

TRIED & TRUE

////// SINCE 1923

SPRING 2024

Adapting & Thriving In the Field

PRECISION FARM
DRAINAGE, INC. | **PG. 14**

Oversaturated

WHEN WATER IS TOO MUCH
OF A GOOD THING | **PG. 8**

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT:
Mark Richardson | **PG. 7**

FRATCO

Where Does the Water Go?

THE ROLE OF PROPER
DRAINAGE IN THE BIGGER
PICTURE | **PG. 16**

Filtering Success:

CARRIFF'S IMPACT ON
DRAINAGE | **PG. 12**

WIN A *TRIED & TRUE*
HAT | **PG. 22**





IN THIS ISSUE

03 | A LETTER FROM CHRIS

04 | PRECIPITATION OUTLOOK

05 | BLUEPRINT FOR SUCCESS

06 | INDUSTRY NEWS & ADMC
CORNER WITH KEEGAN KULT

07 | EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT:
MARK RICHARDSON

08 | OVERSATURATED: WHEN WATER
IS TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING

11 | WORK ANNIVERSARIES

12 | FILTERING SUCCESS: CARRIFF'S
IMPACT ON DRAINAGE

14 | PRECISION FARM
DRAINAGE, INC.: ADAPTING &
THRIVING IN THE FIELD

16 | WHERE DOES THE WATER GO?:
THE ROLE OF PROPER DRAINAGE
IN THE BIGGER PICTURE

18 | FROM POLYMERS TO PIPE:
UNVEILING HDPE AND HDPP
TECHNOLOGY

20 | FIELD JOURNAL

22 | CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Dear Fratco family,

As we release another issue of *Tried & True*, we are not just turning the pages of this publication but also turning a new leaf in Fratco's journey of innovation, resilience and growth. Every issue marks our progress, our challenges and our victories—setting the stage for a future that is built on the solid foundation of today's efforts.

In this issue, we shine a spotlight on Mark Richardson, our Plant Manager at Algona. Mark's story is not just about personal growth and career progression; it's a narrative that reflects Fratco's commitment to nurturing talent and fostering an environment where everyone has the opportunity to excel. His journey from the automotive industry to leading our plant in Algona is a testament to the versatility and adaptability that Fratco champions.

We also highlight the outstanding work of a proud contractor, Precision Farm Drainage, Inc. Their dedication to quality and excellence mirrors our values at Fratco, and their flexibility on the job is an inspiration to never stop learning.

Our Partner Spotlight in this issue features Carriff Engineered Fabrics Corp., a collaboration that underscores the importance of synergy in creating industry-leading products. Their innovative approach to drainage materials complements our mission to offer the best to our customers.

This issue also delves into the critical topic of water management in "Oversaturated: When Water is Too Much of a Good Thing." Understanding the challenges and solutions in effective water management is crucial, and this feature provides valuable insights. Furthermore, "Where does the Water Go?" is a small story that offers a fascinating exploration of the journey water takes and the intricate patterns it forms in our environment.

At Fratco, we believe in looking ahead, in continuous improvement and in the relentless pursuit of excellence. We are committed to not just keeping pace with the industry but setting the standards for others to follow. This issue of *Tried & True* is a reflection of that spirit, and we hope you find it as informative and enjoyable as we do.

Here's to building a better tomorrow, today. Remember, at Fratco, we're not just creating pipe; we're helping create the foundation for a more sustainable future.

Sincerely,



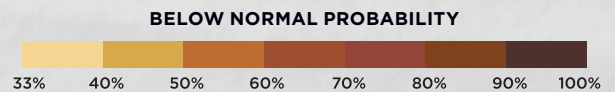
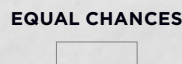
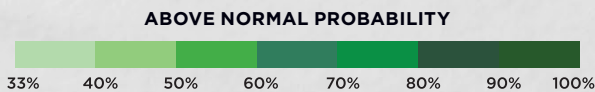
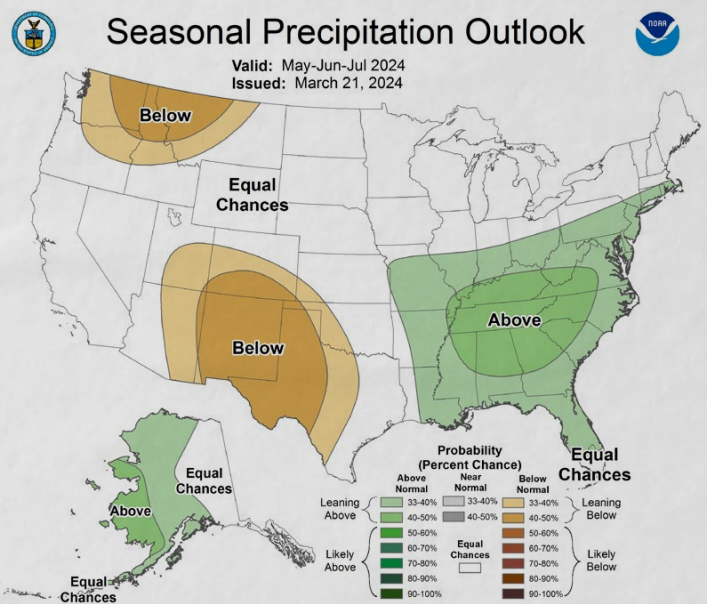
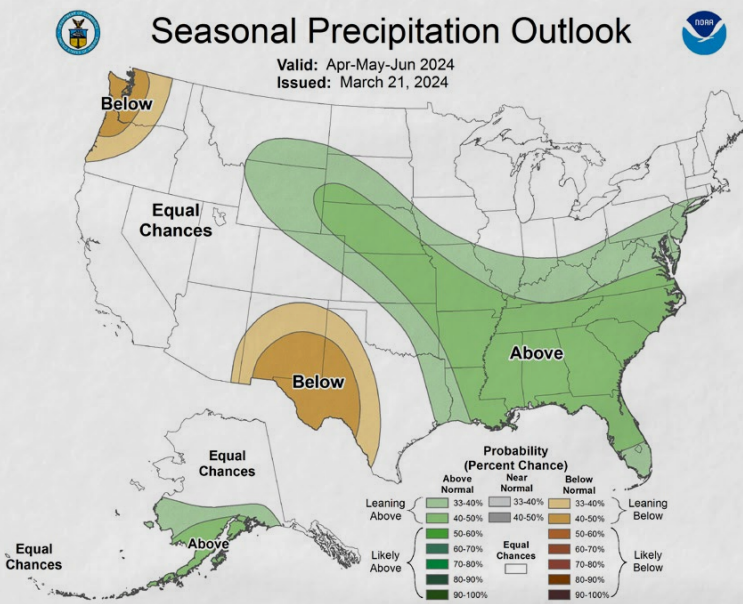
Chris Overmyer
President and CEO

Precipitation Outlook

FROM THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

APR-JUN

MAY-JUL



The future brings a constantly shifting landscape, and weather predictions are no exception. In an industry where preparation is the cornerstone of success, having a glimpse into what lies ahead can make the difference between a normal day or an unforeseen setback. Staying vigilant with daily and weekly weather updates is essential. Take proactive steps towards a successful future by considering seasonal forecasts for a broader perspective on the coming season.

For the latest weather information, visit the National Weather Service's website.

www.weather.gov

The only thing standing between you and outrageous success is *continuous progress.*

- DAN WALDSCHMIDT, AUTHOR

The Path to *Outrageous Success*

Outrageous success, as grand as it sounds, isn't a far-fetched dream. It's the cumulative result of small, consistent steps forward. It's in learning from each project, celebrating the wins and learning from the setbacks. In an industry that's the backbone of infrastructure and development, every bit of progress counts.

Whether you're a seasoned professional, a budding entrepreneur or someone embarking on a new career path, the essence of progress remains the same. It's not about

monumental leaps; it's about the consistent, small steps we take every day.

Outrageous success, then, isn't an overnight phenomenon. It's the accumulation of these days, these efforts. It's found in the silent victories that no one else sees—the extra hour you spend mastering a skill, the additional effort you put into your work, the kindness you show to a colleague in need. It's in the choices we make daily to move forward, no matter how small the step may seem.

Remember that your path to success is paved with the progress of today. Keep moving forward, for the only barrier to your success is the pause in your progress. So, as you reflect on your path, let this be a reminder to cherish and acknowledge your progress. Share your stories, inspire those around you and recognize that in the pursuit of success, continuous progress is your most powerful ally.

Here's to stepping forward, to embracing each day and to building a future marked by relentless progress and outrageous success. ■

INDUSTRY NEWS

YIELD LOSSES INTENSIFY WHEN GROUNDWATER DWINDLES

A recent study from Nebraska, drawing on three decades of data, reveals that groundwater depletion—a crucial resource for farmers’ irrigation—poses a significant threat to food production, especially in times of drought and increasingly arid conditions. The research highlights the complex challenges of maintaining agricultural productivity amid changing environmental realities.



Scan here to see the full study at ScienceDaily.com!

WATER QUALITY IN AGRICULTURE: RISKS AND RISK MITIGATION

The Food and Agriculture Organization and International Water Management Institute have published “Water Quality in Agriculture: Risks and Risk Mitigation,” highlighting the importance of water quality for sustainable agriculture and achieving UN Sustainable Development Goals. Targeted at government authorities, agricultural professionals and the academic community, this report is a key resource for enhancing water quality in agricultural practices.



Scan here to download the full report from the UN and learn more!

ADMC CORNER



WITH
KEEGAN KULT

Keegan Kult had some exciting updates and announcements for our spring issue!

HELP ADMC START STATE CHAPTER WATER TABLE COMMITTEES

ADMC is currently seeking state LICA chapters, NRCS offices, NGO groups, etc. to start or join state-level Water Table Committees!

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Preliminary Talks in Illinois have begun to implement Turn-Key/Batch and Build projects!
- Lake Springfield CWLP out of Springfield, Illinois has been approved for a Regional C Partnership Program Project funded—possibly for a Turn-Key project—completely by the NRCS.
- ADMC is currently looking for sites in southwest Minnesota for potential Turn-Key/Batch and Build projects.

REGISTER NOW FOR NATIONAL LICA’S WATER MANAGEMENT FORUM

Register now for National LICA’s Water Management Forum! June 13-14, 2024 in Rensselaer, Indiana. ADMC is organizing a range of classes to feature at this National LICA event. This is a great opportunity for contractors to see and experience all kinds of exhibitors and equipment and engage in different workshops.



SCAN TO REGISTER

For more information on any of the updates and announcements, contact Keegan Kult, Executive Director at ADMC, by emailing kkult@admcoalition.com.

MEET

MARK RICHARDSON

PLANT MANAGER AT ALGONA

Back in January 2018, Mark Richardson started his journey with Fratco, coming from an impressive 30-year stint in the automotive industry. But it wasn't just a switch of jobs for Mark; it was the beginning of a new chapter in a career marked by constant growth and learning.

When Mark initially joined the Fratco team he began on the production floor, quickly moving up to maintenance, then to a supervisor role and eventually to where he stands today—Plant Manager.

Each step of his journey was filled with diverse challenges—from dealing with machine breakages to managing employees and juggling the complexities of parts ordering while still overseeing the entire maintenance operation. It's this variety, this daily test of skill and resilience, that keeps Mark driven.

He credits Fratco for seeing his capabilities and giving him room for growth, particularly in taking on new responsibilities and honing his ability to work effectively with people.



Just the fact that they helped build me up to this position... I appreciate what they have done for me and the trust that they have given me.



For those considering a career at Fratco, Mark's advice is straightforward: "It's a great place to be, with solid and rewarding work. I encourage people to apply."

Mark's belief in the quality of Fratco's product is unwavering. "Customers choose us because we make the best pipe on the planet," he states confidently. It's a belief rooted not just in pride for the product but in the hard work and dedication that goes into each piece of pipe.

Mark Richardson's story is more than just a career trajectory; it's a testament to Fratco's commitment to its people and quality. It's a story of a man who joined a team and found a family, a place where every challenge is an opportunity to grow and every day is a step towards excellence. ■

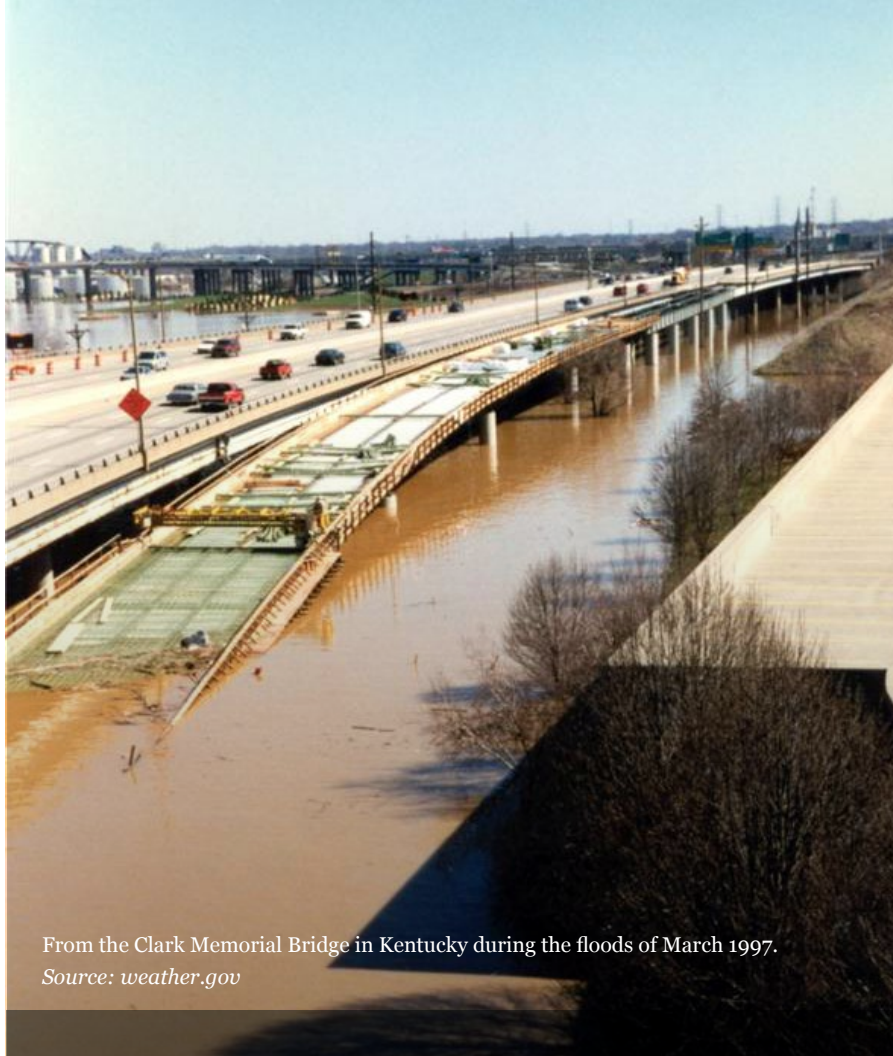
OVER-SATURATED

WHEN WATER IS TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING

Rainfall, a vital component of nature's cycle, is eagerly anticipated by growers worldwide. It's the heartbeat of agriculture, quenching thirsty crops and nurturing soil. However, this natural gift can quickly turn into a challenge when it becomes excessive. Heavy rainfall leads to a myriad of problems—from runoff and poor soil conditions to a significant impact on crop yields. In this brief exploration, we'll delve into the impact of excessive rainfall in both agricultural and non-agricultural settings, and highlight the often overlooked, critical importance of drainage solutions in our functioning society.

EXCESSIVE RAINFALL AND AGRICULTURE

Proper drainage plays a vital role in contemporary agriculture, extending beyond the mere elimination of surplus water. Inadequate drainage in agricultural fields leads to several challenges. Excessive rainfall can cause runoff and soil erosion—stripping the soil of valuable nutrients and structural integrity—diminishing its fertility. Furthermore, waterlogged conditions from excessive moisture harm plant growth by depriving roots of oxygen, leading to diseases and stunted development in the crops. These factors collectively contribute to reduced crop yields, as saturated fields delay planting and harvesting as well as heighten the risk of disease and pest infestation. Therefore, proper drainage is not just an add-on but an essential component for maintaining soil health and optimizing crop productivity.



From the Clark Memorial Bridge in Kentucky during the floods of March 1997.
Source: weather.gov

URBAN DRAINAGE: A SHIELD AGAINST FLOODING

The significance of effective drainage extends well beyond agricultural fields. Urban areas, public parks, schools and other communal spaces greatly depend on efficient drainage systems.

The significance of proper drainage systems becomes particularly evident in urban landscapes for their role in managing rainwater and preventing the risks associated with urban flooding. In cities, even moderate rainfall can lead to significant challenges if not properly managed. Streets can quickly become flooded, disrupting traffic, impeding access to emergency services and even causing damage to vehicles and property. Even just a tenth of an inch of standing water on a road can lead to hydroplaning, where a vehicle loses traction and control, posing serious safety risks. More and more cities are taking steps to improve their water management systems to avoid these hazards.

Flash floods specifically can cause damage to urban areas when rainfall comes fast. For example, Kentucky saw one of its worst floods on March 1-3 in 1997 due to a foot of rain. The storm resulted in significant financial impacts, with damages exceeding 500 million dollars and affecting over 14,000 homes. This event claimed 33 lives. The tragedy included several incidents where individuals were swept away by floodwaters while in their vehicles, along with others who encountered fatal outcomes during river activities or upon returning to their residences, finding themselves overwhelmed by the swiftly rising waters.

We can even look at the recent mudslides in California to see the damage that flash flooding from rainfall can cause. The Associated Press wrote on the mudslides saying, "One of the wettest storms in Southern California history unleashed at least 475 mudslides in the Los Angeles area." While these

storms are extremes, proper drainage can help minimize damages by keeping flooding to a minimum. Therefore, implementing water management systems is essential for safeguarding urban infrastructure against severe weather impacts, emphasizing their critical role beyond simple utility.

PARKS AND RECREATIONAL AREAS

To maintain accessibility and health, proper drainage in parks and recreational areas is crucial, particularly in regions prone to heavy rainfall. Without adequate drainage systems, these areas can quickly become inaccessible due to the formation of muddy puddles and waterlogged grounds. This not only detracts from the aesthetic appeal of the park but also makes it challenging for visitors to use pathways, picnic areas and sports fields. For instance, in Central Park, New York, innovative drainage solutions were implemented to address this issue, involving the installation of permeable pathways and strategically placed drainage channels. These measures ensure that even after torrential rains, the park remains accessible and usable for the public.

Inadequate drainage can lead to the deterioration of park infrastructure. Wooden structures, such as benches and play equipment, can rot when exposed to persistent moisture, compromising the structural integrity of the equipment and making them unsafe to use. Similarly, paved areas can suffer from erosion and potholes, creating hazards for visitors. The introduction of sustainable urban drainage systems can greatly reduce such issues, preserving both the natural beauty and the infrastructure of parks.

The health implications of stagnant water in recreational areas are also important to consider. Stagnant water serves as a breeding ground for mosquitoes, which can transmit diseases like West Nile virus, Zika and malaria. Efficient drainage systems

CONTINUE READING ▶▶▶

SHOWER THOUGHTS

INTERESTING STATS AND FACTS

In 2022 the U.S. suffered \$177 billion of inland flooding damage.

Hawaii has the highest average annual rainfall in the US with 63.7 inches of rain.

Nevada has the lowest average annual rainfall in the US with 9.5 inches of rain.

Los Angeles recorded at least 475 mudslides in February 2024.

Most raindrops take at least 2 minutes to fall to the ground.

Freefalling raindrops are actually shaped more like hamburger buns.

It only takes 0.1 inches of standing water to cause hydroplaning on the road.

Some tropic areas can have up to 900 inches of rain a year.

help to eliminate these breeding sites, thereby protecting public health. In areas like the Florida Everglades, where mosquito-borne diseases are a significant concern, managing water levels through comprehensive drainage and water control systems has been a key strategy in mitigating these risks.

Additionally, stagnant water can harbor harmful bacteria and parasites, posing a risk to both humans and wildlife. For example, waterborne pathogens like Giardia can thrive in poorly drained areas, leading to gastrointestinal illnesses. Children, who are more likely to play in puddles or poorly drained areas, are particularly vulnerable to such health risks.

To address these concerns, many parks have started adopting advanced drainage solutions. Bioswales and rain gardens can be utilized not only to improve drainage but also to enhance the park's natural beauty. These features filter and direct runoff water, reducing the likelihood of stagnant water pools forming.

Effective drainage in parks and recreational areas is essential for maintaining their usability and ensuring public health and safety. By employing innovative drainage solutions and regular maintenance, park authorities can significantly mitigate the risks associated with excess rainwater and poor drainage systems.

SCHOOL GROUNDS: SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Our kids are the heart of our lives. So we should be attentive to the potential dangers in their schools. Efficient drainage systems are a small but important part of what helps create safe and supportive environments for schools, especially in outdoor areas like playgrounds and sports fields. These systems ensure that these critical areas remain dry, safe and conducive to both learning and physical activity, regardless of the weather.

Effective drainage is key in preventing the accumulation of water on school grounds, which significantly reduces the

risk of slips and falls among students. Waterlogged playgrounds and sports fields not only hinder outdoor activities but also pose serious safety hazards. For instance, a study conducted in a school in Seattle revealed a noticeable decrease in playground accidents following the installation of a new drainage system, highlighting the direct impact of such infrastructure on student safety.

Additionally, good drainage systems can contribute to the aesthetic appeal of the school environment, creating a more inviting and pleasant atmosphere for students. This not only enhances the physical appearance of the school but can also have a positive impact on students' attitudes towards their school and learning.

A COLLECTIVE EFFORT

Efficient drainage in public spaces is a shared responsibility. It requires not just the implementation of well-designed systems but also community awareness and involvement. Initiatives like community clean-up drives can help maintain local drainage systems, ensuring their efficiency and longevity.

The role of efficient drainage systems is pivotal across various facets of our lives—from the fields that provide our food to the urban streets we traverse daily to the public spaces where we seek recreation and relaxation. Investing in and maintaining these systems is not just a practical necessity but a commitment to the health, safety and well-being of our communities. ■

Sources: National Weather Service, Associated Press News, Climate.gov, CurrentResults.com, Met Office, U.S. Geological Survey

WORK ANNIVERSARIES

Todd Denton	<i>33 years</i>	Rosa Pacheco Lopez	<i>3 years</i>
Charles Houchell	<i>27 years</i>	Brice Watts	<i>3 years</i>
Bill Champion	<i>13 years</i>	Shain Yenna	<i>2 years</i>
Craig Douglass	<i>13 years</i>	Deyanira Gonzalez	<i>2 years</i>
Joel Kruger	<i>12 years</i>	Sierra Wood	<i>2 years</i>
Brandon Herron	<i>11 years</i>	Matthew Barker	<i>2 years</i>
Katrina Pelsy	<i>10 years</i>	Mason Doyle	<i>2 years</i>
Gavin Conley	<i>9 years</i>	Robert Boyd	<i>1 year</i>
Martin Thompson	<i>9 years</i>	Samantha Deck	<i>1 year</i>
Jacqueline Sanchez	<i>8 years</i>	William Leek	<i>1 year</i>
Skylur Moseley	<i>6 years</i>	Brian Miranda Ortiz	<i>1 year</i>
Jose Requena	<i>6 years</i>	Tyler Ricardez	<i>1 year</i>
Jesus Hernandez	<i>6 years</i>	Garrett Grieger	<i>1 year</i>
Kenneth Craft, Jr.	<i>5 years</i>	Alex Hernandez Villarreal	<i>1 year</i>
Katie-Anne David	<i>5 years</i>	Michelle Mills	<i>1 year</i>
Trevor Williams	<i>5 years</i>	Devin Pocius	<i>1 year</i>
Erick Garza Lozano	<i>4 years</i>	Sergio Peralta	<i>1 year</i>
Matthew Rightman	<i>4 years</i>	Adelso Vincente	<i>1 year</i>

WELCOMING NEW HIRES

Trudi Clark	Diego Jordan	Jose Padilla, Jr.
Devin Davis	Maverick Kerr	John Penton
Thomas Feathers	Matthew Lewis	Gaby Villegas
Kiana Gertson	Joel Lopez Jiron	Rigoberto Zaragoza
Jhelson Gonzalez	Jhony Marroquin	
Hubert Hoover	Willinton Navarro Perez	

FILTERING SUCCESS

CARRIFF'S IMPACT ON DRAINAGE

In the heart of our thriving Fratco community lies a commitment to excellence, one of many traits vividly shared with our valued partner, Carriff Engineered Fabrics. At Carriff, the mantra is simple yet profound: innovation meets practicality. Specializing in the creation and distribution of technical fabrics, Carriff's expertise spans a broad spectrum of environmental applications. From drainage filtration to erosion control, Carriff's fabrics play a pivotal role in industries like agriculture, construction and landscaping—not forgetting the DIY enthusiast. Carriff's sales and marketing director, Shayne Stonehouse, met with us to help tell Carriff's story and give us an inside look at what drives this partnership.

WHO IS CARRIFF?

In the 1970s, Carriff revolutionized the subsurface drainage landscape by introducing their pioneering Sock™ filter. A knitted mesh filter that covers the exterior of drainage pipe. Since then, they've established themselves as the frontrunners in crafting circular-knitted geotextile filter fabrics. These innovative drainage filters have found extensive applications across various sectors. Whether it's improving agricultural yields, enhancing residential and commercial properties or bolstering highway and infrastructure systems, Carriff's filters are a critical component. Each year, hundreds of millions of feet of these filters are employed, a testament to their reliability and effectiveness.

Carriff's unique approach to drainage fabric manufacturing sets them apart in a competitive market. Utilizing their advanced circular-knitting machines, they produce fabrics that are not only effective but also highly versatile. These fabrics, or often put simply, "socks," embody the essence of Carriff's innovation. This distinctive design is more than a mere stylistic choice; it's a testament to their commitment to providing solutions that are as practical as they are pioneering.

Shayne explained that Carriff's Sock filter, when paired with Fratco's high-quality drainage pipe, extends the life of a drainage system by further protecting the pipe. Once in place, the filter acts as a gatekeeper; water is freely allowed through the filter and into the pipe, while sand, silt and other sediment that could clog the system are effectively kept at bay. This critical feature helps in averting potential failures in drainage systems.

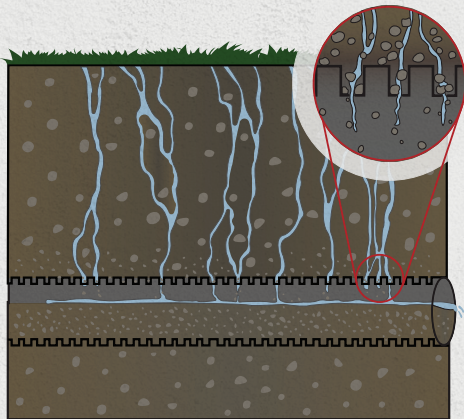
What's particularly remarkable about Carriff's Drainage Sock filter is their meticulously engineered opening size. These openings are designed to let the smallest of soil particles, the colloidal ones, seep through the filter and into the pipe. This process is not just about filtration; it's about enhancement. As these tiny particles are washed away with the water flow, they leave behind larger soil particles. These particles, now trapped around the geotextile, create expanded void spaces, Shayne explained. That may be hard to picture, but it means that it helps increase the flow of water into the pipe. It helps create a significant boost in the soil's permeability right around the pipe, optimizing drainage efficiency like never before.

The people at Fratco are really making their mark on the market, and we're glad to be part of it.

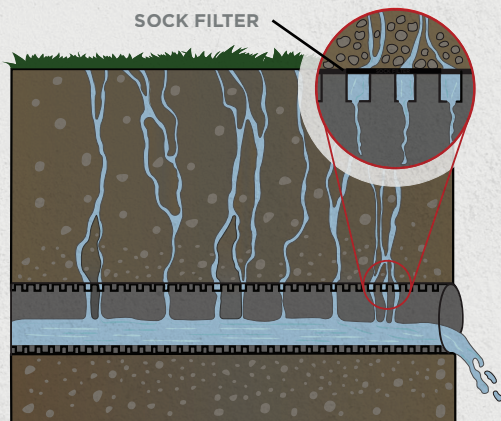
- SHAYNE STONEHOUSE, CARRIFF'S SALES AND MARKETING DIRECTOR



HOW THE SOCK™ FILTER WORKS



WITHOUT SOCK™ FILTER



WITH SOCK™ FILTER

PARTNERS IN DRAINAGE

Working together for nearly 40 years, the partnership between Fratco and Carriff is a natural fit. Both companies share a core philosophy: delivering practical, no-nonsense solutions to the hardworking individuals who form the backbone of our industries. Carriff's products complement Fratco's drainage pipe offerings, creating a synergy that benefits contractors and end-users alike. The partnership is a reflection of our ongoing dedication to quality, practicality and innovation—values that resonate deeply within the Fratco community.

After talking with Shayne his passion for the industry was immediately visible as his excitement carried through our conversation. This kind of radiant passion seems to go around as he told us about meeting Chris Overmyer for the first time a few years ago, "I met Chris in Las Vegas for the first time in January of 2019, and I could just tell how passionate Chris was about Fratco and just the industry in general. They're all just very passionate people, very humble in their relationships and partnerships."

He went on to talk about some of his relationships with Fratco employees throughout the industry as many relationships go a step further than working together commercially. Specifically, he mentioned how his relationship with Craig Douglass, Fratco's sales manager, has grown by meeting together at PPI committee meetings, "I have a great relationship with Craig Douglass. He and I are both on the drainage management committee for the Plastic Pipe Institute. And we connect and get together for drinks at almost every PPI meeting. We've become friends over the last couple of years through these industry events. So we have open conversations about the market and what's going on. I've been able to provide feedback to him about what I'm seeing in the market and he's been able to provide me with what they're seeing in the markets that they service. So, I think it's great to share that knowledge with him and for him to share it with me."

Shayne continued recalling his time working with Fratco leadership saying, "They're just very humble and appreciative for everything that they have. So I mean, tons of respect for that. You don't come across too many presidents of companies that are humble and appreciate things as much as Chris does." Shayne told us about the value there is in having real relationships with the people who represent Fratco. Carriff overall shares Fratco's value of the family-oriented business model, where employees are people first. This shared value is mirrored by both companies' commitment not just to the quality of their own products, but to the progression of their respective industries. ■



PRECISION FARM DRAINAGE, INC.

ADAPTING THRIVING IN THE FIELD

IN THE HEART OF MAZON, IL, there's a company that embodies the spirit of hard work and versatility—Precision Farm Drainage, Inc. At the helm of this dynamic outfit are Dan Wilkinson and his right-hand man, Tyler Cockerham. Both work together to keep this multifaceted operation running smoothly.

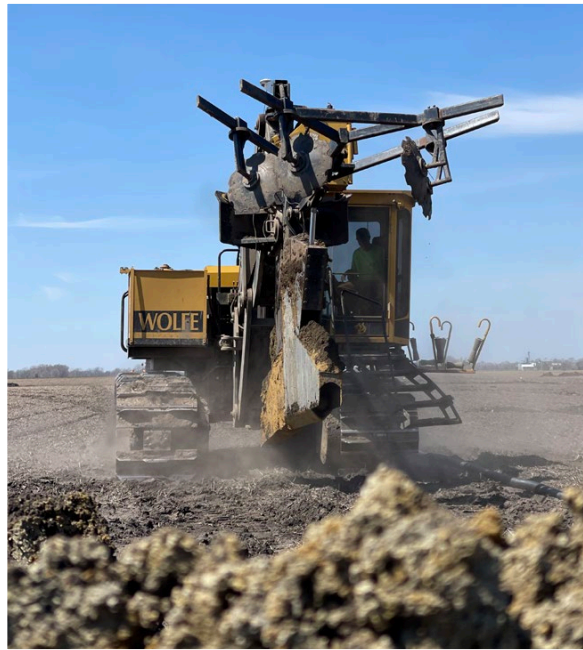
Precision Farm Drainage, Inc. isn't your run-of-the-mill contractor. They're a jack of all trades in the truest sense, handling everything a farm field could need—from laying Fratco pipe, crafting ditches and waterways to less drainage-focused projects like

building bridges, laying concrete and even landscaping. When you think of a task, they've either done it or are ready to learn it. And learning is a big part of their philosophy. As Dan puts it, "If we can't do it, we find someone to help us do it right." That's not just talk; it's a promise they work by.

The inception of Precision Farm Drainage, Inc. is a tale of family support and belief in one's dreams. Something we're proud to resonate with here at Fratco. When Dan decided to venture out on his own and establish the company, it was his family who stood by him, backing him on his business

loan. This foundational support was not merely financial; it was a gesture of faith in Dan's vision and capabilities. This support system played a pivotal role in the company's early days, laying the groundwork for what would become a 33-year testament to hard work, versatility and the power of family. It's a reminder that behind every successful endeavor lies a network of support, often starting with those closest to us.

Precision Farm Drainage, Inc. has a willingness and ability to adapt on the fly, changing plans to tackle new challenges as they arise. It's this adaptability that makes them



invaluable to their clients. They aren't just contractors; they're problem-solvers who think on their feet. They're resourceful laborers who are ready to change plans for the best possible outcome for the client. While many of the contractors we've spoken with mention slower seasons, Dan and Tyler joked that they don't really know what that's like, as they are doing a lot more than laying drainage pipe for their clients.

Dan recalls his work and interaction with Fratco as being seamless, full of easy people to work with. He jokes that Chad Nicholson, his Fratco

salesman, could probably sell him anything, even if Fratco pipe wasn't top of the line! Chad's been in the field, understands the nitty-gritty and works seamlessly with Precision Farm Drainage Inc. to sort out any issue. Dan was sure to mention how Chad has always been there for them. When things don't go as planned, Chad's ready to go the extra mile. Wilkinson's respect for Chad is evident,

“HE'S NOT JUST A NORMAL SALESMAN WITH A SUIT AND TIE ON, HE'S BEEN IN THE FIELD.”

Dan's approach to work is personal. He likes to do things as if he were doing them for his own farm. This attention to detail resonates deeply with us as we know a job shouldn't be done if it isn't going to be done right.

In a move that underscores the company's commitment to its employees and their well-being, Dan Wilkinson took it upon himself to construct an office for Tyler Cockerham while he was on paternity leave. This act of kindness and consideration speaks volumes about the culture at Precision Farm Drainage, Inc. It's not just about the work; it's about creating an environment where employees feel valued and supported. Dan's initiative to build the office during Tyler's absence was a welcome surprise, ensuring Tyler returned to a workspace that acknowledged his importance to the company and his need for a conducive work environment as a new father.

Precision Farm Drainage, Inc. is more than a contractor; they're a prime example of what hard work, flexibility and willingness to learn can bring to the table. They embody what we at Fratco celebrate—the relentless pursuit of excellence and the resilience to adapt and overcome. Their story isn't just about drainage or farm work; it's about the spirit of the working man.

In this humble contractor, we don't just see a company doing its job. We see a team, a part of our larger community—setting an example for what it means to be truly committed to quality, learning and adaptability. Precision Farm Drainage, Inc., through their work and ethos, reminds us all that with the right attitude, there's no challenge too big, no task too complex. They're not just working the land; they're cultivating a legacy of excellence and determination that inspires us all. ■

WHERE DOES THE

THE ROLE OF PROPER DRAINAGE IN THE BIGGER PICTURE

WHAT IS A WATERSHED?

In simple terms, a watershed is an area of land where all the water, from rain to snowmelt, drains into a common outlet—like a river, bay or even the ocean. Think of it like a giant basin; everything that falls inside ends up in the same place. Seems simple right?

For example, a farm with Fratco pipe installed will drain water off the farm, and that water is probably drained into a nearby ditch. The ditch may flow into a creek or nearby pond or lake. That would be the end of a local watershed. But oftentimes varied amounts of water will travel through different basins, creating an inter-connected water cycle throughout the US, and the world!

In the midwest region, a lot of drained water will find its way to the Mississippi River and from there flow south to the Gulf of Mexico. Throughout its travel, some water is evaporating, and some water is seeping deeper into the soil to travel underground or to be evaporated later in warmer weather.

WHY WATERSHEDS MATTER

As drainage experts, we're not just laying pipe; we're key players in guiding water through these natural pathways. Whether it's a small creek in a rural area or a large urban canal, our work is part of a larger cycle that ensures water flows where it should, reducing flooding and erosion.



Proper drainage is more than just preventing a puddle in someone's backyard. It's about keeping the larger water system healthy.

PROPER DRAINAGE PRACTICES HELP:

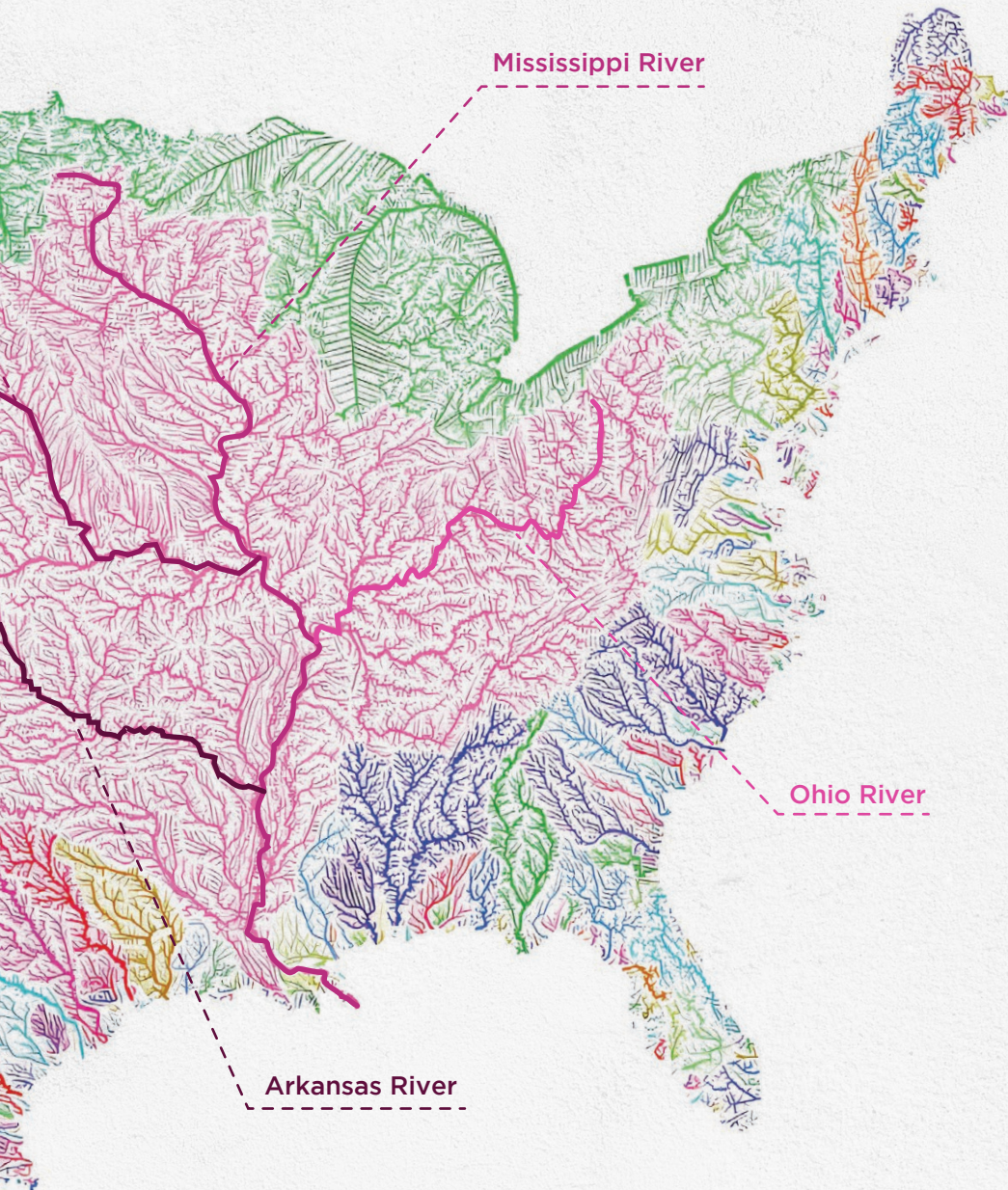
Prevent Pollution: By controlling runoff, we reduce the risk of pollutants reaching our waterways.

Protect Wildlife: Many species depend on clean, stable water habitats. Our work helps maintain these ecosystems.

Support Communities: Good drainage means safer, more resilient communities, especially in flood-prone areas.

Every pipe laid, every trench dug, plays a part in this massive, interconnected water system. It's a tough job, that's why it has to be right. We're not just working; we're making a mark for the environmental health of our nation.

THE WATER GO?



Next time you're knee-deep in a drainage project, remember: you're playing a vital role in managing America's watersheds. Your skill and hard work keep the water flowing right, benefiting everyone and everything downstream. ■

The Heartbeat of America: Veins of Running Water

This diagram is a zoomed-out representation of the various watersheds across the lower 48. The large pink watershed, the Mississippi-Missouri Drainage Basin, is the largest watershed in the U.S.; including the basins for the Mississippi, Missouri, Arkansas and Ohio rivers.

- The Missouri River is the longest river in the US, flowing about 2,450 miles long.
- The Mississippi-Missouri watershed serves as a drainage system for roughly 1.2 million square miles, encompassing 32 U.S. states and two provinces in Canada. This accounts for approximately 40% of the natural drainage area in the continental U.S.
- Spanning from the Allegheny Mountains in the east to the Rocky Mountains in the west, the Mississippi-Missouri Drainage Basin ranks as the fourth largest watershed globally.

Sources:
Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Geological Survey, National Park Service, Smart Water Magazine

FROM *POLYMERS* TO *PIPE*

Unveiling HDPE and HDPP Technology

At the heart of Fratco's advanced corrugated drainage pipe lies the intricate chemistry and sophisticated makeup of high-density polyethylene (HDPE) and high-density polypropylene (HDPP). These materials are not just plastics; they are marvels of modern chemical engineering, tailored to meet the rigorous demands of many products including drainage infrastructure.

WHERE DOES PLASTIC COME FROM?

Plastic is everywhere today! The term "plastic" refers to any material made of polymers, large molecules made of the same unit. Most plastics we refer to are completely man-made. Today, the majority of plastics, except for bioplastics, are created from crude oil drilled from underground. Then the oil is refined by heating it in a furnace at around 752°F (400°C). Heating the oil separates its core components, allowing engineers to extract ethane and propane to begin building plastic. Then these components are broken up into smaller molecules like ethylene and propylene. It's these components that then go through a polymerization process—where the molecules are combined—to create the physical polymers that

become what we call plastic. Finally, the polymers undergo a pelletizing process, creating the pellets that Fratco and other plastic manufacturers mold into the plastic product.

HDPE: POLYETHYLENE

HDPE stands as the most prevalent plastic, making up over a third of the global plastic market. This polymer consists of numerous repeating ethylene units, with its molecular formula and makeup being $(C_2H_4)_n$.

A unique feature of HDPE is its relatively minimal branching compared to other polyethylene types, contributing to its distinct properties.

Let's Break it Down:

- HDPE is a thermoplastic, meaning it can be melted and reshaped.
- It's created by joining together ethylene molecules, which come from petroleum.
- The molecules are arranged in a straight line with very few side branches, making it very dense.
- This arrangement makes HDPE very strong and tough, able to withstand heavy use.

- It has a high strength-to-density ratio, meaning it's strong even while staying relatively light.
- HDPE is great at resisting damage from environmental factors like stress cracking.

HDPE's ability to stay flexible and resilient make it a common choice for many products even outside of drain pipe." We often find it in shampoo bottles, toys, chemical containers, plastic bags and milk jugs. Milk jugs and large drink bottles are a great example to show off the strength and flexibility of HDPE, as they hold large, heavy quantities of liquid.

HDPP: POLYPROPYLENE

High-density polypropylene (HDPP) is widely used and known for its strength and durability. This plastic is made by linking together propylene molecules, which are derived from petroleum, similar to HDPE. Its chemical structure is represented as $(C_3H_6)_n$.

Let's Break it Down:

- HDPP is a thermoplastic, just like HDPE, which means it can also be melted down and reshaped.

- It's formed by connecting propylene monomers, another product from petroleum.
- The arrangement of its molecules is typically in a straight line with a specific orientation, known as isotactic polypropylene. This setup gives HDPP a higher degree of firmness and crystallinity.
- This molecular structure makes HDPP very strong, resistant to physical impacts, and able to handle higher temperatures better than many plastics.
- It's also known for being tough but lightweight, offering a balance between strength and ease of handling.
- HDPP stands out for its resistance to various chemicals, including solvents, bases and acids.
- It's particularly good at resisting wear and tear from repeated bending or flexing, which is known as fatigue resistance.

You'll often find HDPP in everyday items like furniture, luggage and Tupperware™, as well as in automotive parts such as bumpers and interior linings. Its combination of strength, flexibility and resistance to chemicals makes it a versatile choice for many applications.

INNOVATIONS IN MATERIAL SCIENCE

Fratco's commitment to innovation and sustainability is evident in the continuous exploration of advanced additives and blending techniques. The flexibility, strength-to-density ratios and simple recycling process give plastic pipe a unique advantage over other materials like concrete or metal. It's innovations like these that can continue to enhance the resistance of HDPE and HDPP, improving their resilience and even extending their lifespan under challenging soil conditions.

The journey from crude oil to drainage pipe encapsulates a remarkable narrative of innovation, emphasizing not only the technical prowess required to manufacture these materials but also Fratco's dedication to sustainability through recyclable materials. HDPE and HDPP's inherent properties—strength, flexibility and resistance to environmental stressors—make them ideal for the challenges of modern drainage systems. By continually advancing material science and embracing recycling, Fratco not only contributes to the longevity and efficiency of drainage infrastructure but also demonstrates a commitment to environmental stewardship. This dedication ensures that Fratco's products not only meet the current needs of the drainage industry but also pave the way for a more sustainable and resilient future. ■



What about recycling?

Plastic is designed to last, while that's great for drainage pipe, it's not great for products that are designed to be one use and disposed of. That's where recycling comes into play. At Fratco, we try to implement recycled materials wherever we can. Remember, when everyone does their small part to recycle, it can make a huge impact!

Sources: Omnexus SpecialChem, Plascon Plastics, TedEd



FUN FACT: Plastic pellets are also known as "Nurdles."

FIELD JOURNAL

TRIED & TRUE TRICKS OF THE TRADE

SUSTAINABILITY ON SITE

ECO-FRIENDLY PRACTICES FOR GREENER WORKSITES

In today's world, going green isn't just for the tree-huggers. It's smart, it's necessary and it's something we can all get behind. Whether you're on a construction site, in a workshop or running a warehouse, there are straightforward ways to make your worksite tougher on waste and kinder to the planet. Here's how to roll up your sleeves and get it done:

1. CUT THE WASTE, RECYCLE THE REST

Look at the trash you're tossing. Chances are, a lot of it can be recycled. Set up bins for paper, plastics and metals. If there's food waste, think about composting. It's about being smart with what you throw away.

2. POWER DOWN TO POWER UP

Energy's not cheap, and wasting it is like throwing cash in the trash. Switch to LED lights—they last longer and eat up less power. Remember to shut off lights and gear when they're not in use. A smart thermostat can cut down heating and cooling costs big time.

3. CHOOSE TOUGH, ECO-FRIENDLY GEAR

When buying materials, think recycled or sustainable. This could mean anything from the paper in the office to the supplies on the site. Ditch single-use plastics for gear that can take a beating and be used again.

4. SAVE WATER, SAVE CASH

Water's a resource we can't afford to waste. Fit in low-flow faucets and toilets. Got a green patch to maintain? Go for plants that don't guzzle water and set up efficient watering systems or rain barrels.

5. SMART COMMUTES, LESS POLLUTION

Encourage rideshares, public transport or biking to work. Less cars mean less pollution, and it can save everyone some dough on gas. If your site uses vehicles, look into electric or hybrid options—they're tough and cost-effective in the long run.

6. SCHOOL YOUR CREW

Getting your team on board is key. Hold a quick workshop or a toolbox talk about why this green stuff matters. Maybe even set up a team to lead the charge on eco-friendly practices. Integrate some motivating incentives to get everyone on board.

7. RUN A TIGHT, GREEN SHIP

Everyday habits make a big difference. Use less paper, let natural light do its job and keep your equipment in tip-top shape for efficiency. On construction sites, manage your layout to disturb less ground and control dust.

8. BRAG ABOUT YOUR GREEN MOVES

Don't be shy—tell your customers and community about the green changes you're making. It shows you're serious about doing your bit.

To wrap it up, making your worksite more eco-friendly is about being smart, saving money and doing right by the planet. It's not about doing everything at once—start where you can and keep building on it. Every little bit counts, and it adds up to something big for our future.



**5 MILLION FEET OF
PROVEN PERFORMANCE.**

FLEX CORR



Howdy, Fratco Family!

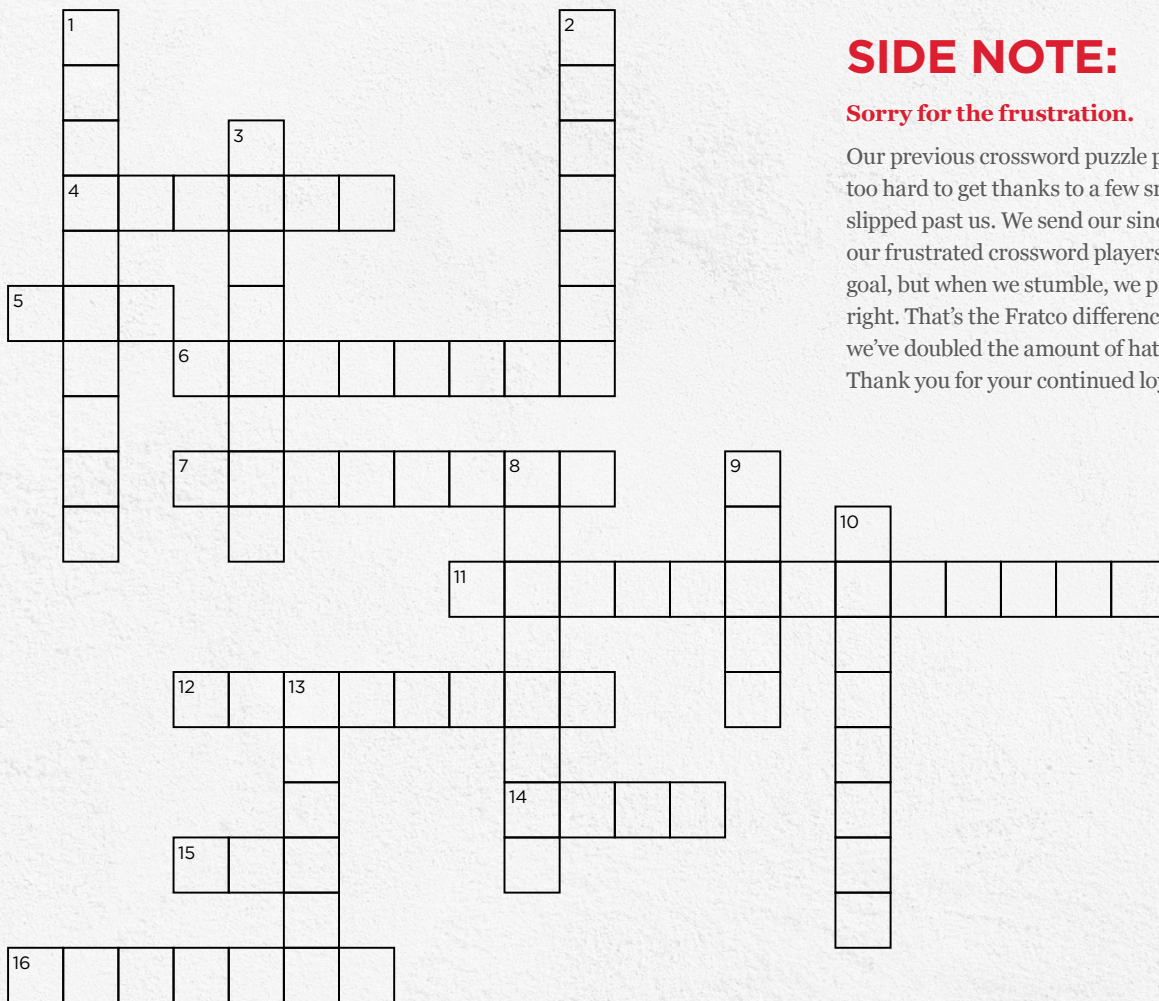
WIN THIS LIMITED EDITION *TRIED & TRUE* CAP



TEN

Complete the crossword puzzle, snap a picture of it and email it to tried-true@fracto.com by June 30th. We will pick ~~FIVE~~ **TEN** lucky winners to receive a *Tried & True* hat! Fill out the information below and include it in your photo!

Name: _____
Street Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Email: _____



SIDE NOTE:

Sorry for the frustration.

Our previous crossword puzzle proved to play a little too hard to get thanks to a few sneaky errors that slipped past us. We send our sincerest apologies to our frustrated crossword players. Perfection is the goal, but when we stumble, we promise to make it right. That's the Fratco difference. To do so, this issue we've doubled the amount of hats we're giving away. Thank you for your continued loyalty.

CROSSWORD CLUES

DOWN

1. Mark Richardson's belief in Fratco product can be described as _____.
2. Proper drainage is about keeping the larger water system _____.
3. The term plastic refers to any material made of _____.
8. How Dan Wilkinson recalls his interactions with Fratco
9. Fratco and Carriff have been working together for nearly this many years
10. The state where they conducted a study that revealed groundwater depletion holds a threat to food production
13. What Dan built for Tyler while he was on paternity leave

ACROSS

4. Where Mark Richardson serves as plant manager
5. The type of light bulb that is more eco-efficient
6. Dan and Tyler work together to keep Precision Farm Drainage, Inc. running _____.
7. The thing between you and outrageous success
11. The more realistic shape of falling raindrops
12. An advanced drainage solution used to improve drainage and increase a park's natural beauty
14. Carriff Engineered Fabrics introduced this type of filter that revolutionized the drainage landscape
15. The abbreviation for the organization Shayne Stonehouse and Craig Douglass are on a committee together for
16. Another fun name for polymer pellets



INSTRUCTIONS: Cut along the dotted line for 5x7 frames. Cut out the image for 4x6 frames.



*Success is not final, failure
is not fatal: it is the courage
to continue that counts.*

- WINSTON CHURCHILL

LOCATIONS

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