

DON'T GET YOUR PIPES IN A TWIST

This picture was just too good to pass up! We do not know where it came from. It may show, unlike our previous photos, something that does not exist in real life. If someone would like to say, “yep, that’s my location”, please let us know! We’ll send you a t-shirt (or something!) for your trouble.

The next time you hear these statements, think of this picture!

- ✦ **“We need to be able to pump everything to everywhere!”** Life is complicated – and sometimes our desire for flexibility creates REALLY complex facilities.
- ✦ **“Line up tank 146, through the new bypass line, to the old stainless heat exchanger and then to the south tank!”** We need to be clear and precise when we communicate with each other.
- ✦ **“No need to look at the operating instructions, I remember the valving for that setup!”** In many cases, we don’t refer to these documents as often as we should.
- ✦ **“Every one of those lines has a management of change form!”** Management of change is a powerful tool, but looking at this piping – one line at a time, by itself – seems to miss something. Management of change must also deal with how the change fits into the existing facility.
- ✦ **“Harry, you need to use a 2” x 12” plank to get to that valve!”** Operability is a key parameter for new equipment. What you see here would seem to be difficult to operate (maybe an understatement?!). Being able to reach equipment is an important feature.
- ✦ **“We never dismantle piping – might need it someday!”** Removing any equipment item is difficult, but when it becomes a hindrance to operability someone needs to make the right decision.
- ✦ **“Nancy, when you break the flange to replace that gasket, lets get a bucket underneath to catch any drips!”** Maintainability is another key parameter for new equipment.
- ✦ **“We pride ourselves on being in complete compliance with all regulations!”** And, the facility depicted above may indeed be in compliance. But, sometimes we need to stand back and ask the simple question – is this facility easy to run safely?

Operating a plant is a complex task requiring a number of different skills. Doing them all, correctly, every time, is essential!