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Dear MeWEA Members:

It is with great sadness that we announce the sudden passing of Kenneth Locke, recently retired Director of Environmental Services and past Superintendent of Brewer Water Pollution Control Facility - affectionately also known as "Emmet." Many of us were fortunate to have seen Ken in September at MeWEA's Fall Convention at Sunday River where he received JETCC's Lee Agger Award on September 16th. That was only the latest of many industry awards that Ken and the Brewer treatment plant received during his career.

Ken Locke's 42-year career in Water Pollution Control included the last 29 years serving the City of Brewer in various capacities. In June, Ken retired from his role as Brewer's Director of Environmental Service. Prior to that, Ken served his community as Brewer's Director of Public Works and as Superintendent of Brewer Water Pollution Control Facility. Throughout his career, Ken led efforts to clean-up CSOs and garnered grants and funds to develop a stormwater and sewer separation program. Ken's work has been instrumental in helping to clean-up the Penobscot River which today boasts a waterfront walking path and other attractions. Always an advocate of community and industry education, Ken assisted with many training classes and always encouraged his staff to do the same.

So many in our industry were shocked by the news of Ken's passing as he was also about to begin post-retirement work with Olver Associates where he was to continue assisting with the operation of Maine treatment plants.

Ken's work was always supported by Brewer's Chief Operator Lou Colburn who had just been hunting with him last weekend. Lou referred to Ken as his "sidekick, his mentor, a true environmentalist, and a great boss. Ken was always proactive in everything including his efforts to take the lead on getting his crew and the City of Brewer at the forefront of stormwater management."

During Ken's retirement party earlier this year Bill Olver of Olver Associates stated "Ken is a humble man, and he is always the first to give credit to the professional staff that he has managed and to the support and financial commitment that the Brewer City Council and Administration have made to its environmental programs. He should be remembered for the pivotal role that this career has played in the success of Brewer's programs. He is the dedicated person on the ground that made it all happen."

Noting sentiments from many who also knew Ken, Leeann Hanson of JETCC stated that "Ken was just a really great person. I remember him from my own early days in this industry. He was always friendly, and one of those silent doers who just gets a lot accomplished. It was always nice to see Ken at events and I recall the many conferences he attended with his wife Kim by his side.

Travis Jones had this to say, "Ken was an excellent boss and mentor, who led by example. He was a consummate professional who lived and breathed his commitment to be the best operator he could be. Ken was a man who did, instead of told. The City of Brewer is fortunate beyond calculation to have had Ken at the helm. I think I'll miss his sense of humor the most, and the way he'd boisterously laugh at a good joke or story. I mourn his loss for Kim & his family, his many friends, myself, and our entire wastewater community. Let us all strive to emulate his unwavering commitment to Clean Water."

Sincerely,
Phil Tucker, MeWEA President