

BO ANDERSSON, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF FLOMATIC CORP.

Industry veteran reflects on a range of topics and looks ahead to the future.

By Mike Price

Bo Andersson has paved the way in the groundwater industry, holding more than 14 patents as president and CEO of Flomatic Corp.

Andersson joined Flomatic as a young engineer more than 50 years ago following education both in his home country of Sweden and then at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in New York. He has since positioned Flomatic as one of the only valve manufacturers in the industry with both ISO 9001 and 14001 quality management certifications.

While busy leading Flomatic, Andersson has still found time to give back to the industry. He is a long-time active member of the National Ground Water Association, having served on various committees and task forces. He has also served as president of the Water Systems Council twice and supported the Water Well Trust since its founding, serving the underserved rural population for better well water nationwide.

The year 2019 is a banner one for Flomatic as the company is celebrating its 85th anniversary with a 20,000-square-foot expansion to its manufacturing plant in Glens Falls, New York. It is fully operational and will ultimately increase its manufacturing capacity by nearly 50%. *Water Well Journal* recently caught up with Andersson to discuss a range of topics.

Water Well Journal: You've come a long way since beginning your career as an engineer more than 50 years ago at Flomatic. What has stood out to you along the way?

Bo Andersson: What has helped Flomatic from the very beginning is listening to our customers and designing and manufacturing valve products that they need and want to buy. It's a very simple value proposition—making quality products that perform and the customer sees a value in them. Our employees have done a great job responding to the changing needs of our customers in the marketplace.

WWJ: As an industry veteran, you hold more than 14 patents. Which ones are you most proud of?

Bo: Our patents are a direct reflection of our passion for the valve market's never-ending need for better solutions for more demanding applications. Our patents cover a number of different valve types for the water well industry, commercial, municipal, wastewater market, and also valves for new environmental applications. Most of these patents have been the result of working very closely with customers and end-users.

Many of Flomatic's products manufactured today are covered by several of our patents and we have another three patents pending for brand new valve types. They are also based on the new needs in the industry.



WWJ: What does the future look like for the valves segment of the water well industry?

Bo: Valves do not get much attention until there is a problem. But no system will work efficiently without a reliable quality valve. Flomatic believes that we can have better domestic water well and wastewater systems through better education. We provide continuing education units (CEUs) to state association members on valve selections for both water well applications and wastewater applications.

The valve market is a stable business as most pumping systems need a quality valve in the system. Preferably they are Flomatic valves that we now manufacture in a size range from ¼ inches through 36 inches and in various materials from unleaded bronze, stainless steel, ductile iron, and carbon steel.

WWJ: How has the water well industry changed over the years?

Bo: Yes, we have seen many changes in the water well industry. Based on statistical data, the domestic water well industry is not gaining in market share with larger centralized municipal systems where funding is easier to get.



The newly completed 20,000-square-foot plant expansion includes more manufacturing and warehouse space and a state-of-the-art teaching and research and development facility. Photos courtesy Flomatic Valves.

However, there is some great news and opportunities for the water well industry through the first federal legislation recognizing the domestic water well option for smaller communities. Through the efforts of the WSC and support by NGWA we are finally recognized through the Water Supply Cost Savings Act, or Savings Act—federal legislation that now requires federal agencies to consider water wells for supplying water to small communities. You will be hearing much more about this later this year!

WWJ: You've attended the NGWA Groundwater Fly-In in Washington, D.C., the past three years. What have you learned from meeting with members of Congress?

Bo: Yes, I have participated in both the NGWA and WSC Groundwater Fly-In in Washington, D.C., which I highly recommend any industry professional do at least once.

I had the fortune to attend this year's NGWA Groundwater Fly-In in Washington, D.C., to lobby the New York state congressional leaders with Scott King, PG, P.Geo., LGH, who is currently serving as president of NGWA.

Scott and I focused on some of the top topics in our industry: PFAS contamination, supporting our nation's water infrastructure needs, securing America's groundwater resources, and the funding shortfall in New York state to small drinking water systems. We must do these things, or we are not going to grow as a water well industry.

WWJ: You've also supported the Water Well Trust which helps low-income families or individuals in the underserved rural population secure a safe water source. How important do you think this issue is in the United States?

Bo: The Water Well Trust and its Executive Director Margaret Martens are doing an excellent job. We, and several other industry companies and organizations like the WSC and WQA, support WWT's important effort to bring fresh potable well water to the many underserved communities in the United States.

We now have the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency also supporting these efforts which will be very beneficial

to the industry in the future. It's a great program that serves Americans and our industry well.

WWJ: You received the NGWA Manufacturers Section Special Recognition Award in 2007. What does the award mean to you?

Bo: I was much honored to receive the NGWA Manufacturers Section Special Recognition Award in 2007. It is clear that by working together manufacturers, contractors, and scientists will make the industry stronger.

It is also nice when an organization like NGWA recognizes individual efforts by its members. It makes one more committed to the water well industry, which I also think is a very noble cause. Thank you again to NGWA for the recognition.

WWJ: Lastly, what is it like to see Flomatic Valves grow with a new modernized facility to celebrate its 85th anniversary?

Bo: I am very optimistic about the future for Flomatic as well as the water well industry. The harder we work, the luckier we get. I know of many industry professionals who are doing very well as they have a lot of passion for what they do. It is the same with Flomatic. We are totally committed to what we are doing designing and building high-quality valves that more and more contractors select by our Flomatic brand.

The newly completed 20,000-square-foot plant expansion includes four components, more manufacturing and warehouse space, but more importantly, a state-of-the-art teaching and research and development facility.

We firmly believe that the future belongs to the companies that both believe in high-quality products and industry education. Our goal is to provide more CEU training for the benefit of all water well professionals and in the process we as a manufacturer will also learn something new in our quest of making high-quality valve products built to last. www.wwj.org



Mike Price is senior editor of *Water Well Journal*. In addition to his *WWJ* responsibilities, Price also contributes to the Association's scientific publications. He can be reached at mprice@ngwa.org.

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