

Research Racks Up Recognition Points for POU/POE



There is some really important research going on right now, and I wanted to make sure that everyone was aware of it. This research is critical for the point-of-use/point-of-entry (POU/POE) industry in order for POU/POE treatment to become an accepted practice for small public water system compliance. It seems as though we are closer than ever to finding acceptance in this arena.

The cost of compliance for U.S. Environmental Protection Agency regulations such as the newest maximum contaminant level of 10 ppb for arsenic is overwhelming—estimated by the EPA at \$181 million for the national annual costs of treatment, monitoring, reporting, recordkeeping and administration for the arsenic rule—leaving many small systems unable to cope with the costs. These studies will show that POU/POE is a viable solution. These research programs—and it is said that the arsenic rule as well—are the industry's strongest driving forces to open up new markets and greater potential to water treatment dealers.

At the Water Quality Convention in March, Dr. Regu Regunathan brought everyone up to date on several projects he was working on in conjunction with the American Water Works Association Research Foundation. The first project, taking place in Grimes, Calif., involves a community that has arsenic at 25 ppb and will determine the feasibility of implementing or centrally managing a POU/POE device option for removing arsenic. There has been six months of use of activated alumina media in addition to carbon block with a meter and shut-off device. Results of this project are expected in December. The second study is a implementation feasibility study that involves several communities that are testing POU, reverse osmosis and POU/POE adsorptive units. Lastly, Dr. Regunathan discussed a study that will compare conventional water treatment and distribution to unconventional approaches for providing quality water to customers including POU/POE devices, small neighborhood systems and bottled water in the Los Angeles and Contra Costa Water Districts. The study also will report on capital costs, operational and maintenance costs, the ability to meet health standards and aesthetic quality goals. This study looks at units being installed in homes as well as being tested in central facilities. Results already have been positive, showing that POU can be used for small system compliance.

Along side these studies emerged a conference from NSF International in February that addressed using various POU/POE treatment for small system compliance. The conference was attended by plant operators, government officials and water treatment professionals. On page 12, you will find a review of what hopefully will be the first of several conferences focusing on this topic.

It is exciting to see such research and conferences opening up new facets of business for dealers. Small public water systems appear to be a growing arena—one that needs some loving attention to reach its potential.

Warmest Regards,

Wendi

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