



## Remembering... and Appreciating

By: Don Craig, Deputy Director

December 2017  
Newsletter

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The old adage, "You only go around once in life"... becomes more apparent with each passing year. And those have been many for me.

I look around at all the "conveniences" most all of us in the United States, have in our grasp; and then think how much we take those things for granted. Specifically, just the convenience of quantity, quality, and access to potable water is abundant in our country through various mediums, including rural public water systems.

This is not to say, that all is perfect for all people in our nation... because the need is still, and probably will always be there for many, many people that are not getting the 'luxury' of receiving a clean, safe, and abundant water supply. But, all in all, we are far exceeding many countries throughout the world, in getting our most precious commodity, to the people.

I remember as a kid, our many trips to my maternal grandparents' home. It was a farm in a rural area east of Frankfort, IN. I was always so excited to get there and try out the water well hand pump, near the rear entrance to their home, and it was always as cold as cold could be.... well, at least we thought so. And, for some reason, it tasted so different, so special, and just honestly better than any water you ever drank.

Try to remember..... we were just kids, so our 'expertise' in water quality was kind of limited, to say the least.

As you may have realized by now, there was NO indoor plumbing in their old farm house... none. And, that's not to mention, no ducted heating... but, that's another tale. So on with the story... As great as the pump outside was, the real gem, was the well pump inside the house, in the big pantry area. Honestly, to them, that was the "Cat's #\*\* (Rear)"! I mean, to have water ac-

cess, from the inside, especially in those cold winters, was as good as it could get.

Grandma was constantly hand pumping water to fill pots for cooking use, and also in buckets to fill tubs for personal cleaning, even bathing. Understand though, each of those buckets of water had to be heated on the coal fired stove, before putting in the big tubs for bathing. It was a hard, seemingly endless job completed day after day. But, there was no mention of the hardship of this endeavor, because having a plentiful supply of water was more important and appreciated, than the concern over the labor involved in its uses.

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 each of those buckets  
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 fired stove....

My grandparents endured many more years before they finally had plumbing put throughout the house...never once during that time, did they complain. But, to say they were ecstatic with the 'wonder' of proper plumbing for potable water and sewage...was to say the least.

Oh yeah, I didn't even get to the 'fun' times having to go outside, and up the hill to use the wonderful "2 man" out-house! Now honestly.... who in their right mind, would want someone else sitting next to you to take care of business... as they say? I have never have figured that one out..... ha. Anyway, in closing... we all need to come down to earth sometimes, and appreciate things that are truly important. When it comes to water, we all take it for granted... in some respect.

For example...I can't even imagine heating large amounts of water up every day to bathe, let alone use for other things.

Remembering the hardships our grandparents and great-grandparents went through... should make us appreciate all we have. As an Association, we all need to continue to work together, so that all people can have the luxury of having good water quality, quantity, and access!

### IRWA'S MISSION STATEMENT

**“Protecting and preserving the water and wastewater resources  
 of Rural Illinois through education, representation and on-site  
 technical assistance”**



By: Roger Noe, Circuit Rider

Cyber security is the body of technologies, processes, and practices to protect computers, programs, and data from attack, damage or unauthorized and physical security. Cyberattacks do not depend on size of the utility. Sometimes cyberattacks are performed because of easy access to certain information. Potential impacts would be unauthorized access, theft, misuse of data, and loss of integrity of control system availability, equipment damage, personnel injury, and violation of legal and regulatory requirement. Today, more utilities are using remote monitoring and connecting their control systems to the internet. You may think the computer running your Scada is not connected to the internet, but if it is connected to your server with other computers or modems, you are connected. Basic cyber security starts with the human sitting behind the computer. Viruses can enter your computer system through several pathways including email attachments, bad links, compromised websites, or USB drives. There are several safeguards you can take to make your utility system more secure. These are basic “best practices”, and individual utilities can adapt and modify them to fit their entity.

First, the easiest and least expensive best practice is password security. There should be a limited number of administrators who have privilege to change and update passwords. Passwords should be changed frequently and contain letters, numbers, and special characters. Surprisingly, many people use a generic password that is initially set up and they never change it. When personnel leave the operation, the administrator needs to change pass-

words. Though it may sound obvious, do not write passwords and leave them in an easy to see place.

Computers need to have an anti-virus program installed and regularly updated. Windows Operating Systems are particularly vulnerable to malware. There should also be a plan for routine system back-ups and safe storage of those back-ups, such as a fireproof safe off-site.

Be aware of the types of media you are inserting into your computer. Anything with a USB drive can contain a virus. You should scan the USB drive when prompted after inserting it into your computer.

The server you use has loads of information that is at risk. There needs to be a firewall between every computer that you are using in your system. The firewalls need to be installed correctly, because if they are not, they can actually do more harm than good.

Finally, the easiest way to keep your system safe is careful web browsing. Only visit secure sites. Only open attachments in email that you are confident are legitimate. 88% of all phishing incidents are caused by users clicking on links in emails. Furthermore, 90% of all email is spam or viruses.

By implementing these practices, you can reduce the chance that your system will be infected. There is no fool-proof method to ensure security, but you can introduce measures to protect your utility and its data.



**Water Well Solutions**

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## **CORRECTION!!**

Please make a correction in your Industry Contact Book. The contact person for Water Well Solutions is Todd Kerry. His e-mail address is [tkerry@utilityservice.com](mailto:tkerry@utilityservice.com).

**By: Wayne Nelson, IRWA (retired)**

There's an old saying that the job isn't done until the paperwork is. The following article confirms it.

The vast majority of water plant operators do one hell of a job. They often work in extremely cold, hot, or wet conditions at all times of the day or night. They do this without much praise for their hard work and often without the compensation that they deserve. Then there is a very small portion of operators that pretty much just coast through the day.

However, what do all of these operators sometimes have in common? Sometimes the answer is "we don't always keep up to date on our paperwork. As operators, we know that there are deadlines for nearly every type of report that we must do but sometimes it doesn't get done on time. For the good operator it's often because they're working hard at other things and the bad operators just don't care but the bottom line is that it still must be done. (Please see first line of article for clarification!)

This has been an issue for the Illinois EPA for several years. Sanctions against an operator's certification is a long process with the result often not worth the time and effort of agency personnel and legal counsel. This has changed with the implementation of the Administrative Citation (AC). In a nutshell, if a Responsible Operator in Charge (ROINC) receives an AC he or she doesn't lose their certification for any specified amount of time and the system that they serve as its ROINC is not penalized.

What it does do is this: If an AC is issued to a ROINC that individual receives a monetary fine and must pay it from their own pocket. If the fine is not paid by the due date interest will also be added. And, even if the fine is paid, the ROINC may still face future prosecution if the violation(s) continues. An AC may start with a complaint from an IEPA staffer such as a regional office engineer

that has conducted sanitary surveys at the ROINC's water system and found reporting issues. This complaint then moves to the Compliance Assurance Section (CAS), and then on to the Division of Legal Counsel (DLC) where the Administrative Citation packet is prepared. This notice is then sent to the ROINC who has 30 days to either pay the fine or appeal the AC. There is no hearing unless requested by the operator.

One of the first instances when an AC was issued involves a ROINC that was employed by two different mobile home parks. The operator had a long history (around 3 years) of not submitting the monthly operating reports for these systems within the required 30-day period after the end of the reporting month. It wasn't even that the reports were late-they weren't submitted period. The regional office engineer that performed a paperwork review at these facilities submitted a sworn affidavit and the AC procedure began its course through the system.

The ROINC received a total fine of \$1000.00 (or \$500.00 for each of the violations at the two systems). During my research for this article I learned that the reason for the AC is not for the operator that sometimes is a couple of months behind sending in his reports but rather for a chronic violator of the regulations. Also, unlike the operator sanction procedures that can take months or years, it may only take a matter of a couple of months to go from the initial filing of charges to the final determination of the case. The AC is considered a civil and not a criminal offense.

Keep in mind that an AC may be issued to the ROINC of a water system not only for failure to submit their monthly operating reports but perhaps for the non-issuance of CCRs and other required reports.



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THE IRWA BOARD AND  
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**IS 13 REALLY AN UNLUCKY NUMBER?**

**By: Heather McLeod, Membership Services Assistant**

We are just winding down after the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Northern Conference. Attendance was lower this year, with only 86 people registering and the weather was dreary once again. However, we still filled the exhibit hall with exhibitors eager to share their products and services, and training rooms with speakers willing to share their knowledge of different topics with all of us. We had delicious food to eat, and friends new and old to catch up with on breaks and after hours. So, in the end I am still calling the conference a success.

Thank you to all who attended and exhibited. Special thanks to those who sent out postcards to your clients to try and help boost attendance, our exhibitors who donated a total of \$1075 in cash prizes, and of course our spon-

sors: Ferguson Waterworks, L & S Electric, Municipal Well & Pump, and Water Well Solutions.

Congratulations to all the cash prize winners, Ed Dole from the Village of Cambridge who won a \$100 Visa gift card for returning his postcard from Dixon Engineering, and to Dale Swineheart from DeKalb Water Department for winning the grand prize of an Amazon Echo Dot.

We will be returning to Giovanni's next fall on October 23 & 24, 2018.

