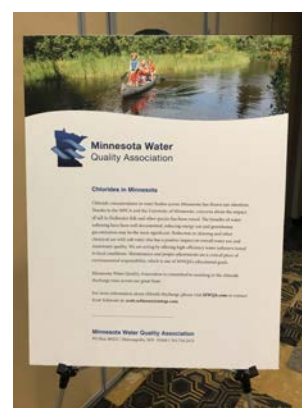




Scenes From The 2019 MWQA Convention





ASSE Request Threatens Water Softener Assembly Regulations in Minnesota

By Jeff Hill, MWQA Board

The ability of plumbers and water conditioning contractors to assemble softeners, backwashing filters and other water treatment devices appeared to be banned under a request made to the Minnesota Plumbing Board at their October meeting. The American Association of Sanitary Engineers (ASSE), which submitted the proposal, denied that was their objective. John Parizek, President of ASSE, withdrew the “Request for Action” (RFA) before the end of the meeting.

Minnesota is in the last stages of issuing the 2018 plumbing code, most likely to be published in 2020. This request bypassed the Ad Hoc Committee working on the code, where MWQA Board Member Mike Herman represents the water conditioning industry. The rule, which may still be inserted, is expected to take effect when the 2021 Minnesota Plumbing Code goes into effect.

Minnesota code is already demanding, specifically recognizing the practice of equipment assembly by water conditioning contractors and plumbers, and requiring that they have Minnesota licenses and use all materials tested for safety. Licenses are not required in any other state.

Proponents of the proposal cite the need for more testing for structural integrity and consumer protection. They claim the burden would fall only on the valve and tank manufacturers. Every control valve and tank would have to be submitted to independent laboratories for additional testing. (All are now certified to NSF 61.) Major manufacturers have not accepted this need, so the regulation would make assembly rules very complex and effectively ban all commercial water softeners in Minnesota in the short term. Building officials would be in the position of overlooking the regulation or prohibiting softeners and filters, at least until one or more manufacturers can fund the expense of laboratory testing. The cost of equipment would increase, the availability of models reduced, and the incentive to develop new and innovative controls reduced.

The Water Quality Association (Lisle, IL) has opposed this standard for two years as duplicative and unnecessary and has provided resources for MWQA to understand the complexity of the proposal. In spite of opposition from WQA and all Minnesota water softener manufacturers, ASSE remains committed to place ASSE 1087 in all national codes. The next few months will determine if the Minnesota Plumbing Board is their first success.

CEU Class Offered For Minnesota License Holders

If you still need credit to renew your water conditioning or plumbing license this year, MWQA is offering a last-minute class in November. This class is open to MWQA members only and is scheduled for November 21 at Robert B. Hill Company in St. Louis Park. The class will feature 4 Code credits, and runs from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Lunch is included. Preference will be given to those whose licenses expire December 2019 and registration is limited to 30 people. Those with licenses expiring in 2020 can take advantage of classes next year.

To register online, follow the link to our [registration site here](#).

Board of Directors Election Results

Five members of the MWQA Board of Directors were re-elected at the annual meeting October 1, and two new members have joined the Board. Re-elected to three-year terms as dealer Board members were Jeff Hill of Robert B. Hill Company, Mike McGowan of McGowan Water, and Bret Tangle of Sterling Water. Re-elected to one-year terms as Associate Board members were Patte Thuening of Cargill Salt and David Ghostley of Canature.

Bill DeBacker of Culligan in Anoka was elected to serve a three-year term as a dealer Board member. Brett VanderPoel of Frakco in Luverne, Minnesota, was appointed to the Board as an Associate Dealer member and will serve a one-year term.

There are still two open Associate Dealer (manufacturer) positions open. Contact Lori Jansen if you are interested in serving on the Board. Meetings are held monthly and members are able to participate via conference call.

Issues Offer Opportunities To Get Involved

By Scott Schiesser, MWQA President

Recently Jeff Hill, Chris Soderholm and I attended the Plumbing Board Meeting. On the agenda were potential Plumbing Code language changes that could possibly affect manufacturers of water conditioning equipment. Jeff Hill, who leads the MWQA Government Affairs Committee, diligently gathered information in a matter of days from outside sources, including WQA, for clarity and direction. We should be thankful for this kind of dedication from our members.

This is another example of MWQA members pulling together, focusing our resources, and having a positive impact on water treatment dealers and manufacturers across Minnesota. *Now what can you do?* Get active with the Association by attending a Board Meeting, ask to be involved in one of our committees. Your help with any of these issues would be greatly appreciated by the Board and your fellow water treatment dealers. We need more dedicated members to put the time and energy into these issues, and your financial support is vital to keeping the wheels in motion!

The MWQA Chloride Task Force is hard at work designing a marketing presentation that any MWQA dealer across the state can use. This presentation will assist dealers when the chloride discharge topic hits their community. It can be used at a local Rotary, Lions Club or any organization that has local community influence. It will focus on informing citizens about what's in their water, and how they can have a positive impact on the growing chloride discharge topic in their community. It's important that we take a proactive approach to informing communities of how they can have a positive impact without spending taxpayer dollars.

Your financial support is critical, [click here to donate](#) to the legal fund for the Association, it will be greatly appreciated and put to good work.

MWQA Seeking State Help on Private Well Testing

By Jeff Hill, MWQA Board

MWQA is working at the Minnesota Legislature to fund water testing for owners of private wells. There has been good acceptance of the idea by a number of legislators. The Minnesota Department of Health, supported by the US EPA, provides oversight and testing of municipal and small public water systems. Private well owners are on their own. The MWQA proposal is in the formative stages, but is strongly supported by the Minnesota Water Well Association and by private well owners associations.

It is hoped that the Minnesota Department of Health will fund both the testing and the treatment solutions for polluted private wells. MWQA plans that those who test wells will be multi-disciplinary skilled and licensed professionals; water conditioning dealers, plumbers, water well contractors, and laboratory personnel would all be eligible. Regardless of their license and focus, all must be able to use techniques to acquire a valid sample and assess the total picture – wellhead safety, well number and data, existing water treatment, cross connection prevention and the use of the water.

1,200,000 Minnesotans are on private wells – 20% of us! They deserve the protection afforded the residents of municipal water.

MWQA Gains Three New Members

Three new members joined the MWQA recently. They are:

EH Renner & Sons, Inc.

Elk River, Minnesota
Katie Renner-Welle

Croix Crystal Water Treatment

Hudson, Wisconsin
Jim Schober

The Tarbek Company, LLC

Blaine, Minnesota
Darrell Callahan

