

# Working yuck jobs takes a sense of humor to perform necessary task

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ROCK HILL—Telling someone you work for the city's sewer department is hardly a good pickup line. Just ask Chris Grant, maintenance superintendent for the city of Rock Hill's sewer division.

"When I met my wife, I told her I was an engineer," he jokes. "You've got to have a sense of humor. There's nothing glamorous about it."

According to the Progressive Policy Institute, around 80 percent of jobs involve working at computers and with telephones.

Not so for Grant and others like him who do the yucky—but necessary—jobs.

These workers deal with spiders and dead animals. They're crawling in the dirt under homes and cleaning sewers and septic tanks. They're out in the winter cold and the summer heat, with smells so bad it could curl your hair.

"There are certain jobs that people brag about having. Police and firemen, there's a lot of pride in that job," said Grant, who's been with the city for 19 years. "We get paid decent. It's just not something you go out and announce."

Grant and a crew of about 11 perform routine maintenance on sewer lines, running a blade down a manhole to cut through roots and grease. They work alongside cockroaches, rats and frogs — on a good day.

"People shouldn't dump raw grease down sinks," he said.

"It might not cause them a problem, but it tends to settle and get hard and cause major troubles."

Broken lines and water leaks cause a blockage of black sludge with a rancid smell. They've found disposable diapers, coveralls, rags and even a bicycle seat in the lines, he said.

"You name it," he said.

Then there's the smell, which sometimes can knock a worker back from the manhole. It's a challenge in the summer, when it's 100 degrees or more in the sun.

"Anybody who said they get used to it is lying," Grant said. "It doesn't get any worse."

Yes, it does.

Take Randy Hubbard's job with York County.

He's a labor foreman for the solid waste department that picks dead cats, dogs and other small animals off the road. "It is a stinking job," Hubbard said.

He goes out as quick as he gets a call so the animal won't be any more exposed than it has to be. He doesn't wear a mask because then he'd be trapping the stink inside, he said.

"I get them in a plastic bag as fast as possible, and then the smell is gone," Hubbard said.

His job is bad, Hubbard admits, but he'd rather collect dead animals than trash. His co-worker at York County's recycling center, Ralph Boyd, agrees.

As assistant supervisor over



PHOTO/WADE NASH

It's a dirty job, but someone has to do it. Professionals talk about how "yucky" their jobs are.

recycling centers, Boyd separates the bottles from the cans and plastic, and he wishes residents would rinse containers more frequently.

"A dog food can that sits for a week in 100 degree weather — it smells good," he joked. Then there is the "gunk and junk" in garbage trucks that need to be cleaned out, he said. What he describes won't go well with the Cheerios you might be eating. "That's dirty," he said.

But Rodney Allman can top

that.

He owns EnviroSafe Termite and Pest Control and runs into snakes, bats and possums, standing water, cobwebs and wood teeming with termites.

"We have personal protective equipment and respirators that help ease the pain," he said. "I have the yuckiest job there is."

The worst are the big flies that accompany dead animals he has to retrieve, he said.

"They're just everywhere,"

# Study finds breakfast helps teen girls stay slim

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BALTIMORE —Girls who regularly ate breakfast, particularly one that includes cereal, were slimmer than those who skipped the morning meal, according to a study that tracked nearly 2,400 girls for 10 years in Ohio and two other states.

Girls who ate breakfast of any type had a lower average body mass index, a common obesity gauge, than those who said they didn't. The index was even lower for girls who said they ate cereal for breakfast, according to findings of the study conducted by the Maryland Medical Research Institute. The study received funding from the National Institutes of Health and cereal-maker General Mills Inc.

"Not eating breakfast is the worst thing you can do, that's really the take-home message for teenage girls," said study author Bruce Barton, the Maryland institute's president and CEO.

The fiber in cereal and healthier foods that normally accompany cereal, such as milk and orange juice, may account for the lower body mass index among cereal eaters, Barton said.

The results were gleaned from a larger NIH survey of 2,379 girls in California, Ohio and Maryland tracked between ages 9 and 19. Results of the study appear in the September issue of the

Journal of the American Dietetic Association.

Nearly one in three adolescent girls in the United States is overweight, according to the association. The problem is particularly troubling because research shows becoming overweight as a child can lead to a lifetime struggle with obesity.

As part of the survey, the girls were asked once a year what they had eaten during the previous three days. The data were adjusted to compensate for factors such as differences in physical activity among the girls and normal increases in body fat during adolescence.

A girl who reported eating

breakfast on all three days had, on average, a body mass index 0.7 units lower than a girl who did not eat breakfast at all. If the breakfast included cereal, the average was 1.65 units lower, the researchers found.

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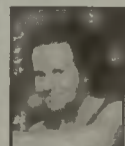
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