

10 Minutes With Kurt Kelsey

Each issue, IECA honors one outstanding member who has shown dedication not only to the organization, but also to the erosion and sediment control industry. We honor these members to show gratitude and support for all their accomplishments in their years of experience. In this issue, it's our pleasure to highlight Kurt Kelsey. Kelsey has been in the industry for 15 years. His humble attitude and go-get-'em work ethic shines through all that he does, whether it be through his work or family life. We sat down with Kelsey to learn more about what drives him to succeed.

Q: Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and your life outside work?

A: Well, I grew up in the shadows of Lambeau Field in Green Bay, Wisconsin. Thus, I am a diehard Green Bay Packers fan by default. I enjoy hunting, fishing, hiking, you name it! My beautiful wife, Amy, and I enjoy taking our boys, Kaden (9) and Kalvin (7), to our family cabin as often as possible.

Q: Can you tell us a little bit about your professional experience?

A: I have been in the industry for 15 years. In 1999, between my junior and senior years of college, I took an internship with American Excelsior Co. The exposure to erosion and sediment control prompted me to pursue a master's focusing on the science behind rainfall-induced erosion. In addition, I was fortunate enough to earn a scholarship to attend IECA's annual conference in 2000 in Palm Springs, California.

Q: What drives you to succeed professionally?

A: There is a long list, but I will name two. First of all, American Excelsior Co. gave me a chance when I was raw. Each day I take pride in being

able to give back to the family-like company. Secondly, my love for the outdoors makes it easy to go to work each day hoping I can make a difference for my children and generations to come. It's important to me that they have the same natural resources opportunities.

Q: What is your work style?

A: Simple: My parents taught me to lead by example.

Q: What's your IECA member experience?

A: IECA exposed me to the industry through the conference scholarship at the 2000 conference, so I give back to the organization as much as possible. I have been a member for 14 years. I have been actively involved with the Technical and Education Committees for several years. I am currently the co-chair of the Erosion and Sediment Control Education Track. In addition, my company is extremely committed to and supportive of the industry's leading organizations like IECA. I plan to continue to network through IECA and give back to the organization each year.

Q: How are you involved with your



Kurt Kelsey shows an effective product solution during the Gulf of Mexico oil spill.

local IECA chapter?

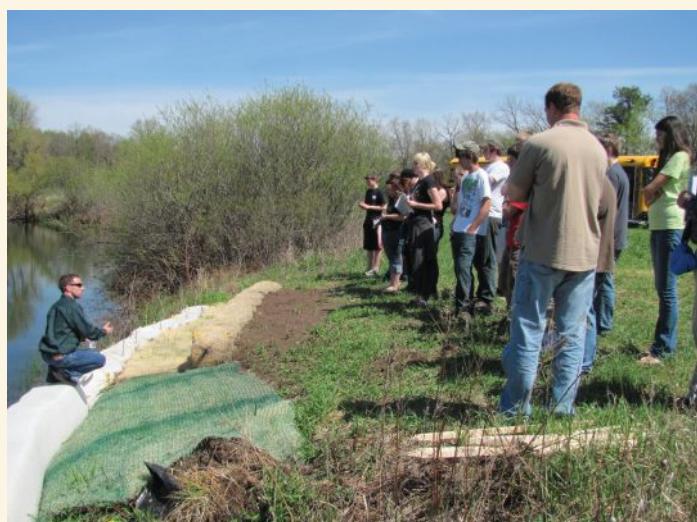
A: Our Great Lakes Chapter will be co-hosting a conference with the Great Rivers Chapter April 29–May 1 in Davenport, Iowa. Both of the chapters look forward to the education classes and networking opportunities. It should be a great event!

Q: What are the most impactful issues regarding erosion and sediment control today?

A: Too many corners are getting cut. A low-price approach typically does not work in our industry, but unfortunately it's very common today. We need to get back to the basics of performance-based solutions and look at the expense over the project's life, not just the expense of materials on day one of the project.

Q: What's your best advice you can give someone new to the industry?

A: Smile and don't be afraid to get dirty. ☺



Kelsey explains shoreline erosion to a high school group at American Excelsior Co.'s ErosionLab in Rice Lake, Wisconsin.