

Pile Buck Interview with David Gentry



OWNER OF JET FILTER SYSTEMS

PB: David, Describe your Product.
What is Weep?

Dave Gentry: Weep is basically a drainage system for sheet piling... a lot of sheet pilings don't have a weep hole. They have a lifting whole to put the piling in but nobody has really come up with the right terminology of calling it a weep hole.

Those sheet pilings are tongue in groove panels that go in and they're not supposed to separate or release water through that area because you will also lose soil ... The drainage system relieves the water pressure that builds behind the wall from the backside of the wall, and basically saves the tension of the tiebacks and so forth that pulls against the wall.

"Believe it or not, a lot of people don't realize the pressure that builds behind these walls... Here in Illinois, I have a contractor who cut a 2.5 inch hole, getting ready to install the filters in the front and as soon as he cut the 2.5 inch hole, water shot out from the wall about 5 feet."

PB: It sounds amazingly simple and a very necessary tool to use.



"Believe it or not, a lot of people don't realize the pressure that builds behind these walls..."

DG: “Yes, and I’m fortunate to have supporters around the country like the Taj Mahal in Atlantic City, Disney World, and many other places. I have contractors that are loyal to me ; they are really concerned about their quality of work when they install a new wall for a homeowner.”

“Some contractors are out there who don’t really care to install a drainage system. A couple years go by and the homeowner contacts me, or finds me, and asks, “Why didn’t the contractor put these in?” And I say, “I don’t know [laugh],” So it’s nice to be able to work with new or existing drains to plug these things in.”

PB: So your system can be installed at any point?

DG: “Oh absolutely, especially the walls out there now that are 30 to 40 years old. *Even the concrete walls down south, they’re failing. It’s really good to release pressure off the walls and make them last longer, but anytime. It’s easy to install from the water side without digging and dredging behind walls and places that you can’t get to because there’s a side wall, a dock, and you can’t get behind there... It makes sense to have a drainage system installed from the front of the wall to easily access a changeable filter. You can change it out easily.*”

“I’m blessed to have all the support in the world with my drainage system such as the engineers and so forth, but homeowners are what I’m trying to target too, no matter what type of wall.”

PB: “There are many different wall materials. Are weep systems different for different types of material?”

DG: “Yes, what I have now is and ABS UV protected Jet Filter. I am in the process of making a steel housing for the steel market so it will be more robust. The drain that I have now works just fine, but I am designing one with the same look with steel.”

PB: “What is your background? Do you have an educational background? Where did the concept come from?”

DG: “All of the above!” (laughing) “I am a professional deep sea diver; a graduate of D. I. T., Divers Institute of Technology, in Seattle, Washington in 1985... I have dived down 200 feet in the water and so forth...”

“In 1996 I was a marine contractor in Naples, Florida and Marco Island. I came across a wall that had erosion problems. Every five feet there was a sinkhole. This doctor was going to build a home on this lot. He had two inch lifting holes in the seawall and I said, “You’re gonna lose soil through these two inch holes” . Every six feet he had two of them. He said to give him a call to dig behind the wall to the filter fabric behind there. It was about a 180 foot wall and I’m thinking: **“my goodness”**.

PB: “People who are not familiar with wall design and are concerned with cost and may ask is it really necessary?”

DG: “I’ll give you an example. They charge about \$350 a foot of vinyl wall. Every four feet is about \$1200. The homeowners can install it themselves. Its pretty easy to drill a hole and mount it to the wall. Basically a hole•cut•saw.”

PB: Are you finding that it is difficult for people to visualize what your product can do who haven’t seen it on a seawall?

DG: Yes, the system has been out for about fourteen years and I sell quite a few drains in many countries to homeowners, contractors, and engineers. I am not getting any resistance at all. As soon as they discover it they are very enthusiastic. I had a guy in NC say, “I need these now! This is exactly what I’ve been looking for!”

PB: It’s amazingly simple.

DG: Very simple, Exactly! There’s millions of homes that have sheet piling walls all around the country. Many people tell me they should be implemented in all new construction, to prevent erosion problems. That’s the beauty of it because once they know about a system like this, a component for piling wall or anything that goes within the wall to relieve the pressure, these engineers are eating it up because it helps them with their design.

“It’s a very professional and good looking manufactured product. It’s a simple design that would help seawalls last a lot longer. Everyone in the country wants the best for their money. You’ve got a premier wall which at least needs a drainage system coming through to relieve the pressure.”

“I’m the only one that has a weep hole drainage system with a filter in it like this.... I truly believe in my product and I have a lot of people believing in it with me. I grew up in an area with nothing. It’s nice to have the support and the people that believe in me. That’s the greatest gift of all. The rest of it will come. To be able to go to engineering shows, expos, seminars, talking to people, that’s my justification on that. It’s something that’s exciting for me and I truly believe in everything that I’ve developed. **It’s nice to know I’m making my mark over the country.** You know what? I can even go into the next level and get into retaining walls.”

-Pile Buck found David Gentry to be as truly authentic and personable as the product he sells. His ingenuity and resolve to make things happen is catching. We’re convinced and we wish him the greatest of luck.-

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sheet piling wick filter system.

For more information on this weep hole drainage system please visit our web site

www.jetfiltersystem.com

