

BEING PROACTIVE

By Nathan Wissenbach

A good way of being proactive is to have a plan written out. A plan should state important information such as date of installation, how critical the piece of equipment is, and when to rebuild or replace equipment in the water treatment plant. During my time of being a water plant operations specialist I heard this phrase, "if it's not broken don't touch it". In my experience this causes higher stress. When equipment fails, it will normally fail at 2:00 o'clock in the morning or on a holiday weekend. Equipment such as backwash pumps, raw water pumps and lift pumps can't be repaired in house. Therefore, it's important to have a plan for rebuilding pumps or replacing them. Making sure there is a plan in place will help save money in the long run. This will avoid the emergency repair calls and overtime you would have to pay to your staff.

One of my past experiences I had while not having a written plan, was when the auto dialer at my water treatment plant stopped working. I had no documentation to tell me when the auto dialer was installed. If there was documentation in place, we would have known that it needed to be replaced due to age. This piece of equipment was never on my mind, nor did I think it would ever fail. However, when it failed it was a holiday weekend and I was on call. I spent that holiday weekend close to home, and I ended up checking the plant three times a day, just to ease my mind. It ended up taking two weeks to get the replacement auto dialer. Therefore, we had no way of knowing if there was a problem at the plant during the times we were not there for the two weeks it took to replace.

The written plan also helps your Board understand the aging infrastructure of your water treatment plant. This will help them spread the cost of the repairs or replacements of the equipment over many years. The plan will also help when trying to write out your budget. In conclusion, having a written plan that shows the age of the equipment, how critical the equipment is if it fails, and when you would like to see it rebuilt or replaced will ultimately solve many future issues that may occur. 💧💧💧



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