



## Enter the Michigan Section AWWA Gimmicks and Gadgets Contest to Win \$500

That whatchamacallit that you developed is saving your utility time and money, and it could earn you some extra cash and a Section annual conference registration as well. To be eligible to win, tell the Water Treatment Practices Committee about your original device or idea by entering the Michigan Section AWWA Gimmicks and Gadgets Contest.

Briefly describe your clever idea and submit it, along with photos or illustrations, to the Water Treatment Practices Committee by May for this year's contest. The prizes will be presented at the Annual Section Awards Luncheon.

### Rules

Gimmicks and Gadgets entries are judged on the basis of originality, simplicity, use, and application to the water industry. A successful entry will be a novel and relatively simple mechanical device or procedure. Gimmicks can include computer programming ideas or software that helps to make your utility operate more efficiently. It should be designed to provide a more efficient, safe, or simplified means of performing routine tasks or a function in the maintenance, operation, or construction, of a water utility system.

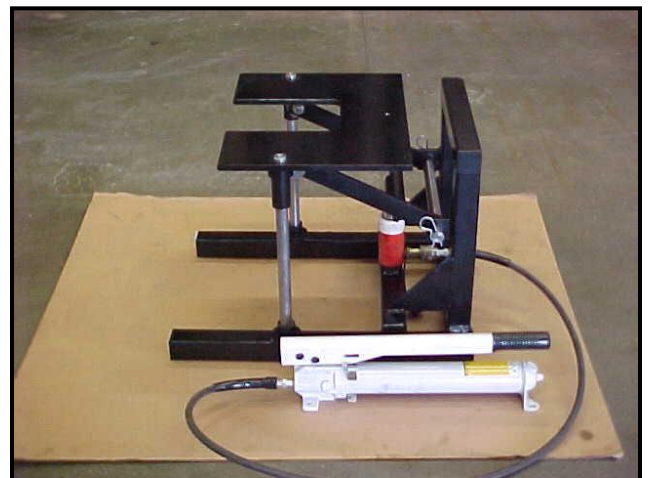
Entries are requested to be complete and submitted by May 1 for this contest year. All entries must be submitted by a current employee(s) of a Michigan water utility.

Send drawings or photos. The old adage "a picture is worth a thousand words" still holds true. Submit the device description and photos by mail or digitally in MS Word or Adobe (pdf) format. Photos must be mailed, or submitted digitally in .tif or .jpg format.

You can e-mail(preferred), US Mail or fax your entry to:

email to: [wtpcomm@mi-water.org](mailto:wtpcomm@mi-water.org)

or fax to: (616) 464-3990



***Ralph Brecken of the City of Lowell Department of Public Works was the 2006 winner with his clarifier drive lift.***

# ***How to Write and Submit a Gimmicks and Gadgets Entry***

## **How to Get Started**

The idea for the device or procedure is really the most important part of the story. Everything else (the details of how to construct and implement, and so forth) can usually be set down in a simple standard format.



If you have ever solved a problem for your utility by inventing some sort of tool or new method for getting a job done more quickly, better, or for less cost to the utility, then you have created a gimmick or gadget. That was the hard part of the process. The next step is to put the idea on paper to share with your peers in the water industry — and possibly win a cash prize.

## **The "Gimmicks and Gadgets" Article Outline**

1. Begin with your name, title or position, affiliation or organization, and location. If you are submitting the idea for another person, please provide the name of the inventor(s) of the G&G.
2. Next, give the gadget or procedure a name (for example, the lid-lifter, meter box lock-out, and so forth); any title that briefly describes what the gadget or procedure does will do. If it's not easy to describe the idea in a couple words, then describe it as well as you can in a sentence.
3. Describe why the gimmick or gadget was needed. Include the problems that were experienced by the utility before the device was used or the procedure implemented.
4. List the equipment and supplies needed to make the gadget. This list should include the exact dimensions, sizes, and quantities that are needed to build the device. If possible, include a total price of the supplies and the total amount of time it takes to build the device.
5. The easiest way to explain how to build the device is to use a simple step-by-step approach. Begin with the very first step you took to construct it. Be careful not to skip any steps; the readers need to know all the details of construction in order to grasp the idea well enough to reproduce it in their own workplace.
6. Finish by describing what was achieved by using the device. How much money and time has the idea saved? List any other benefits that have resulted from its use, such as improved operator skills or record keeping, safer working conditions, increased job pride, or streamlined office procedures.