



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Twenty years of sewage

I read and was touched deeply by your editorial in *the Water Wheel* (November/December 2005). I have recently dealt with a client of Glencoe in northern KwaZulu-Natal, who has, for 20 years, been battling to get rectification of sewage streaming into his farm dam and the Wasbank River.

Perhaps someone could cover the story, as he has literally run out of options as far as government departments go. Nobody has been prepared to remediate the pollution and it continues to this day to flow unabated on to his property. He has files of records, minutes of meeting after meeting and resolutions that have singularly failed to bring any remedy.

James Mitchell, Dundee

Small companies also credible

As a supplier of water treatment chemicals to numerous small (and larger) local authorities within KZN, I read your article in the November/December 2005 edition of *the Water Wheel*, 'What's That in Your Water', with interest.

Reputable water treatment chemical suppliers have been acutely aware over the past 11 years of the lack of formal legislation in South Africa with regard to the suitability

of water treatment polymers. This was the motivation for our primary manufacturer, Zetachem, to become the first South African company to achieve international standards for potable water treatment polymers.

We wish to point out that, while there are undoubtedly 'unscrupulous treatment chemical suppliers' in the municipal market throughout South Africa, there are also medium-sized companies, like Rheochem, who provide a very useful technical support service to small municipalities. Our dedication to service, including monitoring of plant results, chemical optimisation, technical advice, free operator training etc., provides much needed support to customers who don't have access to the resources of the larger Water Services Authorities.

Speaking for Rheochem, strict ethics and standards are applied to all aspects of the business, from quality control to general business practices to Black Empowerment. We therefore trust that your article, while quite rightly alerting consumers to suppliers who to quote, "place the entire industry in disrepute", does not create the impression that there is a danger in dealing with any company other than the companies that were favourably mentioned (albeit one of those manufacturers on our behalf).

Jacqui Swart, MD, Rheochem

(The article certainly recognises that not all small companies are 'bad' and that there are, in fact, smaller water treatment chemical firms, such as yourselves, who are providing an extremely valuable and essential service in ensuring that our drinking water remains safe. One can only hope that stricter standards will rid the sector of the existing bad apples, thereby opening up the way for more reputable, credible firms. — Ed.)

Idea not new

I am intrigued as to why WRC gave all the free publicity to Garden Res-Q (*the Water*

Wheel November/December 2005) to an idea that is not original and other organisations have been promoting and selling for far longer periods. For example, Guy Preston and myself have had them installed for years. Guy's efforts have been featured in national magazines such as *You*, *Water Rhapsody* has been on Radio 702 — all before Garden Res-Q came on the scene.

For example Water Rhapsody in Cape Town have installed over 1 500 units, in Canarvon 110 units were installed to solve the problem of greywater disposal (funded by the Department of Water Affairs & Forestry), another 10 went into Kgalagadi and a number of units have been installed around Johannesburg (BRD Engineering/Aquasave).

Winning a design prize for something that has been done before does not reflect well on the Design Institute.

Also there is a matter of cost, which is not discussed. The biggest problem on take-up is cost. Aquasave and Water Rhapsody have kept their costs down by using off-the-shelf components. It might not look so nice but if it works and sells then the objective is achieved.

Richard Holden, Department of Science & Technology

Correction in order

I would like to point out an error in your article 'What's That in Your Water' (*the Water Wheel* November/December 2005).

The fact is that both Süd Chemie and Zetachem have applied for and been granted approval by the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) (not the FDA as stated in the article). The NSF is the only regulatory body accepted by the World Bank when it supports tenders for chemicals for water treatment and the global list of approved chemicals can be found on their website at www.nsf.org.

ISO 9002 has nothing to do with safety in use and only regulates procedures to ensure that reproducible systems are in use whether they are safe or not.

Peter Leopold, Süd-Chemie Water and Process Technologies

