

# WOOD WORKS



## City of Pittsfield Department of Public Services

C.N. Wood equipment solutions help the city  
of Pittsfield tackle aging infrastructure, tight  
streets and long service hours with confidence



# Built for the demands

C.N. Wood equipment solutions help the city of Pittsfield tackle aging infrastructure, tight streets and long service hours with confidence



Jeffrey Howes,  
Fleet Manager

The city of Pittsfield, Mass., supports a population of approximately 45,000 and manages a municipal fleet of around 240 machines to keep critical city operations moving every day.

“We’re responsible for every type of vehicle or piece of equipment the city uses, with the exception of police and fire,” explained Jeffrey Howes, Fleet Manager for the city of Pittsfield. “That includes public utilities, inspections, administration, building maintenance — you name it.”

Despite the large number of machines, the Department of Public Services operates with just five mechanics and Howes, who constantly juggles multiple roles.

“There’s only a handful of us keeping this entire fleet running,” Howes emphasized. “I serve as the parts person, helper, researcher, purchaser — whatever needs to be done. That’s the reality of running a lean operation.”

### Versatile equipment

The Department of Public Services oversees operations across Pittsfield’s 256 lane miles of roadway, maintaining essential equipment and supporting a wide range of city functions — from street sweeping and sewer maintenance to material handling and utility work. Much of the city’s infrastructure dates back decades, demanding reliable equipment capable of navigating narrow, hilly streets and enduring long service hours.

**“C.N. Wood provides training and support materials for our mechanics.”**

~Jeffrey Howes,  
Fleet Manager,  
City of Pittsfield

### Customer snapshot

**Company:** City of Pittsfield Department of Public Services

**Location:** Pittsfield, Massachusetts

**Employees:** 6 in fleet maintenance

**Area of expertise:** Fleet management, public works equipment support and infrastructure maintenance

**Equipment from C.N. Wood:** Komatsu WA270 and WA380 wheel loaders; Elgin Pelican broom sweepers; Vactor Ramjet sewer jetters; Vactor 2100i combination sewer cleaner

To find equipment capable of handling the demands, the department looks to C.N. Wood for purchasing and maintenance support. Pittsfield currently operates three Elgin Pelican broom sweepers from C.N. Wood to perform biannual street sweeping cycles — once in the spring and once in the fall before

Using a Komatsu WA380 wheel loader, an operator piles waste removed from streets at the department’s facility.

### ▶ VIDEO





The city of Pittsfield appreciates the versatility of the Vactor 2100i combination sewer cleaner.

temperatures drop too low. The machines carry water, requiring indoor storage to prevent freezing in colder months.

"We chose Elgin Pelican sweepers because of their maneuverability," said Howes. "They're perfect for our tight roads and can handle the terrain without issue. The sweepers are easy to maintain and have proven to be very reliable. C.N. Wood provides training and support materials for our mechanics, and we've stocked wear parts, so we're never caught off guard."

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***"The pump on the Ramjet is the best we've ever used — high pressure, long-lasting and very low maintenance."***

*-Jeffrey Howes,  
Fleet Manager,  
City of Pittsfield*

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The department's relationship with C.N. Wood has helped streamline maintenance as well as procurement and service scheduling. That partnership extends across multiple pieces of equipment, including the city's growing fleet of Komatsu wheel loaders.

"We have two Komatsu wheel loaders — a WA380 and a WA270 — and we're planning to buy a third," Howes stated. "We normally rent a third loader during busy seasons, but now we've secured funding to purchase another WA270."

The WA380 is primarily used for stacking salt and yard material, while the WA270 units are deployed for road work. Their drivability,

visibility and hydrostatic braking system make them popular among operators.

"Our guys like the feel of the WA270s on the road," commented Howes. "When they let off the throttle, the machine slows down rather than coasting, which adds another layer of safety and control."

The reliability and responsiveness of equipment extends to Pittsfield's vacuum and hydro-excavation equipment. The city runs two Vactor Ramjet sewer jetters and one Vactor 2100i combination sewer cleaner, all purchased through C.N. Wood. One Ramjet truck has logged more than 10,000 hours with only basic upkeep. That level of durability matters when dealing with aging underground systems and the unpredictable demands of municipal infrastructure.

"We use the Ramjets for sewer line maintenance and clearing blockages," described Howes. "The pump on the Ramjet is the best we've ever used — high pressure, long-lasting and very low maintenance."

Howes added, "The combination Vactor unit is extremely versatile. It's used for hydro excavating, cleaning catch basins, and it also has a rodder pump. The crew absolutely loves it."

### **Backed by C.N. Wood**

From Howes' perspective, equipment reliability is only half the equation. With a small crew, having maintenance support offloaded to C.N. Wood has become a critical advantage.



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# 'C.N. Wood handles all the scheduled maintenance'

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"We rely on Komatsu Care for our loaders, which means C.N. Wood handles all the scheduled maintenance," Howes noted. "They monitor hours, call me to set up service, and send a tech to get it done. We just have to grease the machines."

With dozens of responsibilities and daily logistical demands, Howes appreciates how efficiently C.N. Wood supports the department, especially when it comes to ordering parts or getting on-site service.

## By the numbers

- **45,000** people in the city of Pittsfield
- **240** pieces of equipment
- **256** lane miles are maintained and swept biannually
- **2** Komatsu wheel loaders are currently in operation and supported by Komatsu Care
- **10,000** hours have been logged on Pittsfield's oldest Vactor Ramjet sewer jetter with only routine maintenance required



C.N. Wood's Chris Kokosa (left) works closely with the city of Pittsfield's Jeffrey Howes to find the best equipment at the right price.

Elgin Pelican broom sweepers offer maneuverability, even on tight streets.



"I usually just text them — I don't even need to call," Howes shared. "They know our serial numbers; they know our fleet. I tell them what unit I'm working on and what I need, and they either ship it or have it ready for pickup the same day."

That level of customer service has made C.N. Wood Pittsfield's go-to distributor for nearly every equipment upgrade. While many vendors may offer similar machines, few deliver the same follow-through.

"There's a lot of salesmen out there trying to push the same equipment, but C.N. Wood has proven they can back it up," declared Howes. "They're consistent, responsive and always helpful — even as their team changes over time."

While sales representative Chris Kokosa is new to Pittsfield's account, the transition has been seamless, which is something Howes attributes to the distributor's culture of service.

"I think it's just their philosophy," Howes reflected. "They really do put customer service first, and it shows in every interaction we have with them."

## Customer-first partnership

With proximity to C.N. Wood's Whately, Mass., branch and another location in Connecticut, Pittsfield is well positioned for responsive parts delivery and field support whenever needed.

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**"I know what good service looks like — and C.N. Wood delivers it every time."**

—Jeffrey Howes,  
Fleet Manager,  
City of Pittsfield

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"I'd tell any city considering a switch to definitely give C.N. Wood a look," Howes stated. "They offer quality machines, top-notch support, and they treat us like their biggest customer — even though we know we're not."

After more than two decades in municipal operations, Howes has seen the difference firsthand.

"I've worked in other towns, for construction companies, and even as a road tech," Howes said. "I know what good service looks like — and C.N. Wood delivers it every time." ■

*\*The opinions expressed here are based on the customer's specific experience. Results may vary.*