



TOP-100 PRODUCER PICKS KAWASAKI

Varmicon Industries supplies the Rio Grande Valley with aggregate, concrete, and concrete products. From pit to yard, they updated with new Dash-2 models.

Business in the Rio Grande Valley of south Texas is booming. Despite its name, the Valley is not a valley, but a flood plain or delta covering both US and Mexican sides of the border. Original settlers felt using the term “Valley” would attract more tourists, and it turns out they were right. Tourism (including Spring Break college students as well as “Winter Texans” who flee Mid-Western snows) as well as agribusiness is up. And because of its border location, factories and fabrication plants are on the rise. As a result, the housing market is booming.

Varmicon Industries, a long-time producer in the Valley, has been a dominant player as a supplier of sand, gravel, and finished concrete products. And with the Valley’s continued commercial and residential growth an encouragement to competitive companies, Varmicon is determined to hold that dominant position, doing what it takes to keep it that way.

PRODUCT SUPPORT IS KEY

In recent months, in order to boost efficiency, replacing the wheel loader fleet became a priority. Most of the major brands were considered, but in the end, new Kawasaki Dash-2 loaders were chosen.

“In today’s world, loaders are pretty good,” says Kieth Witt, plant manager of Varmicon’s crusher and mining pit. “What’s really important, what sets different brands apart, in my opinion, is the product support provided —

both from the company and especially from the local dealer. The Kawasaki dealer here in the Valley, Nueces Power Equipment (NPE), is one of the better service providers I’ve ever worked with. Doug Kosarek, the branch service manager, is a ‘Johnny-on-the-spot’ kind of guy, which is a welcome relief from some other dealers. He always responds quickly with a solution or plan for the minor things we’ve encountered so far. Robert Zohrer, my NPE sales rep, is great on follow-through. And when I rent, the rate is competitive and the machine gets here when promised.”

ON THE GO

A total of seven Kawasakis were purchased — all at once — and were delivered within a 90-day period. The sand and gravel plant uses two 90ZV-2s and one 95ZV-2. The other four 90s are at Varmicon’s three ready-mix plants and their manufactured pipe and manhole facility.

“At the crusher, we use the 90s as shipping machines,” says Witt. “All day long we’re loading select material from our multiple piles into trucks that haul for Varmicon deliveries as well as for many contractors in the Valley. Our 95 I use for tying up loose ends. That means I keep it busy doing multiple tasks like feeding the crusher, doing push-up work in the pit, maintaining the pit roads, and doing reclamation work as we finish digging in various parts of the pit.”



The sand and gravel plant produces about a million tons a year of crushed gravel, manufactured sand, and screened and washed natural sand.



In addition to owning the 90 and 95 units, Varmicon also rents additional Kawasaki loaders — like this 85ZV-2 — when needed.



“ I really like the way they perform and the way the cab is laid out. ”

– Kieth Witt, Plant Manager, Varmicon Industries



Varmicon uses its 95 for a variety of tasks including feeding the crusher, push-up work (in place of a dozer), maintaining roads (in place of a dozer or grader), and reclamation work.

STONE-WORTHY

Witt grew up around the crushing business. His dad, granddad, and uncles either owned or operated crushing operations in Oklahoma and Texas and he often worked weekends taking care of equipment and doing a variety of jobs. As a vocation, he’s been working at crushing operations for 20 years, with the last 12 in management. So you might say Witt knows a few things about wheel loaders.

“Although these loaders are still pretty new, I really like the way they perform and the way the cab is laid out. The Cummins powertrain works quite well in them. The 95 is extremely nimble for its size and its responsiveness is one of the best that I’ve experienced. I

really like the way it maneuvers. But most importantly, the operators like them, and that’s important because they’re working in them 12 hours a day.”

CHARGING AHEAD

Thanks to the success of the Kawasaki loaders used at the quarry, Varmicon has also replaced many of their mixed-age loaders used for charging their batch plant and cement pipe operations with Kawasaki 90 loaders.

Varmicon Industries is serviced by Nueces Power Equipment (NPE), San Benito, Texas.



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