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WATER QUALITY ASSOCIATION PRESS RELEASE

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Study launched to look at softener effects on septics

Foundation seeks funding for crucial project to scientifically examine issue

LISLE, Illinois -- A new study conducted through Virginia Tech will examine the effects water softeners might have on septic tanks, the Water Quality Association announced today.

The investigation is being funded by WQRF (Water Quality Research Foundation), which also announced it is seeking funding for the project and other projects. The study is expected to be completed in summer, 2012.

Dr. John Novak of Virginia Tech is heading up the research. Novak has earned awards and recognition for more than 30 years for his studies on wastewater treatment and other projects.

The goals are to find out whether various water softener operation patterns might have a negative effect on septic tank performance, and if so, to develop operating guidelines to minimize any problems.

The septic study is expected to cost \$95,000. WQRF, a not-for-profit foundation, is seeking donors for the project and other initiatives. More information on donations can be obtained at WQRF@wqa.org or by calling WQA at 630 505 0160.

Studies have shown that in activated sludge systems, an imbalance of the cation ratio in wastewater can lead to poor flocculation. The imbalance is typically caused by excessive sodium and can lead to poor settling, which might ultimately clog outlet filters. Water softeners operated primarily for removal of calcium and magnesium produce a discharge that has a cation ratio that has been alleged to impact septic tank performance.

WQA is a not-for-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 internationally. WQA provides Gold Seal certification for products that remove a variety of contaminants. These products are tested according to independently developed standards of the highly respected ANSI (the American National Standards Institute).