



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

John O'Connell, III | NYRWA President

I'm writing this article as a new era is beginning, Corona Virus or COVID-19. This has and will change all of our lives forever.

I grew up being taught to shake hands to make new friends, to forgive disagreements and to make a sound and fair deal. The gesture of a hand shake has now stopped and may never be the same way again. I also see more changes coming to our industry, with more PPE, washing our hands more often than ever and I'm sure more health and safety procedures in the future. Admittedly, I will need to adjust, as will everyone as more viruses, or widespread practices to mitigate future viruses, will sure be in our future. I have not witnessed so many changes since 9-11, and I'm sure many of you haven't either. The water and wastewater industry will see more testing and more awareness of things we never dreamed imaginable in the upcoming years, so be prepared.

I believe that some of the things we will see involving PPE and being more aware of our surrounding will become more important

than ever seen in our history. Be aware that NYRWA will make adjustments to meet the needs of our members. We will continue to support you, our valued system and associate members, to the best of our ability. The staff at NYRWA is working with both the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and the NYS Department of Health with regard to your re-certification hours and testing for your DOH and your DEC operator certifications. Options are being considered and we hope to be able to offer these to you in the near future.

In closing, I want to mention a great Rural Water person and one of my closest friends passed away in early April. Pat Williams from the great state of California was just 52 years old and celebrated his birthday April 7th. Pat was quick with a smile, always willing to share a kind word or his expertise, and was a true friend to all he met. I was lucky enough to wish him a happy birthday just days before he passed. Godspeed my friend. 💧💧