



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

John O'Connell, III | NYRWA President

I will start out by saying its August 6, 2018, the temperature is 95 degrees with a heat index of 100 degrees. It's been a hot dry summer, and before long it will be fall. It's hot but the change will come sooner than we would like.

I have traveled to many WWTP's in all directions and there are a lot of upgrades taking place throughout NY. I believe this is a direct result of National Rural Water's efforts to have each state actively encourage their elected representatives to provide funding to rural communities for infrastructure improvements. Thank you to all of you who have taken the time to contact your congressional representatives over the years. I have had several meetings with engineers and plant personnel and they state that they are holding off on bidding projects due to the fact that contractors are at their working capacity now to complete projects. If memory serves me correctly, it wasn't that long ago that there wasn't enough work and contractors were going out of business or falling into bankruptcy. Fortunately, the tables have turned and now contractors are scrambling to find qualified workers. They tell me they can't find workers. In some cases, contractors are waiting up to four weeks for concrete. It has been quite a while

since New York has seen summer projects to this extent, forcing concrete plants to run at maximum capacity. I would have to believe that a lot of this is coming from the new administration and from the increase in federal dollars available for infrastructure improvements. Also in talking to two engineering firms, some of them are turning down clients due to lack of engineers available. That all being said, the wastewater industry seems to be booming but the workforce situation seems to be in dire need. I hope the work load continues, but I'm not sure what steps will have to be taken to ease the shortage of workers.

On another note, let's not forget about the **NYRWA 40th Anniversary** to be celebrated at the **Conference at the Turning Stone Resort in May of 2019**. There will be many special events going on and some new options for attendees as part of the celebration. Also, I will be attending National Rural Water Conference on September 14th thru the 20th, 2018. I will be running for Vice President of National Rural Water, which in return will open up a few more doors and I am in hopes that New York will see a few opportunities. 💧💧