

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Florida MEP Helps AQUATHIN CORP. Make its Mark

Water Treatment Company Obtains CE Marking and ISO-9001:2000 Certification

POMPANO BEACH, FL - AQUATHIN CORP is known for their unique approach to water filtration and purification systems. For more than 25 years, the company has produced the most effective water purification systems available, as well as conditioning and treatment systems for residential, commercial, and laboratory use.

AQUATHIN is a leader in exporting its products around the world and earned the President's Excellence Award in Export in 1990. Increasingly, exported products are being required to bear the European Conformity marking (CE marking) in order to gain access to the European Union market. As a result, AQUATHIN was hoping to obtain the CE marking rather quickly to eliminate any potential road blocks. In addition, although AQUATHIN has a very detailed quality system to insure unmatched quality in its market, the company had not implemented a quality system compliant to the ISO standard. The ISO procedures create uniform practices within a company that meet international standards, and the requirements are the same worldwide.

"We knew we needed the CE marking and ISO-9001:2000 certification to achieve a new level in our business and retain our world-class reputation," said Alfred "Alfie" Lipshultz, President of AQUATHIN CORP. "We contacted Enrique Bekerman, project manager for the Florida Manufacturing Extension Partnership (Florida MEP) to address these issues and lead us through the steps. Bekerman was able to help us secure a grant through the Florida Workforce that paid for a major portion of the training costs for this project."

The Florida MEP brought in the Center for International Trade Regulation Assistance (CITRA) of Duquesne University in Pennsylvania to help with the CE marking project. CITRA is an organization that has developed expertise in European Union regulations, including the requirements of CE marking. CITRA representatives studied the drawings and specifications of AQUATHIN products and components to ensure they were in compliance with the European Union regulations. They also helped AQUATHIN prepare a technical file, containing the documentation that proves conformity to the CE marking directives covering its product.

Wilhelm Barb of the Florida MEP also assisted in the updating of AQUATHIN procedures to comply with the ISO-9001:2000 quality system.

"They have successfully passed the first external ISO audit and will obtain the ISO-9001:2000 certification by the end of September," said Bekerman. "But while conducting training in ISO, Wilhelm also recognized some areas where AQUATHIN could eliminate waste from their already efficient operations. In October, a Time Wise® Principles of Lean Manufacturing session will be facilitated to help them identify areas where operations can be improved, streamlined and made more efficient."

"As a member of the Florida District Export Council, I was well aware of the benefits that the Florida MEP could bring to a company like ours," added Lipshultz. "We are very happy to work with the Florida MEP and are grateful for their help in making some successful changes in our business practices."

Founded in 1980 in Pompano Beach, Florida, AQUATHIN CORP was formulated from a single concept of producing the most effective water purification systems available for residential, commercial, and laboratory applications. AQUATHIN has acquired seven patents for its unique point of use **reverse osmosis deionization systems and treatment products**. For more information on AQUATHIN and its products and services, please visit their website at www.aquathin.com, or call toll free 800-462-7634.

The Florida MEP is an affiliate of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) under the U.S. Department of Commerce. The national MEP is a network of manufacturing extension centers that provide business and technical assistance to smaller manufacturers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Through MEP, manufacturers have access to more than 2000 manufacturing and business "coaches" whose job is to help firms make changes that lead to greater productivity, increased profits, and enhanced global competitiveness. For more information on the Florida MEP program call 321-939-4000.

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