

# Concrete Factors

## THE QUEST FOR WISDOM

There was a very wise man who once said; "If any man lack wisdom let him ask". I believe there comes a point in time where every man just ought to know when enough is enough.

As a pre-caster with an interest in the wastewater industry, we set out on a quest for the answers that we thought would bring us closer to a wise decision on the selection of an aerobic system. Knowing nothing about these systems it seemed a great place to start at the World Wide Web. Boy was I shocked!

Is it possible that so many, that have so much that are so close, are actually in the same business? How do you even begin to tell the difference? Or is there any? At first glance everything seems to blend together. So what's a guy to do? He picks up the phone and begins dialing each manufacturer to ask as many stupid and dumb questions as he can only to be agreed with by the manufacturer. He thinks you're stupid too... Who have you been talking to? What similar products have you seen? "OH, by the way, ours is the best!"

So as anyone would do in this case, I planned a trip to an expo, I mean at least I would be able to have some hands on experience. Only once again to be completely overwhelmed by the amount of product available and the high pressure sales techniques only previously rivaled by the used car industry. "OH, by the way, ours is the best!"

And that's where I made my first mistake.... The phone calls started, the information gate was opened and I was on my way to being an educated consumer, or was I? A whole new can of worms were presented. BOD's, TSS, Nitrates, Nitrogen, Ammonia, NSF. I

needed to be a college senior biology student just to begin to understand just what it takes to protect ourselves and the environment. Add to that the difference between drip or spray, mound or field, oh, and don't forget about the laws of your particular area. I truly was on a quest that had left me at the starting gate. I am no further along now than when I started. "Oh, by the way, ours blows the competition away!"

Then out of nowhere, someone who could and would answer my questions and who had real knowledge of not only his product, but the products of many others. One who didn't mind taking the time to sit with me and draw pictures so this little feeble mind could comprehend the simple but effective design of a system that has a proven track record. I was treated with respect and was invited to a facility where I could actually observe the design and assembly of the products. Taken step by step into the workings of how and what these systems were designed for. Questions about the future of these systems and how they related to our particular indus-

try were answered. Also, directions were given on how to successfully enter into a relationship that would benefit the systems manufacturer and the pre-caster.

It was becoming perfectly clear. After all, isn't that the end result we were looking for? With the new regulations that are coming into view and the growing concern with our water quality. Our task should be to find and use those systems in which we can be proud to represent and that perform with excellent results while performing in a low maintenance atmosphere with energy conservation at the fore front. So, as you can see, with any new endeavor, time and patience is an advantage. Taking the time to explore and ask the silly questions just may be the next piece of information that unlocks the door to our quest for wisdom..."Oh, by the way, ours is the best!"

**By David Seuis - Guest Editorial**



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