

WOOD WORKS

NELM CORP. CONSTRUCTION

Read how this Rockland, Mass.,
contractor specializes
in 'building fun'



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President/Owner



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Playgrounds bring immense joy to children. Slides, swings, monkey bars and zip lines produce endless laughs and cheers at schools and parks. However, when residents in eastern Massachusetts hear those sounds in octaves far lower than they are used to, it means that Ray Delmonico and his NELM Corp. Construction crew are hard at work.

"Premier playground construction is the focus of our business, and one of the perks of the job is testing out the stuff," said Delmonico, who is the company's President and Owner. "We're certified with several equipment manufacturers, and we're one of the top playground installers in New England. It's a great feeling to see kids run to the equipment at a grand opening and have so much fun. We take our job seriously – we build fun. It's great."

NELM, short for North East Landscape Management, is a family-owned company that Delmonico and his father, who is now semi-retired, started. They have enjoyed being in the "fun" business together.

"The majority of our work is playground construction for cities, towns and schools, but

we also do splash pads and ball fields," noted Delmonico. "It's rewarding. I have young kids, and when we go to a park they think it's pretty cool that their dad built it."

The Rockland, Mass.-based company has 20 employees, including Project Manager Eric Wendland and Foremen John McDonald, Nelson Figueiredo, Frank DaRosa and John O'Laughlin. It typically operates within a 150-mile radius and has completed jobs throughout Massachusetts in addition to Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire and Maine.

More than meets the eye

Playground construction is a niche business, and with 28 years of experience, NELM knows the finer points of the industry.

"There's a lot of detail work that goes into these projects," explained Delmonico. "Most people just see the finished product, but we have to make sure it meets certain safety rules and regulations. Fall heights, rubber thickness and safety zones are all things we have to keep in mind."

In addition to meeting regulations, the company's duties on a project go beyond unboxing slides and hanging swings.

"We are a general contractor that provides full-service construction," said Delmonico. "We take a job from beginning to completion; including demo, excavation, utilities, grading, landscaping, paving, concrete and custom carpentry. We handle sidewalks, parking lots, lighting and anything else that is needed. Once that's complete, we build the park."

Delmonico's experience can also help to save customers money.

"We've been doing this for a while, and we know how to design and complete a job

This NELM operator uses a Volvo ECR58D compact excavator at a jobsite in Everett, Mass. The machine is vital to NELM because it typically works in confined areas.





▶ VIDEO

By using a Steelwrist attachment on a Volvo ED140EL excavator, NELM Operator Jim Corry is able to rotate his bucket 360 degrees to grade the work site. “The Steelwrist is great for tight jobsites because it allows us to use one machine for several applications,” said Corry. “I can’t imagine operating without a Steelwrist.”

in an efficient manner,” detailed Delmonico. “Recently, we were able to save a customer nearly \$100,000 by helping redesign the plans and connect them with some vendors we have a relationship with. It’s another example of how we can provide a full package.”

Bigger and better

As NELM has grown, so too have its projects. In 2017, the firm completed Noah’s Place Playground in New Bedford, Mass., for the Team Noah Foundation. The 22,000-square-foot, handicap-accessible playground is the biggest in New England and believed to be the third-largest inclusive playground in the nation.

“We were proud to be a part of the construction,” said Delmonico. “The Team Noah Foundation set out to build a park that was sensory-rich, safe and accessible for children of all abilities, and they did a great job of that.”

NELM contracts have also evolved from playgrounds to recreational complexes. At Saint Columbkille Partnership School in Brighton, Mass., the company handled the construction of an athletic field with artificial turf and a parking lot with a new entranceway,

curbing and bus turnaround. This effort also included a basketball court and a playground.

“That was a huge project for us,” recalled Delmonico. “There were several large structures involved, and we also performed all of the drainage work. It was a good example of what we can do when it comes to site development.”

Delmonico notes that NELM has also evolved to handle design-build projects. “They have become more frequent for us,” he added. “We recently had one for St. Peter School in Cambridge where we cut an embankment for an athletic field. Design-build gives us the chance to really pass savings on to our customers through our experience; we see it as value-engineering.”

Attached to Woodco

Succeeding in a niche industry requires specialized equipment. That’s why Delmonico turns to Woodco Machinery and Sales Rep Bob Rosa for Volvo excavators.

“Most of our work takes place in compact areas, so we can’t be very equipment-heavy,” detailed Delmonico. “We put a high value on efficiency with our pieces because we don’t have the space to have several machines at our jobsites.”

Continued . . .

'Volvos will get the job done'

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In Volvo equipment, NELM has found the right mix of power and versatility in a compact design. The company has a fleet that includes Volvo EC240EL, EC140EL and ECR58D excavators, as well as L60 and L35 wheel loaders.

"The Volvo excavators are efficient and smooth," described Delmonico. "We burn

very little fuel, and they always start. We aren't constantly running equipment at a site, but when we need to, we are confident the Volvos will get the job done."

Delmonico further increases the efficiency of his new Volvo EC140EL with a Steelwrist attachment, a rotating tilt, which allows the excavator operator to maneuver the bucket 360 degrees as needed.

NELM Corp. President/Owner Ray Delmonico (left) calls on Woodco Machinery Sales Rep Bob Rosa for all of the company's Volvo and Steelwrist needs.



"It's the best product I've ever purchased," shared Delmonico. "It's allowed us to do the work of several machines with a single excavator. The Steelwrist has a quick-coupler that hooks up to several types of buckets and forks. We can rotate and maneuver them into any angle we want, and we can keep the excavator in one spot. We've done everything from unloading boxes to grading a slope with it attached to the EC140. It's changed the whole dynamic of the machine. Our operator, Jim Corry, won't run anything without it."

The decision to add a Steelwrist came from Delmonico's relationship with Rosa and Woodco.

"Bob came to us with a video from Steelwrist, and the minute I saw it, I knew I had to have it," remembered Delmonico. "We trusted Bob's advice on the attachment and went through Woodco for financing. It's another example of why we continue to do business with Woodco. We consider them a strategic partner in our business."

Pride in the work

At just 48, Delmonico has no plans for slowing down – he's enjoying his work too much.

"What we do is high-end fun," he stated. "We have challenges every day that keep us fresh; and when we're finished, our efforts bring people so much joy. We take great pride in the work, and we put a lot of ourselves into our projects. We never leave a site 'good enough.' We want it to be perfect."

Delmonico is confident that dedication will help the company to grow. "As long as we provide excellent service for our customers, I think we'll continue to expand. People know when they hire NELM, they're getting a company in the top one percent of contractors. That's a reputation we intend to maintain." ■



NELM Corp. worked with the Patriots Foundation and M.E. O'Brien and Sons to build this playground in Central Falls, R.I.

This Volvo EC140EL excavator is the latest addition to NELM Corp's fleet. "The Volvo excavators are efficient and smooth," said President/Owner Ray Delmonico.

