



Demolition contractor Jeanne Staton at the Port of Portland's Terminal One.

Breaking into Demolition

Taking on the challenges of construction

When you conjure up a vision of a typical demolition contractor, it doesn't look like me. Being a little unique doesn't hurt.

— Jeanne Staton, owner of Staton Companies

BY JEANNE STATON

Why not start a demolition business?

I distinctly remember the reaction we received from a local banker when my husband and I brought in our projections, crude business plan and our dream. We asked for a loan to buy equipment and seed money to get started. He said, "You need a 'guardian angel,' not a banker. If it was as easy as that, the bank could go into the demolition business." Very humiliating.

Fortunately, I had a dad who was much more experienced in these matters. He showed me how to take a different approach. We

tried another bank. Dad offered to co-sign the loan for us, they agreed, and we began. We started by bidding the demolition of the Springfield High School to a general contractor that my husband knew well and worked for many times. We made enough money to pay for our annual insurance premium and pay back a loan from my dad.

We grew slowly, and were fortunate to hire some very talented people along the way. Staton Companies now employs 25 and is very well respected in the industry. We demolish any type of structure and are especially expert in heavy con-

crete removal. Our nickname has become "Bridges R Us"—in the last several years we have demolished over 200 bridges and overpasses in the Northwest.

Eight years ago, a divorce meant tough decisions. We had three assets: the business, commercial property and our lovely home in the country. I took the business and left behind the rest. I had worked too hard growing this business, and I certainly was not willing to walk away from it and fade into the woodwork.

Being a single woman in busi-

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BUSINESS RESOURCES

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4134 N. Vancouver, Portland, OR 97217
503-249-7744
jorge@oame.org www.oame.org

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1714 N.E. Alberta, Portland, OR 97211
503-335-8200
connie@tradeswoman.net
www.tradeswomen.net

Oregon Women Lawyers

PO Box 40393, Portland, OR 97240
503-595-7826
orwomenlawyers@msn.com
www.oregonwomenlawyers.com

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818 SW Third Ave #132, Portland, OR 97204
503-796-2700
laura.conarton@elementsconsulting.com
www.portlandia.org

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