



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

SBA Names **Safe Water Systems** “Exporter of the Year”

HONOLULU, April 30, 2003

The U.S. Small Business Administration announced that **SAFE WATER SYSTEMS** will be named the 2003 “Exporter of the Year” at an awards ceremony at the Sheraton Waikiki today.

Established in Honolulu in 1996, **SAFE WATER SYSTEMS** has invented and successfully brought to market an innovative, life-saving line of passive solar water disinfection products for use in developing countries and rural areas in the USA. The company’s *Solar Water Pasteurizers* disinfect contaminated water without electricity, chemicals or water pressure.

SAFE WATER SYSTEMS’ commercial and social purpose is to prevent some of the estimated 2.5 billion annual illnesses and 5 million deaths that result from waterborne pathogens. An early stage enterprise competing in the health and environment sectors, the company can function as both vendor and consultant. It has already established a worldwide footprint, with distribution channels in 65 countries and 1,500 units installed in 48 countries.

Solar Water Pasteurizers are currently serving safe drinking water to an estimated 100,000 people, many who have reported dramatic reductions in illness. With product life expectancy as great as 25+ years, safe water can be delivered for as little as US\$1.00 per person per year.

The worldwide market for **Solar Water Pasteurizers** is well in excess of \$1.5 billion. Since the company holds product patents and is the world’s sole supplier, it is well-positioned to satisfy the global demand for safe drinking water.

Success in exporting, combined with a solid commitment for expansion and growth in Hawaii, contributed to **SAFE WATER SYSTEMS**’ selection as “Exporter of the Year.”

“The SBA Small Business Award events are both exciting and inspirational,” said Andrew K. Poepoe, Hawaii District Director. “These winners are tops in their fields and show just what small businesses can accomplish here in Hawaii, against the odds, with determination, desire and vision.”

“The State of Hawaii has been critical to our successful international expansion,” said Will Hartzell, President of **SAFE WATER SYSTEMS**. “The tax incentives offered by Act 221, combined with enormous support from Mike Murphy and his staff at the Honolulu office of the U.S. Dept of Commerce, are just some of the benefits that have proved invaluable.”

“Between the Asian Development Bank annual meeting, the MAPES conferences and Sister Summits hosted by Mayor Harris, and visits from other international delegations, being based in Hawaii has been ideal for our company,” said Hartzell. “Receipt of the SBA award confirms that in a very concrete way.”

In the past year, **SAFE WATER SYSTEMS** has:

~Signed a MOU with the Asian Development Bank. Proposals with the ADB are underway for projects in Vietnam, Laos, Bangladesh, Nepal, East Timor and Kiribati.

- ~Initiated plans for UNICEF evaluation projects in Nigeria and Bangladesh
- ~Established relationships with UNICEF, UNFPA, UNOPS, CARE, World Vision and Rotary Clubs
- ~Exhibited as part of the official US government delegation to the UN World Summit in S. Africa

The Company is targeting several marketing sectors for 2003:

- ~International Financial Institutions
- ~International governmental and non-governmental aid and development organizations
- ~Value-added resellers (i.e., international water engineering firms, etc.)
- ~Missionary and religious organizations
- ~Housing, hospital, school, factory, temporary and permanent shelter projects

SAFE WATER SYSTEMS is well positioned for strong growth in the coming year with a seasoned management team and a board of advisors that includes former US Ambassadors, former ADB officials, and corporate CEOs.

The "Exporter of the Year" award comes on the heels of another honor given to **SAFE WATER SYSTEMS** in November, 2002 by the Department of Commerce. The "Export Achievement Certificate," presented in person by US Congressman Neil Abercrombie, recognizes businesses that have exported to new markets.

(For related story, visit: http://www.usatrade.gov/website/website.nsf/WebBySubj/Main_WhatsNew011103)



US Congressman Neil Abercrombie (left) presenting the Export Achievement Certificate to Safe Water Systems, with Department Commerce Director Mike Murphy (far right). Accepting the award for the company was President Will Hartzell (center).

About the SBA Small Business Awards

For more information about the SBA Small Business Awards, contact Jane Sawyer at the SBA Hawaii District Office, at 808-541-2973 or e-mail: jane.sawyer@sba.gov.

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