



By Laura Moorman

Certification Around the World

With the expansion of the international marketplace for residential drinking water treatment products, there are many questions surrounding what approvals are required in certain countries. These approvals can be quite complex, and digesting the regulations can seem like a monumental task.

International regulations for POU and POE systems

This article provides a brief overview of the residential drinking water requirements of some of the larger markets, including the United Kingdom (U.K.), France, China, Australia and New Zealand.

U.K.

The Water Regulations Advisory Scheme (WRAS) approval is required for many drinking water treatment devices and other products sold in the U.K. and Northern Ireland. The WRAS is in effect to prevent the waste, misuse, undue consumption, contamination or erroneous measurement of water. The scheme consists of two portions of testing: material safety testing and mechanical testing.

The material safety testing is performed in accordance with the British Standard 6920.

The BS6920 is comprised of five individual tests and its purpose is to ensure that the product does not impart any negative odor or flavor, leach anything harmful to a consumer's health or

promote the growth of microorganisms. Upon successful completion of the materials testing, mechanical testing will commence.

Mechanical testing ensures a product is watertight and properly identified.

After materials and mechanical testing is successfully completed, the information is sent to the Test and Assessment Group (TAG) for review. The TAG meets at scheduled dates throughout the year to review the submitted information. Upon review and acceptance, WRAS approval is issued. Approval is valid for five years. Approved systems and materials are listed on the WRAS website at www.wras.co.uk/directory.

France

Attestation De Conformite Sanitaire (ACS) is the material safety approval required for materials and products in contact with drinking water in France. Manufacturers are required to obtain ACS approval on their products; it is not a voluntary



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requirement. All materials used in a product that are in contact with water are reviewed. Metallic materials are reviewed to ensure they are in compliance with purity requirements. Organic materials are reviewed against a positive list. The formulation and compositional information is gathered from the material suppliers and is reviewed against a positive list. The testing required is dependent on this review. If migration testing is required, it may analyze parameters such as:

- Odor and flavor;
- pH and conductivity;
- TOC;
- Chlorine demand;
- Chlorinated and nonchlorinated solvents;
- GC-MS screening; and
- Cytotoxicity evaluation against human cells.

If the product seeking ACS approval includes a water treatment component such as activated carbon or an ion-exchange resin, it must be tested without the treatment component. The treatment component must be approved separately by the Ministry of Health (MOH).

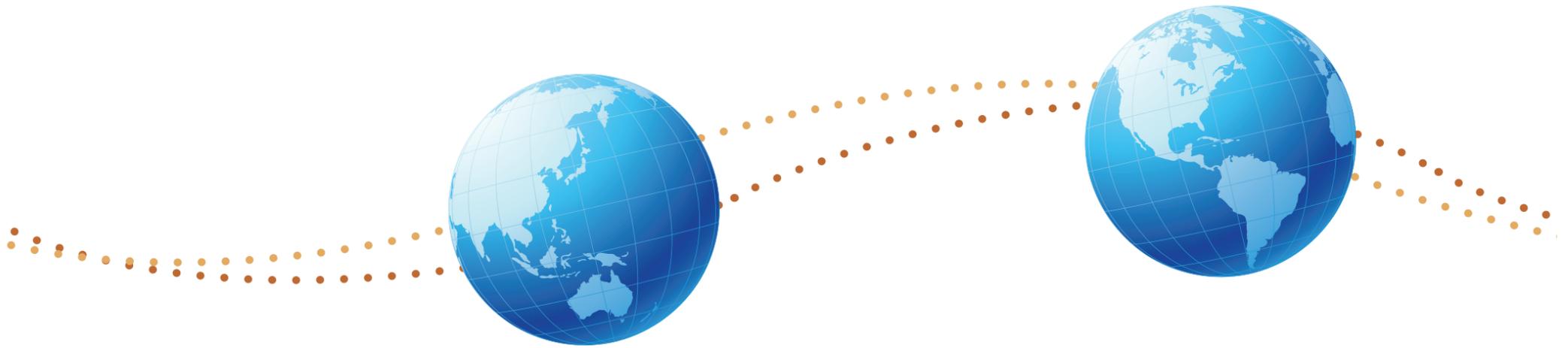
If the materials conform to the positive list and the required testing is successfully completed, an ACS certificate is issued by an approved laboratory and is valid for up to five years.

China

Manufacturers wanting to sell their product in China must obtain approval from the Chinese MOH. Many details regarding the approval process are not publicly available; however, the generalities of gaining MOH approval involve the submission of:

- Wetted parts list;
- Schematics;
- Literature;
- Product information; and
- Supporting testing data or approvals, such as NSF certification.

The product will be required to undergo testing, which may involve material safety, functionality and hygienic testing. The pass/fail criteria and specific testing methods are not published or publicly available. The



testing is conducted by an approved laboratory in China. Upon successful completion of testing, the test results and all other product information is submitted to an expert committee who issues the recommendation for MOH approval. The time frame to gain approval varies.

Australia & New Zealand

Products for plumbing and drainage, including filter and treatment units, for sale in Australia and New Zealand must comply with the requirements set out by the Plumbing Regulators. The approval scheme is the WaterMark Certification, Level 1. This scheme was introduced in 2005 to replace the use of several different product certifications in Australia. To obtain certification to the Australian standards, the following is required:

- Material safety testing;
- Structural integrity testing;
- Performance claims testing; and
- Auditing of the manufacturing facilities.

The performance testing relevant to domestic drinking water filter devices references the NSF/ANSI standards. Upon successful completion of testing and auditing of the manufacturing facilities, the WaterMark is issued.

The countries mentioned are just a few of the various certification schemes required abroad. While the concerns of each respective country to product safety are similar, the requirements and processes to prove a product is safe are vastly different. *wqp*

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