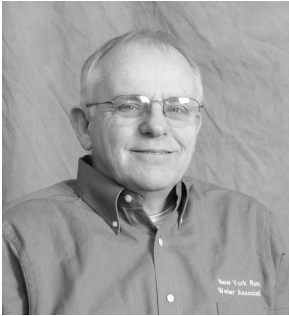


Handshakes, Back-Pats and Hugs

By Mike Dill
Wastewater Trainer



Whatever it takes to send the message and express gratitude to those that were there. If your weekend of June 24th was quiet and uneventful, some folks have another story to tell. Rain that just wouldn't quit. Areas of the state were hit with flooding of extreme and devastating

proportions. It is difficult to explain. Damage beyond belief. Those that were there, say they don't believe what happened. Loss of property, and unfortunately, loss of life. Those I have talked with said much the same, "so much water, so fast." As one operator told me, "we thought we were going to get through it without too many problems. That was at noon time, and by 4 o'clock, we were headed to high ground." The water kept coming. Places that never flooded before were now under water. Roads washed out, communities either under water or surrounded by it, or both. Operators stayed with it, if they could. Some slept at the plant. Others tried to make do as best they could, but with such a magnitude of water, safety had to prevail.

The hard part was waiting for it to stop and start

receding. "Now the hard work is about to begin" was a quote from one operator. After the water is gone, you see the devastation. Where to start with such damage. Operators think operations. What's it going to take, and how long, before we're back up and running. Damage assessment, put it back together and resume normal operations. Some plants got away with minor damage, while others . . . "it will take time."

As with any flood, the mud and the silt remain. It is everywhere and in everything. Heavy duty cleaning is in order. I have said many times that volunteers give more than they receive. Many residents stepped up to help. Push, scrape, and wash mud. At one plant they manned hoses, scrub brushes and carried debris to the dumpster, whatever needed to be done. People helping out when and where needed, that's what makes a community. Bless the volunteers.

I could fill this magazine with stories, but back to the title and the gratitude of New York Rural Water to all when we say, JOB WELL DONE. The next time you think you're having a bad day, some are still having one that started that June weekend.

NYRWA says thank you to ordinary people, who in trying times, step up and do extraordinary things. If you need a hug, let me know I can help. 💧

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