

Sent: Tuesday, July 05, 2005 9:45 AM

Subject: EU'S NEW GROUNDWATER PROTECTION DIRECTIVE LACKS TEETH AND IS WATERED DOWN

Dear Members of Aquathin Europe;

If you ever wanted a 500 ton bomb to deliver to your Customers...here it is ! No one in Europe...not even media nor politicians, can state that the government is keenly handling your water crises. Aaaaaaaaaand because they are not properly dealing with it, as you will read below, "crises" may not be a cogent enough discription.

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"Alfie"

Alfred J. Lipshultz, President

P.S. When responding please continue 'REPLY' to include all previous correspondences on this subject.

Europe backtracks on water protection (published on 1-Jul-2005)

Disappointed lobbyists have claimed the EU's new Groundwater Protection Directive lacks teeth and dismissed it as a watered down version of existing legislation.

The directive was agreed by Europe's Environment Ministers on Friday, June 24 to replace the Water Framework Directive of 2000, which was itself designed as a stop-gap between the previous version brought in in 1980 and this latest model.

But according to the European Environmental Bureau, a coalition of campaign groups from across the continent, the tough measures that had been hoped for are largely absent, leaving water supplies vulnerable to a broad spectrum of pollutants.

"Clearly, citizens are worried about chemical contamination of their drinking water," said Stefan Scheuer, EEB policy director.

"But the response from EU governments is to allow even further contamination of groundwater - our main source of drinking water.

"Almost every government that asked for it got its specific exemption, leaving the law with more loopholes than actual obligations.

"This is the EU à la carte."

The French government, for example, asked for pollutants from diffuse sources to be exempt from the directive, meaning contamination from agricultural chemicals, thought to be the largest single contributor to groundwater contamination, will not be covered.

The Netherlands' request to exclude contaminated sediment from river maintenance was also accepted.

The EEB argues that the key to effective protection is prevention rather than cure, as once contamination has occurred it can take a long time for pollutants to disappear.

In the worst case scenario, recovery times can stretch into the hundreds of years.

It also points out that a number of hazardous chemicals, such as endocrine disrupters, have irreversible effects and should be prevented from reaching the water supply at all costs.

Mr Scheuer said implementing the new directive was a backwards step and it offered no real protection.

"It would be better if this law were to be abandoned altogether and the old 1980 Groundwater Directive kept", he said.

"But we have still hopes with the European Parliament.

"It must defend its position on a clear approach to prevent hazardous chemical reaching groundwater."

By Sam Bond

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