

Our Future Operators

By Pat Scalera, CEO,
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In our last issue of Aquafacts, I briefly addressed the issue of the aging operator. This was a hot topic at our regional membership meeting and gave us, NYRWA, the push to begin to educate those that can make a difference in addressing this upcoming crisis.

I am happy to report that the NYRWA Board of Directors acted immediately by budgeting funds for two projects. Bob Messinger took on these tasks and has had many players involved in the assignments, including NYS Department of Health, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, NY Conference of Mayors, NY Guidance Counselors, and Town/Village/City Administrators and Supervisors.

The first task was to develop a power point presentation that is directed towards your elected officials to get them thinking about what their plans are in the commitment to provide safe drinking water for their community through professional certified operators. We believe this presentation will educate them on the requirements of a certified operator, running their water and wastewater systems like a business, the competitive market for qualified operators, and the need to pay these individuals for their professionalism and dedication. We will need your help to reach this audience, so we ask that you consider getting us on the agenda for an upcoming meeting to make this presentation for your benefit. Our field staff are ready to present this 30-minute power point presentation and answer questions from your Board.

The second task was to develop an informational brochure directed at high school students to consider a career in the water and wastewater industry. The brochure will be complete by the time you are reading this article and hopefully distributed across the state. If you plan to participate in a career day at your local school district, please contact us for additional brochures to distribute to those students. We all need to band together to address this issue.

This will be the theme for our upcoming Annual Technical Conference scheduled for May 22nd – 25th, 2006 at the Adams Mark Hotel in Buffalo, NY. Please plan to attend this year's conference. This issue of Aquafacts has all the conference information you will need to register, also our website at www.nyruralwater.org will have this information and you can register on-line, hopefully making it easier for our attendees.

We hope you have visited the new and improved

website that features all of our training events, news, on-line training opportunities, classified ads, past articles and so much more.

I look forward to seeing all of you in Buffalo. Don't forget our 2006 Harley Davidson Fat Boy Motorcycle Raffle that will take place at the conference. If you wish to purchase a ticket go to our website or contact Cheryl Kearns at our office on our toll free line 1-888-697-8725, for your \$20 donation you could be the owner of this Fat Boy. You do not need to be present to win, so take a chance!! The Harley is featured on the website, so you can see what it looks like and dream about yourself riding this down a country back road in your area. Lookin fine!! ♡