

The Florida Flow

Volume 5, Issue 1 January 2008

Florida Water Quality Association

UPCOMING EVENTS

WQA Aquatech USA 2008

Conference Dates: March 25-29, 2008
Mandalay Bay Convention Center
Las Vegas, NV

FWQA Annual Convention

MAKE MAGIC HAPPEN!!!

June 5, 6, and 7, 2008

Caribe Royale Resort
Orlando, Florida

FWQA Board Meeting Schedule

Friday April 4, 2008 10:00 a.m.

Lakeland Yacht Club
Lake Hollingsworth Rd.
Lakeland, Florida 33803

Minutes of any board meeting are available upon request
All FWQA members are welcome at Board Meetings.

President's Message – Cindy Gresham

The holidays have come and gone and here we are in the year 2008 already! I hope this New Year finds all of you in good health, invigorated and ready to embark upon the New *Challenging* Year ahead.

Most of you who are operating on a calendar year will have your business plan finished, but I hope you budgeted time and money for you and your staff to attend our FWQA convention this year in June. We have a full program planned and have tweaked the show somewhat to accommodate what we believe you our members are looking for.

Last quarter FWQA began a successful partnership with TekCollect, an early intervention company that professionally works with you to collect monies on delinquent accounts. We have several of our members that have signed up for this service and from all I've heard the program is working well for them. Please call Suzanne Trueblood for information on this program if you haven't already.

FWQA had a great fall educational session in November. (Thank you Doug Haring.) Thank you all who attended and for those of you who missed this session, we have a great educational program lined up for our convention in June. Please see the details in this printing of the Florida Flow. Don't miss this opportunity to increase your knowledge to better equip you in managing your business professionally. We are planning two days this year for our fall educational session, so look for those details at the convention.

By the next addition of our Florida Flow and certainly by convention time, we hope to have some information on our worker's compensation classification as well as preliminary information about health care options for our FWQA membership.

I look forward to seeing all of you in June.

Sincerely,
Cindy Gresham
President, FWQA

Remember, if all seems quiet in our industry statewide, we are doing our job.

Your Best Insurance- by Denny Mahle, Public Relations Chairman

As we get in to the routine for 2008, most of us will plan for how to make this a successful year. Push a new product? Add a new service? Try to grow our territory? Part of a successful game plan is to make sure we have ourselves covered for the unexpected problems that seem to always be lurking. Hopefully you have a little nest egg of funds to draw from for emergencies, or at least a good credit line; and certainly we all realize the importance of a good liability insurance policy.

But I'm writing to discuss another vital piece of your ongoing success that you may not have given much thought to. It's your voice as a water treatment dealer, your voice as an independent businessman; it's your basic right to earn a livelihood in this industry. There hasn't been much going on in the legislature the past few years that has challenged us, and I think complacency has made us a little too comfortable. Not to scream "wolf," but be aware that water is becoming a political flashpoint in our country and particularly in drought states and high growth states like Florida. We've all been following the water rights conflict between Georgia, Alabama, and Florida, and also the water needs of southeast Florida and its ever increasing demands on the Everglades.

As our metropolitan areas expand, local governments will look for more revenue to drive infrastructure. Selling municipal water and charging for sewer service are cash machines for local governments, and they are ever expanding. Last year a very scary event happened. The Marion County Commissioners launched a "Water Protection Bill." In short from this very complicated plan, homeowners would have been required to stop using septic tanks; there would be mandatory hook ups to county water, even for irrigation. The plan also called for the abandonment of all private wells in the county. Yes, this happened recently in OUR state. The plan was vigorously challenged by many organizations, public awareness was brought out in radio spots, full page ads were taken in the Sunday papers, and public opinion was changed through education. The ordinance was eventually voted down.

Think this could happen again in our state, in your county? You bet. Many of you may not know, but the FWQA has supported monies to a Political Action Committee in Tallahassee for years. It gets our voice heard to the legislature. This year in addition to our annual dues, you will also be asked to contribute \$10.00 to support our PAC in Tallahassee and around the state. Believe me, it's the best \$10.00 insurance policy you'll pay for in 2008.

*It's an election year and we want **OUR** voices heard.*

Sea Level Rise Could Affect Ground Water in Coastal Areas

Rising sea levels could impact drinking water sources, according to an Associated Press report.

Joel Scheraga, the national program director for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's global change research program, suggest that a rise in sea level could contribute to salt water intrusion in drinking water levels in Florida.

This past summer, officials reduced pumping from some public supply wells along Florida's east coast to reduce salt water intrusion into the Biscayne Aquifer during a severe drought. Other coastal wells were shut down.

The Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta in California could also suffer from salt water flooding as a result of a rise in sea level.

By the end of the century, scientists believe the seas will rise at least 16 inches. It could rise as much as 3 feet. In the last century, the level rose almost 13 inches. The change will be gradual, though, experts say.

"It's like sticking your finger in a pot of water on a burner and turn the heat on," S. Jeffress Williams, a U.S. Geological Survey coastal geologist, says in the report. "You kind of get used to it."

From National Ground Water Association – November 2007

Focus on the Dealer....



For this issue of the Florida Flow, we traveled to the northeast sector of the state, Deland. Here we find “The Watershed Laboratories, Inc.,” a water treatment dealership that is also a state accredited water analysis laboratory. George Taylor took a few career turns before founding “The Watershed Laboratories” in 1985. After completing a tour of duty in Vietnam, George graduated from the University of Central Florida with a B.S. in biology, then went to Stetson University and earned a B.S. in chemistry. For the next 18 years he worked as a biologist and chemist first for the Volusia County government and then in the medical field. It was during his later years in the medical field that he started to test water, which eventually led him to opening his own water testing laboratory. George soon found that many of the people having water tested would ask for assistance in treating it, which made the addition of the water treatment side of his company a very smart decision.

As the company name implies, it all started in a little storage building located behind his home. While the business has now moved to a large office /laboratory/showroom on a major highway in Deland, the once little shed has had three expansions and now serves as a warehouse for water treatment equipment. As the business grew, George added Scott Gilmore in 1990 to help manage the water treatment side of the business. Now with the addition of several office staff and another chemist, Kurt Seiler, The Watershed Laboratories is one of the largest water analysis laboratories in Florida; testing samples statewide from the Keys up to the Georgia border.

The Watershed Laboratories equipment side mainly serves residential customers and installs a complete family of products from water conditioners and chlorination systems to whole house RO systems. The necessity of a water test for FHA, VA, and conventional mortgages drives their analysis business, but they also offer several innovative services such as a Safe-Well program for home owners, which provides periodic testing of homeowner’s wells. A variety of water treatment equipment scheduled maintenance plans are also available for their customers.

During the tour of the laboratory, George explained their National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (NELAP) certification is what allows them to provide the testing. This robust certification is hard to receive and just as hard to maintain. It involves the state providing onsite audits several times annually to review their practices. Also twice annually the state will send a case of “mystery” water samples which must each be correctly analyzed and reported on.

Not to stand idle on his current successes, George has been developing another product which may have a large impact on every Florida resident who has a decorative Sago Palm tree in their yard. The Sago Palm tree, which has existed on earth for more than 250 million years (before the dinosaurs); has been suffering from an epidemic in Florida since 1996. An invasive insect, Cycad Asian Scale, has been attacking and killing the palms for the past ten years. It is reported the insect has killed 80% of the trees in south Florida and 50% in central Florida. George has created a solution that has a pesticide and fungicide component and has proven very effective in eradicating the insect on these plants. He is currently still testing his product at Stetson University and has applied for a patent. Stayed tuned if you have suffering Sago Palms, as it looks like George has come upon another highly successful business idea. It appears his company business slogan says it all, “Using Science Not Sales.”

Land Use, Human Activity Impact Aquifers and Drinking Water Supplies

As populations increase around areas with public water supply wells in the northern Tampa Bay region in Florida, there are corresponding increases in contamination as well. According to a study by the U.S. Geological Survey, human activities are impacting ground water resources.

In the first phase of the study, 30 randomly selected public supply wells were sampled prior to treatment and analyzed for the presence of 258 compounds generated by humans, such as pesticides and volatile organic compounds. The northern Tampa Bay area was selected for study because a large percentage of the population relies on ground water resources from the Upper Floridian Aquifer for their drinking water supply.

Of the 258 sampled compounds, 31 were detected in wells prior to treatment. Samples from the wells generally contained a mixture of compounds, and 70% of the samples had at least one compound detected. Concentrations were well below the potential for human health concern, and were several orders of magnitude below the level of toxicity for drinking water standards set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The relative levels of contamination were closely linked to land-use type and the amounts and types of chemicals used around the homes and gardens, golf courses, and public road right-of-ways. These common pesticides included atrazine, simazine, and prometon.

In the second phase of the study, wells that had the highest levels of contamination were resampled before and after treatment. The pesticides most frequently detected prior to and after treatment were atrazine and its breakdown products. All detections were at very low concentrations.

“We’re seeing the effect of human activity and land-use practices on our ground water supplies,” says Patricia Metz, USGS hydrologist and lead author of the report. “Although concentrations are very low, their presence indicates the relatively rapid mobility of these contaminants to the ground water system and the vulnerability of ground water supplies to contamination from human activities.”

The study examined the relation between the occurrence of the contaminants to land use, population, and local hydrogeologic conditions. In the northern Tampa Bay area, the Upper Floridan Aquifer ranges from being unconfined to semiconfined. In areas where the aquifer is unconfined, it is more open to recharge from land surface and therefore more vulnerable to impact from human land-use activities. In this study, half of the 30 water supply wells were located in areas where the aquifer was unconfined, the other half in areas where the aquifer was semiconfined. Compounds associated with human activity were found at almost double the rate in water from wells where the aquifer was unconfined as compared to semiconfined conditions.

The study also found that a significant relation exists between population and the number of contaminants detected. Where population and human development was limited, such as large wellfields, little to no anthropogenic compounds were detected.

“Concentrations of specific compounds in ground water depend on a number of factors,” Metz says. “The hydrogeology plays an important role in allowing these compounds to migrate from land surface into the ground water system. Both the unconfined nature of the aquifer and the higher population are determining factors in the number of anthropogenic compounds detected.”

Other key findings include:

- Chloroform (disinfection byproduct) was the most commonly detected VOC and compound detected in the study, most frequently detected in residential areas. Chloroform detected in residential areas may be associated with lawn irrigation, leaking of supply lines, pools, and spas.
- Atrazine (herbicide used in lawn care) and its degradates were the most commonly detected pesticides, most frequently detected in residential areas. Atrazine’s detection in residential areas is commonly associated with application of lawn maintenance chemicals.
- DEET was detected in five source water samples, commonly found when sampled wells were near septic systems.
- In wells sampled in wellfields where the population and land use development is limited, little or no human-generated compounds were detected in the ground water.
- One-on-one comparison between source water and the associated finished water (non-blended) found certain compounds were still detected after the treatment process (for example, atrazine and its breakdown products bentazon, imidacloprid, tebuthiuron, and caffeine were found in the treated ground water); again these were detected at very low levels.
- Treated water generally had higher concentrations of human-generated compounds due to the disinfection treatment process.

From National Ground Water Association – November 2007

MEMBERSHIP DUES STATEMENTS ARE IN THE MAIL...

Be on the lookout for your 2008 FWQA Membership dues statement. Please return as soon as possible. This allows us to get your plate with the date for your plaque and this year look for our new decals with the year listed. You will receive one with your confirmation of payment and more can be ordered for your service vehicles and other locations.

Remember it’s your dues that let the association work for you!

FWQA Committees

It’s that time of year again when FWQA committees are set up for the year. There is always an opportunity for your participation. Please consider a committee membership it’s a great way to network and to learn more about the industry. If you are interested in serving contact Suzanne Trueblood at 863-644-6622 or 863-698-0611 or FLWQA@aol.com, or any Board member and let them know the committee you want to join.

Convention- Chairman, Sandy Eaton & Ray Gregory
Golf Tournament – Chairman, Rusty Schoenthaler
Public Relations – Chairman, Denny Mahle
Government Affairs – Chairman, Donn Davis

Membership- Chairman, Todd Mosteller
Education – Chairman, Doug Haring
Florida Committee on Water Quality – Chairman, Alan Sayler

Dealer's Corner (From Dealer to Dealer)

When I was first approached about writing an article on Marketing for the Water Treatment Dealers, I was honored and excited that we could share some ideas that could produce additional sales, with little or no extra money out of our advertising budgets. Back in the good ol' days, we would go to the office and wait for the phone to ring, without ever looking for all the opportunities around us. Times can appear bad and we can blame our problems on everything around us and not remain positive, or go looking for the opportunities out there, I chose the latter.

On Sunday I was driving home and stopped at a new house and talked to the new owner, and left a card. The more business cards you put out, the more changes of success you have.

I was once told a story about a man who was getting dizzy and seeing white spots before his eyes. He went to a doctor to find out what was wrong and after several tests; the doctor called the man and told him he had six months to live. The man quit his job, bought a sports car and was spending more time with his family. One day he was driving past a famous clothing store and decided to buy him a custom made suit. The tailor measured his waist, 34 inches, inseam 30 inches, neck, 16/5 inches. The man quickly told the tailor he wore a 15 inch shirt. The tailor re-measured his neck and told him it is still 16/5 inches. The man was insistent on a 15 inch shirt. Finally the tailor said; "Okay, I will make you the shirt, but don't come back to me when you are dizzy and seeing white spots before your eyes."

I think you get the point; we have to adjust to the ever changing market place.

One of the easiest ways to market your name is to have bottle water privately labeled. There are companies that will sell you as little as one case of water with your name on the bottle. Every sales call we run, the company always gives away a bottle of water. The service truck has water on it for our customers. The easiest sell is the customer you already have. You would be surprised at how easy it is to sell an R.O. unit once they taste your product.

Last week, our company put one case of our bottled water in a woman's health spa, the spa is giving it away to their thirsty customers and to date we have marketed: one R.O. unit, one service call, and a potential lead with a builder, not bad for one case of water, don't you think? We installed a small commercial water conditioner in a restaurant nearby our office that's going to give away free water to their customers. They should be opening in the next few weeks. I'm very excited to see the leads a few bottles of water will produce.

Another way of lead generation is to do "Inspect and Check" on existing water treatment equipment. When the customer calls you to their home, there is a problem with their current water treatment provider (i.e. bad service or problems). The worst that can happen is you get paid for testing the water and have the opportunity to sell yourself or additional equipment. What could be better than that?

These are just a couple of ways to generate leads. There could be unlimited marketing opportunities if we just take the time to search for them.

Every morning when you get up, be thankful you're in the water treatment business and have a new opportunity to help someone.

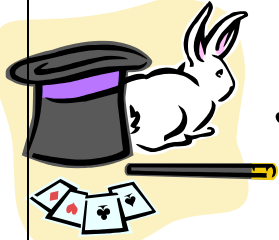
I chose to wear the proper size shirt, instead of one that is too tight. What size 'shirt' do you wear?

If you have any additional ways to generate leads, please feel free to contact me and we can place an article in the next Florida Flow to share our ideas with other dealers.

Happy Selling
Ray Gregory, CWS I-CI
rghtwoo@aol.com

AND LOOKING TOWARD 2008-FWQA CONVENTION AND TRADE SHOW

Attention Water Treatment Professionals!!!



Are you ready to **Make Magic Happen** with your business? Mark your calendars now to attend the 2008 FWQA Annual Convention and Trade Show.

June 5, 6, and 7, 2008 at the Caribe Royale Resort in Orlando.

This year's convention will be featuring Educational Seminars on topics such as: Business Planning for the Water Treatment Dealer, Installation, set-up and maintenance of chemical injection systems, filter housing and cartridge selection and application. We also are offering the WQA Fundamentals Course and WQA exams. These seminars gain valuable seat time to complement your Certifications.

Join your fellow water treatment professionals at the two day exhibition, which will feature a wide variety of top known vendors and manufactures in the industry displaying new and existing water treatment equipment. **You will also have the opportunity to enter two separate drawings, the first being a complete chlorination system, and the second being a water conditioner.** And don't miss out on your chance to bid on all the unique and exciting *Silent Auction* items in the exhibitor booths.

Make plans to attend our Friday Night entertainment which will be a spectacular Magic Show.

There will be prize giveaways such as: 26" LCD Flat Panel TV, Digital Camera and more.....you must be present to win!!!!

EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS...

In an effort to provide informative educational seminars at our June convention and fall educational seminar for our dealer members, please forward any seminar topic ideas to Doug Haring, FWQA Education Committee Chairman at dharing@atlanticfilter.com . Examples such as specific control valves to be broken down and rebuilt, resin maintenance, injection pumps & chlorination, how to calculate softener regeneration frequency, system sizing, or system troubleshooting.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

We welcome Jeff Gassaway of Action Manufacturing as a new board member. Jeff will replace Matt Dierolf for the balance of the 2007-2008 term. Matt Dierolf had to resign due to business growth issues and lack of time. We thank Matt for his years of service to FWQA and look forward to his continued support.

Sandy Eaton, Aqua Wholesale, was appointed to fill the term as Secretary of FWQA.

Anyone who would like to become involved and attend board meetings; all members are welcome and encouraged!

Suzanne Trueblood has been the Executive Secretary for FWQA for over 20 years. She also works with several other associations and has seen many changes in FWQA. Technology has changed and as we grow, please contact the office by phone (office phone 863-644-6622, or cell phone 863-698-0611) or e-mail to FLWQA@AOL.COM. We are trying to promote and update our website. Any suggestions will be greatly appreciated.

Welcome to our new FWQA Members

DOMERS, INC.

204 SE 10th Ave
Okeechobee, FL 34974
Ray Domer
863/763-3417
E-mail domersinc@aol.com

EASY WATER, INC.

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Brad@easywaterjax.com

NELSON CORPORATION

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