

# Solving the Puzzle

By Laura Moorman

Certification programs help navigate complex international standards

**L**ike assembling a jigsaw puzzle, regulations for drinking water products must be understood and put together correctly to find a solution and see the entire regulatory picture. Unfortunately, the pieces can be difficult to assemble.

The puzzling sight is due to the absence of a uniform global standard for products in contact with and for the treatment of drinking water. The closest the industry has come to a single multi-country standard was a committee formed to harmonize water standards in Europe called the European Acceptance Scheme

(EAS). The EAS is no longer active, and while some work on global standards is underway, the current regulatory climate requires manufacturers to seek separate approvals in each country where they wish to market their products.

## U.S. Standards Abroad

Although there is no single worldwide standard for products in contact with drinking water, the NSF Mark is accepted in many countries. In addition, many countries have adopted or referenced NSF standards, including Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile,

Colombia, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, South Africa and Taiwan.

The degree of acceptance and adoption varies by country. The Australian standard states the equivalence of NSF standards, but still carries its own certification mark, the WaterMark, which is required on products installed in that country. Malaysia accepts products bearing the NSF Mark as having met regulatory requirements, and in South Africa, the NSF Mark is widely known, recognized and accepted.

Other countries have their own conformity assessment requirements to address the safety and effectiveness of products in contact with drinking water. These individual standards require separate certifications before a product can be sold into a market. The continual reassessment, varying and conflicting requirements between countries, and cost of testing to multiple standards can make selling a single product worldwide extraordinarily difficult.

## Standards Around the Globe

Manufacturers must ensure their products conform to the required certifications in each country where they will market their products. Major and emerging market requirements for products used for the treatment of residential drinking water that are not connected to the plumbing supply are shown in Table 1.

Table 2 reflects the regulations of major and emerging market requirements for products used for the treatment of residential drinking water that are connected to the plumbing supply.

## Planning Certifications

Manufacturers may navigate the regulations themselves and work with multiple agencies to submit information and undergo testing and multiple audits, or work with an accredited certification body that can test, audit and issue multiple certification marks. Working with a single accredited certifier can save manufacturers time and

**Table 1. Residential Drinking Water Product Requirements (Not Connected to Plumbing Supply)**

Country/Continent	Regulation	Certification	Testing	Manufacturing Facility Inspection
Australia	AS/NZS 3497 and 4348	WaterMark Certification Scheme	Material safety, performance	Required
Brazil	Directive 93 ABNT/NBR 15176	INMETRO Seal of Conformity	Material safety, performance, bacterial	Required
China	GB Standards	Ministry of Health approval	Material safety via immersion, functionality	Required for products manufactured in China
Europe	Compliance with EU Food Directive	2002/72 and 1935/2004	Migration testing with stimulants	No audit of the facility needed, quality statement from suppliers required
U.S.	NSF/ANSI 42 and/or 53	NSF Mark	Material safety, performance	Required

**Table 2. Residential Drinking Water Product Requirements (Connected to Plumbing Supply)**

Country	Regulation	Certification	Testing	Manufacturing Facility Inspection
Australia	AS/NZS 3497 and 4348	WaterMark Certification Scheme	Material safety, performance	Required
Brazil	Directive 93 ABNT/NBR 14908	INMETRO Seal of Conformity	Material safety, performance, bacterial	Required
Canada	B483.1	NSF C Mark	Performance	Required
China	GB Standards	Ministry of Health approval	Material safety via immersion, functionality	Required for products manufactured in China
France	ACS	ACS	Review of chemical composition to French Positive List, migration testing	Not required
Germany	KTW	KTW	Review of chemical composition to German Positive List, migration testing	Not required
Italy	Decreets 31, 143 and 443	Ministry of Health approval	Material safety, bacteriostatic	Not required
Malaysia	SIRIM	SIRIM	NSF certification	Required
U.S.	NSF/ANSI 42, 44, 53, 55, 58 and/or 62	NSF Mark	Material safety, performance	Required

money with comprehensive testing plans that cover multiple markets and reduce audits.

One example of a single certifier testing plan is the NSF Intl. Passport Program. NSF created this program to reduce inefficiencies and decrease time to market for manufacturers. NSF holds numerous accreditations, including the American National Standards Institute, the Standards Council of Canada, the Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand, Brazil's National Institute of Metrology, Quality and Technology, and the Certification and Accreditation Administration of China.

These accreditations allow NSF to test, audit, certify and issue the NSF Mark, NSF C Mark, Australian WaterMark and Brazilian INMETRO Seal of Conformity. In addition to these accreditations, NSF owns and partners with numerous laboratories, allowing manufacturers easy access and streamlined certifications to major European approvals, including the U.K.'s Water Regulations Advisory Scheme, France's Attestation de Conformite Sanitaire and Germany's KTW.

Working with a single certification body allows manufacturers to submit product information and supplier chemical composition information just once. The manufacturer indicates markets in which their products are sold. The certification body can provide guidance on which approvals are required and which audits can be conducted simultaneously, as well as advice on testing combined for multiple certifications. *wqp*

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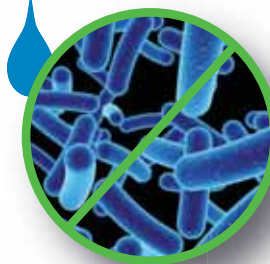
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