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A clean drink of water

By Kim Mikus; July 29, 2014



John Schoch Jr., president and chief executive officer of Profile Products LLC in Buffalo Grove, holds his company's ProCleanse water filtration system that is new being used and tested in third world countries all over the globe. (Mark Welsh/mwelsh@dailyherald.com)

A Buffalo Grove company created a portable water filtration system that's in the middle of a six-month testing period to provide clean water to about 600 rural homes in Ghana.

"The technology used in this system is very interesting and exciting," said John Schoch, president and CEO of ProCleanse, a subsidiary of soil, water and vegetation management company Profile Products.

Goals in creating the canister-style filtration device included that there are no chemicals or replacement parts and that it's simple to use for about 10 years. Schoch said millions of dollars went into the research and testing of the filtration system that exceeds World Health Organization standards.

The filtration canister contains porous ceramic particles that trap and neutralize bacteria and viruses in the water through an ion exchange process, said Schoch, 64. The unit processes the water and stores up to 18 liters of clean water.

Users pour dirty water into the filtration chamber and gravity moves the water through the strainer that filters out debris and deactivates harmful microorganisms. Clean water is stored in a separate chamber within the unit with access for drinking and cooking through an attached hose.

"It's extremely effective," Schoch said of the system that is about \$200.

"It's doing well in Ghana right now," Schoch said. He added that along with how the product works, they are going to observe its acceptance. "

"There are cultural issues that have to be looked at as well," he said of the product designed mainly for Third World countries. He added his company is working with faith-based organizations and foundations to get the filtration in the homes and huts where water is unsafe to drink.

Development of the filter system started about five years ago and is based on a product made through Profile Products, a 50-year-old company with 150 employees. One of the products Profile manufactures is the clay particles used to help soak up water on the infield of professional baseball fields. These ceramic particles are part of the filtration process in the water filtration systems, said Schoch, who resides in Naperville.

Profile has plant locations in Tennessee, Mississippi and North Carolina.