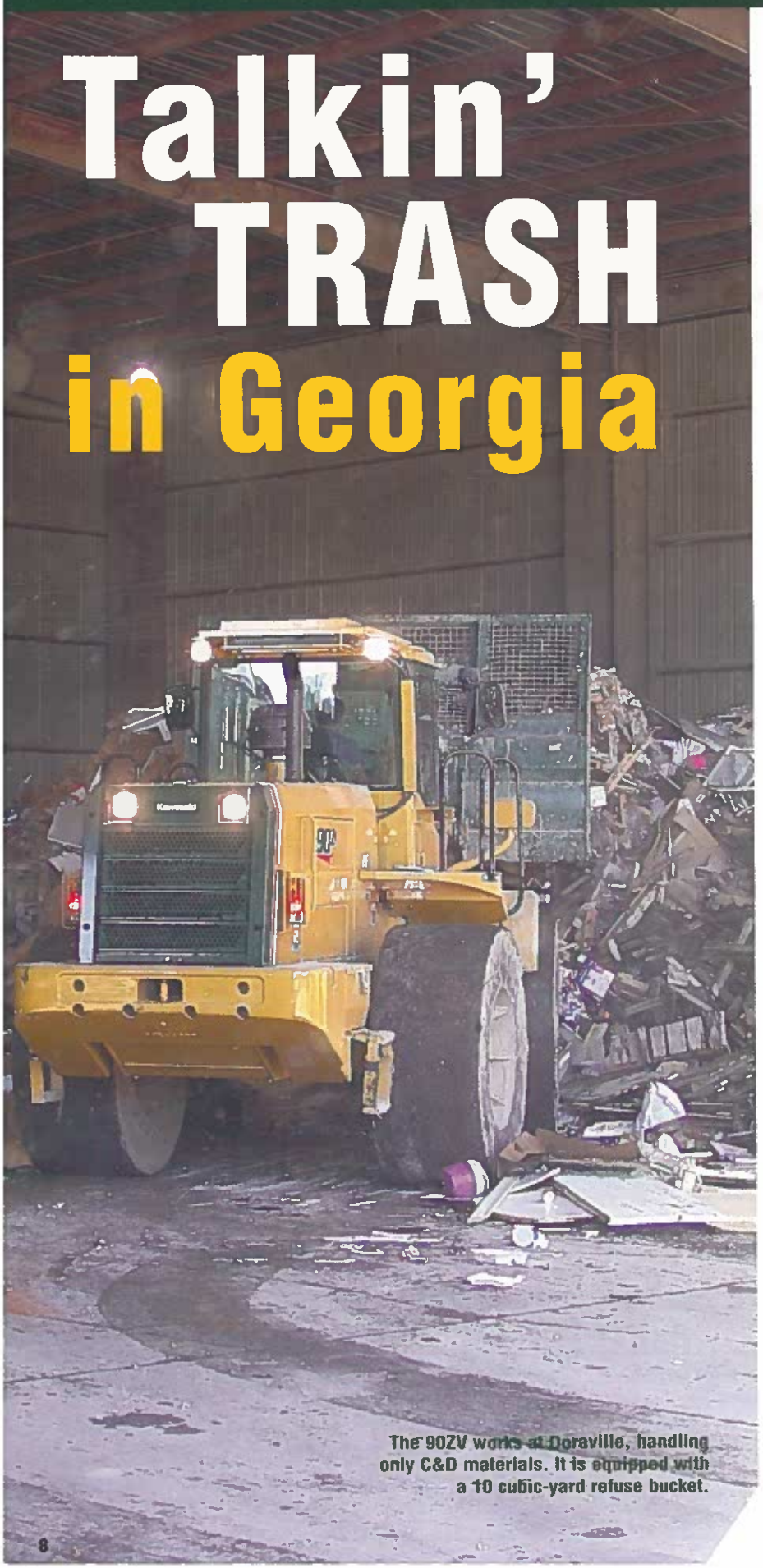
Talkin' TRASH in Georgia



The 90ZV works at Doraville, handling only C&D materials. It is equipped with a 10 cubic-yard refuse bucket.

It's 3 AM at Advanced Disposal's waste transfer station in Doraville, Georgia. The atmosphere is thick with dust and humidity, the pace relentless. Eagle Environmental Transport, headquartered in Forsyth, Georgia, is two hours into a 12-hour cycle of orchestrated chaos — shoveling trash, loading trailers, and hauling debris to two landfills.

The Kawasaki wheel loader operator is scooping up heaps of C&D (construction and demolition) material with a huge 10 cubic-yard refuse bucket, then loads 50-foot, 120 cubic-yard trailers. Each Mack CH Series truck and East Walking Floor trailer take about a half hour to fill, an hour to drive to one of two landfills, a half hour to discharge, then an hour back to the transfer station. As daylight breaks, garbage trucks begin to lumber in, depositing debris from their early-morning rounds. After the loading and hauling ceases in the early afternoon, garbage trucks continue to offload, creating new mounds to be dealt with in the early hours of the following day.

Eagle Environmental Transport works two transfer stations for Advanced Disposal — the second is located in Cartersville, Georgia. On a good day, they will shuttle a thousand tons of debris from each station. In a business that makes money based on the number of tons hauled, any hitch in the process can create a backlog that seriously impacts profits. Jarod Lovett, President, does his best to minimize any mechanical slowdowns by purchasing dependable, low maintenance equipment able to move high volumes of trash.

"I started two different garbage companies in Georgia," recalls Lovett. "Both times Advanced Disposal bought me out. Then, when I was a general manager at Advanced Disposal, the company approached me about starting my

Riverside is a mixed C&D and MSW facility. The 85ZV is typically parked in the middle while dry material is dumped on one side and wet material on the other.

own by making a hauling contract with them. I wasn't interested in doing a little five-truck show, so we negotiated a contract to use my loaders and haul trucks at two of their transfer station facilities. Once I had the contract, I needed to shop for equipment."

When it came to wheel loaders, he became frustrated dealing with the local Cat dealer. The more frustrated he got, the more he kept staring at a Kawasaki loader wall calendar hanging over the desk of a friend and co-worker. In a classic example of "it's a small world" story, it turned out the office mate had gotten the calendar at a Kawasaki River Fest event in Florida from a mutual friend of them both, who had moved away from the area and worked at a Kawasaki dealership. That sparked the idea to pursue Kawasaki.

"So Jarod called me and asked a lot of questions about Kawasaki loaders, options, and especially pricing," says Steve Tuton, a Kawasaki sales rep.

"I educated myself about several brands of loaders," explains Lovett. "I checked out the Kawasaki loaders and liked what I saw. I felt the overall quality was better and I really liked the all-steel design — no plastic to break. From a service standpoint, some dealerships don't treat small companies with the same timeliness, respect, and care as bigger ones. I could tell that would not be a problem with Kawasaki. I also like that the Kawasaki factory is close by, parts are not a problem, and there is easy access to key people. There was a good comfort level going into the deal."

As a result, Eagle Environmental purchased three Kawasaki loaders: a used 70ZIV-2, and an 85- and 90ZV. The ZVs are equipped with Kawasaki's standard refuse package plus two other factory options — an undercab guard to protect steering hydraulics, the brake, and throttle linkage from debris; and an engine air pre-cleaner to separate and eject the larger, heavier particles before they reach the regular air filter. To prevent debris ingestion problems, the 90 also had its A/C condenser relocated higher and its air intake covered with a special screen.

The Kawasaki loaders have proven to be very productive because of their quick cycle times and high uptime. Lovett also purchased large refuse buckets for his ZVs in order to speed his loading time even more (see side bar). His Kawasakis handle the oversized buckets with ease, remaining stable. The solid rubber tires on all three loaders eliminate worry from punctures or failures. They also increase traction and pushing power while adding more stability during loading.

"I've been very pleased with the Kawasaki loaders," states Lovett. "I like the way the company listens to its customers and is willing to learn from field experience. The service and warranty response have been great and the operators like the loaders a lot. Our company is looking for moderate growth this year and I plan to order a couple more Kawasakis."

Specialty buckets make a huge difference in the efficiency of any loading operation. Refuse buckets are characterized by their generous size and flatter floor design that enables the operator to get in under the debris. Two companies that offer refuse buckets are JRB and Dymax.

The eight cubic-yard JRB waste bucket used by Eagle Environmental on its 85ZV handles both C&D and heavier MSW (municipal solid waste) materials. The visibility spillguard is made from durable round bar. The side cutter and skid bars, as well as the top gussets holding the round bar, are made from AR400 material for durability and strength. The bucket uses a replaceable bolt-on skid pad and the bucket front weld in edge is drilled to use standard OEM auxiliary edges.

The company's 90ZV is equipped with a Dymax 10 cubic-yard bucket. Since it works with lighter C&D materials, this large size, coupled with the loader's inherent stability, poses no problems. This particular bucket was ordered with a longer flat floor to make it easier to smash refuse in the trailer, taking advantage of the 90's ability to deliver a lot of down force to crush and compact. The bucket also features a visibility screen to reduce weight, replaceable wear plates, and a z-bar clearance pocket to enable full rollback — useful since material must be lifted over a six-foot barrier.