

How'd I Get So Smart?



by Steve Grimm,
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So, the other day I'm talking to someone about a wastewater related issue. I can't remember for the life of me if I was talking to an operator, my girlfriend, my sister...I just can't remember. It's not important anyway. What is important is I couldn't believe the words coming out of my mouth. The words just flowed from my mouth like a fountain, not just words, but entire sentences. Sentences that made sense. The most casual of observers would have thought I knew what I was talking about. I had to stop for a minute. I really scared myself. I mean, how did I get that smart?

That little episode got me thinking (that's always a dangerous thing). Before I became the Wastewater Technician for New York Rural Water, I was just like you, I could talk until I was blue in the face. The words just didn't seem to form sentences that made sense to anyone but me. I struggled alone with operational problems and often second guessed myself. It was frustrating, to say the least. Then I accepted the job as Wastewater Technician,

and guess what? I got smarter. It didn't happen over night, but, gradually, I got smarter. How'd that happen? Was it because of the title "Wastewater Technician"? I hope not. Devine intervention? Perhaps the force was with me. None of the above. So how did it happen? Simple. I had great teachers. YOU! Traveling around the state and listening to you guys and gals has been the best learning experience I have ever had. Listening to your problems, your experiences and the different ways you have handled the speed humps (larger than a speed bump) that wastewater treatment has given, and continues to give, me the knowledge and yes, confidence, to dare go out and assist my fellow operators. I am not smarter or better than anyone. I am merely another set of eyes, often confirming what you already know. That's it. Plain and simple. I hope I haven't shattered anyone's picture of the Wastewater Technician. The truth is I couldn't do it without you. Keep teaching. I'll keep learning. 💧