

A CUSTOMER'S SUCCESS STORY



Volvo Construction Equipment

READY, SET, RIDE!

Volvo Construction Equipment contributes to the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo

Everywhere, golf carts are buzzing around, carrying groundskeepers and volunteer workers. Whoosh! A 25-ton off-road Volvo articulated hauler zips by, hauling sawdust for livestock bedding. At the office, people crowd around Greg Golightly, managing director of the Buildings and Grounds Department, pressing him with questions and requests.

This was Reliant Park in Houston in the midst of preparations for the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, the world's largest rodeo and the third-largest fair or festival in North America, held March 2 – 21, 2010.

This is a truly unique international event. This year's general attendance soared to over 2 million visitors, breaking the previous record of 1.8 million visitors in 2009. More than 2,000 foreign visitors came to Houston from 51 countries. With more than 27,000 livestock competitors and horse show entries this year, the Houston Livestock Show is the world's largest event of its kind.

But the show is not just about horses and livestock. Nationally acclaimed musical artists perform every night during the show and rodeo. This year's list of top acts included the Black Eyed Peas, Jonas Brothers, Rascal Flatts, Tim McGraw, Brooks & Dunn and many more. There's



A Volvo articulated hauler moves dirt into the arena at Reliant Park for the 2010 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo.

a huge carnival. And a petting zoo. A series of art exhibits, a Texas-sized food court, a shopping mall and much, much more.

It all takes place in Reliant Park, the site of Reliant Stadium, Reliant Center, the Reliant Astrodome, and the Reliant Arena. The park is a vast complex of buildings and tents that house six indoor arenas in addition to the main stadium, a retractable-roofed building that is home to the Houston Texans pro football team.

What makes the preparation so daunting is that the stadium, the six arenas and thousands of pens, stalls and corridors all have concrete floors. Every surface must be covered with clay, sand, a combination of clay and sand, topsoil, or sawdust and wood shavings. Every time one group of

livestock — say, the goats — moves out of an area, it must be cleaned to prepare for the next round of animals, which could be hogs, chickens or sheep. In all, more than 8,000 cubic yards of material was used.

In the preparation and during the show, Volvo Construction Equipment can be found moving all that material. For many years, ROMCO, one of the company's Texas-area dealers, has supplied the show with Volvo articulated haulers for hauling clay, sand, sawdust and wood shavings for bedding. This year, two L25B compact wheel loaders and a G960 motor grader were also included.

Articulated trucks save time

At the peak of preparations for the show, two Volvo A25E articulated haulers

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hauled sawdust about a half-mile from a stockpile to a point near the Reliant Center. Traveling between 30 and 40 miles per hour, the big haulers fairly dominated the concrete roadways around Reliant Park.

For 17 years, Archie Peterson, a ROMCO sales representative, has been a member of the show's Equipment Acquisition Committee. Years ago, Peterson tells us, the show used on-road tandem-axle trucks to haul all of the required clay, sand and topsoil into the arenas and grounds.



Archie Peterson with ROMCO Equipment Co., and Mike Strittmatter with Volvo Construction Equipment, are members of the Equipment Acquisition Committee for the Houston Rodeo.

"I proposed using articulated dump trucks instead of tandem-axle trucks," said Peterson. "I figured the artic haulers would be faster. But show management was hesitant to use them, because they thought the tires would tear up the pavement.

"We did calculations to show that the big tires' loads per square inch would not exceed the limit of the concrete pavement," said Peterson. "So I brought one artic hauler to the grounds, to show that it would not tear up the pavement — and the next day they sent all the on-road trucks home."

That was huge for show management, because the show is a nonprofit charity event, and the on-road trucks were paid by the load. So because ROMCO donated the Volvo equipment, it saved the show considerable money. "We cut the time to haul dirt to the Astrodome from two weeks to three days," said Peterson.

Compact loader a hit

Like the big artic haulers, the Volvo L25B compact loader was a smash

hit at the show as well. "We've got that baby loader in use everywhere on these grounds," said Golightly. "Everybody wants to use it. That loader is a godsend."

Each day during the show, sawdust needed to be changed out of the livestock stalls. Both the Volvo L25B loaders distribute sawdust and bedding materials to the pens and stalls used at Reliant Park. The loaders proved to be invaluable for their ability to maneuver in tight spaces.

"They really have fallen in love with the L25B loaders," said Peterson. "They are easy to navigate around the arena."

Because the show is a nonprofit organization, each year it depends on an army of volunteers to make everything happen. Mike Strittmatter, a product manager at Volvo Construction Equipment, is one of those volunteers as a member of the show's Equipment Acquisition Committee. Both he and Peterson are enthusiastic about the exposure given to Volvo Construction Equipment prior to and during the show. Equipment operators come from ranches and local contractors, from volunteer workers, and from show staff. "A lot of people are operating this Volvo equipment for the first time, and they're finding that they like it," says Strittmatter.

"This show has more than 20,000 volunteers," says Peterson. "Every time you shake a hand here, it's a potential customer."

It's about the scholarships

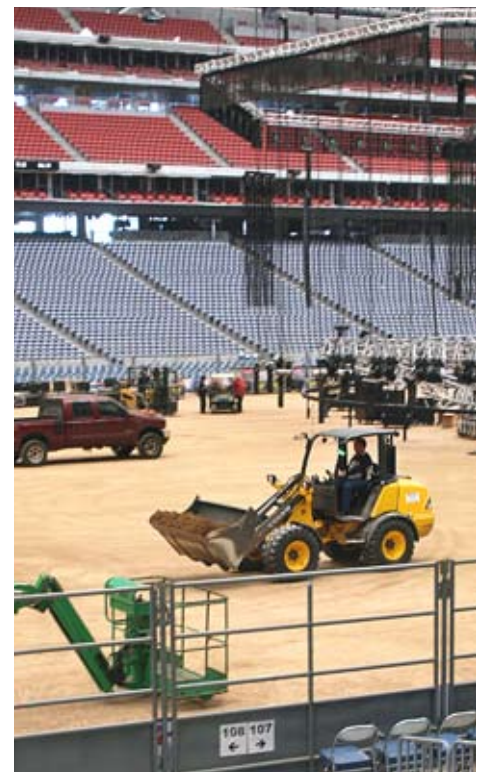
The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo is a charity that benefits the youth of Texas. Since the show began in 1932, it has contributed more than \$250 million to scholarships, research, endowments, calf scramble participants, junior show exhibitors, the Rodeo Institute for Teacher Excellence, School Art participants, and other educational and youth programs. Currently, 1,884 students are attending 88 different Texas colleges and universities on show scholarships valued at nearly \$26 million.

Since the inception of its scholarship program in 1957, the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo has committed more than \$140 million in direct educational support to the youth of Texas. More than 300,000 young

amateur artists participated in the School Art program in 2008, submitting projects based on Western culture, heritage and history.

Strittmatter said show management keeps ticket prices low so that the average family can attend the rodeo and a concert. On Value Day Wednesday, for example, \$10 buys a rodeo ticket. "The show and rodeo sell more tickets than the Houston Astros baseball team draws in their entire 81-game home season," says Strittmatter.

The economic impact on the Houston area is large indeed. Rodeo competitors, visitors, livestock show contestants, vendors and others have direct expenditures in excess of \$220 million annually. When economic multipliers are applied, the financial impact of the show is nearly \$345 million.



Because of its compact size, the Volvo L25B was invaluable for moving dirt and sawdust in and out of livestock stalls.