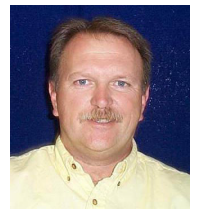


# Utilizing the World Wide Web

## (WWW) TO RESEARCH SMALL SYSTEM PROBLEMS, ISSUES, AND ANSWERS

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I am pretty sure that most everyone that reads this article will remember that old television jingle “Let your fingers do the walking in the Yellow Pages”. And it may be that today you still depend heavily on the phone book and it’s yellow pages to find the products that you need to go about your everyday business. Since about 1995, the Internet began to become mainstream and with it’s enormous popularity came a whole new set of tools to find and research the products we use in the water and wastewater industry. Once upon a time, we were almost totally dependent on known suppliers to meet the daily needs of our industry. Now we can flip on our computer and with a variety of methods (Dial-up, High Speed Cable, or Wireless), we can access the World Wide Web or the Internet, as it is better known, and find exactly what it is we need and where to find it.

Most products can be found, sometimes at great savings to our communities, just by performing a simple search using Google, Yahoo, Dogpile, Altavista, or any other of the popular search engines. We can research emerging technologies and processes that have been proposed to us by Consulting Engineers, so as to better evaluate the feasibility of utilizing them in our projects.

In most cases, we can read reviews from others evaluating the pro’s and con’s of items that we are interested in, and we can get up to the minute reports. The Internet allows you the luxury of contacting an individual or community that has had either a good or bad experience with a building system, process control, material, or what have you. I personally have been utilizing the Internet for years and have amassed many links to my favorite sites by adding them to my Favorites menu in my Web Browser. I also like to print articles to share with systems I know are having specific problems. Sometimes I will be contacted by individuals from other states or provinces with questions on articles I have written for this publication, as most of our back issues are available through our website. When someone searches the Internet for specific subject matter, or wording, they are somehow directed to our site and then to me. Search engines are easy to use for simple searches, but once you figure out how to search for something very specific, they are downright amazing. I would like to leave you with some links to a few of my favorite websites:

- National Drinking Water Clearinghouse - <http://www.nesc.wvu.edu/ndwc/>
- Tech Briefs - <http://www.nesc.wvu.edu/techbrief.cfm>
- Office of Ground and Drinking Water - <http://www.epa.gov/ogwdw/>
- Small Flows Magazine - <http://www.nesc.wvu.edu/smallflows.cfm>
- Water World - <http://www.pennnet.com/home.cfm>
- Unique and Unusual Water Towers - <http://www.ohiobarns.com/othersites/watertowers/wt.html>
- NYRWA Links - <http://www.nyruralwater.org/links/links.cfm>

P.S – Do not throw away that phone book; the Yellow Pages are still a useful media. 💧