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the price of wear & tear

(AND MY HORRIBLE WINTER)



This past winter took everything out of me. Extreme temperatures day in and day out made my daily commute (which involves lots of waiting outside for various modes of public transportation) incredibly uncomfortable—painful, really. Blinding snow and an unforgiving windchill served as the frosty icing on the most miserable cake ever. I won't even get into how high my heating bill was this winter.

It appears that spring is finally in the air; and even though my pockets and my heart are drained, I believe that because I've known these hardships, I won't take for granted the little things—like warm weather and a normal heating bill. But most importantly, I'll be a little more mindful when it comes to saving for rainy days (or in this case, blizzard days).

I think a similar phenomenon occurs when one is tasked with protecting pumping systems from wear and tear, and the strides facilities need to take these days to stay as energy efficient as possible when the going gets rough.

Energy costs are on the rise, which means end users have to be sure their pumps are operating at maximum efficiency. For example, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the electricity price index reached a new high in January 2014, with the largest month-to-month increase in almost four years.

What's more, this year, the average price for a kilowatt-hour of electricity in a U.S. city also hit an all-time January high of 13.4 cents.

When the cost of pumping is ever increasing, it also is important to think about the durability of the pumps being selected for the toughest jobs. Let's face it: A wastewater pump has a rough life. It has to handle everything from soda cans, to stones, to rags—you name it. Wear and tear on a pump can lead to lower efficiency.

The final leg of this epiphany is the idea of maintenance. End users should be sure to take a proactive approach when checking up on their systems. In fact, this issue of *Pump Source* features an article on one city's proactive and disciplined approach to pump maintenance, and why it was so important.

To sum up, pumping systems are vital to the entire wastewater installation, so they need to be properly managed, even when times are tough—or rather, *especially* when times are tough.

Happy Spring!

Elisabeth Lisican

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