

# SO, YOU'RE BUYING A PRESSURE WASHER...

# BUT HOW DO YOU CHOOSE?

by Karen Anderson



**W**hen it comes to pressure washers, the hundred-thousand-dollar question is: "With all the choices there are today, how do you really know which pressure washer is right for the job you are doing?"

Actually, the answer is easier than one might think. Customers who are in the market for a professional pressure washer should go to someone who is knowledgeable about the equipment. Many dealers will not only help customers make a wise purchase, but can also service it after the sale.

Here are some questions to consider:

### Cold or Hot Water?

Cold water pressure washers are great for cleaning dirt from most any surface: decks, siding, concrete, and so on. However, cold water pressure washers cannot remove grease and oil effectively. To clean any surface that needs to be degreased, a hot water pressure washer is required. Hot water also cleans faster in most applications.

### Belt-Drive or Direct-Drive Pumps?

- **Belt-Drive:** Most commonly found on industrial models, a belt-driven pump is ideal for cleaning applications requiring 40 or more hours of use per week. The belt connecting the engine or motor with the high-pressure pump dissipates the heat and vibration, minimizes the wear and thus the repair on key components, and extends the life of the pump by reducing the rpm demand.
- **Direct-Drive:** For applications not requiring more than 30 hours of use per week, direct-driven pumps are more commonly used. The pump is directly coupled to the engine or motor causing the pump to spin twice as fast as the belt-drive models. Although these models are not recommended for heavy, consistent usage, they are a lower-cost alternative to more expensive, belt-driven models.

### Gas or Electric Engine?

Pressure washers powered by an electric motor can be inexpensive, and are generally smaller and lighter than a gas-powered pressure washer. They do not emit any gas fumes so they can be used in an unventilated area, and produce less noise. Electric motors are measured in amperage. The higher the amps, the more power.

Gas-powered pressure washers are more powerful than electric models and don't require an electrical outlet. They are more durable and take less effort and time to clean projects. Because of their fumes, gas-powered pressure washers must be used outdoors and are a lot noisier. Gas-powered engines are rated in horsepower. The higher the hp, the more power.

### How Much Performance Will You Need to Get the Job Done? How Much Pressure? How Much Flow?

Anyone looking to purchase a pressure washer will want to look at three measurements; pounds per square inch (psi), gallons per minute (gpm) and cleaning units (cu).

- **PSI** indicates the amount of pressure the unit will create if concentrated on one square inch of surface. The greater the psi, the better the cleaning efficiency.
- **GPM** tells you how much water will flow through your pressure

washer. A higher flow rate will cut down on your cleaning time.

- **CU** is calculated by multiplying psi by gpm. The number is useful for comparing models. The higher the number of cleaning units, the more cleaning power your pressure washer has.

Obviously cost must be a consideration. But buyers should remember that they get what they pay for. If their budget does not allow them to purchase the right machine for the job they are doing, then the pressure washer may not last as long as they want it to. Everyone who makes a living using a pressure washer should consider it an investment for their livelihood.

Also, buyers should compare product warranties. Today's pressure washers are engineered to last, but even with proper maintenance some major components just fail. Make sure the manufacturer will stand behind their product and take care of any problems that occur.

Pressure washer customers should do a little research and seek out the help of professionals in the industry. It will save time and money in the long haul and their pressure washer purchase truly will be a smart investment.

*Karen Anderson is Marketing Manager for the Mi-T-M Corporation. cr*

**TRUCK WASH • INDUSTRIAL DEGREASERS • CAR WASH • LAUNDRY**



**ITD**

**BRAND NEW LOOK  
SAME GREAT PRODUCTS**

800-472-1233 • [www.itdinc.biz](http://www.itdinc.biz)



**ITD  
Detergents Deliver!**

- **Convenience:** custom packaging  
**DRUM KITS, POWDERS & LIQUIDS**
- **Flexibility:** stock formulations, custom formulations and private labeling
- **Value:** concentrated for higher dilution rates and lower shipping cost,  
**WE DON'T SELL WATER**
- **Promptness:** we ship stock orders in 24 hours, full truckloads ship within 5 days

**CONSISTENT QUALITY • PRIVATE LABELING • PROMPT & DIRECT SHIPMENTS**