

## Duty Calls For Local Awareness



May 6–12 is National Drinking Water Week (NDWW). It is our duty and opportunity as water professionals to make this week work for us by incorporating local companies, expertise and even the Water Quality Association (WQA) into NDWW.

The WQA Consumer Survey 2001 reports some really helpful and interesting facts. A mere 20 percent of Americans drink enough water, leaving the other 80 percent without enough. Eighty-six percent of Americans have concerns about their home drinking water as well as nearly half of the respondents believing that federal drinking water laws are not strict enough. Also, one in three Americans believe their water is not as safe as it should be, and 69 percent of respondents said they were very or somewhat knowledgeable about substances or contaminants in their household water supply.

The drive for good-tasting water, exposure to negative media reports and the public's craving for the never-ending supply of carbonated beverages, make educating the public of the health benefits of water and the quality that can be achieved mandatory.

WQA offers tips on bringing water awareness to a local level. On April 9, each WQA member was sent a brochure and the video, "Quality Water On Tap: Drink to Your Health," featuring WQA spokesperson Bob Greene. A satellite media tour also is scheduled. The satellite tour, consumer video and brochure highlight the health benefits of water consumption and a variety of treatment systems available. Throughout the week, the WQA will host a daily online discussion of water treatment issues with Joe Harrison, WQA's technical director.

Some ideas for educating your local community include the following.

- Set up a story on water for local papers and television and radio stations.
- Sponsor a contest with a radio station. (The WQA suggests utilizing the "H<sub>2</sub>O IQ Test" and making the prize a water treatment unit.)
- Organize a community clean up.
- Organize a tour through a water facility.
- Tailor AWWA press releases to your business and distribute to local media. (Available at [www.awwa.org](http://www.awwa.org).)
- Perform presentations at local groups such as schools, Cub Scouts, Lions clubs, libraries, county offices, etc.

These suggestions can be used throughout the year, not just during NDWW. Don't delay in getting started. If you haven't planned for NDWW yet, you might just be missing a very valuable opportunity for your company and your community.

Happy Drinking Water Week!

*Wendi*

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