



# STICK WITH WHAT YOU KNOW AND DO WHAT YOU DO BEST.

*by Gary Bryant, Senior Vice President and National Sales Manager*

Every American will remember where they were and what they were doing on the morning of September the 11th, just as the generation before us did when they learned of the attack on Pearl Harbor. I was on the road calling on Ford customers that day, and I found a degree of comfort in doing something I've done for so long.

Within days of the terrorist attack, our leaders were asking the country to get back to business and go back to doing whatever it is you do best. On the surface this seems a simple request but, in light of September's events, it took some effort to start thinking of work and not of the tragedy. But the President is right. What better way for our country and our economy to get back on its collective feet than for each person, company, and community to return to those jobs we do best?

Weeks later I was calling on Ford customers in the New York area. One afternoon we drove down to ground zero, the site where the World Trade Center buildings once stood. From our vantage point, we looked out over ground zero, Ellis Island, the Statue of Liberty, and the setting sun. I'm not capable of communicating the feelings of the moment nor describing the sights we saw that afternoon. Days later, I was left with another lasting impression of that trip. The communities bordering the Hudson River featured flags and patriotic messages, like so many towns across our nation. But here, just miles from ground zero, their messages offered prayers for friends, families, and the neighbors who were lost in the terrorist attack. Instead of withdrawing into mourning, these people were struggling back to normalcy by doing what they do best. Seeing the destruction to man-made buildings was a disturbing experience but witnessing the spirit of these resilient people was inspiring.

This past year has presented the water works industry with another unsettling state of affairs, a dilemma of lesser significance mind you, but troubling nonetheless. A non-profit trade organization that Ford Meter Box has supported for nearly 100 years has stepped outside its own stated mission. This association has ventured far from being advocates for safe water; they now choose to invest their member's funds into the world of E-commerce for profit. I have a philosophical difference with that decision. Ford Meter Box has worked hard to establish itself as one of the premier manufacturers in the water works industry. Manufacturing and delivering products is what Ford does best. We also know the best channel of distributing products to our customers is through the partnerships we have formed with local distributors. Any entity that desires to disrupt or dismantle these relationships lacks an understanding of an existing network that serves them so well today.

Our country and our company have survived world wars and great depressions, and we will prevail over our war against terrorism. I also believe our industry will move beyond this current discord, too. The headlines are true – the world changed in an instant. Today we shall forever be more guarded of the world and associations we enter into.

