

THE MAGAZINE FOR LEADING CONSTRUCTION EXECUTIVES

# US Builders Review

SUMMER 2013 Edition II

A 165-year-old  
Maine-made, Family-  
run Success Story

**Hancock  
Lumber  
Company**

Innovation in Precast  
Concrete Construction

**Fabcon Precast**

One-stop shop  
Mechanical Contracting  
for Nearly a Century

**Hayes  
Mechanical**

Cover Story Page 54

**IKEA**

Offering Solutions for the Home  
at Affordable Prices

# L.R.E. Ground Services Inc.

## Delivering Stability as the Largest Sinkhole Specialist in Florida

Produced by John Carioti & Written by Molly Shaw

Since 1989 L.R.E. Ground Services Inc. (LRE) has been serving the state of Florida with full-service ground stabilization, foundation and sinkhole repair for residential and commercial properties. The LRE team works closely with leading geotechnical and structural engineering firms throughout Florida, performing restoration projects on a broad range of facilities.

“We work on several hundred residential properties a year, but also energy plants, cemeteries, roadways, banks, hospitals; you name it, we’ve done it,” shares Frank Vitale, vice president and general manager of LRE. “We’re pretty much all over the place.”

LRE was established by Raymond and Susan Woolever. “We originally started out as Lar-Rays Excavating Inc. in Hernado County,” recalls Frank. “After two or three years in that business, the sinkhole problem in Florida became more prevalent, so we decided to expand our services. We now perform construction and restoration services in addition to sinkhole repairs.”

According to Frank, LRE’s capabilities come in especially handy in Florida. “Our weather presents some challenges,” he explains. “We’re either getting lots of rain or we’re in a drought period, which means there’s constant fluctuation in the water table. Over time, this begins to erode the limestone layer, which often causes sinkholes.”

Today LRE services the entire state of Florida from its headquarters in Brooksville. Although the company operates throughout the state, the majority of work takes place in Pasco, Hernando, Pinellas, Hillsborough and Citrus counties due to LRE’s 130 highly trained professionals.



*Frank Vitale, vice president of L.R.E. Ground Services Inc.*

“We were just recently named No. 15 of top places to work in the Tampa Bay area in 2013 and we’re A+ rated in the Better Business Bureau,” shares Frank. “We have great core employees here; we refer to ourselves as the LRE team.”

“We’re also a founding member of the Florida Association of Sinkhole Stabilization Specialists [FAS3],” reveals Frank. “FAS3 is comprised of engineers, geologists and contractors like us. We wanted to develop an organization that would set industry standards, because it’s a busy business with a lot of people trying

to get in. We help uphold quality workmanship and conduct and we’re dedicated to improving the process. It’s truly a quality organization.”

### **An Innovative Approach**

Not only was LRE a pioneer in the ground stabilization industry, it’s also one of the fastest growing companies in the field, because the company is always looking for new and improved



ways to better serve its clients. After completing more than 4,000 successful projects, LRE has become one of the most knowledgeable, go-to ground stabilization and foundation repair specialists in the state.

“We self-perform our own soil stabilization, foundation repair and fire- and water-damage remediation,” reveals Frank. “On the construction side of things with renovations and cosmetic work, we might hire out several small trades, but we have an extensive network of approved subcontractors and suppliers we work with.”

One of LRE’s most trusted suppliers and business partners is Foundation Supportworks Inc. (FSI). “We have a network of contractors who install our products like PolyLEVEL and StableFILL all across the country,” says David Thrasher, vice president of FSI. “Not only do we manufacture these products,

we also provide engineering support. We’re really a partner in that sense, providing knowledge, support and custom designs to fix the problem.”



**Brown & Brown of Leesburg has been a LRE strategic business partner for nearly a decade.**

Our agency’s long established partnerships have extended considerable market negotiating power and leverage, giving LRE the most comprehensive and competitively priced insurance program available. LRE has been able to capitalize on Brown and Brown’s size and power accommodated with local service staff eager to offer friendly, personalized service. Travis Childers and Terri Hendrickson congratulate LRE.



***Brown & Brown Leesburg FL has enjoyed a great strategic partnership with E.R.E. Ground Services. We would like to congratulate them for the solid foundation of success.***

**Brown & Brown Leesburg FL provides Commercial insurance and Employee Benefits.**

*General Liability ■ Property  
Business Auto ■ Workers Compensation  
Group Health Benefits*

CONTACT: TRAVIS CHILDERS (352)431-3001, TRAVIS.CHILDERS@BBLEESBURG.COM  
**www.BBLEESBURG.com**

LRE has delivered stability and support at thousands of various facilities throughout Florida, from the famous Busch Gardens to energy plants, highways, hospitals and cemeteries. “We just finished Bradenton Manor, a rehab hospital and assisted living facility in Bradenton, Fla.,” notes Frank. “They were having lots of issues with the front of the building. We installed helical piers, which are basically giant screws, then poured the footer right on top of the piers for added stabilization.”

LRE offers innovative product installations, including FSI’s



*Foundation Supportworks offers a complete line of foundation stabilization products to repair existing structures as well as provide deep foundations on new construction projects.*

Our product line includes helical pile and helical anchor systems, push pier systems, lightweight cellular concrete and geopolymer stabilization products. Our international network of contractors consists of some of the most sophisticated foundation repair experts in the world. LRE Ground Services is the exclusive Foundation Supportworks contractor in central Florida.



**The Industry Leader for Geotechnical Construction Solutions**



- ✓ Helical Piles
- ✓ Push (Resistance) Piers
- ✓ Wall Anchoring Systems
- ✓ Helical Soil Nails
- ✓ Cellular Concrete
- ✓ Polyurethane Grouting

**www.FoundationSupportworks.com**  
**800.281.8545**

PolyLEVEL and StableFILL for increased security. “PolyLEVEL helps us lift slabs and fill in voids, from small sections of sidewalks to roads and pool decks,” explains Frank. “StableFILL is our lightweight cellular grout that fills in large voids. The product is flowable and pervious so water can drain right through without any disruption.”

Frank reveals LRE is gearing up for a large hospital job in Orlando, Fla., as well as an extensive real estate office in the

As an associated contractor, L.R.E. Ground Services and RE&A work in unison, taking a design build approach to every project to ensure that we provide our clients with cost-effective remediation solutions. Our combined 50+ years' experience also ensures that effective solutions are implemented in an expedient, high quality manner.




**ENGINEERING SOLUTIONS  
ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN**




We take pride in working closely with our clients and providing them with practical, time tested engineering solutions & a creative approach to design challenges...

<p><b>ENGINEERING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction Engineering Inspections (CEI)</li> <li>Property Condition Assessments (PCA)</li> <li>Forensic Engineering &amp; Expert Witness</li> <li>Geotechnical Engineering</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specialty Foundation Engineering</li> <li>Karst activity Assessment &amp; Investigations</li> <li>Neutral Evaluator for Sinkhole Investigations</li> <li>Structural Engineering</li> </ul>
<p><b>ARCHITECTURAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commercial &amp; Residential Building Design</li> <li>Entitlement Services / NCI Charrette certified</li> <li>Land Use: Density / Feasibility Studies</li> <li>Space Planning / Tenant Upfit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Renderings/illustrations</li> <li>Design Guidelines</li> <li>Sustainability / LEED Certification</li> <li>Interior Design</li> </ul>

2825 MINUTEMAN LANE, BRANDON, FLORIDA 33511 TEL. 813.453.0935 WWW.RAMOSENGINEERING.COM

Brooksville area. “We also have a cemetery with an abandoned sewer line and a small airport we’ll be operating on in the near future,” he details.

**Refusing to Sink**

Frank admits legislation in Florida and the economic downturn have caused some bumps in the road for LRE. “Some new legislations have made it harder on homeowners to easily do improvements, because engineers and insurance companies require lots of research and testing to prove there’s a confirmed sinkhole,” adds Frank. “Also the economy is nowhere near what it used to be six or seven years ago, but we’re starting to see the building industry creep back up. It’s showing positive signs and we’re glad about that, because we want to keep our people working.”

Despite the economic downturn, Frank says LRE has set its



sights on expansion. “Our construction and restoration division is growing very quickly,” he reveals. “We’ve launched new products and see other directions we can take things. We’re having brainstorming meetings to work everything out, but we want to make sure before we launch a product or service; it needs to be done right, 150 percent.”

LRE is also looking forward to its 25-year anniversary in February 2014. “We’re getting pretty excited about it,” says Frank. “We’ve been in this business a long time, but we wouldn’t be where we are now if we didn’t treat every property, every home like it’s our own.” L.R.E. Ground Services Inc. continues to provide stability, support and security for homeowners and commercial clients throughout Florida.

For more information about L.R.E. Ground Services Inc., please visit: [www.lregsi.com](http://www.lregsi.com). •

**Are you "READY?"**

Preferred Materials is proud to be supplying GeoReady™ to the Florida marketplace!

**GeoReady™**

GeoReady™ is a compaction grout specifically designed for a quick & efficient placement where ground stabilization is required.

*For more information about this product, please contact your PMI Account Manager.*

**Preferred MATERIALS, INC.**

**800-331-3375**

Congratulations to our valued client, L.R.E. Ground Services, Inc.

We are proud to support you and wish you continued success!

A WORD ABOUT OUR FIRM

Harper, Kynes, Geller, Greenleaf & Frayman, P.A. is a full service law firm established in 1974 in Clearwater, Florida, and continues to provide legal services throughout the state.

Our areas of concentration – litigation, corporate, real estate, construction, tax, trusts and estates – enable us to operate with the effectiveness of larger firms, yet with the kind of individual attention you require and deserve.

Our goal is to achieve the best results for our clients – in the courtroom or at the conference table.

HARPER, KYNES, GELLER, GREENLEAF & FRAYMAN, P.A.  
 1253 Park Street, Suite 200, Clearwater, Florida 33756  
 727-799-4840 Fax 727-797-8206 [www.harperkynes.com](http://www.harperkynes.com)