LOCTEGON Spring 2023 Vol. 45, No. 2

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Please send submissions (no more than two pages in length) to:

Oregon Association of Water Utilities

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Send your articles with full color photographs, in digital format if possible, to the address listed above.

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H2Oregon is the official publication of the Oregon Association of Water Utilities, and is published quarterly for distribution to representatives of rural and municipal suppliers. Issues are mailed free of charge to member and nonmember rural water/wastewater associations. Articles and photos are encouraged with payment in complimentary copies.

H2Oregon is published for the Oregon Association of Water Utilities by

Mt. Angel Publishing, Inc. 135 N. Main St., Mt. Angel, OR 97362

503-845-9499 fax: 503-845-9202 www.mtangelpub.com

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Oregon Association of Water Utilities

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OAWU's mission is to provide service, support and solutions for Oregon water & wastewater utilities to meet the challenges of today & tomorrow.

In Step

by Jason Green, Executive Director

Ft. McClellan, Alabama was muggy and hot on July 1, 1983. From the rural Oregon Coast to the Deep South, that was an experience in itself and for an 18 year old waiting for the Fourth of July holiday to pass before Basic Training began was painful, slow, like watching paint dry. There were so many life-lessons early on that I learned, some forced, by force, natural deduction, or simply over time in watching a father who had good work ethics and a positive attitude towards authority. Regarding work, authority, athleticism, a young and quick mind—made boot camp easy, almost fun. Learning the expectations, nuances and formalities of military life—uniform/dress code, beds and gear, haircuts and shaves, times of order to have PT, chow, taps or attention with salute or cover off, parade rest or at ease, authority figures and officers, etc. Rules. They are good and generally needed in most cases for order and expediting work and habits of life; they are for the rule abiding. Those that don't, won't last. Courtesy, respect, honor, self check and evaluations, motivation and self challenges, truth, and sincerity. Influence. Respect. Leadership. Thus began my interest and awe and sometimes frustrations and disappointment in leadership.

I thoroughly enjoyed my short three years. Communications/electronics, Station Tech Controller, Inside Plant, RMATS, AT&T, Special Circuits Team and Jungle Warfare. Two and half years in Panama. I was still fascinated by leadership, influence, and personalities, but it all hinged around who and what the person said and did, their examples, attitude, hard work, and the sincerity and respect they gave and thereby earned. It was not simply the rank they held. SFC Thornton was my lead DI, a large and bigger than life man. Physically capable. Not one of us willingly challenged him. His rank and stature demanded respect, most hated and admired the man. He ran us in cat 4 temps with full gear until we collapsed or passed out. Eventually, the green recruits began to respect his care, influence and leadership of us. Without question, wanting to talk to the giant Kentuckian—permission was carefully requested and if outside and walking, one immediately got into cadence step with him. Valuable life lessons—learning to respect authority and an individual person. Learning to do what one is told or expected to do and with a positive attitude.

In step... bosses, authority, we all have them or at least answer to someone. I am familiar with many utilities and cities, most have a basic mission, whether written or not, we are expected to carry it out. Obviously, this is fundamental and no offense intended, but occasionally it's good to be reminded. Getting in step with the boss is wise, crucial for the mission, our longevity and success at work. It is what we should be doing and it is right. If I am working for a council or board, I should be in step with them, desirous in doing what they expect me to do (and more), looking to advance and support them as I carry out their work or policies. Getting in step with my boss, my job and duties, anticipating and doing. That's good stuff and it's right! My best to you! \blacklozenge

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45TH ANNUAL Management & Technical Conference SUNRIVER, OREGON







This year's conference was a great success, and we were blessed with a week of beautiful snow. Many of the attendees were able to catch up with old friends and make new ones within the industry. OAWU staff enjoyed serving the members of the Association and providing assistance to those in need. Sunriver staff again provided genuine, friendly, excellent service, and great food.

The conference sessions were led off by Jason Green, OAWU Executive Director, guest speaker Tony DeBone, Deschutes County Commissioner, Matt Johnson, OAWU Board President, and Russ Cooper, OAWU NRWA Director. They welcomed attendees, discussed the state of the Association, and provided an update on the issues the industry is facing at a national level. This was followed by Mark Landauer who presented an update of legislative issues at the state level.

The OAWU annual business meeting was held after class sessions ended on Tuesday. President Matt Johnson presided over the meeting as attending members heard committee updates and participated in board member elections. The slate of board members who were submitted by the Nomination and Development Committee and elected to the board were:

- Matt Johnson, City of Monmouth, Region 5, expires 2026
- Craig Sheldon, City of Sherwood Region 2, expires 2026
- Marc Caldwell, Avion Water Company, Region 3, expires 2026
- Travis Gibson, City of Independence, Region 2, expires 2026







Oregon Association of Water Utilities

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At Wednesday's regular board meeting, annual officer elections for 2023 occurred. They are: Matt Johnson as President, Micah Olson as Vice President, and Craig Smith as Secretary/Treasurer. We would like to thank and recognize them for their direction and service to OAWU.

Many attendees were present at the awards banquet on Wednesday evening, and several visiting attendee families. The roast and salmon were great, we had a Murder Mystery for entertainment and many good conversations could be heard throughout the Great Hall.

The 2022 Manager and Operator award recipients are:

- Manager of the Year: Chico Holliday, Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs
- Manager of the Year: Jeb Miller, Chenowith Water PUD
- Wastewater Operator of the Year: Chris Patton, City of Sweet Home
- Water Operator of the Year: Jaegar Thomas Howatt, City of Sweet Home
- Associate Member of the Year: Phil Pellitier, Furrow Pump
- Friend of Rural Water: Tony Fields, OHA-DWS
- Office Manager of the Year: Ana Linden, Corbett Water District
- Rookie of the Year: Mitchell Jaspers, City of Molalla

Congratulations to all of our award recipients. These awards recognize the dedication and commitment made by those who choose to serve the communities of Oregon every day. Don't forget, if you have an employee who you would like to nominate for next year's awards, submit the information to the OAWU office for consideration.

The Best Tasting Water award recipients this year were the City of Sweet Home for Best Surface Water and Avion Water Company for Best Groundwater. The submissions are tested by 3 judges from the water community of Oregon, and they decide the best groundwater and surface water, then these winners go head-to-head for best overall water in Oregon. The 2023 winner of the Overall Best Water category is the City of Sweet Home. Their water will be flown to Washington DC and submitted for judging in the Best Water in the Nation contest.

At the Exhibitors' Hospitality Night Thursday, there was good food and drink, many door prizes, raffles, and an auction. We wish to extend a special thank you to all of those that took part in this year's auction. The money goes to support the Jeff Swanson Memorial Scholarship fund. The scholarship auction and raffle proceeds exceeded \$4,000. The selected candidates for this year's Jeff Swanson





















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Memorial Scholarship of \$1,500 was: Taylor Vanaken, whose father Chad works for Tualatin Valley Water District, Lily Schmid, whose father Adam works for the City of Hood River, and Emma Miller, whose mother Laurie works for the City of Manzantita. The application for the 2023/24 academic year can be found on our website, please apply if you have a dependent that is currently attending or going to attend college.

Congratulations to our raffle winners. Raffled items were:

- A 270 Weatherby Vanguard Sporter rifle for the WaterPac
- A 357 Smith and Wesson 686 Western Six-Shooter pistol for the Jeff Swanson Memorial Fund
- A LG 65-inch 4K UHR AI Thinq TV
- A Lamiglas Redline Fighting Rod and Diawa Lexa 300 Reel donated by Oregon Meter Repair

The winners of the ping pong and cribbage tournaments were announced. First place in ping pong was Darryl Walker, Joel Gehrett came in second, and Shane Ortega came in third. Jonathan Neumann came in first for cribbage, receiving the championship board. JD Burns came in second and Jason Devine came in third. Anthony Thompson came in first for the Cornhole tournament, John Lee came in second, and Paul Walford came in third. Find the Logo contest winner was Trevor TeEack from the City of Umatilla.

We wish to thank our Associate Members for their donations, time, and support of this conference and of course to the members who continue to believe in and support the Oregon Association of Water Utilities. Additionally, we would like to especially thank this year's Diamond sponsor: TAG; our Gold Sponsor: Core & Main; and our Silver Sponsor: HD Fowler Company, Inc. Be sure to sign up for the Annual Conference next year, the first full week of March 2024, as there will be a slate of new classes to attend, people in our industry to visit, food to eat, and fun to enjoy. See you there!

Best wishes to you, our friends.



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Oregon Association of Water Utilities

UPCOMING TRAINING & EVENTS

Date	Class Title	Location	CEU Information ESAC	C#, Fee/F	ree
May TBA	EXPO	Rickreall	0.4 Water/Wastewater	TBA FF	REE
May 10	Understanding the Requirements of the WMCP	Salem	0.3 Water	4351	Fee
May 10	Leak Detection	Salem	0.2 Water/Wastewater	4396	Fee
May 24	Math for Operators	Redmond	0.4 Water/Wastewater	4329	Fee
May 24	Pumps & Pumping	Redmond	0.3 Water/Wastewater/Onsite	4395	Fee
June 6–7	Water Treatment, Water Distribution Certification Review	Salem	1.4 Water/0.5 Wastewater/Onsite	TBA	Fee
June 27	Math for Operators	Hermiston	0.4 Water/Wastewater	4329	Fee
June 27	Pumps and Pumping	Hermiston	0.3 Water/Wastewater/Onsite	4395	Fee
July 25–26	Water Treatment, Water Distribution Certification Review	Redmond	1.4 Water/0.5 Wastewater/Onsite	TBA	Fee
August 8–9	Wastewater Treatment/Collections Certification Review	Salem	1.4 Wastewater/0.7 Water	4227	Fee
August 9	Lock Out Tag Out Operations	Bend	0.3 Water/Wastewater/Onsite	4397	Fee
August 10	Confined Space	Bend	0.3 Water/Wastewater/Onsite	4634	Fee
August 10	Hazardous Communication Standard (Global Harmonization)	Bend	0.3 Water/Wastewater	4193	Fee
August 21–24	29 th Annual Summer Classic Conference	Seaside	2.3 Water/Wastewater	TBA	Fee
September 11–14	ptember 11–14 2023 Fall Operators Conference		2.7 Water/Wastewater	TBA	Fee
September 19	ptember 19 Distribution Basics		0.6 Water	4117	Fee
October 11	Distribution Basics	Lake Oswego	0.6 Water	4117	Fee
Oct. 31 – Nov. 2	Spirit Mountain Casino Operator's Conference – 2023	Grand Ronde	2.0 Water/Wastewater	TBA	Fee
November 8	Confined Space & Job Site Safety	Eagle Point	0.6 Water/Wastewater/Onsite	4331	Fee
November 28	Distribution Basics	Salem	0.6 Water	4117	Fee
November 29	Developing Your Operations & Maintenance Manual	McMinnville	0.4 Water/Wastewater/0.2 Onsite	4116	Fee
November 29	Leak Detection	McMinnville	0.2 Water/Wastewater	4396	Fee
December 11–14	25th Annual End of Year Operators Conference	Hood River	2.7 Water/Wastewater	TBA	Fee

Levels 1-4 Water Operator Exams

Trained and certified operators are necessary to ensure that the systems are managed in a manner that fully protects public health and the environment. The OARs for certification stipulate that the qualifying experience for applicants for certification as a water treatment plant operator must attain at least half the required operating experience at a public water purification plant that uses complex filtration technology and is not more than one classification lower than the level of certification they are seeking. In other words, if you have only worked for a Class 2 treatment plant, we allow you to apply for a Level 3 certification but not a Level 4 certification. If you move on to a Class 3 plant, then you must have ½ the qualifying experience (at the Level 3 plant) before allowing to apply for a Level 4 certification. Reciprocity from state-to-state ensures that the operator have the operating experience for which they are certified.

For additional information, please visit http://public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyEnvironments/DrinkingWater/OperatorCertification/Levels1-4/Pages/exams.aspx

Drinking Water Data Online Drinking Water Services

https://yourwater.oregon.gov https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/HEALTHYENVIRONMENTS/DRINKINGWATER/Pages/index.aspx

Training class dates, class topic and/or locations may be subject to change as needed.

For more information on any class by OAWU, please contact the office at 503-837-1212, office@oawu.net or visit www.oawu.net.

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Wise Up

by Mike Collier, Deputy Director/Source Water Specialist

I know something you don't know... has been said by many a kid through the ages. But what is knowledge? Knowledge is being smart – is this useful? Sometimes, but just knowing things is not useful if these things are not acted upon. So what is the point of being smart, to win at Jeopardy! or some other game?

What should do instead of just having the smarts? Knowing what to do and actually doing it is much better—this is called wisdom. Being smart really isn't that helpful, I can know how to change the filter in my furnace, but unless I actually go and do it, the furnace will fail to provide warm air and will probably end up dying. I can learn all kinds of things, go to school, read books, do online research, but if these things are not applied, what is the use? We can learn, then tell others about what we have learned and maybe they will take and apply these things, but most of us can see through the veneer of someone who is just smart but has not actually applied it to real life. When we run into this, most of us will turn to a different source to ensure that what they are saying is really true.

I will give a quick example, I am not just going to plant a field based on a professor that talks about how to grow the best grass seed in the valley if they have no experience, but I will trust a farmer that has many decades of experience, has gnarled hands, and grown his business. He actually has wisdom in this area from the years of dedicated, practical, application.

This concept can really be applied to all the aspects of our lives, if we know what is the right thing to do, but do nothing at all or do the opposite this is not beneficial to anyone. Or if we know what is wrong but continue to do it—this is also not beneficial. Understanding these things should remind us that being just smart is not what makes a person great, but rather if we are able to act upon what we know is the basis for wisdom.







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What in the Wastewater

by Monty Norris, Wastewater Technician

As we move through each year, we are handed new permits, testing requirements, and expectations. Whether it is for water or wastewater, they usually impact each other. What the water plants make ultimately ends up at the wastewater plant after being used by the consumers, treated then sent to receiving waters for the next municipality to create drinking water. PFAS has been a very hot topic as of recent and for good reason. Whether it is going to be highly regulated like mercury is yet to be seen, but personally I believe that is where it is heading, most facilities will require additional treatment to prevent it from leaving their current processes. But what about all the other testing requirements or pre-permit issuance? To name a few—TSS, BOD/CBOD, ammonia, toxic monitoring/Copper Biotic Ligand, and WET testing.

TSS, BOD/CBOD, and ammonia are all common testing parameters that vary from plant to plant. Depending on outfall and where it goes. Going to a receiving stream/ irrigation or drain field seems to be the most common and permits are adjusted accordingly by DEQ. The size/ type of wastewater plant, mixing zone, and dry weather flow can also change the permit values.

Toxic monitoring tests at some facilities are being required before issuing a permit to determine the presence and concentration of chemicals of concern in Oregon's waters. Copper Biotic Ligand model testing can be done at the same time as Toxic monitoring.

The toxicity of copper varies in aquatic environments because the bioavailability of copper changes based on water chemistry conditions. The Biotic Ligand Model determines copper toxicity for a given set of conditions by using measurements of ten different water quality parameters that affect copper toxicity to aquatic organisms. These parameters are pH, dissolved organic carbon (DOC), temperature, calcium, magnesium, sodium, potassium, sulfate, chloride, and alkalinity. The model provides site-specific acute and chronic copper criteria that reflect changes to copper bioavailability caused by interaction with these water chemistry variables. Using the model provides a high degree of protection to aquatic life during vulnerable water chemistry conditions and will also identify those conditions that are less sensitive, where toxicity occurs at greater copper concentrations.

-Oregon DEQ

WET tests are used for water quality assessment, permit limit development, and compliance assessment. To protect water quality, EPA recommends using WET tests in NPDES permits together with requirements based on chemical-specific water quality criteria.

WET test methods include two basic types of WET tests, acute and chronic (including sublethal endpoints). WET test methods include procedures for freshwater, marine, and estuarine test species. EPA recommends running tests using an invertebrate, vertebrate, and a plant to identify the most sensitive species

Is Going On?

for use with the NPDES permits program. Ceriodaphnia dubia (freshwater flea) and Pimephales promelas (fathead minnow) are examples of EPA approved indicators or surrogates used in the protection of freshwater aquatic community organisms.

Finally, lets hit on PFAS! PFAS (Per- and Poly-FluoroAlkyl substances) are commonly found in water, soil, and sewage sludge, so they can easily contaminate our crops, chicken, livestock, and other animals on farms that produce our meat, dairy, grains, vegetables, fruits, and eggs. How do they get to the wastewater plant? Well, PFAS are everywhere! To just name a few: Industries, Airport firefighting foam, non-stick cookware, cleaning agents and fabric softeners, pesticides and herbicides, adhesives, medical products, and personal care products (for example, shampoo, hair conditioners, sunscreen, cosmetics, toothpaste, dental floss) and anything that repels water. There are oodles more to hit on, but this is a simple example of how deeply embedded in our

lives PFAS are. Where does this all go if it leads down the drain? Your local wastewater treatment plant. The majority of teatment plants are not equipped to remove PFAS. It does like to bond to solids therefore, some of it is removed...or just transferred elsewhere. Off to biosolids land application and relocated to grass/soil for animals to ingest. What is all the commotion about? The suggested health epa limit has been set at 70 parts per trillion, equivalent to 1 drop per 20 olympic size swimming pools! They have detected up to 4700 forms of PFAS and possibly up to 10,000. Most of the high concentration of PFAS has been from the Midwest to east coast, but does it exist here as well? Yes, and some of you have been testing at water treatment plants for the EPA.

We are stewards of the environment and our receiving waters. When we are responsible for what is going out to the receiving waters there is an expectation that goes beyond the paycheck and job title that is more of an oath to keeping our rivers clean and pristine. *For tomorrow, for our future!*



Oregon Association of Water Utilities



Lost Programming

by Keith Bedell, Wastewater Technician

What happens if the programming is lost at your Wastewater Treatment Plant or Water Plant?

Everything is working great, and you check your operations with the SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition). The levels in the basins are fine, blowers are running, and it shows that the lift stations are working properly, but when visually checking, the levels are way low, and the pumps aren't running. Somehow the PLC (Programmable Logic Controller) had frozen up and it is still telling you everything is ok. But what if it is on an older system with an auto-dialer that only lets one know if there is an alarm, then you go and check it just to make sure that everything is ok. Which is actually the better system?

With the SCADA you can check everything remotely and save time and labor by not having to physically drive out and check, but when driving out we are actually confirming that everything is fine. OAWU got a call from a new operator with a small city that one of their water tanks had been showing that the level was down to 0 feet and their well was running, couldn't keep up. There was water running down the hillside and they didn't know where the leak was. After they did some searching and visually checking the elevation in the tank. The culprit was a failed pressure sensor in the tank and the water was coming from the overflow. The overflow was not at the top of the tank where you could see it but piped down to the ground so there would be less damage to the area around the pipe. When the operator looked at it he thought that the distribution pipe had broken.

Another wastewater treatment plant had somehow lost the programming in their SCADA system and backup had somehow gotten corrupted, they then had to manually operate everything by hand. The computer technician had to take the old plans and rewrite the program for the system so the plant would operate on its own.

It is important to have a backup plan for our SCADA system and that it is readily available and on-site if possible. What if in the worst case scenario everything goes out, electricity (but we have backup power), internet, land lines and cell service? We will still be able to reprogram the system if need be and continue to operate the system. Do we also have spare Input/Output (I/O) cards and relays for the system in case one goes out that can be put in to keep the controllers working? Then again, how much backup equipment do we have on hand that will never be used?

Not to date myself, but we had a Verbatim auto-dialer that would call a pager. Then you would go to the wastewater plant to see what the alarm was, get everything taken care of and leave. If there were multiple alarms continuously going off, we would unplug the phone line until everything was back to normal. I recall driving half way home and couldn't remember if I had plugged the phone line back in and had to drive back to double-check—makes for a long night.

We learn a lot more about the operations when we have to walk around and check everything rather than just remotely acknowledging the alarm.



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Energy: Sparking Interest

by Tim Tice, Projects Manager

Interest in health and safety (H&S) has been growing over the past few years, and like many topics, seems to cycle with the tides. Controlling hazardous energy—in laymen's terms "lock-out/tag-out" (LOTO)—is one safety topic that, for the most part, is forgotten and yet it is one of the most cited OSHA standards. Some key shortcomings to avoid in a LOTO program include:

Simply failing to LOTO a piece of equipment

Where employers get into trouble is outlining the procedures for a specific piece of equipment. Various machines we use in industry will not have the same protocol, hence the citation. If you're working on changing out a valve, blocking and or blinding the pipeline is very different than if you're replacing a hydraulic cylinder on the backhoe. The main emphasis is to review the procedural steps for the multiple types of LOTO and write (rewrite) them as they relate to each piece of equipment.

Failing routine inspections

This citation is about understanding what the rule says and then finding the time to complete the task. The rule states for each energy control procedure that is used in the workplace, we must conduct an annual inspection of the procedure while it is being performed to prove the procedure(s) is adequate. The LOTO procedures must be reviewed by an authorized, designated employee, who observes the LOTO team then concludes if the procedures are adequate or additional review required.

Standard operating procedures (SOP)

SOPs are written in a way to assure the highest level of safety is retained throughout LOTO. The trouble lies from a couple different views. First, we as workers, have an uncanny knack of falling into complacency as we become hardwired in routine tasks, which in itself is not too bad, but we begin to short circuit the required steps. Second, is dealing with a timeline. A hurried pace is not conducive to safety. It inevitably provides the perfect scenario for overlooking a step. Most SOPs should be written with a concise sequence of steps that we should never stray from. There are eight specific steps that all LOTO procedures should include for the majority of equipment. Rule 1910.147(d) lists the steps.

Identifying sources of energy

Being able to understand the types of energy sources we deal with, or the characteristics of those sources is important. An easy example is electricity. Some significant sources of energy we encounter may be mechanical, hydraulic, or pneumatic (air). Does the facility deal with gravitational energy? This is one form of energy that is rarely remembered. A vital aspect of the written program is identifying all types of energy.

A quick review of four citations that are normally found during a safety inspection are a starting point, but as one knows, there can be additional violations associated with LOTO programs. Find an inspection form online and begin the process in determining the adequacy of the facility's LOTO program. Bring in a third party to assist in the review process, we all see things differently. A facility can request Oregon OSHA, through the consultation services, to visit and discuss not only LOTO, but any safety programs required at the workplace.

There are many approaches taken to develop a thorough LOTO written program but putting time into the written portion of this program (any H&S program) will hopefully save time when LOTO procedures are being implemented. Teaching the program to employees and raising their level of understanding will be the second important step in sustaining a high level of safety.



One size fits all is, unfortunately, true when it comes to H&S. A small water/wastewater system with a crew of two or three versus a work force of twenty plus, the goal should be the same, everyone looks out for each other as it relates to working safely. If your interest in H&S has waned lately, then prior to the busy construction season beginning, take time to review the H&S programs, have a few tailgate meetings as preparation. Insure you document those meetings because the paper trail is as important as the procedural steps.

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Let's Talk Safety

by Bob Waller, Water Circuit Rider

When thinking of ideas for an article it seems every subject has been written about. I thought maybe just expand on a topic that has been done over and over, so here it goes "workplace safety." Working at water and wastewater plants can be dangerous, with hazards such as slippery walkways, dangerous gases and loud noise, possibly malfunctioning equipment. Workers experience an occupational injury and illness rate higher than the average for all occupations, incurring injuries ranging from sprained ankles and pulled muscles to lung infections, blindness, and even death.

There are about 2.8 million nonfatal workplace accidents and injuries in the United States each year. Before getting into the water industry I was a cabinet maker where we use tools that can take a finger or an eye in a millisecond. I would hear of experienced woodworkers losing fingers or worse, it seemed they had made the cut thousands of times. Were they just not paying attention, in a hurry, or just complacent?

The company I worked for would have safety meetings every month and like many safety meetings little attention was paid. One day we decided to have every one come up with ideas for safety around the shop, for fresh ideas—thinking out of the box.

At the next safety meeting several ideas were bandied about—I'm not sure if it was one idea or a combination of several. The idea that stuck and really caught on was after every job we would clean the shop, reinstall any safety guards and shrouds, even that table saw guard. We would make up a whole bunch of new push sticks, get new clean safety glasses, ear protection. We were to follow all safety procedures to the letter for the next week. It seemed like overkill at the time, but



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it allowed us to get back to working safely and have safety foremost in our minds. This shop made cabinet doors by the hundreds and after implementing this safety procedure our accidents were cut in half.

Over the years I have taken this approach to safety and have had almost zero accidents, just some muscle strains or knuckle busters working on a truck or meters. If this is an approach you would like to try ask the staff if we were giving a tour to some children from a local school, or our grandchildren, how mindful of our workplace would we be?

So, what would this safety reset look like in your water and wastewater plants? Remember the idea is to set the bar high—maybe pretend we have an OSHA inspection? Hopefully we are not removing shrouds and guards from equipment around our plants, but we could ask questions like: are our ladders chained, electric wires in conduit, gas lines marked, etc. Maybe we should be looking for rusted or loose railing, rethinking our confined spaces, ensuring our wet-wells are safe. When coming off a stairway onto a painted floor a little nonskid tape works great. When someone is called out at night, are we checking on them? Even to review our policies to make sure we are watching each other's backs.

This list could go on and on—I'm sure you know your work area and what looks to be in good repair and what's not. We



don't have to wait for an OSHA inspection to get things back the way they are supposed to be according to the manufacturer's specifications. Safety is for everyone, and we are all responsible; sometimes a little different approach is maybe just what's needed.

We can become complacent and sloppy doing the same thing day after day. So, the point of this article is that everyone goes home to their family after shift. We at OAWU see you operators at conferences and short schools throughout the year. Afterwards our staff text or call each other to see that everyone made it home safe, because you watch out for people you care about.

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Use It or Lose It

Heath Cokeley, Programs Manager/Circuit Rider

Do you have any skills you used to be good with and then when you do them again after a long time you realize you are not as good at them now? I see two very contradictory statements and they are: "it's like riding a bike, you never forget" and "if you don't use it, you lose it." While I hope for your sake you are more along the lines of, "it's like riding a bike," for me, I find the older I get the more I resemble the, "if you don't use it, you lose it."

Case in point for me is sheetrock. You see my dad had a construction company when I was a kid, just him most the time, me and my brothers in evenings, weekends and when we were out of school if he needed help. Now-a-days people get all uptight about child labor, but I assure you, from my point of view, it was not an abuse my dad, in my view, paid what I consider a fair and equitable wage. By that I mean he paid us what he felt we were worth at the time so when I was straightening nails, a job which I know now was to keep me out of the way and save a few cents, he paid me accordingly but as I got older, I was actually of use, so he paid me more. By the age of 12 I felt like I could actually sheetrock pretty well and even though I needed help throwing around the materials at times I could make pretty short work of rocking in a room. I say all that as many years later as I am working on a project house of my own, I find that not only am I slow at the sheetrock, but the end result is something that, while I can hide my mistakes with mud, is not something I am particularly proud of.

I bring all this up as I find this happens with a number of different things in life, that if you don't do something for a while, it can be very hard to get back into the swing of it. The number one thing that this happens to me on is Math. Now I like math because to me it has the ability to make sense out of things that at first glance don't always make sense, but I find if I am not doing math problems frequently, I tend to forget steps. Frequently, before I teach a math class I will sit down and do the problems I will be teaching on my own as I find it helps me to better explain them and be better prepared for questions regarding them.

So, if I could make a suggestion, it would be this. Do some practice math or other water/wastewater questions at least once in a while. I have seen a number of systems that throw questions up on a white board and work through them first thing in the morning or at lunch. I think this is a great idea because at least for me if I don't use it I lose it, and with that I'll see you down the road. •

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Meter Mystery

by Hans Schroeder, Circuit Rider

How did your city fare during the freezing temps this winter?

My wife went outside one day this last winter and heard water spurting. Being this is my gig I have several water meters around our ranch so I can tell where the water usage is during the different seasons. Meters to see how much the cows drink depending on what pasture they are in, the horses, the barn, and of course the house. The meters also help to tell if there are any leaks.

She heard the water spurting out of the meter that is tied to our house and sure enough the meter had frozen, and the freeze plate had split and was leaking water. The meter box was stuffed with insulation. The house had never been "without water" in the 15 days of below freezing temperatures. The meter was about 15 years old. Was it just meter fatigue? Who knows why it cracked, I had taken the proper precautions to protect it.

Did any of your communities have significant problems this winter? Were their better precautions that we could have taken? This year we didn't get the usual snow layer that helps insulate the buried lines, valves, and meters. Are there areas that need attention before next winter?

Were there notes made on these things that could have been improved or what did we do that was successful, so in another few years when we have this same type of winter we can look back on them and make it a more successful year than this year was. It is miserable to repair a leak or frozen pipe while battling the elements. The old saying "if it can go wrong, it will" seems to apply. Being prepared is the best prevention in the planning process.

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GOAL TEA





Courtesy Flush

by Scott Berry, Operations Manager

Conventional flushing programs have been in use for as long as there have been water distribution systems. Traditionally, these programs have consisted of flushing hydrants in different targeted areas until the water runs clear. This resulted in varying degrees of success in achieving significant improvements in water quality.

Over time water operators have continued to refine their flushing processes into more of a unidirectional flushing (UDF) program. There are many benefits of a unidirectional flushing program.

In Figure 1, the hydrant is opened, and water flows to it from all directions. One of the goals is to move the water through the pipeline at a velocity of 3–5 feet per second to get good scour. With a unidirectional flushing program (Figure 2), we get higher velocities inside the pipeline and use less water. That benefit—using less water—means that UDF can be an important part of our Water Conservation and Management Plan.

Unidirectional flushing is performed according to a predetermined plan starting from the source or the reservoir that supplies an area and working our way out from there. Flush for larger pipes to smaller pipes, trying to limit the segments to 1,500 feet or so and making sure to maintain 20 psi in all parts of the distribution system while conducting a flushing program.

There are many things to be considered when planning, conducting, and restoring after completion. UDF mobilization and setup activities are similar to conventional flushing. Opening and closing of valves to support UDF will likely require a longer setup period; however, this time may be offset by shorter flushing duration.

Mobilization and setup activities:

- Identifying stormwater and drainage that can be used to manage discharge of flushed water to avoid localized flooding. De-chlorination may be required if discharge is entering a water body.
- Establishing traffic control for the safety of operators and drivers. Limited stormwater conveyance and subsequent ponding may require traffic control beyond what is required for operator safety. In addition, traffic control may be required at open/close valve locations.
- Maintaining direct contact with critical customers sensitive to water quality or pressure changes.
- Notifying the fire officials of UDF activities, which may limit available fire flow due to closed valves or active flushing.

Institutional knowledge of utility staff is often useful in identifying and mitigating major operational challenges before going out to the site. However,



Figure 1

crews should be prepared to address a variety of conditions in the field. For example, a clogged storm drain may unexpectedly limit stormwater conveyance.

Flushing and system impacts:

The increased cleaning power of UDF can result in temporary reductions in water quality and service pressures. Operators should expect:

- Initial water discoloration that clears during the flushing
- Sand and other particulates
- Temporary lower pressure
- Water on streets and/or parking lots

Visual inspection or measurements, such as turbidity, should always be used to confirm that adequate water quality has been restored before ending the flushing sequence.

Field observations:

Field observations during flushing provide valuable information for future flushes. Records should include site requirements (traffic control, stormwater control, etc.), the flushing time, hydrant flow, velocity and pressure.



Figure 2

Documenting site requirements aid in planning and mobilization for future flushes. Comparison of system data in future flushes can help identify potential issues, such as open valves. Similarly, if hydraulic modeling was completed, this recorded field observation can be used to confirm the initial flush assumptions and planning considerations. If changes or additional sequences are required, the updated field information will provide great value for future programs.

Site restoration and cleanup:

UDF activities typically require additional site restoration and cleanup activities, as compared to conventional flushing. UDF may create a "dirtier" site than conventional flushing due to the discharge of sand and other particulates. In addition, flushing crews will need to open all valves at the completion of daily activities.

The first time UDF is conducted, flushing crews will likely identify areas where existing records and mapping are inaccurate or incomplete. Record all valves that were operated and confirm that all valves are opened again and the distribution is returned to normal operation. Update system mapping with any corrections that where noted. When we lost our Australian Shepherd, Rowdy, last Christmas that was difficult.

"Like losing a family member," someone said. "No," I thought to myself. "It's not like losing a family member. It *is* losing a family member." But I knew what to do. Someone told me long ago...the English vet, James Herriot.

As a practicing veterinarian, Herriot wrote his wonderful stories and he wrote about the difficulty of losing his patients. He also wrote about his pets. "When I lost my own companions, I suffered even more." Herriot found a way to deal with the grief. "As soon as you can," he wrote, "love again. Find another companion to replace the one you lost. Love is the only thing that can cure heartache." And that's what my wife and I did. Three months later, a new companion came to our farm.



He was a blue merle and because he looked like he had been in an Oklahoma bar fight with his two black eyes, we named him "Shiner." And Herriot was right. From the day this little ball of fuzz set foot on the ranch, he brought his healing and laughter with him. I told my friends, "I don't know what kind of cow dog he might become, but he sure has a future in comedy." And we began.

When should you start training your dog? Ask any trainer...and most all will say, "The best time to start training your dog is today!" So that's what I did. First day he was home, I took him out in the front yard on the long line. I was excited and and reminded myself many times not to compare this pup to Rowdy because that would be unfair...because I knew he could never be like Rowdy. Sure enough, things went downhill from that first moment.

He jumped, bit, squealed, and kicked and fought the leash that first day with everything he had. I found myself disappointed in the little fellow and thought, "Rowdy never did that." The next day I happened to look out the window and saw Sherry with Shiner on the long line. He was prancing along beside her like one of those dogs on television in the New York Dog Show. And at that moment I could hear all my friends—who are true horsemen and have taught me so much—yelling inside my mind, "It ain't the pup, Miguel! It ain't the pup."

For the next few days I didn't work with Shiner. I just watched Sherry work with him...and I began to see.

I noticed when she began with Shiner on the leash, she would shake the leash and call his name.

"Why do you do that?" I asked.

"To let him know we are about to do something," she said. "You know, to help him get ready."

Sometimes when she walked off with him, he would resist and fight her, too. When that happened with me, I would just keep pulling him. (Ain't that just like a man?) But when Shiner refused to go forward, Sherry would stop and come back to him. She petted him gently and talked softly to him. "Why do you do that?" I asked.

"To let him start over," she said. "You know, sort of like to give him another try. To let him know this is not so difficult. We can try again." And I watched and watched, and after several days, I became of aware of so many little things she did that I had failed to do. She was eliciting high cooperation without the use of force. I was eliciting almost no cooperation no matter how much force I used. I changed my ways, and after several months now, Shiner responds to me much like he does to the person we both love so. And then, there was yesterday...

Shiner and I went to the pasture fence in the late afternoon. Some one hundred yards away stood my roping steers. I had worked with the pup on the long-line, but never with Shiner free. On this day, he stood by my side staring at the cattle. "Shiner?" I said to him. No response. Focused only on the steers.

"Shiner," I said again. "Look at me." He turned.

"I'm going to unsnap your leash," I said. "I want you to go gather the steers."

I removed the leash and he trotted away. The pup made a wide circle behind the steers and sat down. Taking his time, he moved forward on occasion—sometimes a bit right, and sometimes a bit left—and soon all the steers were in the arena. Shiner sat down again and turned to look at me. And I thought to myself, "Rowdy never did that either."

I said, "Good dog, Shiner. Good dog."

Then I sat there and cried like a baby. •



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