

On The Rails

Rail Support Services News and Insights from Cranemasters

The Track Issue

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CRANEMASTERS

Headquarters
8020 Whitepine Road
North Chesterfield, VA 23237

804-236-4900
info@cranemasters.com
www.cranemasters.com

Track Construction and Maintenance



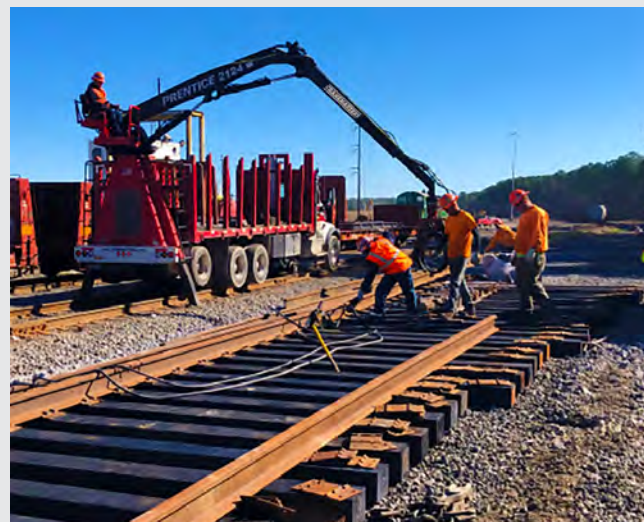
As a full-service railroad provider, Cranemasters is much more than a crane company. We've also worked on tracks and rail lines since 1988.

Cranemasters can construct, inspect, maintain, repair or dismantle track on main rail lines and railyards both large and small, as well as private industry and transit authority tracks.

Whatever it takes to construct, maintain, or restore your rail line, we have the expertise to recommend and execute a cost-effective solution. If you need a section of track built, repaired or replaced, we can do that at Cranemasters. And so much more. Call us for an estimate.

Track Services:

- Track inspections
- Development of maintenance plans
- Crane rail inspection and maintenance
- Direct fixation
- New turnout and track construction
- Emergency response
- Repairing/replacing grade crossings
- Installing frogs and switches
- Track surfacing and alignment
- Ballast regulating
- Thermite welding
- Track take-up
- Mowing right-of-way
- Laying panel track



5 Ways Track Inspections Add Unexpected Value

Winter 2024/2025 | Mark Coressel

Inspections are key to keeping your track safe and in good working order – whether talking about thousands of miles of mainline rail or a shorter length of industrial siding.

Regular inspections performed by a Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) 49 CFR Part 213-qualified inspector are essential for the safety of your employees and the public. It also supports the efficient delivery of your goods, positively contributing to your bottom line.

But, while using inspections to ensure safety and optimize operations is critical in preventing devastating and costly issues, there are other reasons to do inspections. While these reasons are still grounded in identifying and preventing issues, they also focus on helping you forecast, plan, budget, and strategize. In short, they find value where you didn't know you had any.

Below are five reasons to use a track inspection beyond safety, compliance, and keeping your track operational.

1. Capital Planning and Budgeting

At their simplest, inspections identify issues that need to be addressed. But they can do much more.

A quality inspection report contains specific information, including a detailed description of every issue found, an assessment of its severity, and any regulatory requirements related to the problems discovered. Cranemasters can also provide a thorough remediation plan with detailed estimates for all needed resources upon request.

This information is necessary for meeting regulatory requirements, but it can also help you make accurate and timely budget decisions and plan and execute capital planning strategies.



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For instance, a track inspection can identify defects to determine whether you need an expansion. Then, appropriate upgrades and improvement cycles can be planned to ensure you are in the best shape to avoid disruptions.

2. Second Opinion on a Previous Inspection

We all know that a second opinion is never a bad idea when it comes to big decisions.

So, if an inspection reveals a costly and extensive remediation is needed, a second inspection can verify the first inspection, provide alternative solutions, and offer confirming evidence for budget requests.

Even if you know and trust an inspection partner, getting a second opinion on their work, even if just occasionally, substantiates the integrity of the relationship and provides you with the support you need to continue or discontinue it.

When you already have a reliable inspection service provider, a second opinion can also be a way to vet a secondary vendor. Remember, an on-the-field injury can put a winning team in a bad spot if they don't have a great second-string quarterback to step into the game.



The Cranemasters Puckett TLV Truck (Track Loading Vehicle) inspects both static gauge and loaded gauge in one pass. [Learn More >](#)

Your current service provider might do excellent work for a fair price, but if they can't respond within your timeframe, a secondary provider at the ready – especially one who has an 'on-site next day' guarantee – can help you avoid headaches like that.

Vetting them beforehand with a second opinion inspection can give you peace of mind when you need them in a hurry.

3. Pre-Inspections for Acquisitions

No business acquires a property without considering its overall condition, so property inspections are standard before any acquisition. But, when an industrial siding is one of your requirements, a standard inspection isn't enough.

This is because industrial sidings must comply with all regulations and standards of the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the railroads.

The railroad industry is one of the safest in the country because of the commitment of the FRA and the railroads. Accordingly, penalties for noncompliance with their guidelines can be immediate and costly.

And enforcement can be administered financially with fines and operationally with track closures.

A pre-acquisition inspection can identify compliance issues and outline a detailed remediation plan, including a comprehensive project plan, plan of scope, and cost estimate.

This gives your transaction integrity by providing the information you need to make the best purchasing decision. Put more simply, it ensures security in your buying decision.

It also gives you a powerful bargaining tool. A complete understanding of what it will take to become track compliant lets you negotiate repairs, replacements, upgrades, the overall purchase price, time in escrow, and more.



Cranemasters derailment equipment designed and purpose-built in-house is legendary. When others face seemingly insurmountable complex adversities, they say, "Call Cranemasters, they can do it." [Learn More >](#)

4. Post-Inspections for Acquisitions

Just as an inspection before a real estate purchase can be valuable, so can a post-acquisition inspection. It ensures that the property you now own is in the condition you expect it to be.

It can confirm that all repairs have been completed to spec and comply with all applicable regulations and standards.

In the event of transactional or legal issues, a post-acquisition inspection can be used as case support, either alone or in conjunction with a preliminary inspection.

A post-purchase inspection can catch anything that a preliminary inspection missed.

5. Derailment Risk Mitigation

If there's one sure thing in the railroad industry, it's that derailments happen. And they can happen to you.

Having an inspection program specifically tailored for your track is the best proactive way to minimize the possibility of a derailment.

Obviously, the main hope is to catch issues that could directly cause a derailment before they occur. But sometimes, it's about preventing the worst of two possible scenarios from happening.

Imagine your track has a minor issue that, on its own, won't cause a derailment. The problem goes undetected and unrepaired. But, because the minor issue wasn't fixed, it amplified the derailment, creating a much larger, much more costly, multi-car incident with a chemical spill.

So, even when an inspection can't help you avoid a derailment, it can still help ensure any derailment you have isn't worse than it should be.

The added value track inspections can give your business shouldn't be underestimated. You would be surprised by how you can use them to make some of your most challenging problems easier to tackle.

Remember that Cranemasters offers a 'call us today, we're there tomorrow' guarantee for urgent requests.

Talk with one of our FRA 49 CFR Part 213-qualified inspectors today.

Contact us at 1-800-624-0543

Whether you have a general question or a specific project in mind, we can help.

Cranemasters Acquires Track Inspection Technology

Winter 2024/2025 | Mark Coressel

Cranemasters is pleased to announce the acquisition of the Hi-Rail TLV (Track Loading Vehicle), now part of its lineup of innovative equipment purpose-built to help keep your tracks operating at their best.

The TLV has been inspecting railroad tracks for over twenty years. You may know it as the 'Puckett Truck.' Its custom programming can monitor cross-level, static, and loaded gauges in real time as it travels your track.

The Cranemasters Hi-Rail TLV allows real-time track geometry inspections without extensive manpower or equipment shutdowns. Its hydraulically loaded axle simulates actual train loads without distorting the track gauge, while its algorithms efficiently identify track defects, reducing human error and speeding up the inspection process.

The TLV measures static gauge and loaded gauge in one pass and can adjust testing parameters for loaded gauge tolerance as needed.

What sets our TLV apart from other testing vehicles and equipment is that it marks gauge defects with paint for verification and repair, provides GPS coordinates of discovered defects, and prints readouts of your track—all in real time.

The optimal operating speed of the Cranemasters TLV for jointed track is typically 7-10 mph while inspecting for static/loaded gauge and cross elevation.

The Cranemasters TLV is ideal for Yard Tracks, Industrial Tracks, Short Lines, and Class 1 Railroads.

Key Benefits:

Eliminates human error from inspections, cuts inspection time, and improves the quality of track reports

- Avoid risks of cargo delay or loss
- Real-time read-outs of your tracks
- Immediate return on investment (ROI)

Predictive maintenance capabilities mitigate downtime, demurrage, and the risk of preventable incidents reducing costs and giving you a better return on your cost of ownership. With Cranemasters TLV, you can conduct safety inspections more frequently, detect more flaws more reliably, and respond more quickly.

As with all of Cranemasters' services, the TLV can be deployed the next day for critical situations or scheduled at your convenience for routine needs.



Contact us at 1-800-624-0543 to review your track inspection plans with one of our FRA 49 CFR Part 213-qualified experts. They can help you determine if the Cranemasters TLV or one of our other rail inspection and maintenance services makes sense for you.

Cranemasters Pitches In for Hurricanes Helene and Milton Relief

Winter 2024/2025 | Mark Coressel

Recovery from hurricanes Helene and Milton will take months, if not years. Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with all those still dealing with the aftermath. We're committed to standing with them as they recover.

Our railroad response team is still helping with cleanup efforts in affected states. We're proud of their dedication to helping people and communities get back on their feet.

We'd like to recognize our home office team for gathering donations from family and friends for those affected.



Our special thanks to Scout Troop #1893 in Richmond, VA. As part of Scouting America's relief efforts, this group of incredible young people helped get our donations to those who needed them the most. We'd also like to recognize Jeff Johnson and Kyle Hasforth, employees of our Chesterfield, Virginia manufacturing office for coordinating efforts with Troop #1893.

We appreciate Robert Varner and William Griffin from our Richmond, Virginia office, for reaching out to local businesses for donations.

Nearly two cargo vans of supplies were collected. Cranemasters added a pallet of bottled water and a pallet of Gatorade. However, those affected need our help. They'll need our support for some time.

YOU CAN HELP.

Please contact one of the groups below to help or donate today.

- [United Way of North Carolina](#)
- [Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina](#)
- [Asheville Humane Society](#)
- [Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest North Carolina](#)
- [International Medical Corp](#)
- [North Carolina Community Foundation](#)

Cranemasters Hurricane Heroes

Winter 2024/2025 | Mark Coressel

Hurricane Helene was larger than all but two other Gulf storms since 1988. And, it was the third deadliest hurricane of the 21st century, after hurricanes Katrina (2005) and Maria (2017). Cranemasters is proud of our participation in the recovery efforts in Helene's aftermath. But, three of our own who were deployed as part of those efforts went above and beyond the call of duty.

Wilson Molina, Michael Marques, and Jay McDermott were sent to North Carolina to help get rail lines operational after the storm. The hours were long and exhausting. But, when Helene knocked out power and water to the Holiday Inn East in Asheville, Wilson, Michael, and Jay made themselves available to help the staff and guests.

They were so helpful that several guests and staff contacted Cranemasters to sing their praises. **Here's how one person described what the guys did for them:**

"I can tell you that after guests were evacuated on Saturday afternoon, your team was able to help the hotel staff pump water from the pool to the 3rd floor (to flush toilets for 300+ guests).

The sump pump did not have enough pressure to get water to the 4th floor. They figured it out – pump to a tub on the 3rd floor, then pump to the 4th floor. They manned a bucket brigade to clear toilets on four floors of the hotel.

We were on the 4th floor, which had no power. To access rooms, you needed a staff member with a

key to escort you every time you needed to go to your room. On Saturday, these good men helped the remaining staff and families move from the upper floors to the lower floors.

There was no power, no elevator, and no carts. They ran up and down the stairs, hand-carrying all our belongings.

You are well represented by these men.

They did not have to put their hands or backs to work. They volunteered, doing dirty work, to help others they did not know. They set a great example by their work and by their willing hearts.

I don't know how to honor them for their service. There are no grades, stars, or merit badges (though we might have to come up with one).

Please share my thanks with them."

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Wilson Molina, Michael Marques, and Jay McDermott

Patty Scoggins was one of the hotel’s stranded guests. She wrote in to say this about the men:

“Just wanted to reach out and let you know what kind of people you employ.

I was recently stranded in Asheville, NC, due to Hurricane Helene. I was put up in the Holiday Inn. I had the pleasure of meeting three of your employees: Wilson, Michael, and Jay.

They went above and beyond what anyone could have expected. They were in a bad situation, stuck in a hotel for days with no outside contact, electricity, or water, and then they volunteered.

There were over 300 people on four floors. They showed up to help move people from the upper floors to the lower floors, carrying suitcases, bags, animals, and sometimes children. After that, they lugged buckets, sometimes 5-gallon buckets, up four flights of stairs to make sure toilets could flush.

I don’t have the words to express my appreciation for what they did for us. And always.... ALWAYS with a laugh and a smile. I just wanted to pass this along so you also understood that these are three AMAZING men.”

We couldn’t be more proud of Wilson, Michael, and Jay.

Wilson has been with Cranemasters since 2006 and is a Supervisor. Michael joined Cranemasters in 2022 as an Operator, and Jay worked for Cranemasters in 2024 as a Laborer. All three are based in our Taneytown, Maryland, location.

On behalf of the entire Cranemasters team, we’d like to thank them for their extraordinary efforts in helping those in need.

MANUFACTURING

First Responders for the Railroad Industry

Winter 2024/2025 | Mark Coressel

For 38 years, Cranemasters has delivered on its promise of outstanding service and innovative solutions for its railroad industry customers.

When Loren Isringhausen started his business with the help of his sons Brian and Barry, he wanted to create a different kind of railroad service company.

Loren’s strategy was straight-forward:

When competitors say it can’t be done, Cranemasters will find a way!

And they do.

Cranemasters became the only railroad services provider to also design and manufacture the equipment needed to solve the most difficult

derailment and maintenance issues. Building on this commitment to innovation, unrelenting service, and industry-leading response times, Brian and Barry Isringhausen took Cranemasters to a new level.

This industry game-changing business model grew Cranemasters from its start as a small family business into a multi-state business with 254 employees working from 13 U.S.A. locations.

Cranemasters’ unique story was recently highlighted in Manufacturing in Focus magazine’s article “First Responders for the Railroad Industry.” [You can read it online here.](#)



Aubrey Amadeo, New Cranemasters COO Explains His Vision to Employees

Winter 2024/2025 | Mark Coressel

Former Senior Vice President of Fleet Manufacturing and Engineering, Aubrey Amadeo, was recently promoted to Cranemasters' COO. He unveiled his vision for Cranemasters to our leadership team on in October and outlined that strategy for our employees in the following letter.



Hello Cranemasters,

As I begin my new role as your COO, I wanted to take a moment to introduce myself and outline my vision for Cranemasters' future.

Raised by a single mom, I grew up with one older brother in a small Florida town surrounded by a large extended family. Now I live in New Kent, Virginia, with my wife, Laurie. We have two sons and a wonderful daughter-in-law. And we recently welcomed our first grandchild.

I started my professional career at what is now West Rock, unloading railcars, laying out raw material

storage areas, and refining complex high-speed production processes. I was ultimately asked to roll out my processes across the entire company.

In 2008, I moved to Lumber Liquidators distribution, where I worked as the head of distribution. There, I continued learning the importance of structure and process and refining my understanding of what it means to be a leader.

In January 2023, I arrived at Cranemasters as Vice President of Manufacturing and Engineering, heading our Manufacturing and Engineering divisions. Later in 2023, I was asked to take on Fleet Maintenance. This year, I was promoted to COO.

My time here has focused on putting us in the right position to be successful and enforcing consistency. Our business is rooted in turning chaos into calm, and so am I. That's why I believe that we need to continue doing what we do well: our one-of-a-kind equipment, 'call today, there tomorrow' urgent response guarantee, best-in-class process design, and, most importantly, you—our people.

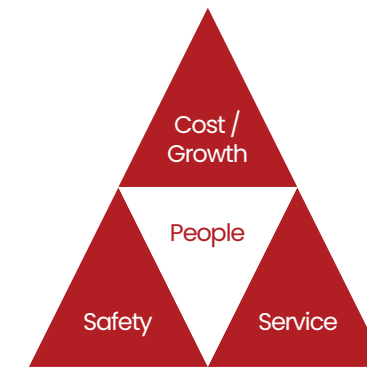
These things separate us from the rest and keep our customers happy. But we also need to make changes where we're coming up short.

There are gaps in educating our people, developing our teams, and convincing our customers that we are the only service provider they need.

To that end, on October 2nd, I presented my vision for Cranemasters to our leadership. It's a simple plan because I believe success isn't complicated.

Purpose is at the core of any vision. And our purpose is to do what's right.

I like to say, "It's not about who is right or wrong; it's about what is right or wrong." In short, things become much simpler when you do the right thing.



My vision focuses on five specific areas: Safety, People, Service, Cost, and Growth.

SAFETY

The non-negotiable cornerstone of our process and success.

We don't compromise on safety.

We take care of our people and equipment. We manage by policy, not personality. Safety is part of our corporate DNA, so we keep it front-of-mind with every activity and process on every job, every day.

PEOPLE

The heart of our business.

Our people are our most valuable asset, period.

That's why we must attract, hire, promote, and develop the right people for the right roles.

We tear down silos and structure our teams for optimal success. We develop our people to promote individuals and resolve organizational gaps. And

we don't tolerate toxic people. Simply put, we are consistent, not chaotic. And we don't tolerate chaos from within.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

The other cornerstone of our vision.

We develop customers for life, not for a transaction.

So, every impression must be a good impression.

A customer should never leave us because of bad customer service. We engage, arrive, work, and close out every job at our best. We care for our equipment to keep our crews safe and show meticulous attention to detail.

Safety, People, and Service are all 100% within our daily control. The last two parts of the vision, Cost and Growth, are primarily the result of how well we control the first three.

REDUCE COSTS and GROW

Drive reliability and standardization.

Our daily attention to the details of Safety, People, and Service increases our ability to serve our customers and lowers our overall costs.

However, we also reduce costs and drive growth by proactively standardizing policies and equipment, centralizing purchasing where appropriate, and positioning people and equipment correctly for our customers.

When our costs go down and our business grows, everyone wins—Cranemasters, our customers, and you.

However, to realize this vision, we must all work for it.

I know we can do it. And I'm here for you as we do.

So, know that my door is always open, my email is always up, and my phone is always on. I want to hear from you.

And thank you for all that you do for Cranemasters every day. Cranemasters wouldn't be the exceptional company it is today without you.

Your hard work and dedication make me excited for the future Cranemasters we'll build together.

Keep up the good work,
Aubrey Amadeo

Cranemasters Railroad Emergency and Construction Services

Full rail support services with innovative purpose-built equipment and experienced crews ready to deliver safe and efficient solutions:

- Qualified for Class 1 and short line railroad, and industrial siding FRA inspections
- Emergency Derailment
- Bridge Span Replacement
- Complex Track Installation & Repair Switches and Retarders
- Innovative Design
- Crane Manufacturing & Rebuild
- Natural Disaster
- Heavy Equipment Recovery
- Load Adjustment & Transfer
- Rail Car & Locomotive Maintenance & Repair

Cranemasters Operations Centers Nationwide

As a working team of rail services professionals, our available inventory of equipment and crews from our locations can be mobilized 24/7/365.



CRANEMASTERS
RAILROAD EMERGENCY AND CONSTRUCTION SERVICES

Headquarters

8020 Whitepine Road
North Chesterfield, VA 23237

1-800-624-0543

info@cranemasters.com

cranemasters.com