



BACKED UP

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There are many ways as operators we use the term backup. We backup our operators. We backup our data. We even backup in the collection system. Not unusual but also not the only backing up that needs attention. From several plants across NYS that I have visited I've noticed that the attention was given to all of those things, but what wasn't given the attention was backing up of motors or pumps!

Now, we all use motors from one extent to another however, having a backup motor on hand is crucial to getting up and running again. The closer that motor is to the plant, the faster and less time you will have out of your normal operations. Having a motor on hand is absolutely crucial. Upon one of my plant visits just south of Buffalo, I was taken back by the operators and the system maintenance crew by their diligence and proactive planning. Not only did they have a spare motor on hand but the operator had a crew of personnel dedicated to getting the plant up and running again. Knowing this was a crucial motor that needed to be running, they worked together and had the motor replaced just before lunch time. Back up and running in a matter of hours! I commended them on their speedy replacement and their proactive approach

to having exactly what they needed ready and the quick response to getting back up and running! Without the motor being on hand they'd have waited days, if not weeks, before getting a new one on site. This would leave them at -50% plant operations during the time down and almost undoubtedly would have left them out of compliance with their SPDES limits, amongst hitting the rest of the plant with twice the load and unnecessary burden.

The need to be proactive is crucial and planning ahead involves backing up our high priority motors and pumps. We as operators have to be aware of our aging systems, especially our smaller systems where the budget is small and has very little wiggle room. If you have not put a backup motor or pump on your agenda or list of things to get done, then you should. It could be you someday that is left with half of your plant down waiting on a pump or motor that needs to be replaced for days or weeks, because it was just an afterthought when it finally does go down. Define your critical motors and pumps at your own plant and take a look and see if you are prepared for "that" day when the influent hits the screen and you're up influent channel with no paddle. 💧💧