

California assembly passes softener ban

As bill moves to governor, industry urged to contact Schwarzenegger

California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger will have until the end of September to decide whether to halt California's radical water softener bill that could lead to bans on the device throughout the state.

The bill, AB 2270, passed the state assembly last week and is now before the governor, who can sign or reject it. WQA members are strongly encouraged to contact the governor's office to register their opposition. (See article below on how to contact the governor's office.)

The bill gives unelected water boards the power to decide whether towns can ban softeners. If a town chooses to announce a ban, policing power to enforce it would be necessary, possibly leading to forced removals from homes.

The final vote in the California legislature was 53-19 (with 10 not voting), all the opposition votes coming from Republicans.

Campaign fights against ban. AB 2270 is being pushed by one of the most influential members of the California state assembly, and members of the body are voting almost down strict party lines.

More than 200 powerful cities, water control districts, water reuse districts, and the entire agricultural

community, including farm bureaus, have also lined up behind the bill.

WQA, the Pacific Water Quality Association, and others in the industry have put together a strong coalition to oppose it. We have and continue to present arguments on why this bill should not become law.

The coalition we have built includes retail "big box" companies, major brand names, dealers and many of their employees, and the Retail Merchant's Association. This coalition has sent nearly 1,000 letters to legislators against the bill. Two of our members have hired lobbyists and communications firms specifically to fight it.

The coalition opposing AB 2270 also created a major awareness and emailing campaign. Ads have been placed in the *Sacramento Bee*.

Using a new Web site, SaveMySoftener.com, we have directed *more than 8,000* of consumer emails to legislators.

Overturning years of mutual effort. The proposed bill would overturn decades of efforts that have been pursuing sensible solutions to the issue of salinity.

The state and researchers in the water treatment industry began looking at the problem together in 1978. That is when California created efficiency

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How to ask Governor Schwarzenegger to veto AB2270:

- ◆ Send a letter, if you have not already. Draft language available at wqa.org. Click "Save My Softener!" on the home page. Please fax a copy of your letter to Pete Conaty, our lobbyist, at 916 492 8957.
- ◆ After Labor Day, call the Governor's Office to emphasize your opposition. Phone number: 916 445 2841.
- ◆ Ask your suppliers and other business contacts to send letters.
- ◆ Direct your customers to SaveMySoftener.com to send emails in opposition.

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standards for water softeners. The state set up guidelines to make sure that before a community bans water softeners, independent scientific studies show such a measure will significantly improve local ground conditions.

India's POU/POE industry looks to create standards and training

WQA participates in first meeting of nation's drinking water industry

Dozens of POU/POE companies gathering in Mumbai, India, in late July agreed to a framework to create industry standards and promote training and education.

The Task Force in India, organized under the banner of the Water Quality Association, represents the first meeting in the nation's history of members of the home water treatment industry.

Held on July 23, the session brought together more than fifty people from nearly three dozen companies.

Members of the Task Force are examining WQA operational methods to determine what elements can be used and modified for India.

The session also focused largely on the needs of the consumers and the industry in India. One of the major points of the discussion centered on product performance standards required in the country. A sub-task force was formed to explore this.

The group also discussed other important matters, such as two separate sub-task forces established to further investigate education of those involved in the industry as well as any communication needs to be met in India.

Those wishing to join the task force do not have to be members of WQA for their first meeting. However, anyone seeking to continue to participate is asked to become a member of the association. The task force will meet next in New Delhi late January, 2009, with potentially two meetings a year.

WQA begins work with Phoenix on major study

WQA and Arizona Water Quality Association staff has begun working with the City of Phoenix on its Point-of-Use Water Softener and Treatment Study.

The association is being asked to play an important role in this major upcoming study because of our previously shown willingness to work together on these issues.

The final report, due at the end of this year, will include conclusions about salinity reduction and alternatives to water softeners. This report will play a major part in any final disposition of the issues being faced in Phoenix.

Certification opportunities

◆ The **2008 recertification deadline** is Sept. 30. All personnel with this recertification cycle due date must attain the appropriate minimum number of recertification credits – 3.0 CPD for CWS, CCO; 2.0 CPD for CI, CSR. Certification cycle end-date and credit standing can be checked online by logging in to wqa.org.

◆ **Certification exams** will be offered at the WQA Mid-Year meeting, Friday, Sept. 12. Please check the WQA Calendar at wqa.org for meeting location and exam registration forms, or contact the Education Department at 630 505 0160. Additional upcoming public exam sessions and registration forms may also be found on the online calendar. Save on proctor fees by attending a public exam session.

◆ The next **Water Treatment Fundamentals Seminar** will be offered on Oct. 14, in Anaheim, CA preceding the annual PWQA Convention and Trade Show. Contact the education department to register at 630 505 0160.

◆ Look for the **2008 Educational Kit**, worth up to 1.0 CPD, in the mail early September. The kit and quizzes will also be available online in the WQA Store at wqa.org, early September. Look for them in the Free Certification Credit Quizzes category of the store.

