

## OurwaterQuality

# Purification rules follow awareness

As the La Niña phenomenon continues to dominate the weather patterns over Northern New Mexico and we read about significantly lower water levels in city reservoirs and decreased flow rates in the River Grande, and we start to come to grips with the reality that this weather pattern also adversely affects the recharge of our local aquifers, more of us are turning our attention to water conservation.

These and other considerations (mostly economic) cause residents to investigate water-conserving ways to treat their water. Sometimes these alternative systems do work, but my experience is that their performance is not predictable. If you can find something that might work, and it is priced at a throw-away price point, then it might be worth a try. If it works, you got lucky; if it does not work, then you can buy a system that does work for you (and for which the results can be measured) and your experiment was a risk management phase in your

buying process. We are currently testing a catalytic system under our New Mexico Small Business Assistance project.

Our experience is that customers like to see demonstrable proof that something is working. We have carried anti-scalant systems, which reconfigure (but do not remove) hardness minerals. Again, sometimes they work very well and sometimes they fail. The fundamental problem is that hardness measures the same before and after the treatment. We do not actively market these systems to new customers, but customers who have had them and experienced success will invariably want the media replaced when it is exhausted.

Inability to predict performance is a major problem for the water-purification model of starting with the incoming water chemistry and using testing to prove that the recommended system works. In that regard, conventional water conditioning by ion exchange is hard to beat in verifiability. And, believe it or not, there

is such a thing as a “greener” softener, although using either potassium chloride or sodium chloride is unavoidable.

Our entire senior staff attended the recent Water Quality Association meetings in San Antonio as part of our ongoing quest for “greener” water conserving products. We heard a lot of claims but we saw little documentation. The most encouraging new development we saw is “water on water” reverse osmosis technology, which decreases RO filtration time and reduces water use. We are currently bench-testing one of the systems. RO membranes filter to 0.0001 micrometers (microns - one micron is one-millionth of a meter).

Our current focus is on nanofiltration membrane technology with filtering to 0.001 microns and capabilities for whole-house, on-demand systems, with very measurable results (comparable to RO) and much lower water consumption. It is not surprising that this technology comes at a high price. FYI, the (tubular)



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membrane filtration at the new Buckman Direct Diversion (BDD) system is 0.1 microns. Water purification is a tradeoff among several factors. You get to decide whether BDD water filtration is sufficient for you, but the water is EPA-compliant and we should all be thankful for the timing of its startup.

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## Socialnetworking

# A few basics about Facebook use

Do you remember when Facebook was the place to connect with people from only your high school or college days? With over 650 million users, Facebook is now all about connecting the web and individual users by personal relationships and preferences with the nearly ubiquitous “Like” button.

These buttons are popping up on Santa Fe websites, including those of artists, restaurants, galleries, motels and hotels, tourist attractions, real-estate companies, and nonprofit organizations, for upcoming events and local businesses of all sizes, products and services. Facebook is now as hot for Santa Fe businesses and entrepreneurs as our New Mexico red chile.

If you are still wondering where to start, you are not alone. If you are “on” Facebook and not sure what being there means, you are like many other users. Here are some basic steps to get you started and to build your Facebook presence.

You need an account on Facebook to have a business or organization page. If you do not already have an account, go to <http://facebook.com> and register for a free user page. You will be allowed one account in your name. Your next choice will be how you use your personal profile. You can connect only with friends and family members you already know or you can connect your friends and family with your professional, company or business worlds.

You can control your privacy. Review your privacy settings and select who is allowed to see what on your Facebook user page. Many users choose to hide their date of birth or other personal information for security. Anytime you update your profile, Facebook will send a note to your Friends.

Complete your profile with a current bio and contact information. Tell about yourself or what is important to you, then add your photo. If the picture is more than five years old, it is time look in the

mirror. Use a photo people will recognize as you and crop it for your face. Select your relationship status. Facebook does give you a range of choices including “blank” response. You can select a privacy setting for these features. Next, you can add favorite books, music, movies and more.

Now you can create your Facebook business page. In the past, people would become fans. Now they join your business page by clicking on the Like button. Unlike the limit of 5,000 friends for your Facebook user page, your business page can have an unlimited number of fans or viewers who Like your page. Unlike Facebook user pages, all Facebook business pages are public. Anyone can find you and see your page whether they are a Facebook user or not.

Think about how you want to promote your business or organization or event. Put on your marketing hat and take the time to study and research other business pages. Focus on objectives, develop a



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strategy, and discover a bottom-line advantage of how a free business page lets you communicate and interact with your customers and clients. Your Facebook business page is your online business card and your storefront. See you next online.

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