

# President's Comments

By Wade Klingsporn

Here in Ely, the fall season is really starting to take shape. The ducks and geese are anticipating the change in seasons and have begun to move around more. The nights are getting much cooler, and the leaves on the maple trees are starting to turn beautiful shades of red and orange.

This is also a very exciting time for me, because as the instructor of the Water Quality program at Vermilion Community College, it is when I start out with a new group of young, energetic students who are eager to start their career path in the water and wastewater industry! Some of the students come in to the program because they had a family member or a friend of the family that is in the industry and they were told that it is a great career choice. Some of them enter the program because they have some previous experience working for their hometown Public Works while in high school and they've discovered that working in the field of water and wastewater is very interesting and rewarding. Some enter because they are aware of the job availability. At any rate, they all have varying reasons why they chose this educational path to get into the industry, and obviously, I think they have made a wonderful choice!



One of the main reasons I love this industry so much is because of the people who are part of it. Every time I take a group of students to a conference or a training, they are always welcomed with open arms. Try to remember when you were a young individual and trying to find your way in life. The students have all kinds of feelings rushing through their minds; excited, anxious, nervous, maybe scared for what lies ahead of them. The welcoming and encouragement they receive when they meet new industry professionals helps them feel a little more at ease. It also helps them realize that they made the right decision as far as their career is concerned. Thank you to all of you who have approached a student at a conference. It means more to them than you may realize! If you've never talked with a student at a conference or training, try it next time, who knows, you may even have something in common with them!

A big part of why I wanted to be more involved with associations like the MWOA is because I am a firm believer that this is a great industry. I also feel that it does not get the recognition that it deserves. We're lucky here in Minnesota to have such high quality water resources surrounding us. Part of the reason we have such excellent water quality is directly related to those of you who treat and manage our state's wastewater and stormwater.

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Without you, our water resources certainly would not look the same. Don't be afraid to toot your own horn. Let people know what you do, and let them know about the importance of the industry! As you probably know, most of the general public doesn't give a second thought to where their water comes from when they turn on their tap or where it goes when they flush their toilets. They should! Public education and support can certainly go a long way to helping make your job easier.

I'm proud to be part of such a great industry, and I hope all of you are too. Try to become more involved yourselves. If asked, take the opportunity to speak at a conference. We can all learn from each other!



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