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WATER QUALITY ASSOCIATION PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - MARCH 25, 2008

New public opinion survey: Pharmaceuticals in drinking water concern two thirds of Americans

Poll shows overall worry over water up 12% after news reports

LAS VEGAS, Nevada — According to a scientific survey conducted nationwide for the Water Quality Association, a large majority of Americans are concerned about the presense of pharmaceutical products in their drinking water.

More than half of Americans say they are now planning to purchase home filtration devices in the future, the poll showed.

The random sample survey, conducted March 15-18 by Applied Research-West, Inc., has a margin of error of +/- 4 percent. It follows a January opinion poll on general water concerns, providing an opportunity to compare public opinion before and after news reports about pharamceuticals in water.

“Americans are increasingly aware of potential problems in the water they drink,” said Pete Censky, executive director of WQA.

Censky said it is important for people to understand potential solutions to their concerns, including an understanding of what different technologies are capable of doing. The results of the survey are being announced at the association’s annual convention and trade show — WQA Aquatech USA — at Mandalay Bay Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nevada, March 26-28.

The survey found that 45 percent of respondents feel very concerned and 23 percent somewhat concerned about pharmaceuticals in their water. More than 80 percent were aware of news reports on the issue.

— MORE —

ADD ONE

Survey

For Immediate Release - March 25, 2008

Overall, just over two-thirds of Americans — 67 percent — are generally concerned about the quality of their household water supply. In the January poll, 55 expressed such concern. Similarly, in January Americans believed by 48 to 41 percent that their drinking water is “as safe as it should be.” In the March poll only 39 percent believed this, while 50 percent disagreed.

The percentage of those stating that the primary responsibility for safe drinking water lies in the home appeared to increase. In January, respondents stated by a 52 percent margin that primary responsibility lies outside the home with their municipality, as oppose to inside the home with water treatment products. In the current survey, that margin is reduced to 44 percent.

Seventy percent said they believe that home filtration plays a role, along with their municipality, in ensuring safe drinking water.

While utilities are required to meet safety standards set by the U.S. EPA, home filtering systems act as a final contaminant barrier and can further purify water for drinking, Censky said.

Specific product performance standards have not yet been developed for pharmaceuticals, he said, but many point-of-use technologies have proven effective for some of these emerging contaminants. Nano-filtration and reverse osmosis systems removed drugs tested by the Colorado School of Mines at full-scale facilities in Arizona and California. Activated carbon, distillation, ozonation, and advanced oxidization have likewise shown promise in removing many of these contaminants.

WQA provides Gold Seal certification for products that remove a variety of contaminants. This certification is conducted using independently developed testing standards. Consumers can learn about different treatment systems and find locally certified dealers by visiting the WQA Web site’s Gold Seal and Find A Professional features.

Full poll results are available at wqa.org. Attached is a fact sheet on pharmaceuticals in water. The association’s Water Information Library is also online at WQA’s Web site.

For further information this week, contact Dave Loveday (cell 630 947 5955) or John Hoffman (cell 630 890 1202). WQA is a non-profit association that provides public information about water treatment issues and also trains and certifies professionals to better serve consumers. WQA has more than 2,500 members nationwide.

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FACT SHEET: Pharmaceuticals in water

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE — MARCH 12, 2008

Home filtering systems provide best protection for drinking water

As news reports about pharmaceuticals in water circulate, here are several facts for consumers to consider:

- Filtering systems in the home provide the highest technology available for treatment of drinking water. Less than **two percent** of all water consumed is ingested by humans, making these “point-of-use” systems the most cost-effective and environmentally friendly.
- While utilities are required to meet safety standards set by the U.S. EPA, home filtering systems act as a **final contaminant barrier** and can further purify water for drinking.
- While specific product performance standards have not yet been developed for pharmaceuticals, many point-of-use technologies have proven effective for some of these emerging contaminants. **Nano-filtration and reverse osmosis systems** removed drugs tested by the Colorado School of Mines at full-scale facilities in Arizona and California. Activated carbon, distillation, ozonation, and advanced oxidization have likewise shown promise in removing many of these contaminants. Individual manufacturers can also test products for specific pharmaceuticals if they choose.
- According to Utah State University Extension, up to **90 percent** of oral drugs can pass through humans unchanged. These often then move through wastewater into streams and groundwater. It is generally cost prohibitive for utilities to use systems such as nano-filtration, long contact activated carbon, and reverse osmosis. However, these technologies have proven successful at removing many contaminants in home water treatment systems.
- In addition to pharmaceuticals, water quality experts are examining other emerging contaminants, such as those found in personal care products and pesticides. These are often referred to as endocrine disrupting chemicals. Home filtering systems have also been proven to treat threats such as lead and mercury.
- WQA provides **Gold Seal certification** for products that remove a variety of contaminants.
- Consumers can learn about different treatment systems and find locally certified dealers by visiting the WQA Web site’s Gold Seal and **Find A Professional** features.
- More information is available at WQA’s **Water Information Library** online, which includes a search feature.

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