



March 20, 2020

To whom it may concern,

The Water Quality Association (WQA) and its more than 2,500 member companies work to ensure that homes and businesses throughout America, including health care facilities, nursing homes and dialysis centers, have access to quality drinking water and in many cases purified water.

In responding to the COVID-19 crisis, water treatment professionals, manufacturers, deliverers and service providers of point-of-use and point-of-entry (POU/POE) water treatment products and home and business delivered bottled water are incorporated into many designations and categories (and governmental announcements and directives) for products and services deemed “essential” due to the critical products and services they provide and their role in safeguarding America’s drinking water.

For so many citizens in the United States, whether rural, suburban or urban, such products and services are life sustaining, basic and fundamental – the very essence of “essential.” These products and services are a must have, like electricity and working plumbing. Consider the following:

- Some small public water systems rely on POU/POE treatment systems for compliance to the Safe Drinking Water Act
- The food and beverage industry relies on POU/POE treatment systems to meet their quality requirements
- Restaurants rely on POU/POE treatment systems throughout their stores (coffee, beverages, protection of kitchen appliances, etc.)
- Most if not all, bottle water production requires water treatment prior to bottling
- Many manufacturing processes require POU/POE treatment systems in order to achieve the specific water quality needed for processes and formulations
- The pharmaceutical industry requires extremely high-quality water
- Medical clinics and hospitals require POU/POE treatment devices (e.g., dialysis equipment, Legionella treatment devices, highly purified water, protection of sensitive equipment, etc.)
- Even for consumers on municipal water, POU/POE systems are helping to protect public health by serving as a Final Barrier against unexpected contamination events
- These systems must be maintained, or they will no longer work to protect public health
- Denying consumers access to these products and services will only escalate the panicked rush on bottled water
- Hydration is vital as we fight this illness
- Some consumers have medical conditions that dictate special water-quality requirements
- Some people who suffer from eczema need a very high-quality water for bathing and showering

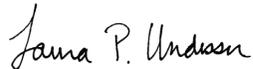
- CPAP users need access to purified water
- If the drinking water treatment systems are not maintained, warranties on certain products and systems will be voided, and these devices will be damaged or even stop working altogether

Furthermore, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) issued advisory guidance to state, local, and tribal officials on March 19 regarding the designation of essential employees who are necessary to maintain critical infrastructure and public works. In that guidance, DHS advises that governmental authorities designate manufacturers of public health equipment and “employees needed to operate and maintain drinking water and wastewater/drainage infrastructure” as “essential”. In addition, it identifies as “essential” those “workers such as plumbers, electricians, exterminators, and other service providers who provide services that are necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences.” WQA agrees with those recommendations. Text of DHS guidance can be found [here](#).

It is for these reasons that water treatment professionals, manufacturers, deliverers and service providers of point of use and point of entry water treatment products and home and business delivered bottled water are “essential” and their associated employees are “essential employees.”

Thank you for all your effort to combat the coronavirus pandemic and support American families and businesses.

Sincerely,



Pauli Undesser
WQA Executive Director