

MINNESOTA WASTEWATER OPERATORS ASSOCIATION

CENTRAL SECTION MEETING

SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

MONTROSE COMMUNITY CENTER

MONTROSE, MINNESOTA

As everyone knows, this was the sad day that terrorists hijacked and flew three jet airliners into the pentagon and both of the World Trade Center Towers. It was an awful way to start the day. I am quite sure most of us feel the same way about what occurred and our thoughts and prayers go out to the families, friends and fellow countrymen who perished in the senseless and ruthless attack on our nation. Please do what you can to help ease the pain of those less fortunate than we are. Thank You.

The September 11, 2001 MWOA Central Section meeting was held in Montrose at the Montrose Community Center. There were 89 in attendance for the meeting. The mayor of Montrose, Mr. Charles Nelson, welcomed us to their fair city and provided opening remarks. The new Montrose Community Center was a wonderful setting for this meeting and the central section of the MWOA would like to extend its gratitude to Montrose for inviting us to hold our quarterly meeting at their site.

Our first speaker of the day was Jenny Lee from C.R.O.W. Jenny gave an update on the Crow River watershed project. C.R.O.W. has been evaluating pollutant loadings on the Crow River from multiple sources including Wastewater Treatment Facilities. Their goal is to identify as many pollutant sources and problem areas as possible and determine the mass loadings to this watershed.

The second speaker of the morning session was Mr. Jim Connolly with ABM. Jim's talk was on equipment and options available for sewer cleaning and televising. Jim discussed many of the tools used for cleaning sewer systems with a focus on jetting systems using high pressure. Jim provided several pieces literature to compliment his talk. Several of the different hose sizes and pressures were pointed out emphasizing the needs in differing situations. Thrust was explained as a combination of flow and pressure and that every line cleaned requires a certain amount of flow and pressure to do a good job of cleaning the lines. Bigger lines will require more flow while smaller lines may require more pressure however operators must ultimately decide what is more important for their situation they are dealing with. The varieties of cleaning nozzles were reviewed as well. Jim wrapped up his session by discussing the 3 types of vacuum systems available for sewer line cleaning. Pure vacuum systems utilize a vane pump to build vacuum in a tank and when a valve is opened the material is sucked into the tank. This type of vacuum system is good for sucking up water but won't suck up dry material. The positive displacement blower was the second type of system discussed which will move from 1,500 – 4,000 CFM and will suck up both liquid and dry material. The last system discussed utilizes aluminum fans to move up to 8,000 CFM through an eight (8) inch pipe, which is what is also being used in hydro excavation, which utilizes water pressure in conjunction with a vacuum. We appreciate Jim taking time out of his busy schedule to address the members at the section meeting and sharing his expertise on sewer cleaning equipment.

After a short morning break, Dianne Navratil from the MPCA gave an update on certification issues. Most likely the major change of the recent past is that operators must renew their licenses within one year of the expiration date or they will have to go through the testing procedure again. Some of the more pertinent information is as follow:

- \$23.00 to renew license.
- Exam Application fee is non-refundable.

- The application for renewal will be returned to the sender if there is no money accompanying the application or if the application is not properly filled out.
- Operators can take a class “C” exam and skip over the “D” exam if they meet the requirements for education and experience. Each individual application will be evaluated independently by the agency.
- All other licenses must be taken in order.
- Operators still may only hold 1 classification above the facility classification in which they work at.

Much discussion took place over the allowance of an operator to only test to one license higher than the plant classification at which they work. The feeling was that as cities update their treatment facility it may be reclassified and the operator(s) working at the facility may not qualify for the position(s) requiring higher licenses. This not necessarily due to the fact that the operator didn't want to upgrade, but rather the current policy limited the operator to the license classification that they hold. The advisory committee has this policy under review and for a list of members on the advisory committee operators are encouraged to contact Diane Navratil of the MPCA for a current list. It was also noted that the advisory committee does not make the final decision on this issue, which remains the decision of the MPCA. I would like to thank Diane for facing the wolves at this meeting and as usual she provided us with some much needed insight in some very important issues.

Gregg Oxley was our next speaker addressing electric restructuring and other legislative issues. Gregg works for the Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association. The focus of this talk was on deregulation of the electricity. Gregg explained that there is no practical way of storing electricity therefore we have no reserve capacity. He is a staunch supporter of municipal systems and has worked with them for many years and likes the reliability of the municipal electrical systems but says they are vulnerable. Minnesota has many small systems and collectively provides an important percentage of the electricity consumed on a daily basis. Gregg also discussed the legislative update and how the environmental concerns affect electricity production. Myself, not being the sharpest tool in the shed when it comes to electricity, I absorbed as much as I could about what Gregg was sharing and realize that deregulation will continue to have its impact on all of us in the future good, bad or otherwise. Thanks Gregg for sharing your knowledge with us.

Following Mr. Oxley's talk was Gary Minor and Dick Rindal from Viking Industrial. This talk, as you may have guessed, was on safety equipment and regulations. The talk started out with reflective clothing and the classifications requiring different outfits in different situations. Beginning in January of 2001 the mesh reflective vests will no longer be allowed to be worn when working in traffic areas over 25 MPH. A class 2 vest/top is required when the speed of vehicles is in excess of 25 MPH and class 3 gear is reflective clothing from head to toe. The new federal code parallels the MnDOT rules currently in place. Lime or orange background with reflective and fluorescent material is a requirement. A variety of clothing was on hand for all to see with pricing for the various pieces. Lock out-Tag out devices were also demonstrated with samples for all to see. Gary and Dick brought along a few new gas monitors for the operators to look at and ask questions, but not everyone was happy about the noisy alarms from the units. Single gas monitors as well as multi-parameter units were available. Much information was covered in a very short time on safety equipment used in our industry and I would like to thank the people at Viking Industrial for providing the training and education at this meeting.

Jorja Dufresne from the MPCA was the next guest speaker. Jorja discussed the issues facing operators pertaining to Biosolids. One of the first items on her agenda was to squash the myth about the biosolids program in Minnesota disappearing. Jorja assured us that the program is funded for at least another two years. Jorja has set two main goals for the next two years and are as follows:

1. Develop an efficient and effective approach to Biosolids regulation.
2. Facilitate Biosolids annual reporting by Major Facilities to the MPCA only.

Jorja brought up the idea about a pocket guidebook for operators. She would like to develop this guidebook for operators in the field as a quick reference guide and is soliciting input from operators as to what they would like to see in the pocket manual. The 1st printing of the new Biosolids manual, final draft, will be coming out soon, as Jorja reported that the old training manual was only in the draft/proposed form. For more information on what is new in 2002 and beyond operators should contact Jorja at 651-296-9292 and if you are out state, 1-800-657-3864. Jorja's E-mail address is Jorja.Dufresne@pca.state.mn.us We would like to thank Jorja for sharing and updating us with what has been happening with the biosolids program at the state and federal levels.

The final speaker of the morning session was Sheila Greene with Bolton and Menk. Sheila gave a talk on the sump pump inspection program conducted in Montrose. Unfortunately I was unable to sit in on this talk and missed most of the information, however the focus was on how the city was able to eliminate a significant percentage of flow from the wastewater treatment facility by instituting the sump pump project. For additional information on how and what was done with this project, contact Del Haag and/or Sheila Greene. Thank You Sheila for sharing this information and I am sorry I missed most of your talk.

Next was lunch! Yup, my favorite session. I could go on for hours about this, but just want to say, if you didn't show up - too bad - it was great! Thanks to the students from SCTC for helping with the cooking and anything else they took part in.

Following lunch, Bob Thul from Infratech gave a talk on private and public inflow and infiltration issues and "how to find them". Bob discussed the common problems; defective pipes, pipe joints, cross connections and manholes. A major portion of excess water in many cases comes from private homes, sump pumps and drains, as much as 50 - 70 %. Often political help is required to control I & I from private homes to interview homeowners and educate them. Authorization for controlling these sources comes through ordinances. Bob explained that finding I & I sources might require the use of video cameras for footing drains, which has become very popular. Dye testing also is widely used as well as smoke testing to detect direct connections such as roof drains. Thanks Bob for once again bringing to light the importance of eliminating inflow into our systems and for sharing what is being used in our industry to help locate the sources of I & I.

The last speaker of the day was provided by Brad Dewolf and Seth Peterson of Bolton & Menk. Brad and Seth discussed the joint venture of combining wastewater facilities between the City of Montrose, Waverly and the 12-HI mobile home park. The need was determined based on new regulations and upgrading for current and future growth in these communities. The choice to regionalize the facilities was because it is easier to maintain and one discharge point would reduce environmental impacts not to mention it was favorable by the State and Federal agencies and provided for more funding opportunities and allowed them to spread the costs over many more users of the system. The costs of the project and alternatives looked at were discussed with explanations why it was decided to upgrade the existing treatment facility with an aerated pond. Capital costs, O & M, Reliability, Flexibility, Expansion Capabilities were all considerations made before deciding how to proceed. This project shows that communities can work together and accomplish what is best for all users of the wastewater treatment facility.

BUSINESS MEETING

The business meeting of the Minnesota Wastewater Operators Association Central Section meeting was called to order by president Tanya Schmidt at 2:05 pm at the Montrose Community Center. The minutes of the last meeting were read, Gerry Mahon moved to accept the minutes as read, Sandy Zanolith seconded the motion.

Old Business:

Keith Redmond gave a brief update on the Student Club at the St. Cloud Technical College. Ron Hagemeyer gave an update on the Annual Conference held in St. Cloud in July of this year.

New Business:

Byron Hyunga's term as director of the MWOA Central Section expired and elections were held for a new director. Jim Miller gave an overview of the duties of the director. Nominations were taken from the floor. Nominees were Pat Meyer from Long Prairie and Les Lange from Willmar. After 3 calls for nominations by president Schmidt, Gerry Mahon motioned to close nominations, Bill Spain Seconded the motion. Ballots were cast and counted. The new director of the MOWA Central Section for the next 3 years is Pat Meyer of Long Prairie. Dan Zarambinski motioned to destroy the ballots and received a second. We would like to thank Byron for his dedication and service to the MWOA over the past 3 years and appreciate his representation of the Central Section of the MWOA.

The next meeting of the Central Section will be held at the St. Cloud Technical College on December 11, 2001. We still need locations for the upcoming meetings in early April and June, please consider hosting one of the meetings. Anyone that has a topic of interest for the December meeting is encouraged to contact Keith Redmond at 320-654-5952. We hope to see you there! Bill Spain made a motion to adjourn the meeting and that motion was seconded by James Hendrickson. All were in favor and the meeting ended at 2:35 PM.

Following the meeting, the prize drawings took place. Donations from several of the guest speakers were given away. We are very appreciative of the support that our guest speakers give to our members. Del Haag donated a Terry Redlin print for the drawing. Thank You Del, this goes above and beyond what is required of a host for the section meeting. Following the drawings, Del gave a tour of the WWTF to those interested in seeing their treatment plant.

A last final thank you to all who made this a successful meeting and to the City of Montrose for allowing us to meet in their fair city.

Respectfully submitted;

Keith Redmond, secretary

MWOA Central Section