

Step Up to the Table:

A Cornucopia of Water Sites To Be Thankful For

By Ronald Y. Pérez
WC&P Managing Editor

As we enter my favorite time of the year—the holidays—my thoughts naturally drift toward the dining table and the Thanksgiving dinner that many of us share in each and every year here in the United States. As I look forward to seeing my mom's and aunt's cooking on prominent display, it's also a time to reflect on the countless blessings we may have in the form of health and family, among others. So, what does Thanksgiving have to do with this website review? Glad you asked. Like the offerings served up on the last Thursday of November, we have smattered a little bit of everything into this column. Go ahead—feast!

www.onlinewatertreatment.com

You're required to register with the site first, which is free and takes a mere two minutes. This also means you must respond to an email sent to you regarding links that enables your navigation throughout the site. Once you get a personalized page that reads "Links for (your name)," you're off and running. The site is spearheaded by a well-known water treatment company, Ondeo Nalco (recently sold by SUEZ to an investment consortium that includes Goldman Sachs, The Blackstone Group and Apollo Management), and DMS, which stands for Data Mobility Systems—a water treatment consulting service.

On the customized home page, you'll notice your main buttons include

Online Tools, *Technical Literature*, *Software* and *Contact*. Below those is also a "News" button. *Online Tools* is used for all sorts of calculations. You'll find calculations concerning cooling towers, boilers and some miscellaneous stuff like cations, anions, lime softening and even reverse osmosis (RO) membrane performance. It's as easy as plugging in a few numbers and, presto, you're set.

With *Technical Literature*, you're provided with information on five different topics—general water chemistry, cooling water, boiler water treatment, ion exchange and equipment specifications (feed, storage, monitoring). What information exactly is supplied for each heading? Well, the ion exchange entry, for one, provides a description of the process itself as well as effects of oxidants on materials. A .pdf file is included for support.

The *Software* button offers the opportunity to find out more about what DMS does for the water treatment industry by way of estimator reports. Lastly, visitors can contact Ondeo or DMS for general information with a query and have them respond using the phone or email.

www.waterandwastewater.com

This site makes no bones about it—"the best website for the water treatment professional." With a grandiose

All Turkey & Little Stuffing

www.onlinewatertreatment.com

For those who've gone through some .pdf files available at this site, you may think this is an Internet ad for Ondeo Nalco. I don't think so. It's not like they have an order form for their products. Most information given here has to do with calculations, and is general enough for the water treatment professional to use.

www.waterandwastewater.com

Not the greatest of navigable sites. It's one thing to have too much information, but quite another when visitors are looking for some kind of site organization. This should be called "wastewaterandlittleelse.com." But we're given an opportunity to try and change that as the site allows others to add their links. Also, a free newsletter is offered.

www.water-filter-news.com

On its own, this is a very informative, if not biased, site. Add the fact that one person is running the show, and the achievement becomes even more impressive. Main buttons are equipped with OK information, and little fluff. And Ms. Carolan supplies a persuasive argument for water filters. Sign up to win a free

drawing on the home page.



Cristina Carolan is the braintrust behind www.water-filter-news.com

statement like that, you would expect to be duly impressed. As I type in the URL, I am torn between where to start on the home page since it runs three printed pages long.

Under the heading, "Inside and WaterandWasteWater," I click on *Industry Groups*. It sends me to another page where four sub-categories are listed—Industry Associations, Industry News, Industry Publications, and Industry Trade Shows and Events. As I discover throughout this site, it's definitely more about "wastewater" than it is "water" (in the POU/POE sense).

Scanning a list of *Industry Groups*, I see AWWA, WEF and NACE—but where are the WQA, NSF or UL? Further, the site devotes space to 16 magazines, trade journals and newsletters—such as *Ultrapure Water*, *Water & Waste Treatment Magazine* and *Water Environment & Technology*—but I don't see *U.S. Water News*, *Reeves Journal* or some of the POU/POE magazines in Europe published by Zenith International. This wastewater slant is also evident under the trade show listings and news item coverage.

Another main button, *Buyers Guide & Industry Directory*, seems like it might uncover some balance with residential water treatment. The site promises a library with over 800 companies and 150-plus companies. Categories are broken down between equipment and supplies as well as services. I click on "Turnkey treatment plants-systems," which leads to another listing of system types. I select "activated carbon systems." Aside from Carbon Resources LLC, there isn't much here that says "residential treatment" to me.

www.water-filter-news.com

From one site that is all-encompass-

ing to one that wants to direct your attention to one, and only one, water treatment component—water filters. A simple enough idea, but does it hold enough water to warrant an entire site? That was my first thought as I scanned the main buttons on the home page: *Water*, *Filters*, *Chemicals*, *Contact*, *About* (but no "us," oddly enough...this will be explained later), *Links* and *Order*.

I click on *Water* and the site gives me three sub-headings including "Water & Your Body," "Water & the Planet" and "Bottled Water." The last is worth mentioning since, throughout the site, bottled water is dismissed as an unnecessary expense no better than what the tap can provide. Instead, of course, it leans toward using water filters. Fortunately, the page does recommend consumers seek certified water filters and contains a link to NSF (a new pop-up window appears instead of taking you offsite—a definite plus).

Next, *Filters* discusses different types of technologies such as GAC, water softener, distillation, RO, UV filters, among others. NSF Standards 42 and 53 are also broached along with a list of questions (and proposed answers) one should consider before purchasing a fil-

ter. Not surprisingly, all answers point to buying a filter for every application. As one might gather, *Chemicals* covers various contaminants and their descriptions (chlorine, *Cryptosporidium*, endocrine disrupters, *Giardia*, lead, VOCs, to name a few).

In *About*, I see the site is headed up by Cristina Carolan. She acquired an affinity for water treatment while pursuing degrees in biology and environmental studies at Baylor University. The *Links* page contains only a few of the major industry-related websites, the USEPA, WQA and NGWA being the most notable. For those sold on water filters, you can place an *Order* by visiting the site's shopping cart at www.cleanwatershop.com

Conclusion

If nothing else, I think we managed to squeeze plenty of water treatment dishes into this smorgasbord of a review. So, if it's a gift idea, water research idea or you just want to know more about the industry's technologies, then maybe you'll find it here. Meanwhile, pass the candied yams, cranberry sauce and homemade biscuits—and have a grateful holiday season! ♦

Reprinted with permission of *Water Conditioning & Purification Magazine* ©2004