

HOW TO HIRE THE RIGHT ENGINEER

The key to a successful water project is the same as for almost any other endeavor. It can basically be summed up in one word. TEAMWORK! The water systems that seem to function the best years down the road with the least amount of cost are the ones that were designed with input from several sources.

The board members, or decision makers need to have input for various reasons. Not the least of which is that they have to be accountable to their constituents when it comes to rates and fees to pay for the project and its operation and maintenance. They need to communicate this to the project engineer right from the very beginning.

The bookkeeper, or clerk needs to be involved, as they are the ones that keep the financing together during and after the project. They need clear communications with the engineer throughout the project as to loan and grant applications as well as paying contractors and others.

The water operator is a very important part of the project, as they are the ones that are going to have to be able to operate and maintain the system for many years to come. The operator needs to understand what is being built and how it is going to work. If a component of the system doesn't work properly, can the operator repair it or at least be able to get someone to fix the problem in a timely and affordable fashion.

The board members, clerk, and operator work in the water system everyday. The one part of the water project that everyone needs to feel comfortable with is the engineer. A good engineer will listen to everyone involved in the project. If someone has an idea or suggestion during the project the engineer should be able to explain why it will or will not work. A good engineer is one of the most important aspects of a water project. Yet many water systems spend very little if any time on the engineering selection process.

The following is a very good guide that I was able to obtain. It comes from the Washington State Department of Health Training and Outreach Section. It refers to the State of Washington regulations in several points. To my knowledge, these are not much different than here in Nebraska.

IF YOU HAVE FURTHER QUESTIONS

Contact any one of the following

NEBRASKA RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION- 1-800-842-8039

AMERICAN COUCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES
OF NEBRASKA (402)-476-2572

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