Fall colors and water problems

It’s that time of year when northern snowbirds flock by the tens of thousands to more temperate regions. Many make sure they have adequately winterized their homes but some may not know the damage that can be caused if their water softening systems aren’t also properly cared for before they depart. This is a golden opportunity to get the word out that dealers are the experts on these matters to help prevent costly plumbing problems.

According to the Energy Department’s Energy Information Administration, last year’s unseasonably warm temperatures during the winter months will not be repeated and heating costs will rise between five to 20 percent, depending on the energy source. And as Tucson found out last year, a deep freeze can bring systems to an amazingly quick halt. Burst pipes, frozen valves and an extended freeze was so unexpected that the situation rapidly devolved into a calamitous event. People who live in regions that experience colder winters might have been ready but we weren’t. A duplex renter suffered for days without water, not because the problems with the city weren’t resolved, but because an orphan water softener prevented flow to the unit. The other side of the unit had water service, only because the occupants were more winter-aware and took precautions (but didn’t have an orphan system to worry about). Yes, it happens, even in Tucson!

Instead of slowing down when cooler weather moves in, it’s a time to take stock of what has transpired over the past several months and what can be done to improve business. Every small problem can be transformed into a business stream, if dealers present themselves as the resident water-matter experts. Are you training your staff well enough for them to feel confident they are the experts? If not, there are a host of training courses available. Training can be costly, yes, but the return on investment will put the right people in the right position to make their companies stand-out performers in the industry.

Many companies have transitioned to working with commercial and smaller industrial clients. It’s not all about the residential marketplace anymore. As we near the end of the year, we are addressing some of the larger applications. In this issue, Dr. Corrado Sommariva of the International Desalination Association covers energy efficiency in desalination. Dow Chemical Company provides information on seawater ultrafiltration; Dr. Leslie Behrends and Eric Lohan of Living Machine offer case studies about converting wastewater for reuse and Dr. Sarah Kennedy and Dr. Henry Nowicki analyze how to implement green chemistry. In addition, Dr. Kelly Reynolds takes a closer look at microbial management practices for biofilms in water treatment. Using bugs to kill bugs makes sense, but is it messing with Mother Nature?

We hope to see you at upcoming events and wish everyone a very special Thanksgiving as well. As we hope for good things to come, planning for successful outcomes is our priority. We hope it is yours also.

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