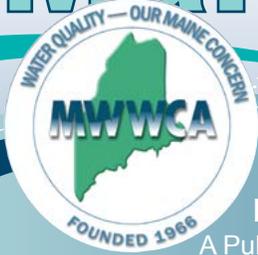


# Maine WasteWater NEWS



February/March 2014 • Winter

A Publication of the Maine WasteWater Control Association

1-800-452-8786

## President's Corner

By Aubrey Strause, President, MWWCA & Verdant Water

In April 2013, I had the pleasure of attending the JETCC/MWWCA North Country Convention in beautiful Presque Isle, Maine. It was a great event and only my second time in that city- the first being a fast-paced consulting gig under the cover of darkness that was hardly memorable.

It was also the furthest north I've been since I joined the Association in 2004.

*"How can that be?"* I thought to myself as I began to define my objectives for my year as President of this Association.

Well, it comes as no shock to most of you that the answer is **"Maine is a darn big state"**.

One of the things that Past President Jeff McBurnie and I talked about in our (apparently entertaining) luncheon speech at the North Country Convention was that MWWCA needs to do a better job reaching our members in the furthest corners of the state. This is easy to say- it's been a goal of MWWCA for years- but the remote nature that makes people "from away" want to come here is the very same thing that makes it hard to accomplish.

My primary objective this year is to make it happen: I am investing my own time in building the resources available on our website ([www.mwwca.org](http://www.mwwca.org)), and reaching out to get more eyes on it.

We've already implemented a **Google calendar** to help you see what training and conferences are available, and where they're located. Our **Twitter** and **Facebook** feeds, active for the last year, do a great job of keeping members and partners current on our activities. We've been posting **presentations from past conferences** and conventions on the site, so those who couldn't attend can still benefit from the information. I hope you all know that our **quarterly newsletter** (and past issues as far back as February 2009!) is available here, as are the minutes from **Executive Board meetings**, to improve transparency. Our **Pump Clog resource page** includes current information on the Association's work, locally and nationally, to address the proliferation of wipes and other consumer products that contribute to "ragging" and equipment interference.

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## 2014 Officers

### President

Aubrey Strause  
Verdant Water, PLLC

### First Vice President

Tom Connolly  
Yarmouth, Maine

### Second Vice President

Scott Firmin  
Portland Water District

### Immediate Past President

Travis Peaslee  
Lewiston, ME

### Secretary/Treasurer

Al Jellison  
Bangor, ME

### Assistant Treasurer

Dan Bisson  
North Yarmouth, ME

\*For a complete Board Listing, please visit the MWWCA website at:

[www.mwwca.org](http://www.mwwca.org)

## Upcoming Board Meeting Dates:

March 21

Waterville – Kennebec  
Sanitary Treatment District

# Mechanic Falls Sanitary District Hosts Elementary Students

By Nicholas Konstantoulakis, Superintendent

This month, the Mechanic Falls Sanitary District hosted the 5th grade class from the Elm Street Elementary school at its facility. The students learned the basics of Waste Water Treatment. They got to see what happens when someone flushes their toilets, where it goes, the natural filtration, and how clean the water is when it leaves their plant. It was with a sense of discovery and new understanding that at some point in the tour the students and even the adults came to see the Mechanic Falls Sanitary District wastewater treatment plant as **their treatment plant!**

They also learned “what not to flush”. Some of the kids already knew about the hazards of non-flushable products such as baby wipes! One of the children told us all how the line from his home had to be replaced by his Dad because of how it became clogged with baby wipes. I reminded him that I was there to help with the repair. We also had a question and answer session. A fun time was had by all. If you haven’t hosted a school tour or haven’t had one lately, give it a go, the kids will even remind you of how important the work that you do every day really is. 🌊



The Big kid is superintendent Nick.

## UPCOMING 2014 EVENTS:

April 17, 2014 – Spring Conference  
Black Bear Inn, Orono

April 7 – 9, 2014 – NEWEA/WEF Washington Fly In  
Washington, DC

June 2-4, 2014 – NEWEA Spring Meeting  
Samoset Resort, Rockland

## President’s Message cont’d

What else is in the works?

An **Awards Committee** page that makes it easy for you to nominate your facility and/or staff for MWWCA or NEWEA awards to get the recognition they deserve.

An enhanced **Government Affairs Committee** page to keep you current on legislative efforts the Association is tracking- for your benefit. This page includes links to the bills and copies of our official testimony or positions to make it easier for you to reach out to your representatives.

**Public Relations** materials that you can print from your own office- inserting your town or utility logo. These will include a general flyer about the value of our industry to Maine (aimed at the general public), as well as topic-specific brochures you can use as bill stuffers.

A “shopping cart” (or e-business) page to allow you to easily register for training events.

Testing the placement of **videos of select presentations** onto the site, so you can watch presentations from the convenience of your office or home. (Our inaugural attempt will be the Spring 2014 Conference- April 18 in Orono, ME)

The Association website is very easy to update- if you’re interested in helping with this, please let me know.

It is an honor to serve as President, and ***I will treat this responsibility like it’s my job.***

Please contact me any time to discuss how the Association can better meet your needs. 🌊

Aubrey Strause, P.E.  
2014 MWWCA President  
[aubrey@verdantwater.com](mailto:aubrey@verdantwater.com)  
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# ON HER SOAPBOX

By Aubrey Strause, President, MWWCA & Verdant Water

**Note:** *The opinions, positions, and views expressed in any “On My Soapbox” feature are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the opinions, positions, or views of the Maine WasteWater Control Association.*

I’m going to hit the high point first: please check out the Message I posted on the MWWCA website in January: [www.mwwca.org/?page\\_id=9](http://www.mwwca.org/?page_id=9). In the President’s Message, I lay out what I hope will be the “mission” of my term at the helm of this great association and make a commitment of my own (ongoing) time and energy to make it happen.

Now onto the serious stuff: I was reminded abruptly last month that no matter how much time or effort I put into this organization, there are going to be people that don’t think I should be President. It’s not that they dislike me personally, and it’s not that they think women shouldn’t be in this industry. No, it’s because I’m not an operator. Yes, it’s true: the 1980-something vote of MWWCA to allow consultants, vendors, industries, and contractors to be members of the Executive Board continues to be controversial. This decision so frustrated some members of the water quality community (who wish to remain anonymous) that they are not interested in joining the association, much less being active in it. Here’s the thing: having been separated from the association for so long has allowed moss to grow over people’s eyes. The perception that somehow non-municipal volunteers are “buying” their way into getting huge municipal contracts just isn’t reality.

What **is** reality? Consider this: if the MWWCA took a vote today and prohibited consultants, vendors, industries, and contractors from being on the Executive Board, the association would lose not just its President but also its NEWEA State Director, its Assistant Treasurer, and the chairs of the following committees: Public Relations, Personnel Advancement, Pretreatment, Awards, Residuals, Collection Systems, and a Government Affairs co-chair. If the naysayers think

that’s fine - I hope they have lots of replacements lined up ready to hit the ground running, since many Association projects just lost their champions. This includes the people currently creating the public outreach materials (five or more flyers that MWWCA members will be able to download from the website, customize with utility name & contact info, and print on demand), many active MWWCA website administrators, the people that organize speakers and technical sessions for MWWCA’s Spring Conference and Fall Convention (and secure training credits), the program that recognizes the municipal operators for work well done, and the people that stay on top of legislation that might harm your operations and your budget. The size of this newsletter would decrease drastically, as half the people that provide content are gone. The “Save Your Pipes: Don’t Flush Baby Wipes” public education campaign would lose half its team (and lots of the volunteers who helped sort materials). These people have the Association’s mission at heart and pour hours of their own time into implementing that mission every day, which is the dedication this Association needs to survive.

The other disconnect from reality is that MWWCA is “just for big facilities” - a critique we’ve heard for years and years. How do you fight this? I’ve spent lots of my own time in the last few months doing outreach to “small facilities” and think I’ve made progress. In fact, at Maine Municipal Association’s suggestion, I rewrote the membership renewal letter this January to update the list of benefits membership provides: it’s now a two-page letter. More importantly it’s accurate. I’ve heard from lots of operators at small facilities in the last month who said “I had no idea MWWCA did this much stuff!” This is an ongoing challenge that will take all of us to correct,

mostly by continuing to be transparent, open, and inviting in everything we do.

It’s the positive feedback I receive when I reach out with a positive attitude and an armful of resources that really help people that makes me want to keep fighting the battle against the misconceptions. Thanks to the MWWCA members - consultants, vendors, contractors, industries AND operators - who are standing in formation with me.

**Editor’s Comment:** *So give this some thought. The old adage “many hands make light work” has never been more true. We are fortunate that so many people from so many employers support MWWCA, if you don’t believe it ask any other New England State Operator’s association. What can you do? Why not consider involvement in a committee? The time commitment often is as little as a half a day once per quarter. If you split the time with your employer, we are only talking about 2 hours of paid time and 2 hours of volunteer time every three months. By doing so you can be sure that your voice is heard and you support your fellow operators. Strange thing is I bet you will find that get back much more than you put in!* 🌊

**This is your newsletter – if you have news you would like to pass along or an opinion to express that would be of interest to the membership of MWWCA we are always interested in receiving material and will make every effort to incorporate your submissions.**



## WHY WATER'S WORTH IT TO ME!



### COMPETITION FOR MAINE STUDENTS

In 1983 the Maine Legislature made provisions to designate the first full week of June as Maine Clean Water Week. Maine Clean Water Week was created to increase the public's awareness of the improvements made in the quality of Maine's waterways. One of the primary reasons our waterways have so greatly improved is due to the hard work of Maine's collection system and wastewater treatment plant personnel.

The Maine WasteWater Control Association (MWWCA) is a nonprofit organization whose goals include: promoting education and communication within the wastewater treatment industry and to the general public; supporting a balanced view of environmental policies; and enhancing the image of wastewater personnel.

In recognition of Maine Clean Water Week, June 1st-7th, 2014, the Maine WasteWater Control Association is again sponsoring a poster competition for Maine students. The theme of the competition is **"WHY WATER'S WORTH IT TO ME!"**

Prizes will be awarded for the top poster for each age group and recognition for the top three posters in each age group.

- Grades 1-3
- Grades 4-6
- Grades 7-8
- Grades 9-12

In addition, the winning students' schools will receive recognition. The winners will be honored at the Maine WasteWater Control Association 2014 Fall Convention, at the Maine State House, or at a school assembly.

Thank you,

Matt Timberlake  
Maine WasteWater Control Association  
Public Relations Committee Chair



MWWCA Clean Water Week Poster Contest Winners with Governor Lepage and MWWCA members.

# Clean Water Week Poster Contest

Nothing calls attention to clean water like a picture in the paper — or a segment on TV — showing kids holding posters and posing with the governor.

At least that's how it looks to Matt Timberlake and members of the Maine Wastewater Control Association (MWWCA), which sponsors a poster contest each year during Maine Clean Water Week, the first full week of June.

Timberlake, who runs the contest as the association's public relations chairman, calls it a way to go to state residents with a unified message about the importance of water and the clean-water profession. Last year's contest drew some 300 entries; with expanded eligibility and more promotion, Timberlake wants to see it get bigger in 2014.

"It has been a great way to promote our organization and the work our members do to keep Maine's waterways clean and safe," says Timberlake, a vice president with The Ted Berry Company, a municipal and industrial service company in Livermore. "Besides giving us name recognition, it engages the kids and gets them thinking about clean water. It's a fun program to be a part of."

## Recognizing progress

The state legislature designated Maine Clean Water Week in 1983 to raise public awareness of improvements to state waterways, and a big reason for the improvements was the work of collection system and treatment plant personnel.

Maine has historic ties to water quality: A primary sponsor of the federal Clean Water Act of 1972 was Senator Ed Muskie of Rumford, Maine. "He grew up on the Androscoggin River, which at one time was on the Top 10 list of most polluted rivers in the country," Timberlake observes. The

poster contest started in 1990 under the theme, "What Clean Water Means to ME." The theme had a double meaning, since ME is the postal abbreviation for Maine.

"The contest is relatively simple," says Timberlake. "It's been open to students in grades three through eight. Every year, the students submit their posters, and the MWWCA executive committee judges them at the spring conference. We typically do an awards presentation at the fall conference. In recent years, we've also asked the governor to be part of a presentation at the statehouse. The past four governors have accepted."

First, second and third prizes were given, and the first-prize winner's school received a gift from the association, such as a microscope, a TV/VCR or cash. In addition, the top 12 posters were made into a calendar, distributed to treatment plants and schools around the state.

## Changing the rules

For 2014, the contest will be expanded, and a winner will be chosen in each of four divisions: grades one through three, four through six, seven through eight and nine through 12. Meanwhile, the nearly 50-year-old MWWCA will be known as the Maine Water Environment Association (MeWEA) beginning in April 2014.

The new theme is "Why Clean Water's Worth It to ME," a play on the theme of a Water Environment Federation awareness campaign embraced by the MWWCA and the New England Water Environment Association.

To promote the contest, the MWWCA sends letters and contest guidelines to every school in the state. This year the group is looking for a local celebrity spokesperson. In addition, Timberlake is challenging members to go farther by contacting their local schools personally.

Last year, a science teacher at Thomaston Middle School received the guidelines and asked Timberlake if an operator could visit his classroom. "John Fancy from Thomaston and Mike Courtenay from Warren went out and did a presentation," Timberlake says. "The students loved it. We received about 30 posters from that school."

Timberlake made a visit of his own last year to his son's first-grade class at Central Maine Christian Academy in Lewiston. He "went a little rogue" and helped the younger kids make posters, even though first-graders weren't officially eligible. A third-grader from the same school had her poster chosen for the 2014 calendar.

## Reaping rewards

The MWWCA publicizes the winners by issuing a press release; the governor's office typically does the same. The releases usually are picked up statewide. Timberlake sees advantages in running the contest at the association level: It enables delivery of a consistent statewide message.

He sees signs the message is taking hold. At the 2013 awards presentation at the statehouse, he thanked first-place winner Nick Rocray, a sixth-grader from Waterboro, for taking time to create his poster.

Says Timberlake, "He told me, 'No, we should be thanking you and your association for all you do. You are the ones who keep the water clean. We just did the posters.' It was neat that he understood the work we do, because often we don't think anybody notices. If we can educate kids early, then hopefully they'll carry that knowledge for the rest of their lives. Maybe some will grow up to be operators." 

# Biosolids and Public Relations

*Spin, Slight of Hand and the Back Door*

The recent policy announcement by the Whole Foods Supermarket chain in which the use of biosolids on flowers and produce was, in fact, a well-orchestrated campaign by a self-described environmental advocacy organization known as PR Watch. (see accompanying article –Whole Foods Bans Biosolids). It gets more interesting when one realizes that it was not Whole Foods that publically announced the new biosolids policy (and one that reversed a long standing policy advising consumers in a much more even handed manner -- including advice to check the EPA website for more information on biosolids and ending with a note that consumers could opt for produce certified by the National Organic Program since biosolids are not allowed under that certification).

So the way this all came down was that PR watch came out with a scary statement about how terrible and frightening biosolids are -- complete with scary looking logos (in this case a picture of a child appearing to recoil from what looks like feces surrounded by a banner that says "This Food May Have Been Grown in Sewage Sludge"). They then targeted an organization, Whole Foods, whose reputation hinges on their "environmental responsibility" but was not fully versed on all the nuances of this particular issue. A consumer campaign was then initiated by providing pre-written e-mails so that people needed only to "click to protest" (note: this is reminiscent of the humorous campaign a few years ago that got people to write letters calling for an end to the use of the dangerous chemical "Dihydrogen Monoxide" aka water) At this point a letter was sent out to Whole Foods:

"Dear [Whole Foods Employee],

It has become obvious that you are ignoring my requests for answers to some simple questions. I can only assume you either refuse to answer because you cannot afford to be truthful or your hands are tied by upper management...I have copied \_\_\_\_\_ in previous e-mails but have never had a reply. I am glad that you have replied in the past and trust that you will find the wisdom, words and guts to do so again...Not being open and honest to your shoppers about Toxic Sewage Sludge and just hiding behind the fact that "the FDA and EPA have approved" is fraudulent. Hope to hear from you soon. Sincerely, Mario Ciasulli. (Mr. Ciasulli was a leader in the PR Watch campaign).

Finally the public relations trap was sprung by PR Watch announcing a new policy, even before the company actually had made any change. In this way PR Watch made it very difficult for Whole Foods to correct the misinformation, particularly as news organizations began to report on the new policy. PR Watch finished the manipulation by sending out notices to people asking them to thank Whole Foods for their policy change.

*Author's note: much of the information in this article is taken from information provided by the Northeast Biosolids and Residuals Association, and I thank Ned Beecher for explaining how the Whole foods matter came down. My hope is that by understanding how public opinion and the media can be manipulated, we will all be a bit more informed and prepared.* 🌐

# Freeport Sewer District Superintendent Finds Silver Lining

*By Aubrey Strause, President, MWWCA & Verdant Water*

This year, MWWCA has a new face on its Executive Board: Dan Bicknell, Superintendent of the Freeport Sewer District. He has agreed to serve in the position of Membership Chair. I love the opportunity to get to know members who are "new to me", and recently sat down with Dan to learn more about changes the District has seen in recent years, and how Dan's experience guided how he navigates challenges.

First of all, Dan is no newcomer to the water quality profession. While he began his career as the chief mechanic for the City of Westbrook's Highway Department, he completed the Pollution Abatement Program at SMVTI (now Southern Maine Community College) in the late 1980's. His career took him from Westbrook to the Town of Yarmouth: originally interviewing for a position with the highway department. While that didn't work out, the Town Manager liked him so much that he was hired to help at the wastewater department. He stayed with Yarmouth for

10 years and has now been at Freeport for another 10 years. His biggest surprise about moving into the wastewater field? "I really liked it!", says Dan, laughing (as he almost always is). "I like working with pumps, but even more important, I like the variety of work I do every day".

Even as we talked for this interview, a variety of other Freeport Sewer District team members asked Dan questions that show the range of his involvement at the facility. Question ranged from what analyses had been run (or started) in the lab, to how to document the cost of some recently-completed repairs, to a conversation with General Manager Leland Arris about how to engage the public that wastewater treatment facilities are protecting the environment and the people that manage them are environmentalists, not polluters.

This last item is really important to Freeport. In recent

**Cont'd on page 7**

# Working In Shoreland Areas: Do You Need Dep Certification?..

By Bill Laflamme (Maine DEP)

As sewage treatment operators you are often required to conduct work involving soil disturbance activity in areas adjacent to waterways. Installation of new sewer lines or maintenance and repair of exiting lines, etc. frequently involves excavation in a variety of locations near rivers, lakes and coastal waters. In 2008 the Maine Legislature enacted a law that required that grading, filling or removal of one cubic yard or more of soil in the “shoreland zone” must be overseen by a person certified in erosion and sediment control practices by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). This is to ensure that proper control practices are followed. The “shoreland zone” generally includes all areas within 250 feet of major rivers, lakes and coastal waters and 75 feet of some streams. Although passed in 2008, the law took effect on January 1, 2013.

Section 3B of the statute indicates that municipal, state and federal employees are exempt from the law while engaged in projects associated with that employment. What this means to you is that if your sewer district is an independent business and not part of municipal government, the law requires you to have a DEP certified individual on-site when conducting activities involving soil disturbance in the shoreland zone. This person could be a district employee or a certified individual hired by the district. If your district is indeed part of municipal government and the work is being done by your employees you are not subject to the law. However, if you hire an independent contractor to do the work that contractor must comply.

If your district contracts out most of its excavation work, it is important to ensure that you are hiring a DEP certified contractor if the work happens to be in the shoreland zone. To accomplish this you can specify in the contract that the contractor provide proof of current certification.

You can also check the list of certified individuals on the Maine DEP web site at: [www.maine.gov/dep/land/training/ccec.html](http://www.maine.gov/dep/land/training/ccec.html)

Whether you are required to have certified staff or not, it is still a good idea for your employees who are involved with soil disturbance work, to obtain certification training in erosion and sediment control practices. Train-

ing includes information on laws and regulations that everyone must comply with as well as best management practices endorsed by the DEP. For more information on the training please see the course schedule on the DEP website: [www.maine.gov/dep/training/npstrc-schedule.html](http://www.maine.gov/dep/training/npstrc-schedule.html) or contact Bill Laflamme at: 215-9237. ●

## Freeport Sewer cont'd

years, the District has faced a lot of changes, many centered on building a relationship with new Trustees. The new trustees have become advocates for change needed, instead of adversaries to changes as could have developed without such a commitment. As a result, these Trustees have supported a number of upgrades at the facility, such as a new aeration system, installation of SCADA, a centrifuge, and several energy upgrades including geothermal systems. All of this was done while minimizing impacts on ratepayers. The approach to these upgrades has earned the District praise from the USEPA and other groups and plaques that are displayed proudly in the facility's conference room.

Another source of joy for Dan has been the opportunity he has had to work with his son, Richard (a well-known bluegrass banjo player who participates with many bands, includ-

ing Tricky Britches). Richard grew up going to work with his father and learned to operate a loader at a young age. Richard worked for the District for 18 months (into 2013) as it went through some upgrades, and shares a passion for outreach to students of all ages with his father. Dan and Richard told me enthusiastically about the many tours that have come through the Freeport facility in the last few years. The facility also recently hosted meetings of the Town Council and Chamber of Commerce at the plant to encourage members to take a tour. While Richard has officially “left the building”, you get the sense that his life may take him back to the wastewater treatment field, and that he'd be totally fine with that.

I'm grateful for the chance to get to know Dan, Richard, and other Freeport team members better through our conversation, and look forward to the energy and ideas they bring to MW-WCA. ●



Dynamic Duo – Dan and Richard Bicknell.

# Whole Foods Bans Biosolids – What Does That Mean For Us In Environmental Work?

By Jen McDonnell, Casella Organics

Whole Foods Market, a leading national organic and natural foods retailer, made headlines recently with an announcement that they would be phasing out the use of biosolids in growing all of the produce and flowers sold in their stores as part of a new produce rating system and policy. Seemingly a decision made without “bi partisan” debate, the news came as a surprise to many in the field of biosolids reuse and recycling. The announcement, available at the following website <http://media.wholefoodsmarket.com/news/produce-rating-release> doesn't specifically mention biosolids, but contacts within the company have confirmed that biosolids will be precluded from use by their growers once the policy is in effect, or as of September 2014. Publicly, there isn't much more information available about the details of the policy or how it was developed. As a former employee for Whole Foods, I reached out to the company to find out more. A response I got was “Our decision making process focused on listening [to] suppliers and customers to find the right policy for our specific produce supply chain.” Although not directly stated, it seems to me that professionals providing wastewater treatment services to the public were left out of the conversation.

There has been some chatter that Whole Foods was pressured into the announcement by a well-organized public relations campaign lead by PR Watch and promoted by the Center for Media and Democracy (CMD). (more on PR campaigns in Mac's column). Visit this link for details on this side of the story: <http://www.prwatch.org/news/2014/01/12359/whole-foods-agrees-stop-selling-produce-grown-sewage-sludge> (note the “scary” image of sewage sludge). It could be that biosolids were added to the produce policy after this effort

generated enough public interest and comments to Whole Foods. Sadly, the CMD portrays arguably inflammatory misinformation about biosolids and their reuse.

So, where does this leave us? Unfortunately Whole Foods' rebuff of a valuable resource is a blow to our efforts to realize our mission as water resource recovery professionals, especially since biosolids are a valuable source of nutrients and organic matter that, when properly treated and managed, are a safe and sustainable recycling story in our society and ecosystem. Hopefully, Whole Food's stance doesn't influence other grocery retailers or food producers, as it is likely that many farmers and users of biosolids rely on them as an economical source of nitrogen and other nutrients and those of us in the field of biosolids production and management rely on users for reliable and environmentally friendly management outlets.

Ned Beecher, Executive Director of the Northeast Biosolids and Residuals Association (author sidebar – a great sister organization that all MWWCA Members should consider joining), wrote the following about biosolids in an email to colleagues about the Whole Foods announcement “Recycling biosolids is an important part of sustainability, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, recycling nutrients and organic matter, reducing the need for chemical fertilizer, and building healthy soils.” Well said. Ned and I are working together to continue an open dialogue with Whole Foods, in the hopes that the “other” side of the story can be better represented as they implement and evaluate their policy.

Although Whole Foods' decision to disallow the use of biosolids in produce and flowers sold in their stores was disappointing, I'm hopeful that it will provide an opportunity to educate a wider audience on the facts about

our industry – the science behind the rules and regulations that guide our operations, the commitment of folks in all segments of our operations to promote a clean and healthy environment, and our overall commitment to sustainability. As the former Green Mission Specialist for Whole Foods in the Northeast, now I'm on a mission to promote the responsible reuse of biosolids. ●

For more coverage of this issue here are some additional web links:

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/the-salt/2014/01/17/263370333/whole-foods-bans-produce-grown-with-sludge-but-who-wins>

<http://www.thepacker.com/fruit-vegetable-news/Whole-Foods-to-ban-use-of-biosolids-on-produce-241567061.html?page=2>



**Maine WasteWater NEWS** is a quarterly publication of the Maine Waste-Water Control Association. (Publication months: Feb, May, Aug, Nov) Opinions expressed in this publication should be addressed to: MWWCA, 60 Community Drive, Augusta, ME 04330.

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# MWWCA Members Receive Awards At NEWEA

By Aubrey Strause, President, MWWCA & Verdant Water

I've been an active MWWCA member since 2006, and have been to NEWEA at least one day each year since then. However, this year was the *first time* I've ever been able to attend the Awards Luncheon. Held on January 29, this was a real treat, as MWWCA was very well-represented among this year's award recipients.

This short article doesn't nearly do justice to the effort that these members invest in their service: involvement in an association- whether MWWCA, NEWEA, or beyond- at this level means time and effort in evenings, weekends, and holidays, too.

Awards presented to MWWCA members included:

- NEWEA Operator Award: Greg Thulen, Brunswick Sewer District
- NEWEA Crystal Crucible Society Inductee: Peter Sherwood, KSTD
- Alfred E Peloquin Award: Scott Firmin, Portland Water District
- Young Professional Award: Paula Drouin, Lewiston-Auburn Water Pollution Control Authority
- Public Educator Award: Matt Timberlake (Ted Berry Co, for MWWCA) and Jeff McNelly (Maine Water Utilities Association) for the 2013 "Water's Worth It" newspaper insert
- Clair N. Sawyer Award: John Hart, Saco WRRD
- Past President: Dan Bisson, CDM Smith
- Operations Challenge, Division II: Force Maine (Dan Laflamme, Alex Buechner, Tony Ellsworth, Scot Lausier, and Stacy Thompson) for 1st Place in Process Control
- WEF Service Award: John Hart, Saco WRRD
- WEF Service Award: Greg Cataldo, Woodard & Curran (retired)
- WEF Life Membership: Tom Schultz, Mechanic Falls Sanitary District (retired)
- WEF Laboratory Analyst Excellence Award: Peter Sherwood, KSTD

If you know any of these members or have the pleasure to meet them, please congratulate and **thank** them for their service.

We don't have room to show photos of each MWWCA member, so we've included a few that have contributed to recent issues of this newsletter. 🌐



**Alfred E Peloquin Award:** Scott Firmin, Portland Water District



**Young Professional Award:** Paula Drouin, Lewiston-Auburn Water Pollution Control Authority



**Clair N. Sawyer Award:** John Hart, Saco WRRD

# Solving Lifting Problems

By Gene Weeks, Blake Equipment Co.

One of the problems we face on a fairly regular basis is moving heavy loads: motors, valves, pumps, etc. Most plants have the necessary plans and equipment to solve some of their lifting problems. Plants have various dollies, carts, overhead hoists, forklifts, and the like. But what happens when the load is not accessible by fork lift, or is not under the overhead hoist? Most of us are quite aware of where the lifting problems are. Some plants are hiring riggers occasionally: presumably safe, but expensive. Sometimes we are using methods that we know are not the safest to get that motor (or whatever) into the truck. I have heard stories using the backhoe as a crane in *very ingenious ways*. Many of us have seen a tripod designed for confined space entry being used to remove submersible pumps. What happens when the tripod gets damaged by being used improperly and is no longer safe for use in confined space entry?

In recent years there have been some advances made in the design of portable lifting equipment that help address these gaps. Many plants already have portable cranes of either the **davit type** (a crane arm at an angle pivoting on a fixed base) or the **gantry type** (a horizontal beam supported by triangular end supports on casters). Historically, many of these cranes were not really very portable because they were quite heavy, being made of steel. Now several manufacturers are making this equipment of aluminum: it is much lighter, and it doesn't rust. This manufacturing development opens the door to new ways to solve lifting problems.

Let's consider the removal of a submersible pump. Many plants use a truck-mounted hoist, but suppose the truck is in the shop or the pump station is not accessible due to snow banks. If we have the proper crane base installed at the pump station, we can remove a pump weighing up to 1,000 pounds with a portable aluminum davit crane that weighs less than 40 pounds. Just throw the portable

davit in any pickup and off you go! That one davit crane can service 12 or more properly equipped pump stations. When we get set up at the pump station, we want to remove the pump in one pull – not a time-consuming “up three feet, get another grip, up another three feet” approach. There are two ways that I am aware of to remove a submersible pump (or mixer) in one pull. The first is a crank-type hoist attached to the davit crane with the proper stainless steel cable permanently attached to the pump. Hook the cable to the hoist and get cranking! The other way involves an ingenious piece originally developed by a pump company called a “grip eye”. The “grip eye” will slide down the chain that's attached to the pump and grab the chain right over the pump, then the hoist can take it right up with one pull.

For use around the plant, gantry cranes are more versatile. They can be used to pull pumps, but much more as well. Several companies make gantry cranes that can be easily disassembled (two people – four bolts) and reassembled over the load. Once the load (e.g., motor, pump, valve) is up, the gantry can be rolled on its casters with the load. Often the gantry and load can be rolled right out the door and over to the shop or a waiting truck.

Give some thought to portable lifting equipment made of aluminum, and how the right tool might make your lifting problems easier, quicker, and most of all - safer. And here is a thought, if you need to convince the person who writes the checks that a new lifting device is a smart investment, just ask them what the cost of one lifting injury is! This is truly a way to work smarter. 🌐

## Young Professionals Committee Upcoming Events

Paula Drouin, YP Committee Chair

Join the “Maine Water Environment Association” team for the Urban Runoff 5k run or walk on April 26th. (<http://www.urbanrunoff5k.com/>). This event is to increase awareness of water pollution and raise money to support clean water education in local schools. All YPs participating will receive a FREE MeWEA race shirt (please email me letting me know you registered and what size shirt you'd like). Non-YPs will be able to purchase a shirt at cost. Anyone and everyone is welcome to join the team. We will also have a booth set up to participate in the festival that follows the race. Please let me know if you're interested in staffing the booth.

Join us at the annual Spring Conference on Friday, April 18th at the Black Bear Inn in Orono. YPs (less than 5 years in the field) receive a discounted rate and will participate in discussion and brainstorming session (approved 1 hour training credit).

Want to know what else we're up to? The committee welcomes any new members, ideas, or questions. Join our email list to stay informed about upcoming meetings and events.

Trivia: A chlorinator treats a flow of 2 MGD. The chlorine demand is 9 mg/L and the desired residual is 1 mg/L. What should be the setting on the chlorinator in pounds of chlorine per 24 hours?

a) 87.8 lb/24 hrs   b) 142.9 lb/24 hrs   c) 166.8 lb/24 hrs   d) 202.2 lb/24 hrs

All correct answers will be entered to win a \$25 Visa giftcard!

Email [pdrouin@lawpca.org](mailto:pdrouin@lawpca.org) by May 1 with your trivia answers. 🌐

## MWWCA Spring Conference: April 18, 2014 in Orono, ME

MWWCA will be hosting its Spring Conference at the Black Bear Inn in Orono, Maine on Friday, April 18. The Personnel Advancement Committee is testing a more streamlined approach, featuring fewer technical sessions but a wider range of topics (i.e., no theme) to appeal to our members. The keynote address will be from members of the Public Relations and Communications committees, introducing the new public outreach materials that the association is developing for use by all members (we're excited about this!). Watch for the brochure and registration information in your emails soon! ●

## Update on Non-Dispersible Wipes

By Aubrey Strause, President, MWWCA & Verdant Water

The following is just the "bare bones" on non-dispersibles. More information is at your fingertips (see below) and if you want to be involved in this effort, better yet!

- MWWCA's "Save Your Pipes: Don't Flush Baby Wipes" campaign kicked off on January 21 with a great press conference at the Portland Water District's Westbrook facility. **Thank you** to the many MWWCA members who attended and have donated to our campaign. You can see the campaign at [www.SaveYourPipes.org](http://www.SaveYourPipes.org) and download materials on the MWWCA website: [www.mwwca.org/?page\\_id=1947](http://www.mwwca.org/?page_id=1947).
- There will soon be a definitive answer on whether the Technical Workgroup (wastewater and industry members working together to develop a standard definition for "flushable") will proceed. Ground rules and a Scope of Work have been developed; each group is voting to accept them and to commit funding.
- Don't miss "Don't Let Wipes and FOG Clog Your Collection System" training, co-sponsored by MWWCA, May 6, 2014 in Chelmsford, Massachusetts. \$30 includes lunch. Credits and registration through NEIWPC: [www.neiwpc.org/portal/connect.asp](http://www.neiwpc.org/portal/connect.asp)
- News and updates on MWWCA website: [www.mwwca.org/?page\\_id=777](http://www.mwwca.org/?page_id=777) and [www.mwwca.org/?page\\_id=1943](http://www.mwwca.org/?page_id=1943)

Call me at (207) 641-7704 with questions on anything wipes-related not covered above.

**Part 1 of an article called "The New Face of Olfactometry (Odor Science)" was featured in the November 2013 Newsletter. Part 2 of the article will appear in our May 2014 issue. Stay tuned!!** ●

## Kyle McCormick Announces Retirement

By Skip Clough, Superintendent of  
the South Berwick Sewer District



After 36 years in the wastewater industry Kyle McCormick has announced he will be retiring on October 25, 2014 from the wastewater profession. Kyle started his career with the US Coast Guard and after

his tour of duty, Kyle attended the Essex Agricultural & Technical Institute in Hathorne, MA where he earned a degree in Environmental Technology.

Kyle's first job in the wastewater industry was with the Berwick Sewer District. The Berwick Sewer District at that time was responsible for treating high-strength waste from a local tannery where Kyle played an important role in establishing process control and testing procedures to help bring the plant into compliance.

After five years with Berwick, Kyle went to work for the Sanford Sewerage District where he spent six years helping to fine-tune the new tertiary treatment plant, newly upgraded from a secondary process, which was one of the first in the area.

The next 16 years saw Kyle take over as Chief Operator at the North Berwick Sanitary District where he not only took the plant through startup certification, but also won the USEPA Region 1 O&M Excellence Award.

Kyle has spent the last 10 years with the South Berwick Sewer District where his lab experience was of great value, and his assistance with energy use has helped the plant cut its electrical use by 40%.

Not only will Kyle's 36 years of knowledge in the wastewater profession be greatly missed, but his ability to communicate with his fellow employees as well. ●

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# Maine WasteWater **NEWS**

**FEBRUARY/MARCH 2014 ISSUE**

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