

RBC SERVICES UPDATE

RBC Services
Division of McNish Corporation

Phone: 630-264-5241 Fax: 630-892-7951

RBC PLANT UPGRADES & EXPANSIONS

Issue 2, 2000

Many RBC plants currently in operation are 13 to 18 years old. Quite a few of these plants are, or will be undergoing evaluations regarding their respective effectiveness for the future. In some cases, the communities have grown, or plan to expand their plant's capabilities due to the desire to attract industry or have had their permits renewed which included requirements for which the plant was not originally designed to handle.

Now, for some odd reason, most plant *operators* are *not included* or their *input* is *not considered* when discussions are held regarding a plant they are expected to run. Instead, that responsibility is given to a person who will likely be nowhere around if you run into trouble. It is the experienced, hands-on operator who has the knowledge of the real world when it comes to plant operations.

When today's engineers are hired to perform these evaluations and suggest process equipment for an upgrade or expansion, it seems their first recommendation is to get rid of the RBCs and start all over with some form of activated sludge...a process that is much more difficult to operate and consumes a lot more time and energy.

Quite contrary to uneducated opinions, RBCs are not a failed technology. The fact is, the activated sludge process is easier to figure from an engineering standpoint. However, the operation of it will be the operator's responsibility. And good chances are, there will be no assistance once it's turned over to you. So, good luck.

If the plant you operate was originally designed with RBCs, the other unit processes within the plant were designed to consider the RBC process. It is actually easier to upgrade or expand *using* RBCs and include current application standards. Why take the time and expense to design a new plant? Simply re-compute what already exists and increase the capacity to suit your requirements. **The plant does not need to be redesigned!**

When speaking with the vast majority of RBC operators, their opinions of the equipment and its process is good. They'll say they just turn the RBC on and it keeps rolling and doing its job.

In many of these cases however, the RBCs operate well enough to where they are inadvertently forgotten until there is a problem. But, every piece of equipment needs routine maintenance. If the RBCs are kept in good repair and the weight is kept under control, there are no problems.

There may have been mechanical problems with some RBCs in the past. And, it would be understandable in those cases to think that the RBCs were going to be trashed anyway, so why not try something new. But, consideration must first be given to the fact that today's RBC equipment is far superior to that of yesterday's RBCs; and secondly, to the overall cost of total plant modification installing a whole new process.

In cases when RBC plants were upgraded using an alternate form of process, the operators didn't want to part with the RBCs because of their ease of operation, but had no say in the matter. And once the new process was underway, there was more time and effort involved with all the adjustments required to maintain a constant level of treatment.

In most every case, even replacing all the current RBCs and installing additional RBCs or even Submerged Biological Contactors (SBCs) to expand the facility, it is far more cost effective when properly applied, and is able to provide the efficiency required for more stringent effluent requirements.

If you will be faced with a situation of this sort and would like to discuss your options, just pick up the phone and give me a call. We can provide you with actual numbers of a facility which saved a ton of money staying with RBCs as opposed to making a switch. And, their level of process treatment increased as well.

Don't hesitate to call...and don't forget - using our toll free number starts your savings as soon as pick up the phone.