

Share Your Thoughts

Exploring the Succession Planning Process

By Ray Gordon

Planning for the future is never high on anyone's list and oftentimes it's why we get caught in a bind. It's always easier to delay this discussion. But in our business, succession planning is essential to ensure the continued operation of our wastewater treatment facilities. This involves identifying potential successors for key critical roles and making sure they are prepared for the job ahead. The most common question is "How to get started?", but the most important question is, "When to get started?", and the best answer to that is "Now". This article will tell you how to get the process started.

First - Make a plan!

Take a look at your organization chart. If you operate a small facility, it may be easy with just a few positions, but for larger facilities it may involve multiple functional units. Start by identifying and examining the key roles in your team and answering these two questions:

- What's the day-to-day impact of each position?
- If the person currently in a position is unavailable or leaves your plant, how would that affect your operations?

Two - Identify Back Up!

Once you understand how the departure of certain employees might hamper your operations you will need to identify team members who could potentially step into those positions. Ask yourself some more questions:

- If you hire from inside for a particular position, which employee would be the strongest candidate to fill this role?
- Does this candidate have the proper certifications, such as the proper grade wastewater or collection system certifications?

- Would the candidates need training? And, if so, what type?

If you are fortunate, you may find that you work in an organization that is structured in a way that the obvious successor may be the person who is a subordinate to each of the positions under consideration. However, do not overlook other promising employees who may excel at the skills that would be required for a particular job. Look for staff who would thrive in another role, regardless of where they may be on the organization chart.

It is important that you never assume you know each employee's career goals as it will be really disappointing to find out at an inopportune moment that an employee you have planned for a move is simply "not interested".

Three - Talk to all Your Employees!

Start with a simple meeting with each and every employee about how they view their professional future before making any of your succession choices. These interviews can help you see the goals of each individual and can further help you narrow in on potential staff members who would make a good backup. But once you identify your key staff members, meet with them again and explain why they are an ideal candidate for positions of increasing importance.

Four - Don't Promise Anything

Since most of us work in publicly owned facilities we know that funding and budget priorities can change dramatically. You should start each employee discussion with an understanding that there are no guarantees and that situations can change due to many circumstances. Some of these changes are out of your control. Issues can arise with the candidate or other factors in the organization, like a new superintendent, DPW director, union contract changes, budget cuts or other external factors.

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Editor's Words



Stephanie Somersworth WWTF

As I write these editor's words, things are starting to feel better in my world. 96-year old Nonna is fully vaccinated and ready for a girls' night! She had to wait a bit for the rest of us girls to get vaccinated, but we'll be spending the night with her in June. She loves our creative menus and this girls' night will be featuring Mexican food and drinks. My favorite flavor of margarita is cranberry, and I tell myself that cranberry juice is healthy... I'll also be able to enjoy watching baseball games at Goodall Park in Sanford this summer. My favorite band has published a schedule of live performances and I'm going to see a show in July. I have a Camp Adventure for Grown-ups scheduled with Girl Scouts of Maine in August. My daughter's very-postponed wedding looks like it'll happen this December. Hopefully, international travel will allow my son to attend.

And check out the schedule of events on this page! I don't play golf, but I already have the Trade Fair on my calendar.

It's not normal, but it feels better. The international pandemic news is still heart-breaking. The pandemic will be with us a while longer, but we've tried to keep this edition of The Collector light and talk about some other topics. Enjoy!



Upcoming Events

Go to www.nhwPCA.org for live links to online registration

Check NHWPCA.org for details — Summer Training Classes

August 5, 2021 — NHWPCA 32nd annual golf outing
Beaver Meadows Golf Course, Concord, NH

October 1, 2021 — Annual Trade Fair
DoubleTree Hotel, Manchester, NH

In This Issue

Blurbs, Blurbs & More Blurbs

NHWPCA Annual Trade Fair Coming up this Fall

Join us for our 32nd Annual Golf Gig!

In the Sight and in the Mind

Waste Water Joke

Committee Spotlights

Retiree Raves

PreTreatment Tales

Residuals Report

Safety Corner

Thoughts from the Bench

NHWPCA Revised Membership Rate Structure

NHWPCA Annual Trade Fair Information and Registration

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

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We are looking for meaningful articles for the Wastewater Operator in a timely fashion. Send submission articles for *THE COLLECTOR* to: Stephanie Rochefort via email at srochefort@somersworth.com.

Editor: Stephanie Rochefort

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Continued from page 1

Staff need to know this development will help them in the long run even if they decide to work someplace else and it is in their best interest to build their own personal development plan!

Five – Professional Development Plan

Next, talk to them about what steps they will need to take to prepare themselves. If you are fortunate, the candidate or your organization may have already begun educating and preparing candidates. If not, you (along with any section heads or immediate supervisors) will need to get working on a Professional Development Plan for each employee.

Professional Development can take many forms! We could write a whole article about this topic. In brief, you need to identify the knowledge, skills and abilities needed for a given position and then set about creating opportunities for the employee to gain those skills. Opportunities can include classes, on-the-job training, job rotations, schooling and/or earning certifications. Another overlooked method is connecting them with a mentor who can boost their abilities in the critical areas especially in the soft skills. Those in key leadership positions must have strong communication skills, and polished interpersonal abilities, such as diplomacy and empathy.

After the Professional Development Plan has been in place for a while and the employee has gained some new skills you need to look for an opportunity to test them.

Six – Take a Vacation!

This is the fun part! Do not wait until there's a staffing crisis to test your employees! The best way to see if a candidate has the right stuff to assume a more advanced role is for someone to take a vacation. During this vacation, allow the potential successor to assume some responsibilities of the manager who's taking the vacation. This experience will allow the employee to gain valuable experience. The employee will also appreciate the opportunity to grow and test their gained knowledge.

Seven – Return and re-examine

After the vacation you can meet in person with the returning manager and the employee to go over the experience. The experience may help identify how to update and improve the professional development plan. Don't expect them to "get it" the first time. Letting them fail at tasks will better prepare them than your "saving" them every time. Failures can actually be a great learning tool. It's important not to assign blame and to take note of suggestions the employee

may have to avoid future failures. This builds rapport with employees as pitfalls are identified and solutions are crafted.

Steps five, six and seven can be repeated until the candidate is fully prepared to assume all potential future duties.

Eight – Fine Tune Your Hiring Process

Once you have identified all your potential successors for key critical roles you will have to see where gaps in necessary talent will occur. Identifying your potential gaps can help you target which skills, knowledge and abilities you will need to acquire via hiring or to develop in existing staff members.

Nine – Don't forget yourself!

Your number one job as a manager is to make sure you have properly trained your successor! Even if you are years away from retirement things can happen, you might win Megabucks, be offered your dream job at a wastewater facility in Hawaii or receive a promotion in your current organization.

Ten – Stick with your plan!

Back in Step Four, we cautioned our employees that there are no guarantees and that situations can change. Regardless, it is to the benefit of the organization to stick with your plan. Even with the "no promises speech" employees will have expectations. Organizations who fail to follow their plan can create bad feelings with staff members. For example hiring a key manager from outside the organization could cause key people who were expecting a promotion to leave and lower the moral of those who remain.

To avoid this, keep working on your plan, be honest, let staff know upfront that sometimes situations in an organization could result in seeking new perspectives. But as much as possible it is best to continue the teamwork and anticipate changes to your plan to avoid this situation.

With succession planning, you may not be able to avoid the risk of losing key staff members to a better opportunity. But if employees recognize that you make their personal development a priority they will be more likely to stay. You also will be building a more robust team, improving moral, building essential skill and letting employees know they are valued.

You will find that changes in your team's lineup are inevitable. You may not always be able to predict a valued employee's departure, but through effective succession planning, you can make life simpler for those who carry on the mission of providing Clean Water.

Implementing these ten simple steps succession plan-

ning in your organization will help you better plan for the future. Oddly enough, Covid-19 has brought the need to have emergency succession planning more sharply into focus than ever before, so don't wait for the next disaster to prepare, start "NOW".

While your staff members aren't fixed assets — they are your most important Asset! Invest in them and they will take care of your physical assets no matter what comes along.



NHWPCA Annual Trade Fair Coming up this Fall

By Michael R. Theriault, PE, Wright-Pierce

It is with great excitement that the Association is looking forward to getting back toward some degree of normalcy in hosting our Annual Trade Fair on Friday October 1, 2021 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Manchester, NH on Elm Street. The trade fair floor will occupy the large Armory Room, have breakout technical sessions to earn some CEUs, and be capped off by lunch with our fellow Association colleagues. A lucky Rhode Island operator will be joining us after participating in a 3-day operator exchange program. For attendees or exhibitors desiring to stay overnight, the hotel has set aside a block of rooms for our group. As usual, the Armory Room will be available on the night before the event for exhibitor and booth setup. Registration for exhibitors will be available shortly followed by individual registrations later this summer.

Join us for our 32nd Annual Golf Gig!



Please join us on Thursday August 5th as the New Hampshire Water Pollution Control Association hosts its 32nd annual golf outing at the municipally owned Beaver Meadows Golf Course in Concord.

Registration and sponsorships are available online at <https://tinyurl.com/2021NHWPCAGOLF> and at <https://tinyurl.com/2021NHWPCAGOLFSPONSORS>



Last year's golf outing was one of the first post-pandemic events in our industry and was a huge success. After almost five months of stay-at-home safe distancing over 100 water professionals gathered, many for the first time since the start of the pandemic, for a day of golf, comradery, and fellowship. The day started on a festive note with bright sunshine and plenty of catching up between old friends. We had guests from every New England state joining us for our 31st annual event. Hoots and





hollers could be heard from every corner of the golf course throughout the day as teams shot for birdies, eagles, and, most importantly, for a good time with friends away from the pandemic. Despite a few wayward shots, shenanigans, and hijinks, all the golfers survived their rounds. At the end of the day, we had dozens of happy, tanned, and tired golfers.

We expect this year's golf outing to be equally successful as the day will start with a continental breakfast, free use of the driving range, and, as always, plenty of old friends to catch up with. Guests will enjoy our traditional lunch of BBQ ribs, sweet sausage, Boston baked beans, and sensational salads served by our talented friend Jessica Martin at the 19th Hole. As with most years, we expect a crowded leaderboard with several teams in contention battling for the NHWPCA Championship. We will also be awarding skill prizes for longest drive, straightest drive, and "closest-to-the-pin". We will close the day with our usual assortment of high-end raffle prizes including plenty of clubs, bags, and other golfing goodies. Lastly, we wish to thank and encourage our sponsors whose generosity and participation is what makes this such a successful event for NHWPCA.

We look forward to seeing you for our 32nd golf outing on Thursday August 5, 2021 at Beaver Meadow Golf Course!

In the Sight and in the Mind

By Nick Fontaine, Industrial Pretreatment Coordinator, NHDES-WRBP

The impacts from the wipes' epidemic have been seen across New Hampshire; most recently observed in the Winnepesaukee River Basin Program's (WRBP) collection system. The WRBP is the state-owned and operated wastewater collection and treatment system serving 10 Lakes Region communities including portions of Center Harbor, Moultonborough, Gilford, Meredith, Laconia, Belmont, Sanbornton, Northfield, Tilton, and Franklin. The WRBP is responsible for

maintaining and operating the main sewer lines that run between these communities, 14 sewage pumping stations, as well as the wastewater treatment facility located in Franklin, NH. Municipalities and private parties are responsible for maintaining the local sewers going to homes and businesses.

Earlier this year, pumps were clogged by wipes and rags at both of the WRBP sewage pumping stations in Sanbornton, NH - causing the pumps to fail. During the first week of April, there was a sewer pipe blocked by similar debris in a local Sanbornton sewer line that led to sewage backing up into the basement of a Sanbornton home.

Just six weeks later, another event occurred. WRBP personnel had to remove a wipe and catheter clog from a check valve at a WRBP pump station; this time in Laconia.

In addition to damaged private property, like the incident in Sanbornton, flushing this debris causes emergency maintenance to remove the blockages, involving WRBP, Town and contractor personnel and equipment to respond and resolve the issues.

In response to these recent events, and to help deter "wipe flushers," the WRBP undertook some targeted outreach by preparing an informative packet to be included in sewer bills. A letter detailing the impacts of flushing wipes and other debris into the sewer, pictures of the Sanbornton clog (before and after manhole cleaning), and a NHDES "What's Flushable" Brochure were included with these packets in an attempt to show sewer users the impacts wipes and other non-flushable debris have on the collection system.



Clogged Check Valve in a WRBP Sewage Pumping Station located in Sanbornton, NH.



Clogged manhole in local sewer that caused a sewage backup in Sanbornton, NH.

The good news—light is beginning to be seen at the end of the (sewer) tunnel. Recently, Kimberly-Clark has reached a settlement in a lawsuit filed by Charleston Water System in South Carolina. The agreement is to make its “flushable” wipes compatible with wastewater systems by May 2022—a huge win for wastewater professionals. However, targeted outreach (e.g. showing pictures, giving tours, local presentations, etc.) must continue to further shift the paradigm of flushing non-flushable wipes, and to continue to help bring this issue and the resulting impacts into both the sights and minds of all sewer users.



Wipe and catheter clog that was removed from a WRBP pump station in Laconia, NH.

The Bottom Line: Wipes, rags, paper towels, diapers, cotton swabs, etc. do not break down in the sewer and SHOULD NOT be flushed. There can be severe consequences from flushing these types of debris. Regardless of what a package may say, only human waste and toilet paper can adequately break down and be processed through the wastewater treatment facility.



Before and after photos of clogged manhole in Sanbornton, NH. Wipes can already be seen accumulating in “After” photo.

Waste Water Joke

Two old guys are working at a wastewater treatment facility.

One guy goes off to lunch and comes back to find his buddy standing above a tank with a long rake.

“What are you doing?!” he yells.

“My coat fell in,” his buddy yells back.

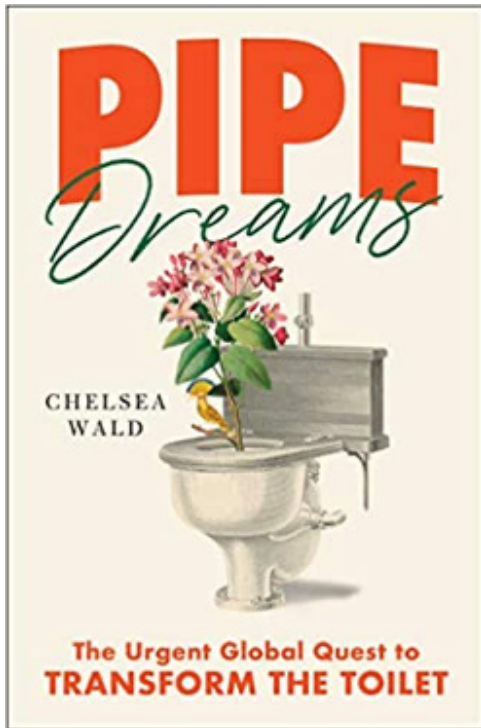
“You’re not really gonna wear that again, are you?!”

“No, no. Gosh, no, I’m not going to wear it. I have to get it back though. My teeth are in the pocket.”



Pipe Dreams Book Review

It's always exciting to find a new book related to wastewater! Find this one on Amazon, print or Kindle. Recommended by Mike Carle, "I've only started reading this, but it's good so far..."



Pipe Dreams:

The Urgent Global Quest to Transform the Toilet

Hardcover – April 6, 2021

By Chelsea Wald (Author)

4.9 out of 5 stars 15 ratings

From an award-winning science journalist, a lively, informative, and humorous deep dive into the future of the toilet—from creative uses for harvested “biosolids,” to the bold engineers dedicated to bringing safe sanitation to the billions of people worldwide living without—for fans of popular science bestsellers by Mary Roach.

Most of us do not give much thought to the centerpiece of our bathrooms, but the toilet is an unexpected paradox. On the one hand, it is a modern miracle: a ubiquitous fixture in a vast sanitation system that has helped add decades to human lifespan by reducing disease. On the other hand, the toilet is also a tragic failure: less than half of the world’s population can access a toilet that safely manages bodily waste, including many right here in the United States. And it is inefficient, squandering clean water as well as the nutrients

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and energy contained in the waste we flush away. While we see radical technological change in almost every other aspect of our lives, we remain stuck in a sanitation status quo—in part because the topic of toilets is taboo.

Fortunately, there's hope—and Pipe Dreams daringly profiles the growing army of scientists, engineers, philanthropists, entrepreneurs, and activists worldwide who are overcoming their aversions and focusing their formidable skills on making toilets accessible and healthier for all.

This potential revolution in sanitation has many benefits, including reducing inequalities, mitigating climate change and water scarcity, improving agriculture, and optimizing health. Author Chelsea Wald takes us on a wild world tour from a compost toilet project in Haiti, to a plant in the Netherlands that harvests used toilet paper from sewage, and shows us a bot that hangs out in manholes to estimate opioid use in a city, among many other fascinating developments.

Much more than a glorified trash can, the toilet, Wald maintains, holds the power to help solve many of the world's problems, if only we can harness it.



Committee SPOTLIGHTS

Wow, this committee has been busy! In addition to getting a new name of Government Affairs Committee (GAC), and a new chair (Rebecca Elwood, HDR), we have been in high gear during the biannual budgeting sessions and relentlessly working to elevate awareness to the needs of our water infrastructure.

Government Affairs Committee (GAC)

State Aid Grants (SAG)

The GAC and Executive Board have been working in unison in support of fully funding water and wastewater State Aid Grants (SAG). We have sent two letters to the Senate Finance Committee voicing our support for SAG, and jointly authored an op-ed (acronym for “opinions and editorials page”) with NHHWA on this topic to be published in an upcoming Union Leader.

As currently written, HB2 Section 62 places a moratorium on the awarding of new grants until June

30, 2023 unless the State general fund unrestricted revenues as reported by the Department of Administrative Services are above the revenue plan. This eliminates \$12.6 million in state assistance to all eligible projects reaching substantial completion after December 2019, effectively denying a number of communities the funds for eligible projects that are currently underway and moving toward completion in the next biennium.

HB2 Section 62 also places a suspension on State payments for existing grants for the 22/23 biennium. Suspending payments on existing SAGs is, in effect, breaking a contract to 57 communities by not funding payments for 139 Governor and Executive Council approved projects. These communities will now be left scrambling to determine how to absorb the portion of funding promised by the State.

As of this writing, HB1 and HB2 (the budget and budget omnibus bills) currently sit in the Senate Finance Committee. Just yesterday, Senator Morse sponsored HB2 amendment 1473, an amendment to move the efficiency SAG budget line item (the amounts for previously-approved projects which the House eliminated) to a fiscal year 2021 appropriation. However, funding is still not restored in FYs 2022 and 2023, and a moratorium is still in place for new projects.

The fight is not yet over. June 3rd is the final day for the Senate to vote on the state budget. From here, these budget bills will then go to a committee of conference where a combination of House and Senate Finance Committee members and legislative leadership work out the kinks between the two versions of the bills and send them back for final votes. The state budget takes effect July 1.

Bills We Are Tracking

The GAC is also tracking several proposed bills in the House and Senate this year that touch our members. These include the following:

HB 397: Last year it came to the attention of the Board the municipal exemption for obtaining shoreland permits had been allowed to expire. These fees would impact any wastewater projects that impacted waterways and could add up to tens of thousands of dollars. We contracted with Dennehy and Bouley to help us put forward legislation to reinstate the exemptions. We also worked with the DES, who were depending on the fees to cover their cost to write the permits to cap the fees at \$3,750 for any municipality. At the time of this article, the bill has passed in the House and Senate with an amendment, and is expected to be signed into law soon.

SB 146: Part IV of this omnibus bill expands the acceptable testing methods for fecal coliform in areas where shellfish might be harvested. When new permits on the seacoast came out last year, they contained language that limited fecal coliform testing to 5-tube decimal dilution. Right now a couple of plants have to send their samples to Concord three times a week to run the test, but this would eventually affect all seacoast treatment plants. This bill would allow them to go back to using IDEXX or MF as they had previously.

With legislative service requests for next year due in September, the GAC is already looking forward to the 2022 legislative session. The main piece of legislation we are looking to introduce will be a bill that will require clear labeling on wipes' packaging as either flushable or non-flushable, based on established industry standards. Several states have already passed similar legislation, with pending legislation in Massachusetts. Already, a group of major manufacturers (including Kimberly-Clark and Johnson and Johnson) have agreed to these labeling requirements. Stay tuned as we continue to move this forward.

Outreach Video in Lieu of Legislative Breakfast

Due to the ongoing pandemic, it was necessary to re-imagine and re-invent the annual legislative breakfast. The GAC decided that the best way to get our message out to our local legislators was to develop a short video with pre-recorded messages from several of our esteemed colleagues about the challenges they face every single day. Additionally, Ty Gagne, author of *The Last Traverse: Tragedy and Resilience in the Winter Whites* and risk management expert, has agreed to be our guest speaker. This video is anticipated to be released by NHWPCA by the end of May. We hope it can be shared far and wide to help us gain more public support and awareness of our water infrastructure.

Other Activities

The committee has also been working to elevate awareness to the needs of our water infrastructure in the following ways:

- Organized a "Water's Worth It" rally while Vice President Kamala Harris visited the Granite State to garner support for President Biden's infrastructure package.
- Jointly participated in calls with NH Federal delegation with NHWWA as part of Water Week 2021.
- Participated in National Water Week activities,

which were limited to virtual events this year due to COVID.

- Participated in the forming of a water coalition with NHWWA, NHMA, NHDES, and several members of the NH House of Representatives to share information and work as a team to effectively promote our water needs, track local and federal legislation, closely monitor funding opportunities, and share timely information.

NEWEA GAC Outreach

As an Affiliated State Association of the New England Water Environment Association, the New Hampshire Water Pollution Control Association benefits from the programs and efforts made by NEWEA to promote the profession.

The NEWEA Government Affairs Committee is proposing to host a series of unifying events that address issues with a regional and national perspective, while allowing each state to identify more detailed views on the topics particular to each State.

This collaborative approach will ensure the details and local challenges are illuminated while future direction and action can be informed by and leverage regional and national policy considerations.

Historically, NEWEA has had two events that address these important issues:

- A Regional Round Table with all 6 Member Associations at the Annual Conference in January
- A State Session at the Spring Meeting held in June

Currently in the planning process is a series of session topics that will address issues facing everyone. Each session will have an agenda that includes introductory comments from industry leaders, a presentation from the National Delegation's perspective, a National Policy Update and a focus on the State issues at the local level. Selected topics include the following:

- June - Infrastructure Investment and Stimulus Funding
- September - PFAS - Managing a Legacy Challenge and Moving Forward
- October - Workforce Development - Careers in the Water Sector

Scholarship Committee

By Jeremy D. Bouvier, PE, City of Manchester, Department of Public Works, Environmental Protection Division

This year, the Scholarship Committee definitely had

some challenges getting the word out. A significant amount of time was spent contacting organizations and schools, and in the end we had the normal amount of high school scholarship applications, but not as many college applications as we would have liked. We suspect it may have had something to do with the remote learning environment and students “working from home” all year. Regardless, in the end, we feel that we had some good candidates who were worthy of the scholarship awards.

For the high school scholarship, there were a number of well qualified students who applied. In the end, the committee recommended awarding the \$1,000 scholarship to Joseph Wholey of Pelham High School. Joe is a member of his school’s band, involved in multiple clubs, and a member of the Science Honor Society. He is also an Eagle Scout, which demonstrates his hard work and commitment to achieving a goal. Joe will be attending the University of North Carolina at Charlotte in the fall to study meteorology. Congratulations to Joe on being awarded this year’s high school scholarship.

For the college scholarship, the committee recommended awarding the \$1,000 scholarship to Parker Lundsted of Rindge. Parker is a senior at UNH majoring in civil engineering. He is the nephew of NHWPCA member and City of Manchester employee Ben Lundsted. Parker expressed interest in a water resources focused career. His essay conveyed his clear understanding of how engineering activities can adversely affect the environment and the balance that is needed to help minimize the potential impacts. We congratulate Parker for his award and wish him all the best.



Retiree Rave

We continue our salute to the wastewater and drinking water operators and administrators who are now enjoying retirement. Our newsletter committee would appreciate hearing from our readers to expand this list so we can recognize our loyal, hardworking associates and friends. Perhaps we can develop Association activities based on the retiree interests, too. Please email your ideas and information to info.nhwpc@gmail.com and use the words in the Subject line ‘Retiree Rave Information’

Greg Campbell left Pennsylvania and began his career in the Town of Waterville Valley in the Fall of

1975. He worked for seven years at the Waterville Valley Ski resort covering every aspect of the year-round maintenance and ski season services. He worked on the trail and lift maintenance detail and snowmaking water service equipment in summer months. In winter he served as a lift attendant and with the snowmaking crew. In 1981 he accepted a position with the Town of Waterville Valley WWTF under the supervision of Tim Kingston. He and Tim made up the two-man team who operated the plant for the next 31 years. They managed the plant through an upgrade in 1998 to replace the aeration system in Lagoon Number 1. After Tim retired in 2012, Greg became the chief operator. He oversaw the major capital project for replacement of the sand filter media complete with substantial building modifications. He recalls visits with George Neill, Steve Broadbent, and a host of others over the years. Greg retired after 38 years of service in December 2019. He held his WW operator certification for 38 years as well. Early in his retirement, the COVID-19 virus restrictions began a slow and steady lockdown. Like most of us recently retired folks, there’s an expectation that there will be periods of solitude. Time will exist to tackle the honey-do list and/or simply take a nap at any frequency we see fit. Instead, Greg’s household became livelier. The school district allowed his wife Lynne to work from home. His son, Justin, completed his college education virtually, at home. Greg truly enjoys their company and like countless others they made it work out fine.

Things are now in the new normal. His son graduated from PSU and is ready to land a job. His daughter, Adrienne is living in Tamworth as an Emergency Room nurse at the local hospital. Greg and Lynne live in beautiful Thornton where endless opportunities for outdoor activity surrounds them every day.

Mitchel Locker retired on May 1, 2021 with 27 years of service to the NH DES Water Division. Mitch is a Professional Geologist and worked in the Drinking Water and Groundwater Bureau. His expertise centered on the Groundwater Recharge and Protection Program and involved permitting and compliance monitoring for groundwater discharge facilities. There is a broad spectrum of treatment facility-types that rely on groundwater discharge, including septic systems, wastewater treatment lagoons, septage facilities to name a few. Over the course of his career, the list of groundwater contaminants of concern grew exponentially. Mitch’s program expanded and other DES programs were developed related to watershed protection, as well. He has enjoyed his role in the fight to protect

groundwater quality in NH. His favorite features of his career include getting out to facilities to learn how WW operators were using advances in technology to meet permit requirements. He takes pride in the fact his actions successfully protected groundwater quality to meet drinking water standards. His position gave him the ability to make the leap amongst the various DES programs and cross Division and Bureau boundaries. This scored a win-win result for the regulators and the regulated community. Thank you, Mitch for your years of 'Black-Hat-Service-With-A-Smile' served with the utmost respect for our WW facility operators.

Bill Morse retired in May 2020 with nearly 41 years of service as an operator at the Nashua WWTF. He has held his NH WW certification for 38 years and counting! He began work at age 20 answering the EPA's call for WW professionals to operate the treatment plants around the country. Bill has been part of every major and minor upgrade project at the Nashua facility. To say Bill is a sports-car enthusiast is an understatement. All those who attended class in Franklin may recall hearing Bill's throaty Porsche long before the Red Rider rolled in for training. Long May You Run!

Ken Noyes retired on March 1, 2021 after nearly thirty-two and a half years of service at the Winnepesaukee River Basin Program (WRBP) in Franklin. He's held his wastewater operator certification for 32 years and still counting. Ken worked his way up through the ranks at Franklin to the position of Chief Operator. There's a reason why the Franklin facility is an award-winning plant -- it's a direct reflection of the hardworking and dedicated staff of professionals. Ken received the New England Water Environment Association Operator of the Year Award for NH in 2014. The plant serves the ten Towns within the Winnepesaukee River basin collection area including the communities of Center Harbor, Moultonborough, Gilford, Meredith, Laconia, Belmont, Sanbornton, Northfield, Tilton and Franklin.

Ken's been very involved with the numerous upgrade projects and improvements at the facility, including the SCADA alarm system development from day one. He learned a lot about false alarms and made many trips to the plant in the days and nights before remote access via a laptop computer became possible. As a result, no one knows that plant better than he. In his words, "Everyone who has a plant needs to develop a plant performance log because the textbooks only give a range of values for key operating parameters. Your plant will have its own optimum range and that's the right way." His dedication to the making of clean water is second to none. He commonly went to the plant on his days off to keep an eye on levels and whenever

storms were forecast anywhere in the region. Ken has acquired a lot of knowledge over the years. He shared his knowledge willingly and conducted countless plant tours to supplement training classes, educating engineers, operators, school age kids, and college level students. The tours were especially helpful for those entering the WW field with no previous experience or familiarity with the WWTF components. Ken served on the NHWPCA's Certification Committee for over 15 years. He thinks the best part is hearing from operators at their interviews. Ken passed all 4 grade levels of WW exam and his guidance to new operators was much appreciated as they prepared to better their grade. Ken went the extra mile to ready the training center before each class or meeting as well as making accommodation for the classes that ended late. Not once was there a single trainer or student locked inside the gates after 3pm!!

He recalls plenty of "famous firsts" at the plant. The plant's design flow is 11.5 MGD and the highest flow Ken ever witnessed was a whopping 32.5 MGD! He witnessed wildlife up close and personal as well, including black bear and moose inside the fenced area. Little did they know Ken is an avid sportsman and hunter. He also truly enjoys deep sea fishing and also plans to get out on the lakes now that he is retired, and fully recovered. Oh yeah, I should mention on the official first day of his retirement, as he went to purchase fish bait, he slipped on an icy patch and broke three ribs... in four places. That's one heck of a way to start a retirement! Ken didn't let his injuries slow him down and while convalescing, he has acquired all the equipment needed to spend time fishing on the beautiful NH lakes that the region has to offer. And the fish are scared. Many thanks to you for your years of dedication and friendship. Here's to a healthy, happy retirement to you.





Pretreatment Tales

By Christopher J. Crowley, Pretreatment Supervisor, City of Manchester, Environmental Protection Division

Hello NHWPCA Members,

One of Many Life Lessons - Open Door, doesn't mean you have to stay...

I was asked to write up a story on any topic of my choice, and had several ideas about pumps and compressors, lab analysis, dewatering sludge or the many types of different industries that we as Coordinators permit. After some contemplation, I realized everyone has heard these types of stories, so instead I decided to talk about my story on how I ended up working in the environmental field and have made a rewarding 30-year career.

I am sure that the majority of people who are working in the environmental fields didn't say back in high school or college when you have to choose your discipline Do I really want to work in a POTW plant?

Actually, my three sons when they were younger called it poo-poo palace.

So here I am, 55 years old and working for the City of Manchester, Environmental Protection Division as the Pretreatment Coordinator. I have been in the environmental field since I was 19 years old and some of the many questions that I am asked often are: why do you work for a treatment plant; isn't that gross?; how can you stand the smell? I am sure you all have heard the same questions time and time again.....and the truth is, no matter how gross, we all do this job for a reason that we are passionate about. So, here is the story of how I started....

One day after high school graduation, my father told me, "son, you can't keep laying around on the couch and wasting your life away, either you go to college or a trade school or get a job". Well I wasn't an all-star student, mostly because I played sports and figured I would be in the NHL, I know I'm a dreamer.....so I took my father's advice and landed my first full time job at a printed circuit board manufacturing plant in Methuen, MA. I met with the H.R. Manager, Mr. Thomas Frank and during the interview process he suggested that I apply for the wastewater treatment

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operator position, which paid \$6.35 an hour and there was overtime available. Now remember, it was 1986 and as a recent high school graduate, it sounded like a good deal. When Mr. Frank said the word “wastewater” my first reaction was “is that working with human waste”? He chuckled and said, “no Chris”, we use chemicals and they need to be treated before they leave the building. We could train you and I think you will like the job. So after learning more about the job, meeting the manager of the department and walking through the facility, I decided to take a step through the door.

During my first year of employment I began to learn about industrial wastewater treatment and in early 1987, the State of Massachusetts Department of Environment & Quality Engineering (DEQE) instituted a licensed wastewater treatment operator program. Because I was already employed as an operator, I was granted permission to continue to operate under a grandfather clause. Over the years I continually trained and received several certificates from the University of Lowell Wastewater Program that was run by Don Pottle. At the time, Don helped me get involved with the Environmental Science degree program that the University of Lowell was offering and after many nights of studying and attending school after work I graduated in 2006. I had my state wastewater license and degree which helped open many doors and over the years I had the opportunity to work in several types of industrial manufacturing jobs from a launderer running a DAF wastewater system in Lawrence MA, to a paper mill that discharged into the Squannacook River in Groton MA and also had a stint in the high tech industry working for a fiber optics company in Bedford, MA. Unfortunately in 2001 following 9/11, the fiber optics company moved back to New York state and I was let go. Fortunately for me another door opened and I applied at the City of Lowell as an Engineering Tech II and started my career at “poo-poo palace”. Because of my experience working with different types of industries, I quickly transferred into the industrial pretreatment department and began writing permits, conducting sampling activities and completing the industrial inspections. During my tenure in Lowell I was involved with a wide range of projects such as working on the City’s ISO 9000 compliance and helping institute their safety program.

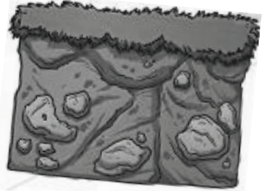
In 2007, another door opened as I was notified that the City of Manchester was interviewing for

a pretreatment supervisor: I applied for the job and was fortunate that Fred McNeill selected me to run the City’s Industrial Pretreatment Program. Since that time, I have had the opportunity to manage and be involved with several projects from pump station improvements, to managing our PFAS sampling, managing odor control projects, and even building projects - all of this while still operating the IPP program and helping out as much possible to keep those doors open.

Now when I get a chance go to speak with kids at their education career days, I tell the students about walking through that FIRST DOOR...Don’t be afraid to take that first step through because you might like what it has to offer. Unfortunately, it seems the younger generations doesn’t find the environmental/wastewater careers very exciting, but in my experience


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I think it can be a very rewarding career.

So this is my story on how I chose to work in the environmental field and if it wasn't for Mr. Frank opening the door for a young naive high school kid, I wouldn't have had the opportunity to work in this fulfilling profession that I love. Because someone opens a door for you, it doesn't mean that you have to stay, you just have to take those first steps in and see where it leads, because something there may define your future.

Hopefully you can share this story with your family, friends and kids and someone might take that step forward through the door and join this rewarding career.



Residuals Report

By Anthony Drouin, NHDES WEB Residuals Management Section Supervisor

The Residuals Management Section (RMS) has been very busy per usual since PFAS has been on our radar dating back to 2016. This spring has been no exception. We are thankful to have a new addition to our team, Jim Talvy, our new Sludge and Septage Inspector to assist the RMS team. I have been training Jim over the past month to get him caught up on all the action the RMS is a part of, and to get him trained for 2021 field and septage truck inspections he will be conducting.

Jim comes to us from the private sector. Prior to joining NHDES, Jim worked for Casella Organics for 12 years as a project manager, and prior to that was a Massachusetts dairy farmer in the central / western region of the state for 25+ years. At Casella, he managed the Erving Class B biosolids / short paper fiber land application program, Nashua class B biosolids land application, and managed the distribution of the Greater Lawrence Sanitary District Class A dried biosolids into the northeast agricultural market. He also sold wood ash, and Hawk Ridge Earth Life class A biosolids products in the region to farmers and landscapers. His experience, knowledge, and positive attitude are perfect for our section. We are very excited to have him become a part the Residuals Management Section. Recently, Jim sent out his inspection notices to all the permitted septage haulers, notifying them what septage receiving stations he will be at waiting for trucks to stop by for an inspection. He has also sent out notifications to each wastewater

plant he will be visiting to conduct these inspections. Jim also has been able to get out to monitor all of the state's class B biosolids land application that occurs at our permitted class B land application sites Judith Sears-Houston, P.E. regulates for our program. We extend our welcome to Jim, and if you see Jim out in the field or at the next NHWPCA meeting, please make sure to give him a warm welcome.

Another update for which I would like to inform the members of NHWPCA is our current efforts with the Northeast Biosolids Improvement Program (BIP). As many of you may know, I created this workgroup back in the end of 2019 to work on creating education outreach for the public and wastewater operators / haulers of the northeast of the impact PFAS has on biosolids recycling programs and wastewater treatment. Since the group's creation, we have created two tri-fold brochures. One brochure is for the public, and the other brochure is for septage haulers and wastewater operators, educating them on why a septage screening program would be set up at a WWTP. This is to educate haulers and operators on the difference between "non-domestic" septage and "domestic" septage. We are working on finalizing these brochures for fall 2021 distribution.

The other update from the Northeast BIP is our new voluntary collection systems' sampling program for NH WWTFs. This sampling program is set up for any WWTF that would like to volunteer their time and collection system for sampling wastewater for PFAS. This task will take a lot of coordination with the Residuals Management Section setting up interviews, and developing a sampling analysis plan (SAP) for each volunteering WWTF. The initial goal of this sampling effort is to identify potential sources of PFAS within a collection system, and then perform education and outreach to eliminate those sources. The efficiency of execution will be in creating a sound SAP, and then determining how to move forward after the first sampling event's data review. Some sampling points may be from pump stations, popping manholes, or even pinpointed discharge inputs within the collection system. Currently, NHDES has several municipalities that have volunteered their time and collection systems for sampling. This effort will be paid for by NHDES, but the sampling and sample pick up will be coordinated by each WWTF's managers or operators with our oversight. Our inspector Jim Talvy will be available for logistics assistance throughout the sampling events, and our coordinator Wade Pelham and myself will be available for SAP planning and data collection and analysis. We will also begin the conversations on, "How would you open the


KATE BIEDRON MEMORIAL FUND




Established in May 2020 in partnership with CDM Smith, the Kate Biedron Memorial Fund honors the memory of Kate Biedron, an active NEWEA and industry leader, professional engineer, mentor and friend. This memorial fund will sustain initiatives that Kate supported and promoted throughout her career, including environmental education, academic mentorship and scholarships, and advocacy for diversity and inclusion in the water sector.

Kate was a dedicated water professional and longtime NEWEA member and leader. She graduated from UMASS Amherst, earned her Civil/Environmental master’s degree from UMASS Lowell, and spent her 15-year career with CDM Smith. Within NEWEA, Kate was an active member and sought-after leader on many committees, serving as the Chair of the Public Awareness and Registration Committees and as the Director of the Meeting Management Council.

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discussion on PFAS regulations to your industrial permit holder?”.

This project will evolve as we move through it. Some would say, “But Anthony, we do not have any sludge or surface water PFAS limits to sample for...”. I understand that as much if not more than anyone, but we need to continue our investigation up the pipe to help municipalities better understand how PFAS may be entering their systems.

We look forward to seeing all of your smiling faces as the state continues to open back up, and work on getting our lives back to some normalcy. Stay safe and be well!



Safety Corner

So many manholes... only one you?

Article by NEWEA Safety Committee (Republished by NHWPCA Safety Committee)



The NHWPCA Safety Committee is pleased to have brought you this article in the absence of any Near Miss incidents on which to report; however, we want to hear about your Near Misses. Please send Near Misses, or requests for other safety topics you want to see, to Patty Chesebrough (pchesebrough@neiwpc.org). All reports are confidential.

We say it so often maybe we take it for granted and hardly ever do it. What is “it”? “Lift with your legs not your back.”

In and around our treatment plants and collection systems are manholes, chambers, slabs, and hatches of all shapes and sizes. Manholes themselves can range from 80 to 500 pounds, and we open and enter them without a thought or care. That is until we injure ourselves and our quality of life is drastically altered. An estimated one third of all back injuries are the result of excessive mechanical stress on the back and spinal column. Recognize any of these accident report statements?

- “Sharp pain in right arm occurred while helping to support a 450-pound manhole cover with a shovel. Torn tendon requiring surgery.”
- “Bulging disc, surgery recommended, due to frequent removal of manhole covers and lifting

heavy equipment in and out of manholes.”

- “Ruptured disc, two surgeries completed, third scheduled.”

Chances are you or someone you know has experienced similar injuries. So, follow safe lifting techniques:

- Lift with your legs, not your back.
- Avoid bending or twisting while lifting.
- Use the proper tools and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Don’t take chances
- Don’t be afraid to ask for help.

While we HAVE to lift covers, hatches, slabs and other heavy objects while performing our daily tasks, we WANT to be able to lift our children and grandchildren at the end of the day.

So why not heed your own advice...

“Lift with your legs, not your back.”

Because there are So Many Manholes... but only One You!

Please be safe everyone!



Thoughts from the Bench

By Stephanie Rochefort, Somersworth WWTF

I’m pretty sure that I could set up a BOD batch in my sleep. The other day I was checking sample pHs and one of my samples had a pH of 7.9. “Hmmm, that’s kind of high”, I thought. Then I thought, “initial sample pH must be between 6.0 and 8.0 and if not in that range, adjust to within 6.5 to 7.5”. That always strikes me as an odd step, so I grabbed my SOP book to double-check. Yeah, it’s an odd step, but I remembered it correctly.

Double-checking odd steps in an analytical method is about the only time that I use the SOPs that I’ve spent so much time writing. But SOPs are super-important. For instance, what if I won an ultra-big lottery and decided to immediately quit working. Then whoever took my place would be using those SOPs – you think? When I started this job in Somersworth, there was no book of SOPs to help me learn. But Girl Scouts always leave a place better than they found it, so whether I win a lottery or just retire, whoever takes my place will have SOPs.



Like many of us, I wasn't looking for a job at a wastewater treatment facility. My local school didn't offer tours and our unit on the water cycle didn't include wastewater treatment. I had NO IDEA what happened to the wastewater after I flushed the toilet! So, how did I end up here? When I was in high school I absolutely hated biology. I liked science and math but not biology. I was feeling the stress of needing to choose a college major and figured that whatever came after biology would have to be it. Chemistry came after biology and I was in love with the subject. All I wanted to do for the rest of my life was work in a lab so I got my chemistry degree from UNH and then I got a job working in a lab.

You might have heard me refer to my prior job that "I don't like to talk about". That's still the case. One of the things that my mother didn't like about my prior job was how far I had to commute. I didn't worry her by telling her the other stuff... My mother found a job listing in the local newspaper for a wastewater treatment plant chemist here in Somersworth and saved me the clipping. Yup, hard copy newspaper, I'm that old!

I just happened to know a wastewater treatment plant chemist who was associated with my job (yeah, the one I don't like to talk about) so I made some inquiries. I started reading about various wastewater tests, like BOD, so I'd sound somewhat knowledgeable for an interview. My application and resume were accepted and I went to an interview at the Somersworth facility. Part of the interview was exposing me to the smellier places in the facility. Well, the current job was pretty

darn smelly, so that didn't bother me. A few days later I got a phone call in the middle of my work day to stop by that afternoon to have an interview with the Somersworth City Manager. Yikes! I was smelly and dirty and wouldn't have time to go home to clean up and change, but I really wanted the job so I went shopping during my lunch for an appropriate outfit.

Two weeks later I began working here in Somersworth. I didn't have SOPs, but there was a big Standard Methods book so I started reading and studying bench sheets and running wastewater tests. I was happy to be working in a lab! As the years have gone by, I still love what I call "mad science days" in my lab, but the most interesting days are the ones where I wear my Industrial Pretreatment Coordinator hat. And yup, I'm working on writing up SOPs for that role too.

Be on the Lookout for NHWPCA Revised Membership Rate Structure

Beginning in 2022, group rates will be available for purchase. The more people you sign up, the greater the discount.

Not to worry, individual rates are still available. In addition, if you volunteer to be on one of the many committees you are eligible for a discounted membership too.

The following is the Membership Rates for NHWPCA (beginning 2022)

Active Membership (Voting member):

- 2 to 5 people - \$35.00 per person
- 6 to 10 people - \$33.00 per person
- 11 to 15 people - \$30.00 per person
- 16 or greater - \$28.00 per person
- Individual - \$40
- Individual/Committee Volunteer - \$30
- Retiree - \$30

Affiliate (Non-Voting) (beginning immediately)

Provider of products and services - \$425

Cap at 10 people at the membership price for meals, etc.

- Covers newsletter sponsorship, affiliate booth price, logo on the website with working link to their page.
- Does not include ads in newsletter or voting rights.



New Hampshire Water Pollution Control Association - Celebrating 54 Years!
2021 Annual Trade Fair
Friday, October 1, 2021

May 2021

Dear Friends of NHWPCCA:

The NHWPCCA's Annual Trade Fair will be held on Friday, October 1, 2021 at DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, Manchester, NH. Last year's fair drew many exhibitors and enthusiastic attendees, despite COVID challenges. We invite you to participate by displaying your products and services to our members and guests.

EXHIBIT AREA: Exhibits will be displayed in the Armory of the DoubleTree by Hilton Manchester from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. **The Exhibit area is limited capacity, so please register early.**

The exhibit area will be available to exhibitors for set-up after 5:00 p.m. the night before on Thursday, September 30, 2021 or 7:00 a.m. on Friday, October 1, 2021. Complimentary continental breakfast will be served for exhibitors during set-up on Friday morning. NHWPCCA volunteers will be available to assist you with your booth locations.

EXHIBIT SPACE: **Exhibit spaces will be assigned only when payment for the space is received.** Spaces will be assigned in the order that registrations with payments are received, on a first come, first served basis, and best accommodating Exhibitor's preferred booth location. Please note that electricity is available for an additional cost but is not available to all booths. Please see the attached booth layout plan.

LUNCH: Banquet Buffet: Lunch will take place in the Pemigewasset Room at the Double Tree around 12:00 pm, for which you may register separately. Add the appropriate fee noted on the registration form for participation in the luncheon.

ACTIVITIES: The NHWPCCA raffle will be held after lunch. All exhibitors are encouraged to participate and increase your company's exposure by donating a raffle prize.

TECHNICAL SESSIONS: There will be two technical sessions offered concurrently during the open exhibit time.

EXHIBIT FEES:

Affiliate Member Discounted Rate:	\$400.00 postmarked on or before <u>September 16, 2021</u>
Affiliate Member Regular Rate:	\$450.00 postmarked after <u>September 16, 2021</u>
Non- Affiliate Member Discounted Rate:	\$600.00 postmarked on or before <u>September 16, 2021</u>
Non- Affiliate Member Regular Rate:	\$650.00 postmarked after <u>September 16, 2021</u>

Electrical charges are \$75.00 per connection, please note on registration form

PAYMENT INFORMATION: **All** completed registration forms with payment must be postmarked by, September 16, 2021.

ACCOMODATIONS: The DoubleTree by Hilton Manchester has set up a discounted room rate of \$149.00 per night plus tax. Please register online here: <http://group.doubletree.com/WPC>. The code is: CDTWPC.

We look forward to seeing you at the NHWPCCA 2021 Trade Fair. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Association representatives listed below. Thank you for supporting the Association's efforts.

Sincerely yours,

Ryan Peebles
1st Director
802-222-1762

Mike Theriault
2nd Director
603-606-4435

Dee Rainville
Operations Manager
603-228-1231

REGISTER ONLINE HERE: <https://tinyurl.com/NHWPCA2021VENDORS>



NHWPCA 2021 TRADE FAIR

October 1, 2021

DoubleTree by Hilton Manchester Hotel - 700 Elm St, Manchester, NH 03101

Exhibitor Registration Form

Celebrating 54 Years!

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