

## **Oakland County Aggressively Pursues New Emerging Water Technologies**

Waterford, MI. January 9, 2012---Just imagine. Rotating discs that breakdown wastewater that can be safely discharged back into the environment, a process whereby ecoli levels can be detected in lakes in minutes rather than hours, water that can be stored in inflatable containers for extended periods of time during emergencies, turbines that generate enough electricity locally, where it is not now available, to operate monitoring systems to save money and innovative new software that can manage hundreds of miles of infrastructure and millions of gallons of water that flow through pipes to produce huge amounts of data. Is this a futuristic sci-fi scenario? Not in the least. These are all new emerging water technologies currently being developed and tested...and Oakland County is right in the mix of what promises to be the next generation of pro-active water system management technology.

Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner John McCulloch has visited Israel, the epicenter for this new technology, to meet with companies that may have an interest in testing their innovations in Oakland County. Several demonstration projects are either already completed or underway. A November trip to a conference in Tel Aviv gave McCulloch the opportunity to meet with representatives of companies in the emerging water technology field. Several of these firms indicated they would seriously consider Oakland County as a location to field-test their technologies.

“Oakland County has partnered with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation(MEDC) to bring these promising innovative water technology projects to North America, in the hope some of them will be located right here in Oakland County,” said McCulloch. “It is our expectation that if the MEDC decides to fund these projects, the companies involved will choose to house some portion of their business operation here, whether it’s manufacturing, sales or distribution.”



Here are some of the emerging water technologies under consideration.

Hydrospin-Smart Power is a company that integrates turbines inside water pipes to generate electricity for local use. The power doesn't go to the electrical grid for widespread use, but generates only enough electricity to power meters and other electronic devices to monitor water systems more cost effectively and efficiently.

Whitewater Security, which is similar to Hydrospin, is a company that provides software to monitor water quality; safety of the system and evaluates variables such as water volume and pressure. The software is able to monitor hundreds of miles of infrastructure and millions of gallons of water that flow through pipes in a more sophisticated way to better manage the system.

VBact has developed an innovative technology solution that has enormous implications for beach closings and food processing plants. Using this innovative process, health departments can test for ecoli levels in lakes and get results back in minutes, rather than waiting twenty-four hours to learn if ecoli levels exceed acceptable standards.

“As it is now, people continue to swim in what may be highly-polluted water until test results are known,” McCulloch said. “With VBact technology beaches can be closed immediately, if necessary, and re-opened when ecoli levels return to acceptable levels. Food processing plants will also be able to employ this new technology to instantaneously test for the presence of ecoli and other contaminants in their products before they reach the marketplace.”

EZ Pack is another new water technology that holds the promise of eliminating the need to purchase and distribute hundreds, if not thousands of small bottles of water during times of emergency like what happened with Hurricane Katrina and the Blackout of 2003. EZ Pack has the capability to store large amounts of water in so called “pillow packs” for extended periods of time, up to three months, which is not now possible using conventional storing methods like water jugs and other plastic containers.



*John P. McCulloch*

A company called CTG has come up with “Rotating Biological Contractor” technology which is a distributive wastewater treatment for small cross-road towns which experience low water flow, but high water tables or ground-perk. This anomaly makes it impractical for these areas to install large wastewater treatment plants. As a result, an alternative to an engineered septic has been developed that takes flow into a mechanism which has disks containing bacteria that rotate to breakdown waste so that when it comes out the other end of the system as effluent the water can be safely discharged into ground or surface water.

“All of these technologies open the door for job creation and economic investment opportunities, not just in Oakland County but for the entire State of Michigan,” McCulloch said. “Rate payers will also benefit from potentially lower costs resulting from an improved and more efficient water management system.”

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