

Valve Exercising - Input Needed



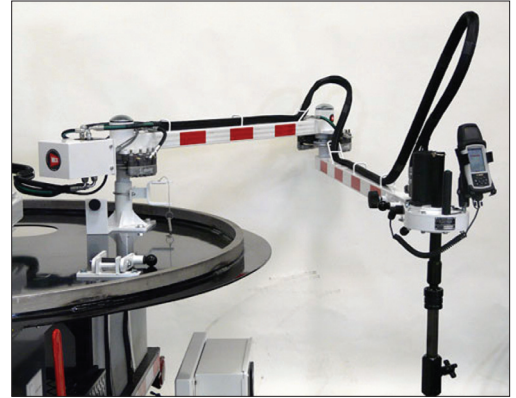
Jeff Dale MRWA Technical Advisor

MRWA needs your input. In the past ten years MRWA has been very proactive acquiring equipment for our members to use. Many of our vendor partners have made these equipment purchases possible.

I get several calls each year asking if we have gate valve exercising equipment or if we know of a company who rents them out. At this time I do not know of a company that is renting this type of equipment. MRWA is in the process of researching avenues to acquire this type of equipment because there is a great need for it.

All cities should be exercising their gate valves annually and not many are doing it. The excuses for not doing this each year are many such as: *"I don't have time."* *"I don't have the employees."* *"I didn't think about it."* and *"No one told me I had to do it"*.

Well, with all the hydrants I repair each year and the water main breaks I'm involved in, I see the need to make this a priority. Too many times the valves do not hold or are simply too hard to operate. If you are not exercising your valves annually you will have trouble when you least expect it. For example, picture this scenario: a water main break in January and you can't get the water shut off to make the repair. The contractor who is helping you is being paid by the hour. You are spending your time closing more and more



MRWA is considering valve exercising equipment similar to the Wachs model pictured above. Photo courtesy of www.ehwachs.com.

"I see the need to make this a priority."

valves while they are waiting for you to get the main shut down. Often this leads to frustration, and in many cases your only option is to take the water tower out of service. This results in a complete loss of pressure in your distribution system. When you have a complete pressure loss in your distribution system, you should initiate a boil water order. Cross connections become very dangerous when your system achieves negative pressure. **You can see why it's important to exercise your gate valves.**

So I need your input please: if MRWA invested \$13,000 dollars for valve exercising equipment, we need this equipment to pay for itself. The idea is we will have a replacement and/or maintenance fee that we will charge each system that would use the equipment. We are looking at \$175.00 per day or \$800.00 per week. In our contract with each user we would have disclaimers for weather or a city emergency that prevented its use. The equipment would be operated by the city staff. We do not want to charge by hours on the machine but instead charging by the day or week will help keep the machine on a working schedule to move on to the next city.

Please send me your thoughts to my e-mail address at: jeff.dale@mrwa.com. Do you think the cost is too high? Would you use it or not? Do you think it is a good idea? If you would use this service and would like to get on our list? So, you can see I need your input to move ahead! Thank you!

Here are the means to contact me: jeff.dale@mrwa.com. Call 320-760-0552 for my cell and/or 800-367-6792 for the office. I look forward to hearing from you.



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