



How HEPA Environmental Services Completes Operation Sunshine with FieldFlō

An Ohio abatement contractor's owner set out to spend his winters in Florida without stepping away from the business. Here's how one connected system made that possible.

FEATURED CUSTOMER

HEPA
Environmental
Services, Inc.

SERVICES

Asbestos, lead & hazardous waste abatement; clean demolition

TEAM

25 full-time plus 40–60 temporary field staff

ON FIELDFLŌ

7 years

AT A GLANCE**COMPANY**

HEPA Environmental Services

LOCATION

Ohio, with work across multiple states

SERVICES

Asbestos, lead, and hazardous waste abatement; clean demolition

CLIENTS

Industrial, commercial, and residential

TEAM

25 full-time employees plus 40–60 temporary field staff

FIELDFLÖ CUSTOMER

7 years

USED FOR

CRM, estimating, proposals, scheduling, timekeeping, compliance, safety, daily field reports, inventory, billing, and closeout reports

RESULTS**3 months**

in Florida planned for next winter, without stepping away from the business

30 min

to deliver a 1,200-page closeout report on a \$2M+ project

2 projects

awarded by that client within the next two weeks

\$1,200

damage claim resolved with a single daily field photo

10 a.m.

payroll hours verified daily, so Monday payroll is ready to run

01**The goal: Operation Sunshine**

Rick Kuhlman built HEPA Environmental Services on a simple idea: run an abatement company the right way, follow the regulations, and customers will keep coming back. It worked. HEPA grew into a team of 25 full-time employees and 40 to 60 temporary field staff serving industrial, commercial, and residential clients.

About seven years ago, Rick and his wife, Janine, started thinking about the long term. They wanted to spend part of the winter in Florida, where the weather is a lot kinder than it is in Ohio.

“ I began what I call Operation Sunshine, and that was my goal: to figure out what I had to do so that I could spend an entire month or two months, or hopefully three months someday, in Florida, but still be able to work at HEPA.

RICK KUHLMAN · President, HEPA Environmental Services

That goal came with a hard requirement. In a business where one missing certification can shut down a job, Rick couldn't simply stop paying attention. He needed to see every project, catch problems early, and keep bidding for new work, all from a thousand miles away.

02

The challenge: a business that ran on the owner

In HEPA's early days, Rick held almost every role outside the field. "I was the project manager. I was the sales, I was the marketing," he says. For about two years, he worked seven days a week to get the company off the ground.

**4 documents.
Every worker.
Every year.**

Even as the team grew, a lot still ran through him. Every worker on an asbestos job needs four current documents on site: a physician's written opinion, a respirator fit test, EPA-accredited training, and a state license. Each one expires every year, on its own schedule. Ten workers means 40 separate deadlines. Ten jobs means hundreds of pages the office has to keep current and in the right hands.



If you had ten jobs, you now need to be in charge of 400 pieces of paper as the owner. It practically was a full-time job, and it was a nightmare. And it would keep me up at night.

RICK KUHLMAN

Keeping that paper where it needed to be was a job of its own. The office kept a master binder, copied it for every supervisor, and kept spare copies on standby. When a crew was working out of town, documents went by fax, FedEx, or mail to a hotel front desk. If a supervisor forgot the binder, someone drove it out. "If the job's two and a half hours away, I'd tie somebody up all day just driving paper around," Rick says.

The rest of the business ran on separate tools that didn't share information. Rick used to get up before everyone else to check that day's compliance paperwork across all of them. Closing out a job could take a week or two of pulling documents together before an invoice even went out, so some customers didn't see a final bill for a month.

None of that was compatible with Operation Sunshine.

03

Why HEPA chose FieldFlō

HEPA looked at large, general-purpose software companies before finding FieldFlō. What set FieldFlō apart was that it was built by people who had done the work themselves, including co-founder, Roni Szigeti.

“Roni knows what I go through. He knows what it’s like to manage that paperwork. So he built a system so that I could go to sleep at night, and I could take Saturday and Sunday off.

RICK KUHLMAN

Rick had spent years watching vendors treat asbestos work as a reason to charge more or do less. FieldFlō was different.

“We don’t get excuses from FieldFlō. We get software.

RICK KUHLMAN

04

The solution: running every job from anywhere

Today, everyone at HEPA uses FieldFlō, from the warehouse to the field to the back office. Together, those pieces give Rick what Operation Sunshine needed: a live view of every job and a team that doesn’t need him in the room to stay on track.

**Every job, every day,
from a phone**

Every HEPA supervisor files a custom daily field report in FieldFlō. It covers visitors, compliance and safety issues, supplies needed, progress, and the plan for tomorrow, with photos from the start, middle, and end of the day. The report reaches the office as soon as the supervisor hits save.



Whether I'm in Ohio or whether I'm in Florida or if I'm on vacation on a boat in the Caribbean, I can hit a button and I can get inside every single job that's going on that day and look at photos that were taken of that day's work.

RICK KUHLMAN

Those photos turn into real-time coaching. When Rick spotted what looked like a PPE issue in one of abatement supervisor Cole Rowley's photos, he reached out the next day. It turned out to be the camera angle, but Cole says conversations like that have changed how he sets up containment. "If they see in your pictures that something's wrong, they can reach out to you and explain, 'Hey, do it this way,'" Cole says.

Project coordinator Jeremy Elliott, a 16-year HEPA veteran, works the same way.



It makes it to where I can basically project manage from anywhere. I don't have to be present to be present.

JEREMY ELLIOTT · Project Coordinator, HEPA Environmental Services

Compliance that keeps itself current

Every certification now lives in FieldFlō. It's entered once and available on every job. When a supervisor clocks in the crew, FieldFlō flags anything missing or about to expire, so the office can schedule a refresher class or physical before it becomes a problem.



Prior to FieldFlō, it was a big dinosaur book. We were walking around with the encyclopedia with me all day. Now I have that all in the palm of my hand.

JEREMY ELLIOTT

Rick says the old binder wouldn't survive today: "If I hand this book to a supervisor today and tell them they have to manage it, I don't know if they'd work here anymore."

Scheduling that doesn't need a 5:30 a.m. phone tree

HEPA schedules crews in FieldFlö, moving people between jobs by dragging and dropping. The updated schedule goes straight to each employee's phone, along with meeting location and supervisor contact. When someone calls in sick, Jeremy reshuffles the crew and only the affected people get the update.



I'm not on the phone at 5:30 in the morning calling everybody and waking up children.

JEREMY ELLIOTT

Supervisors can see weeks ahead, too. Cole uses that view to plan around upcoming staffing gaps: "It takes stress away a lot more than other things would."

A warehouse that plans ahead

Project managers submit warehouse requests in FieldFlö, and the warehouse team pulls everything before the supervisor arrives. Each item shows its photo and bin location. Anything that goes out to a job is tracked until it comes back, and anything that doesn't come back is charged to that job.



Before FieldFlö, we always rush. We have to do extra trips to the stores because we don't have a plan. And now we have everything in control.

MELVA JAIMES · Warehouse Supervisor, HEPA Environmental Services

Because pull lists come from templates, Melva also catches mistakes before trucks leave, such as a request for a four-foot ladder on a job that needs a six-foot one. And when HEPA's single four-gas monitor is needed somewhere else, Rick says the team can "hit a button and find our four-gas meter and have it back at the office in a half hour."

05

The results

30 min

to deliver a 1,200-page closeout report

2

new projects awarded within two weeks

\$1,200

damage claim resolved with one photo

15 min

support response when a feature changed

Proof on demand wins more work

HEPA's largest project was a mall abatement worth more than \$2 million. Months after it wrapped, the client called Rick during lunch. He was thinking about selling the mall and needed every piece of asbestos documentation, as soon as possible.

Rick finished his lunch. About 30 minutes later, the client had a 1,200-page closeout report containing every document generated on the project. He wrote back that it was far faster than he expected. Within the next two weeks, he awarded HEPA two more projects.



He knows he can count on us because we have all of his paperwork housed in our system.

RICK KUHLMAN

Photos that protect the company

A residential customer once claimed HEPA's crew had broken his pool table and asked for about \$1,200. Rick pulled up the daily photos, zoomed in on a crack in the table leg taken before work began, and sent it to the homeowner. The claim went away.

The same records protect the crew. "If I have pictures of it, it proves that that person was working and they can't question it really," Cole says. "It helps protect me and my workers as a crew."

Customers see exactly what they're paying for

HEPA does work for land banks funded with federal money, which require proof that every job was done correctly. With FieldFlō, Jeremy can send photo documentation of each property from the first day to the last, so clients don't have to visit every site.

That speed stands out. When a university environmental manager asked HEPA and a competitor for progress updates on the same campus, HEPA responded right away. The competitor needed a day.

Cleaner billing and a calmer payroll

Proposals now go out through FieldFlō using standard language, and signed proposals come back directly into the system. When a job is ready to bill, VP of Operations Susan Munger uses the proposal's wording on the invoice.



What they can understand is that my invoice matches my proposal. They're both the same amount. It's okay to pay this.

SUSAN MUNGER · VP of Operations, HEPA Environmental Services

**A company that's
grown, and supervisors
who can switch off**

The office checks time entries every morning by about 10 a.m. On Mondays, employees confirm their own hours from a text sent by FieldFlö, so payroll is ready to run. And when a scheduling feature changed unexpectedly, Susan says FieldFlö's support team had an answer back to her in about 15 minutes.

Since adopting FieldFlö, HEPA has grown substantially in employees, profits, and customers. Rick also built the system around something he wanted when he was a field supervisor himself: everything the crew needs to finish on time and on budget, in their pocket. Drawings, videos, custom checklists, and job-specific instructions all live in FieldFlö, so supervisors can do their jobs well "and be off when they're off."

06

Operation Sunshine, next winter

Operation Sunshine is on track. Next winter, Rick and Janine plan to spend three months in Florida.

“ I’m happy to say next year we plan on spending three months in Florida, and I’m not going to stop working. So I’ll be working, but it’ll be a little sunnier.

RICK KUHLMAN · President, HEPA Environmental Services

For Rick, it all comes back to HEPA's motto: making commitments and keeping them. Showing up when you said you would, sending the proposal when you promised, and finishing the job on time.

“ We feel like FieldFlö helps us deliver that customer promise. And that is what we’re all about.

RICK KUHLMAN · President, HEPA Environmental Services



THE HEPA ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES TEAM

See how FieldFlō can run your jobs from anywhere.

Scheduling, compliance, daily field reports, inventory, and billing
in one place.

Book a demo at fieldflo.com