

# THERE'S NO "I" IN TEAM

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Everyone has heard the old saying “there’s no I in team”. We laugh and joke about it, but it certainly is true. Every successful water and wastewater agency in the world has a strong team mentality that is evident in each level of the chain of command.

A successful team requires an excellent leader. The leader needs to have a vision for the department, usually determined by the mission statement and goals of the agency. This person also needs to focus on achieving the pre-determined goals, with the input and assistance of each and every employee. Mutual trust, understanding, and open lines of communication are vital for a strong leader to create a proactive and productive team.

Each section within the department needs to function as a team whether it is managerial, financial, or operational....they all need to work as one for the utility to be not only successful, but to thrive in our ever difficult financial times. A team is only as strong as its weakest link! Successful team members will always provide positive reinforcement when required, assisting fellow employees when required. We’ve all been there, and had the choice to make, do we help a co-worker who is struggling or do we just go the other way? A good team member will always choose to help, which will begin the creation of a strong bond, and a stronger team. As long as the earth continues to spin there will be disagreements and tension at times between co-workers. Hey, we don’t have to invite each other over for a cookout, but we do need to maintain a positive and equal work relationship.

As many of you know, I am a bit stubborn, and tend to think I can do everything myself. Even I need the help of our “Rural Water Team” from time to time. This became very evident over the month of July. You see, in that month, both Morris and I were faced with serious illnesses in our families. We needed to be home with our loved ones during these trying times. We’ve all been there, and we all know that the work does not stop, and our mission and goals are still a daily concern. In our case, our mission is to provide low cost solutions to the issues facing water utilities across the state. While we were with our families the calls for service did not stop. Our team, meaning our co-workers, picked up the slack and worked long hours to ensure everyone was provided service in a timely manner. A big thank you goes out to all of our co-workers, for giving of yourselves and your time to allow us the time with our families.

For a water utility, the mission is generally to supply adequate

amounts of high quality water at an affordable cost, with the highest level of customer assistance. This can be a daunting task, but if all sections of the system, managerial, financial, and operational staff have one similar focus, a clearly defined mission and goals, and maintain open lines of communication, then you are certain to be successful and maintain **Quality on Tap!** 💧💧💧

