

to companies lining up jobs to clean trucks at the owners' sites. He soon was doing his first job, knee deep in snow, using his pickup to carry in 55-gallon drums of wash water. John perfected techniques. And he grew his business.

"I developed my own chemical line, just out of need," says John. The original environmental specialties component of the contracting business grew into EnviroSpec, which officially

tornado swarms that moved through the Midwest and South at the end of February and beginning of March. The goal was to get everyone the tools they needed to get their businesses back in operating form as fast as possible.

John and Shelley are also busy gearing up for a new, year-long venture slated to begin in June 2012. Through their Soap for Hope Charity, they will be starting their Washin' Warriors Project, which has the goal of putting 12

help them sidestep the pitfalls that, at one time, I was not fortunate enough to avoid," he says.

For many years, John's company has been offering a roster of System Certification Courses and Symposiums. The contractors enrolling not only learn how to repair equipment by hands-on immersion, but they also get the opportunity to talk with other contractors and to enjoy some great barbeque.

Knowing how to maintain a machine saves a contractor time and money. And those are precious commodities that the contractor can reinvest in his business.

Day-to-day, the objective of John and his employee team is to keep contractors "energized and profitable," he explains. "They are our partners—not our customers."

A member of the Power Washers of North America, John always has contractors in mind. Innovation is a big part of the equation and much of the innovative design begins with John's tinkering.

In 2012, several new products will become available from EnviroSpec, including a burner diagnostic system, a foam turbine, a new trigger gun, three new pumps, and a line of 40-hp, big block, high volume dual pumpers.

Working alongside employees is the best way to stay connected to them and to the industry, says John. "Get just as dirty as they get and work as hard as they work." A first time visitor to his company would not be able to pick him out as the boss.

Before John got into the industry, he worked for Chrysler Corp. in Lansing, MI. Prior to that, he served with the U.S. Navy in Vietnam for two years.

Shelley also served in Vietnam with the U.S. Army. But the couple did not meet during military service. They met in Connecticut some years later when he was building his contracting business and she was working as a head nurse at a Veterans Administration hospital. They moved to Georgia in 1992. "The winters finally won and drove us south," says John.



launched in 1986 when he sold the contractor component of his business.

In addition to its headquarters in Georgia, EnviroSpec has a facility in Minneapolis, MN. John began his company when there were no 800 numbers to call for advice and assistance. "Now, there are," he explains. In full circle, he stands as one of the experts that takes the calls of contractors, ready to provide the real-time help they often need.

"I speak their language and there is nothing that they can get themselves into that I haven't already done," says John. Indeed, on one of the days we had planned to talk, he had to reschedule; he was too busy helping contractors who had been hit hard by the

veterans into the professional contract cleaning business at no charge to them.

"Recommendations will come from EnviroSpec's customer base and will include veterans returning from all wars," explains John. Across one year, one veteran each month will receive a pressure washer, chemicals, spare parts package, and a training and advertising allotment. Mentoring—from John's company and the person who recommended the veteran—will also be a component of the start-up assistance.

Knowledge Is Power

What guides John through each day in business? "Knowing that we are fortunate enough to be able to share our knowledge and experience with a generation of contractors [and] may