embracing the concept of treatment and distribution system optimization utilizing the tools provided by the Partnership for Safe Water (PSW). In Manchester, NH, at the Lake Massabesic Water Treatment Plant, we have embraced the optimization culture since the PSW program was launched in response to the following Milwaukee crisis. Our charter membership in the program came several years before embarking on a major treatment plant upgrade project, which significantly helped shape the treatment goals and design elements with a keen eye on optimization.

Fast-forward to 2012 when the Lake Massabesic Water Treatment Plant became just the 11th treatment facility in the nation to earn Partnership recognition for “Excellence in Water Treatment” (our good friends at Champlain Water District, South Burlington, VT, were 1st in the nation). Partnership recognition was the result of a diligent process of data collection, self-assessment, identification of performance limiting factors, and development and implementation of specific plans to measure and sustain optimized performance. Most importantly, for the best chance of success, was to have “buy-in” from the top down throughout the organization. Any of the tools and guidance were provided and supported by the Partnership. Our operators have developed a high level of tenacity and drive to achieve the highest quality possible from our plant. The culture of excellence is infectious...in a very good way! Manchester has now maintained this high level of plant performance for 7 years and counting and is committed to it indefinitely.

How about you...are you sleeping well?

If your treatment facility and distribution system are optimized, the chances that your customers wake up in the morning will be greatly diminished...and you will be able to sleep more soundly at night!

I hope you have the opportunity to attend the NEWWA Spring Joint Regional Conference & Exhibition in Worcester, MA. Please look for more information and for presentations related to all that the Partnership for Safe Water has to offer at the conference. For more information on the Partnership program, please visit https://www.awwa.org/Resources-Tools/Programs/Partnership-for-Safe-Water.

NEWWA President

Dave Miliar (right) accepts the Jerome J. Healey Award from Kirsten King. The Jerome J. Healey Award is presented to acknowledge the contribution of an individual or a group of individuals, who have promoted the drinking water profession by reaching out to other NEWWA members and the public and enhanced the relationship between the regulated community with state and federal personnel to promote water supply and public health.

Teresa Trott (right) accepts the Jerome J. Healey Award from Kirsten King.

Teresa Trott is receiving the Jerome J. Healey Award for her outstanding work on both the state and federal levels. Teresa is the Clinical Manager of the drinking water laboratory for the Nashua School District.

The Partnership for Safe Water

The Partnership Brings Program Successes to the Spring Conference

By David Miller, NEWWA President

For many Source Readers, you’ll recall that Dave Miliar shared his outlook for the new year as the 2019 NEWWA President along with his 2019 goals in the Winter edition. Dave’s top goal is focused on improving and sustaining public trust in drinking water by actively encouraging the optimization of treatment plant, distribution system, and wastewater treatment plant operations. In the President’s Message he also introduced the Partnership for Safe Water & Partnership for Clean Water programs. At the Spring Conference in Worcester, MA, NEWWA members can meet Partnership program leaders and volunteers. Partnership staff and volunteers will share how utilities across North America are improving operations by optimizing with the Partnership’s self-assessment guidance while continuously establishing community trust regarding daily operational quality. The drinking water treatment programs were launched in 1995 in response to the Milwaukee Cryptosporidiosis outbreak of 1993. Since then, the Partnership has grown to a subscribership of nearly 700 utility treatment plants and distribution systems. These plants and systems assess operations and implement optimization plans designed to help improve performance – even beyond current regulatory requirements. For wastewater and reuse plant optimization, the Partnership for Clean Water was launched in 2016 and currently has 60 utility subscribers. With the launch of this program, the Partnership now offers a complete set of resources and guidance that relate to the entire water usage cycle – from source water to drinking water treatment and distribution system delivery to wastewater treatment plants and back to the source. The Clean Water program also features an energy management component that is beneficial for high-energy usage at wastewater facilities. For small utilities, the Partnership for Small Systems will be fully unveiled soon and is a component like (other Partnership Programs) of AWWA’s Total Water Solutions® set of resources. The small systems program features a complete set of optimizing components of treatment and distribution operations (many of which utilize a groundwater source). As utilities assess operations with Partnership Program guidance, utilities share specific data sets that allow others in the utility community to quickly identify best-practice data trends that are also critical in improving public recognition, are core components. But, providing utility directors and managers with access to a broad network of utility professionals with similar experiences is also highly valuable. Plus, plant and system employee collaboration and teamwork are also enhanced by participating in the programs.

For more than 20 years the Partnership has supported NEWWA and many other AWWA Sections – and we look forward to doing the same in 2019 by attending conferences and conducting outreach. Be sure to stay informed about Partnership activities with our newsletter and on the AWWA website – and be sure to take part in Partnership activities at ACE19 in Denver this coming June. We look forward to seeing you in Worcester at the Spring Conference!

NEWWA Spring Joint Regional Conference & Exhibition

Wednesday, April 3

Technical Session II: Partnership for Safe Drinking Water

9:00 am – 11:30 am

Opening Remarks: David G. Miller, PE, Manchester Water Works, Manchester, NH & NEWWA President; and Kevin M. Flood, PE, Fuss & O’Neill, Inc., Manchester, CT.

1] History & Overview of Partnership Programs: Mike Barsotti, Champlain Water District, South Burlington, VT – 9:00 am – 9:30 am

2] Partnership Distribution System Optimization Program: Todd Brewer, PhD, PE, Partnership Programs/AWWA, Denver, CO – 9:30 am – 10:00 am

3] Got Buy In?: Kevin Linder, Aurora Water, Aurora, CO – 10:00 am – 10:30 am

4] Three Keys to Success: Dave Hardy, Central Utah Water District, Pleasant Grove, UT – 10:30 am – 11:00 am

5] The Manchester Water Works Road to Excellence: David G. Miller, PE, Manchester Water Works, Manchester, NH – 11:00 am – 11:30 am

Training Contact Hours are available for these sessions.

NEWWA Fall Joint Regional Conference & Exhibition

Wednesday, October 2

Technical Session III: Partnership for Safe Drinking Water

9:00 am – 11:30 am

Opening Remarks: David G. Miller, PE, Manchester Water Works, Manchester, NH & NEWWA President; and Kevin M. Flood, PE, Fuss & O’Neill, Inc., Manchester, CT.

1] History & Overview of Partnership Programs: Mike Barsotti, Champlain Water District, South Burlington, VT – 9:00 am – 9:30 am

2] Partnership Distribution System Optimization Program: Todd Brewer, PhD, PE, Partnership Programs/AWWA, Denver, CO – 9:30 am – 10:00 am

3] Got Buy In?: Kevin Linder, Aurora Water, Aurora, CO – 10:00 am – 10:30 am

4] Three Keys to Success: Dave Hardy, Central Utah Water District, Pleasant Grove, UT – 10:30 am – 11:00 am

5] The Manchester Water Works Road to Excellence: David G. Miller, PE, Manchester Water Works, Manchester, NH – 11:00 am – 11:30 am

*Training Contact Hours are available for these sessions.

Editors’ Note

We welcome letters by members on topics that are timely and of general interest to fellow members.
By Norine Bastilguo

The previous “PR Perspectives” column, “Working with the News Media During a Cyber Attack – Part I,” explained why running scared from the news media during a crisis is not a smart strategy. This strategy can also be a major missed opportunity in cultivating a critical ally when responding to a crisis. By pro-actively working with, rather than fending off, the news media, throughout a crisis, an organization can get ahead of the story and direct the narrative.

This approach also allows an organization to position itself as the authoritative source of timely and accurate information about a crisis—a source that reporters will likely turn to first when covering a crisis.

In the end, an organization can vastly improve its chances for more correct, fair, and balanced news coverage; minimize misinformation; establish credibility; and earn the critical trust of the news media and the public.

Below are a number of essential, time-tested guidelines for working with the news media during a cyber attack. These guidelines, with few exceptions, can be applied to any crisis. Some of these guidelines can also improve an organization’s overall working relations with the news media. For these reasons, these guidelines are explained in some detail:

Communicate promptly with the news media once a cyber attack has been confirmed.

Research has repeatedly shown that such prompt communications significantly increases an organization’s chances for becoming the media’s main source of information during a crisis. Be sure to notify all employees first about a cyber attack before going public with this information. If employees learn about an attack first from the external sources, such as the news media, an organization risks eroding their confidence and trust at a time when it needs the most.

Issue a holding statement to the news media if you lack the necessary verified information about the attack to provide a full statement.

By including a few documented basic facts about the attacks, an organization signals that it is working to contain and reframe the story. By including a few documented basic facts about the attacks, an organization signals that it is working to contain and reframe the story. By including a few documented basic facts about the attacks, an organization signals that it is working to contain and reframe the story. By including a few documented basic facts about the attacks, an organization signals that it is working to contain and reframe the story. By including a few documented basic facts about the attacks, an organization signals that it is working to contain and reframe the story.

Avoid “analysis paralysis.”

When preparing information for public release, particularly, for initial statements after a cyber attack, some organizations overthink the content of all input from multiple parties. Granted, it is prudent to be cautious when releasing such statements. Any information must be completely accurate and verified. But unnecessary delays can be perceived as a cover-up or an admission of guilt. Too much input can muddy the message.

Clear protocols about preparing and approving statements for the news media and the key stakeholders should be established by the crisis communication team.

Provide a constant flow of documentation and timely information to the news media.

Hold frequent news conferences and media briefings. These events reinforce an organization’s position as the main authoritative source of information about a cyber attack. They provide opportunities to emphasize key points, correct misinformation, and answer questions. Such “face-time” with reporters demonstrates openness, transparency, and accessibility.

Be willing to address the bad news as well as the good news.

An organization gains more credibility and respect among the news media each time it acknowledges and addresses bad news, and clearly and effectively.

Own the issue and take responsibility.

Do not make excuses or blame others for a cyber security attack, such as third-party suppliers. Resorting to such tactics can signal to the news media and key stakeholders that an organization lacks the ability to control and prevent such attacks.

The next “PR Perspectives” column will continue to discuss guidelines for working with the news media during a cyber attack.

For profit / competitive water services subsidiary has also made new opportunities very interesting. But above all else, I have had the opportunity to work with and be mentored by a cast of great individuals.

Tell us about your role in public outreach at Pennichuck.

Pennichuck is very involved with educating the public about the importance of water and watershed protection. I have been involved in going to schools within our community to teach students about preserving and protecting our water supply. I have also been lucky enough to have had the opportunity to provide presentations along with tours at our water treatment plant during water week to school children even Lego Team. Pennichuck has also been very supportive of my time volunteering to train new operators at the Small Public Water System Operator Training Course / Pump Station Training field day in Franklin, NH. NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES), in conjunction with New Hampshire Water Association, and the water supply agencies in NHDES has asked me to instruct in the past. My position has also allowed me to assist and attend 7-10 tradeshows every year throughout New Hampshire, where Pennichuck Water Service Corporation has had a booth.

Do you have any advice for new water works professionals just starting out in their career, or in NEWWA?

Stay active and in contact with NEWWA. NEWWA is a great source for industry information, training opportunities and networking. The Young Professionals Committee (YP) does a great job getting NEWWA news and event information out to both new and younger members. I strongly recommend to anyone just starting out take advantage of the YP conference calls and social events. This group is constantly coming up with creative topics and events for everybody.

As far as advice in the water works profession, always listen and ask for advice from seasoned industry professionals and never be afraid to ask questions.
New England Water Works Association’s Board of Directors Appoints New Executive Director

Kirsten King to Transition into New Role

NEWWA’s Board of Directors is pleased to announce the appointment of Kirsten King as its new executive director. Kirsten will begin this role immediately, after a long vacancy due to the passing of its previous executive director last fall. She has been on staff at NEWWA for the past 14 years, first as its director of communications, and more recently as the deputy executive director of administration.

Kirsten is a career-long water professional with more than 20 years in the business. Her experience includes working for a major New England utility and then an engineering consulting firm before joining NEWWA in 2005, where she honed her skills as an association manager. She states: “I am humbled and honored that the board selected me executive director. NEWWA has undergone major transitions over the past 3 years, and I intend to move the organization forward by working closely with the staff, board of directors, and dedicated membership to continue our vision of inspiring excellence in the drinking water profession, public confidence in tap water, and water resource stewardship.”

Kirsten’s experience in both the water and association management professions extends from media relations and public education, to emergency preparedness, event planning and management, grant management, award-winning course development and instruction, relationship building, strategic planning, and association and budgetary management. “After an extensive search process NEWWA’s board is thrilled to welcome such a well-rounded, experienced, and passionate professional to NEWWA’s helm,” said NEWWA President David Miller. “NEWWA’s board is excited to welcome Kirsten into her new role and we look forward to working with her to take the association to the next level.”

Kirsten holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Biology from Westfield State College and a Master’s Degree in Communications from Boston University. She is a member of the American Water Works Association (AWWA), where she sits on the Public Affairs Council, as well as the New England Society of Association Executives, where she sat on the Program Committee and chaired the Communications Task Force for a year. She is a City of Boston Parkman Club inductee, and a recipient of NEWWA’s Public Communications Award. She resides in Burlington, MA, with her husband and children.

Save the Dates — 2019 Major Events

• Spring Joint Regional Conference & Exhibition – April 3-4 – Worcester, MA
• Deer Island Dash 5K for Water For People – May 4 – Boston, MA (MWRA Deer Island WWTP)
• Annual Golf Classic – May 6 – Granite Links – Quincy, MA
• NEWWA ACE2019 – June 9-12, 2019 – Denver, CO
• Annual Water Quality Symposium – May 8 – Doubletree – Milford, MA
• AWWA ACE2019 – June 9-12, 2019 – Denver, CO
• 45th Annual Joint Luncheon with CTAWWA – June 10 – Maggiano’s – Denver, CO

Social Skills

by George R. Allan

Whether you work for a municipal department or a private company, business etiquette should be an important part of your daily life. Too often, however, we all focus on the technical skills associated with our job and don’t consider the importance of social skills in our interactions with our peers or the public. Because of the world we live in, texts and emails rather than personal interaction have become the norm. Training today’s workforce in these “soft” skills typically hasn’t been a priority.

There are many social settings where knowing basic etiquette techniques can help improve a person’s standing in the eyes of one’s peers. The key is being comfortable around people and making people feel comfortable around you. Whether it is at the “attitude adjustment hour” at the Spring Conference, a meeting luncheon or a committee meeting, NEWWA offers many opportunities to develop and use your social skills. You will also encounter other situations such as client luncheons. With that in mind, here are some tips and some do’s and don’ts.

Anyone who has attended a NEWWA meeting knows that during lunch you will be sitting at a table with seven or nine other people. There will be glasses and dishes everywhere. You’re probably thinking which glass or bread dish is yours. Here is an easy way to get it right. It is something I learned years ago—BMW. Bread dish on the left; Meal dish in the middle; and Water glass to the right. With the eating utensils, start at the outside and work in toward the dish. During this same luncheon, if you need to pass the rolls or butter, it is customary to pass it counterclockwise. If someone without your etiquette skills has started passing something in the opposite direction, don’t change it.

If you are at a meeting and you are trying to end a conversation with someone, don’t walk away while they are talking. Wait for your turn and disengage gracefully by saying something like, “Nice talking to you. I will let you go so you can talk to some other people.” Always have a good exit line. At meetings or other occasions, you will probably be introduced to someone. If you are sitting, stand for the introduction. Repeat that new person’s name. That will help you remember it. And give them your full name. Another important skill is knowing the proper technique for shaking hands. A handshake is the basic business greeting and needs to be done correctly. You need to look the person in the eye when shaking hands. The handshake should be firm but don’t try to show how strong you are and put the other person’s hand in a death grip.

In addition to business or professional settings, etiquette is also important in the workplace. Many people now work in open spaces or cubicles, which makes it even more important to be respectful of your fellow workers. Knowing how to interact with others will earn you respect. Conversely, acting inappropriately will adversely affect your relationships with co-workers.

Here are a few tips for the workplace:

Meetings

• Arrive on time; priority one.
• Pay attention to what is being said.
• No texting or checking emails; silence your phone.
• Don’t dominate the discussion.

Emails

• When replying to emails, don’t hit “reply all” unless everyone really needs to see your response. “Reply to sender” may be more appropriate.
• When you send an email, don’t use all caps. The recipient might interpret that as shouting.
• Check spelling and grammar but don’t rely on auto correct, which could substitute an embarrassing word. Proofread before hitting the send button.

• Make the subject line specific. It could get you a quicker response.
• Remember an email is a legal document. Don’t put anything in it that could come back to haunt or embarrass you years later.

Phones

• Return all phone calls (and emails) within 24 hours.
• Don’t put your phone on speaker when you are in the office. Keep your voice down.
• Be respectful of your co-workers’ privacy.

When you want to be taken seriously in our profession, you need to hone your social skills as well as your technical skills. The best way to do that is to practice proper etiquette daily so that it becomes a habit.
Inspecting Your Water Storage Tank

By Joe Pappo, Distribution & Storage Committee

Water storage tanks are an integral part of most water systems throughout the country. Communities depend on them to operate day in and day out without issue. An untimely issue or realization that your tank needs attention can throw off an entire system’s operations, leaving you without adequate storage when you need it most. Inspecting your water storage tank does not have to be a major operation. Setting up a standard schedule to perform routine, periodic, and comprehensive inspections will help you discover minor issues before they cause major issues and better prepare you for any tank down-time.

Routine inspections are as simple as a quick visit to perform a visual inspection of the tank and the surrounding site. The intent is to identify major or obvious changes in the tank appearance or the site conditions. Examples are storm damage, vandalism, unauthorized entry, or significant leakage. Routine inspections should be performed weekly or monthly by a member of your staff that frequently visits the site, like a groundskeeper or sampler technician.

Periodic inspections are a more detailed investigation at the tank structure and its appurtenances. These should be performed quarterly or annually depending on local requirements and the age of your tank. Periodic inspections can be performed by a trained member of your staff, mostly visually, and focus on the overall structure, the appurtenances, and other basic regulatory items. It is recommended that a standard checklist be developed to create a record of the inspection including date and inspector. It is also important to take photographs and attach them to the checklist, so any changes over time can be more easily identified. Key items to check are vents, overflows, access hatches, ladders, coatings, and to identify any visible leakage.

Finally, comprehensive inspections are performed by a professional tank inspection company. Most states require this type of inspection every 3 to 5 years. It is important that the inspector you choose has sufficient experience and knowledge of the type of tanks you own. Don’t be afraid to ask your tank inspector for their qualifications and a list of references of similar style tank inspections.

The intent of a comprehensive inspection is to develop an overall condition assessment of your tank. If the tank can be taken out of service, the interior portion of the inspection can be performed with the tank empty. If system operations prevent this, an underwater diver or remotely operated vehicle (ROV) can also be used. The inspector should be reviewing and commenting on structural integrity, coating condition, as well as sanitation, security, and site conditions. It is also beneficial for the final report to provide clear recommendations and accurate cost estimates to complete the recommendations.

Having a plan when it comes to tank inspections is very valuable and can have a significant economic impact. You will identify items that need correction early on, when they are still minor and less costly to repair. Regular inspections also allow for you to have an accurate real-time assessment of your tanks condition so that you can properly budget and plan for future work.

Excerpt from “Safe Water in Rulindo”

By Chelsea Durante & Water For People

NEWWA’s Water For People Committee

“We’re very happy,” Bernard says. He and his wife Febronie are happy their two young grandsons don’t have to walk so far to fetch water. They’re happy that the new water point supports the entire village, improving lives for everyone. A change that will last forever, through sustainable water resources that fund operations and maintenance well into the future.

In a small village of the Rulindo district in Rwanda, grand-parents Bernard and Febronie live on a farm with their two young grandsons. On the lush hillsides, they raise cows and grow yams, potatoes, and beans. The boys are not studying, they help with the crops and livestock, and also help their grandma prepare meals. Many things contribute to the family’s health, happiness, and hopes for the future.

Safe water is the foundation for achieving these hopes.

Last year, a water point was installed near their home through a partnership between the local government and Water For People (WFP). Previously, the family had to walk 2 hours up and down hills to find water for drinking, washing vegetables, cooking, and bathing. For the aging grandparents, this daily trek was physically difficult. For the young boys, this chore often kept them from school and their studies.

Now, things are different. “We’re very happy,” Bernard says. 2.1 billion people around the world don’t have access to safe water and 4.5 billion lack access to adequate sanitation. Women and children spend more than 4 hours walking for water each day, and more than $400,000 people die each year from water-related diseases. For this family and countless more, investing in “Everyone Forever” has made a major impact in their lives today, and will for generations yet to come.

WFP exists to promote the development of high-quality drinking water and sanitation services, accessible to all, and sustained by strong communities, businesses, and governments. We’re working to reach Everyone Forever.

NEWWA’s WFP Committee is one of over 50 committees across North America supporting WFP in its mission to bring safe water and sanitation to people around the world. The committee accomplishes this through community outreach, advocacy, and fundraising, often in partnership with the New England Water Environment Association’s WFP Committee. One of the most successful committee events is the biennial WFP Gala. The 2018 gala raised over $33,000-net proceeds went directly to WFP. Our committee cannot continue to do this type of work without help from sponsors and volunteers. If you are interested in getting involved please contact Chelsea Durante at cdurante@woodardcurran.com.
University Outreach at MIT

NEWWA’s Young Professionals and University Outreach Committees represented the association at the MIT Water Club’s 2019 MIT Water Night in late February. “Water Night” is a free program for local high school students to learn about water issues while practicing their research and communication skills, run by MIT graduate students.

Our December meeting is a great networking event with plenty of opportunities to catch up with old friends and make new connections.
Joint November Monthly Meeting with the Rhode Island Water Works Association
November 15, 2018 — Lincoln, RI

Sean Osborne (left) and Robert Marquis (right) received their Membership Tenure Awards from NEWWA President David Miller. Sean marked 25 years with AWWA and Robert 40 years with NEWWA, Inc. Congrats!

January Monthly Meeting with the New Hampshire Water Works Association
January 17, 2019 — Portsmouth, NH

Dr. Raymond Talkington accepts the David M. Erickson Groundwater Award from Andy Miller (left) and Barbara Cook. The award recognizes those who have demonstrated excellence in the field of groundwater science as it relates to groundwater supply development, management, and protection.

The City of Portsmouth, NH, accepted the 2018 Public Communications Award, which acknowledges excellence in communications through comprehensive public outreach materials and programs.