



**TIM  
GREENLEAF  
ENGINEERING**

## ***From Mass Excavation & Hillside Repairs to Hard & Soft Demolition, Tim Greenleaf Engineering Is Among The Best In Southern California***

*By: Brian Hoover*

Demolition & Grading / Huntington Beach, CA



There is a certain amount of envy us older guys get when we run across a young guy who started from nothing and has worked his way up to a multi-million dollar company, all before the age of 30. Along with envy however, comes respect, hope and promise. A feeling that if you work hard and watch your finances you can still be very successful in this country, even in these trying times. Tim Greenleaf is an example of what can happen when an individual works hard, smart and with purpose.

Tim Greenleaf is a third generation grader, who worked for and learned the trade from his grandfather. Like so many future successful men, Tim faced some hard times as a youth and found himself leaving high school in order to help support his family. He was just 14 years old when he began working for his grandfather as a laborer. He quickly worked his way up to operator and by the age of 18, he was running all of the field operations. Tim had hopes of one



***Tim Greenleaf  
finds success through  
teamwork.***



day taking over his grandfather's business, but soon learned that this was not going to be in the cards. In 2000, and at the still tender age of 20, Tim decided to go it on his own. When most men his age were still living at home and playing Xbox, Tim was trying to figure out how he was going to be able to afford the equipment for his new venture. Tim explains, "When I first started I went and worked in areas like Ventura, San Bernardino and Riverside, so as not to compete with my grandfather's company. At first I took any job I could get and was even happy if someone would let me demo his or her driveway. During the first year it was rocky as I was just establishing my clientele and making a reputation for myself. I started out renting what I needed as I needed it, but as my company began to grow, I knew I had to find a way to own my equipment. Around this time, Jeff Liebl of Quinn Company showed me a rent to own program, where I could

make 6-months of accelerated rental payments, with 80% being credited back to me as a down payment. This afforded me a low monthly payment and allowed me to roll right into another rent to own machinery purchase. The first machine was a Cat 953 track loader and I added another track loader just six months later. Today we have used this program to procure 16 Caterpillar machines including: Cat track loaders, wheel loaders, excavators, skid steers, track Cats and Caterpillar backhoes. We also have four Peterbilt trucks and end dumps, as well as several John Deere skip loaders. I am very grateful to Jeff Liebl and the rest of the team at Quinn Company for working with our company over the years and truly being an integral part of our success."

Today, with approximately 47 employees, Tim Greenleaf Engineering performs grading and excavating

*Tim Greenleaf Engineering relies on Cat equipment to stay competitive and responsive to their clients needs.*

services that are among the best in Southern California. Their services include everything from mass excavation, hillside repairs, custom house pads, import and export dirt services and finish grading. In addition, Tim Greenleaf Engineering can demo any site from entire buildings to just the interior down to the core. They also specialize in deconstruction services where they carefully dismantle a structure and



**Above:**  
**Tim Greenleaf,**  
**Owner.**

*They have completed more than 4,000 jobs and customer satisfaction has always been a top priority.*

its contents for recycling purposes. This can help offset job costs, as well as remaining environmentally responsible. Tim Greenleaf comments, "We are well known for our turnkey services where we can take a job from complete demolition to finish grade, saving our customers

time and money in the process. Our operators, laborers and technicians are fully trained and certified to perform all of our services, including asbestos removal and other abatement services. Our grading and excavating services offerings are unique in the fact that we take on the jobs that others shy away from. We want the jobs that drop from the sidewalk, straight down three stories. We specialize in this type of work and it sets us apart from the others. We use extended excavators and unique tried and true methods. What keeps our job interesting is not just moving dirt around all day, it's

about taking on the jobs that other companies say can't be done. I believe our willingness to take on these difficult jobs is what has helped us weather the current economic situation. We specialize in custom home hillside type work and we put our men and machines on steep hills that most people would not even walk down. I am also quite proud of our other service offerings like the job we recently completed on the Disneyland Hotel Courtyard project. We ripped down approximately 7 restaurants, 13 pools, and even an underground waterfall and did the grading for the





*The  
Tim Greenleaf  
Engineering team has  
over 100 combined  
years of demo and  
grading experience.  
They are prepared  
for all types of  
projects.*

new water park. We started this a year ago and just recently finished. We are also getting ready to start a 12-acre job in Beverly Hills that includes the construction of lagoons and ponds and even a mini-golf course. Because of our confidentiality agreements we can not divulge the celebrities that we are doing work for, but they are currently keeping us very busy."

A challenge that Tim Greenleaf Engineering and most everyone in this industry are experiencing right now is of course the economy. Tim continues, "It is not just getting the work, it is getting profitable work. A little more than three years ago, I didn't even want to answer the phone. We just could not take on any more work and it was not how much, it was, 'When can you start?'" Consequently, we have invested in a very thorough job-costing program. We do this while some of our competitors insist that if they have money in bank, they are remaining profitable. I am here to tell you that is a dangerous way to do business and it is the reason why so many construction companies are bidding these jobs below cost. 2011 was the year of the budget bid. Now I think people are better adjusted and things are a bit better. Still, much of our profit is in our receivables. We will get paid, but when we do, we cannot touch it. You just have to work smarter. I was fortunate to see some

of this coming and we saved the profits that we made when times were good. I did not buy that beach house or Harley Davidson. My savings account is what funded the jobs like we are doing now and I am thankful for that. I am also thankful for our awesome team of employees. My wife, Joanne takes care of all of the compliance paperwork and keeps the office in order, while the rest of our long time employees do what they do best. Right now I feel like a marathon runner with no finish line in sight. I just want to remain comfortable, without feeling like a workhorse all the time. I will be happy to stay the same size, just not so hurried all the time. I look forward to the future and the challenges ahead."

Tim Greenleaf Engineering works primarily in LA and Orange Counties, but will and have gone out much further. For more information on Tim Greenleaf Engineering, you can visit them at [www.tgegrading.com](http://www.tgegrading.com) or call 714-847-2700.