

## Going Above and Beyond

### Michael Barnett & the Operations Staff

*Douglas County Sewer District*

Michael Barnett has been with the Douglas County Sewer District in the combined treatment/collection system division for 23 years.

As a Wastewater Class IV operator, he has time and time again demonstrated vast knowledge, analytical acumen, and a strong desire to provide efficient service in a fiscally responsible manner.

Michael became Chief Operator in 2003, and has since aggressively promoted a team approach to operation and maintenance of the treatment plant and collection system.

Last year, Michael was asked to submit an article to the Pacific Northwest Clean Water Association for their newsletter on the District's Autothermal Thermophilic Aerobic Digestion (ATAD) treatment process. The article can be seen in the Summer 2017 edition.

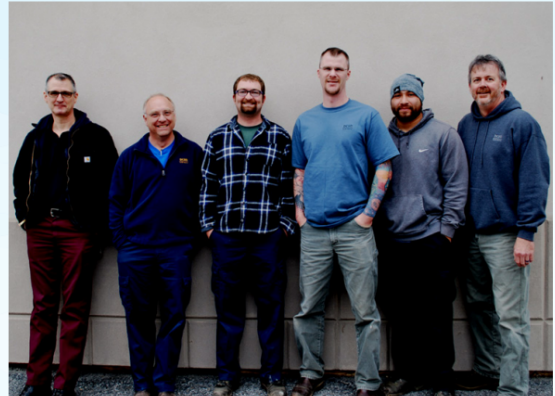
As the article explains, the treatment plant is within the city limits of East Wenatchee, Washington, and prevailing winds carry any odor toward town. Odor complaints were common and had

been a concern of the public and neighboring businesses in our small community for years.

The article is lengthy, and somewhat technical in nature, but beyond the treatment information it explains, you would read that a team 'think-tank' approach was promoted to analyze and research ways to minimize creation of odor in the treatment process. As a result of this group effort, the Operations Staff was able to identify complex, yet inexpensive operational changes that minimized the creation of odor, thereby eliminating the need for large capital projects intended to control the odor.

Mike and the Operations Staff were not content to see the District spend resources on expensive mitigation projects before exhausting the possibility of minimizing odor creation by a change in the treatment process.

These efforts were extremely successful. After implementing the changes to the treatment process identified through the Operations Staff research, odor complaints related to



*Pictured from L to R: Michael Barnett, David Lane, Kyle Nelson, Mark West, David Léon, Stuart Kays*

treatment plant operations have disappeared almost entirely. The District, and the ratepayers by default, saved on the costs of large capital improvement projects that were no longer needed.

The Douglas County Sewer District Board of Commissioners and the District Manager wish to commend each and every one of you for your hard work, dedication, and for 'Going Above and Beyond'! Your efforts are appreciated more than you know and certainly worthy of recognition.