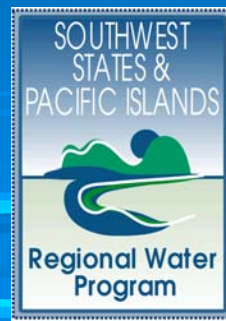


# Drinking Water Scams

By  
Southern Region Drinking Water Program  
Team

Adapted by  
Kitt Farrell-Poe, AZ Extension WQ Specialist  
Southwest States & Pacific Islands  
Coordinator



# Objective

To make you more aware of the various types of scams associated with drinking water so that you can better recognize a scam or potential scam and know how to inform the public on how to deal with it.



# What is a Drinking Water Scam?



# Who is Susceptible to Scams?



# History of Water-Related Scams



# Many Scams Now Internet-Based



# Examples of Past Water Scams

- Medical use of hydrotherapy
- Drinking radon or radium water



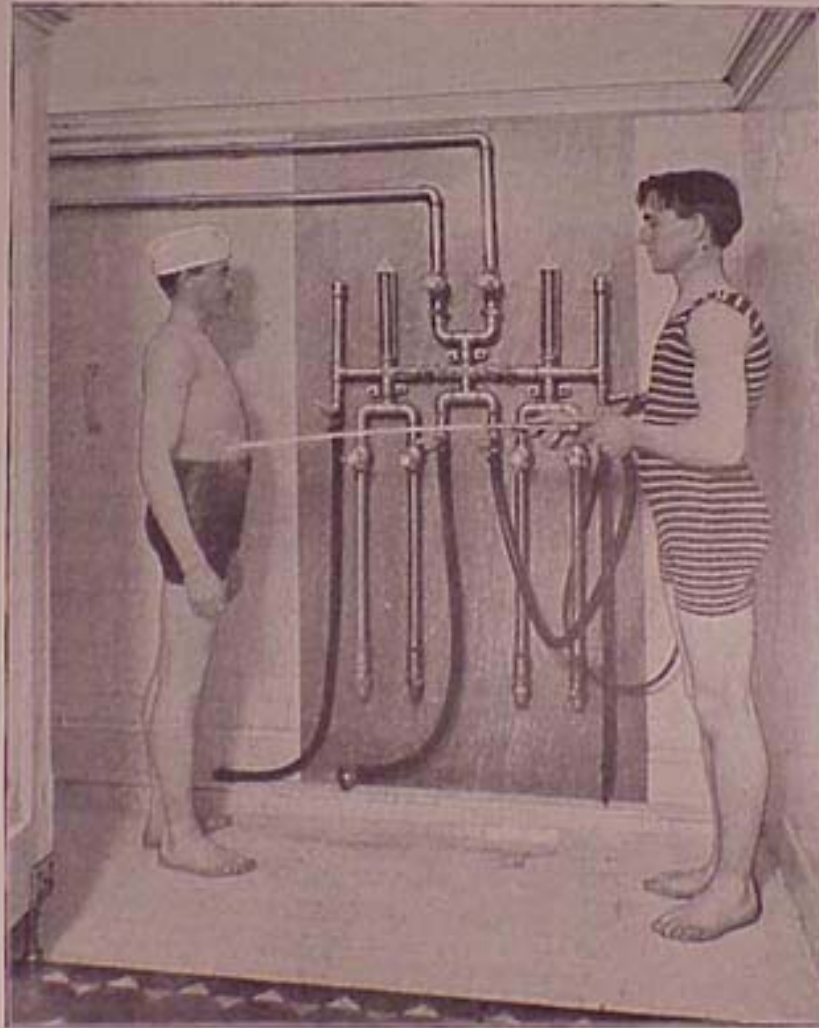


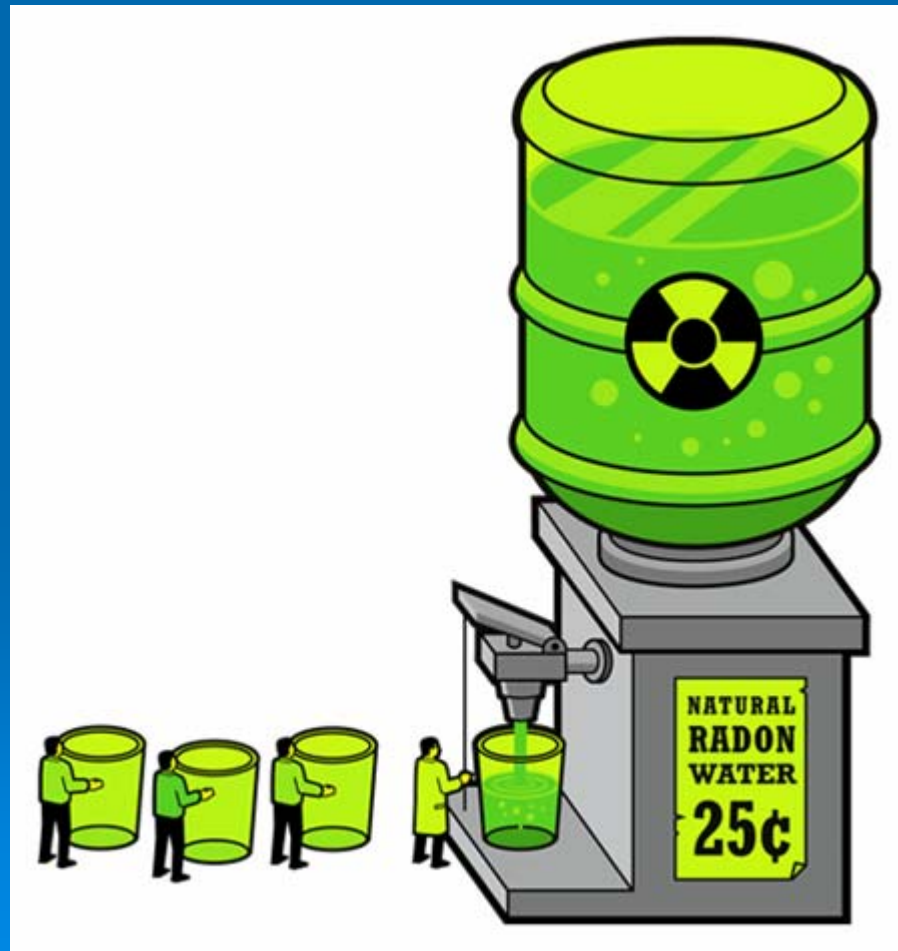
FIG. 53. HEPATIC DOUCHE (p. 310).



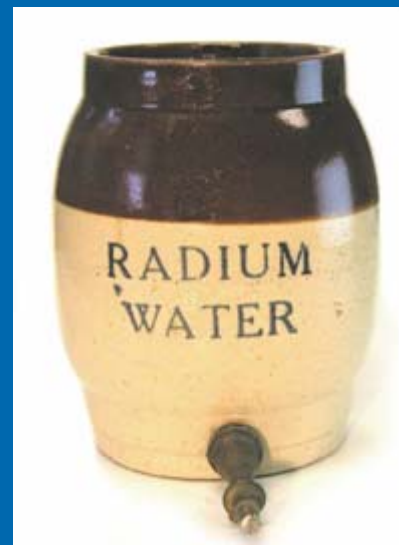
# From Hot-Springs Therapy to Radium and Radon Water



# For that Healthy Glow Drink Radiation



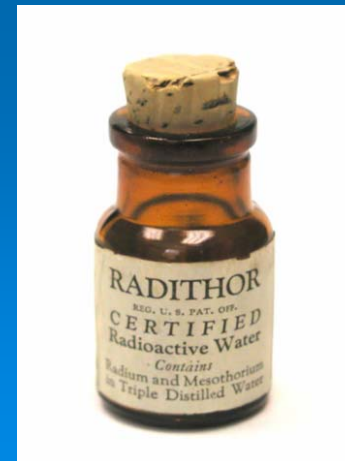
# Radon or Radium Water Devices



# Radium Water from Pills



# Radon Water from Liquid Concentrate



# First Bottled Water Scam



# Modern Day Drinking Water Scams

- **Bottled water scams**
- **Health quackery scams**
- **Water treatment scams**
- **Water testing scams**
- **Water supply scams**

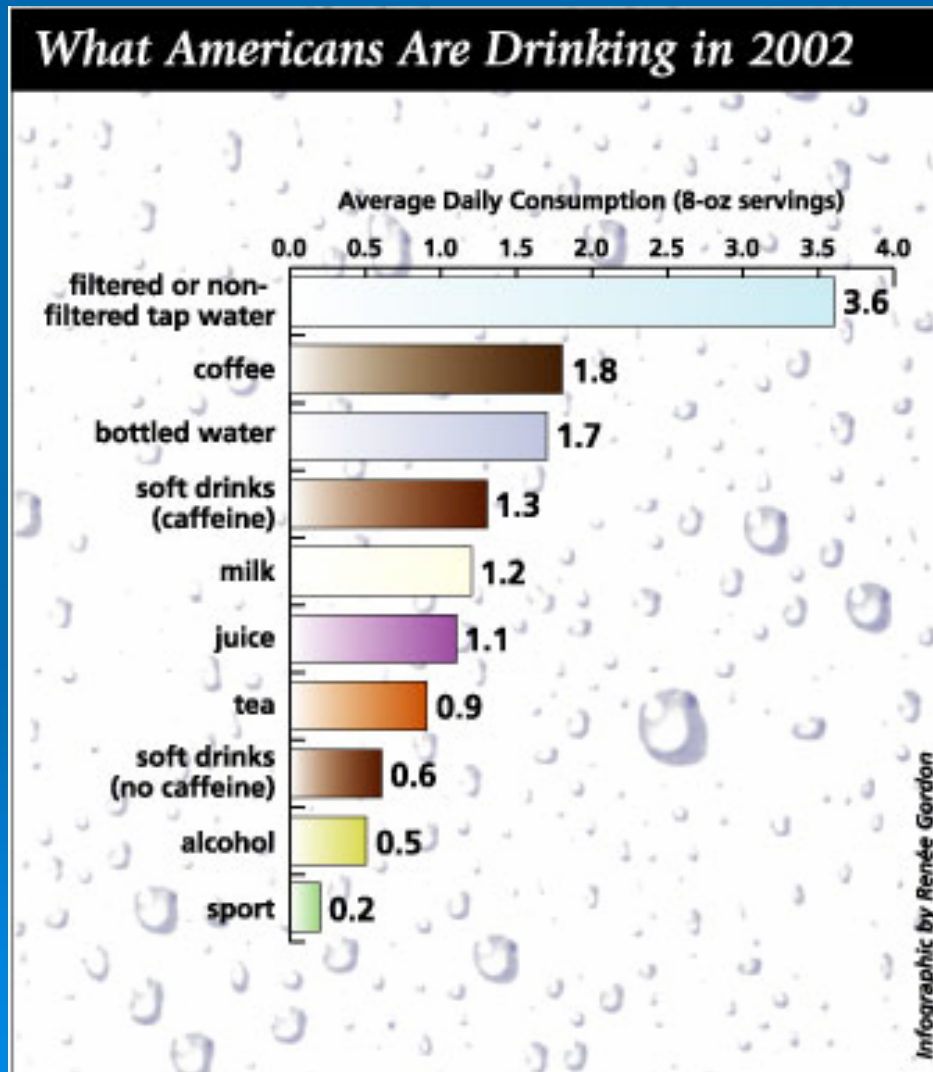


# Bottled Water Industry and Associated Scams

- All bottled water is not a scam
- Fraudulent vendor claims are scams
- Deception by sales persons are scams
- Special formulations are often scams



# The Growing Bottled Water Industry





# Bottled Water—the Good

- It is convenient and portable
- It is a good diet drink
- Healthier than many drinks containing sugar, caffeine and other additives
- Fits special niches (some are scams)



# Bottled Water—the Bad

- It is very expensive in comparison to tap water
- It is not necessarily better than most tap water
- It is not necessarily safer than most tap water
- Some niche uses are scams
- It is associated with many health quackery scams
- It is associated with push for global privatization



# Bottled Water and Health Quackery

- **Bottled water is tied to many health quackery scams**
  - **Structure-altered or clustered water**
  - **Special oxygenated forms of water**
  - **Specialized mineral waters**
  - **Alkaline, ionic, or ionized water**
  - **Special energized forms of water**
    - ✓ **Treated with magnetism**
    - ✓ **Treated with some form of light**
    - ✓ **Treated with sound waves**
    - ✓ **Treated with electricity in some way**
    - ✓ **Treated with a special catalyst**
    - ✓ **Naturally occurring (some remote area)**



# Bottled Water Health Quackery Scams

**Oxygenated water  
*nonsense***



# More on Oxygenated Water Scams

Special oxygenated and clustered water found in nature



Super-oxygenated water – *just a super scam*

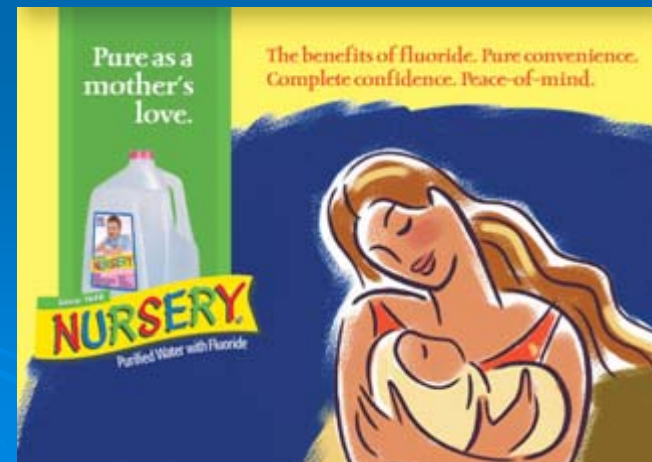
# Need a Mineral Supplement, Order it in Your Bottled Water

Special mineral water for  
any element you desire



# Other Bottled Water Scams

Water for special niches  
(some are scams)



# Other Bottled Water Scams

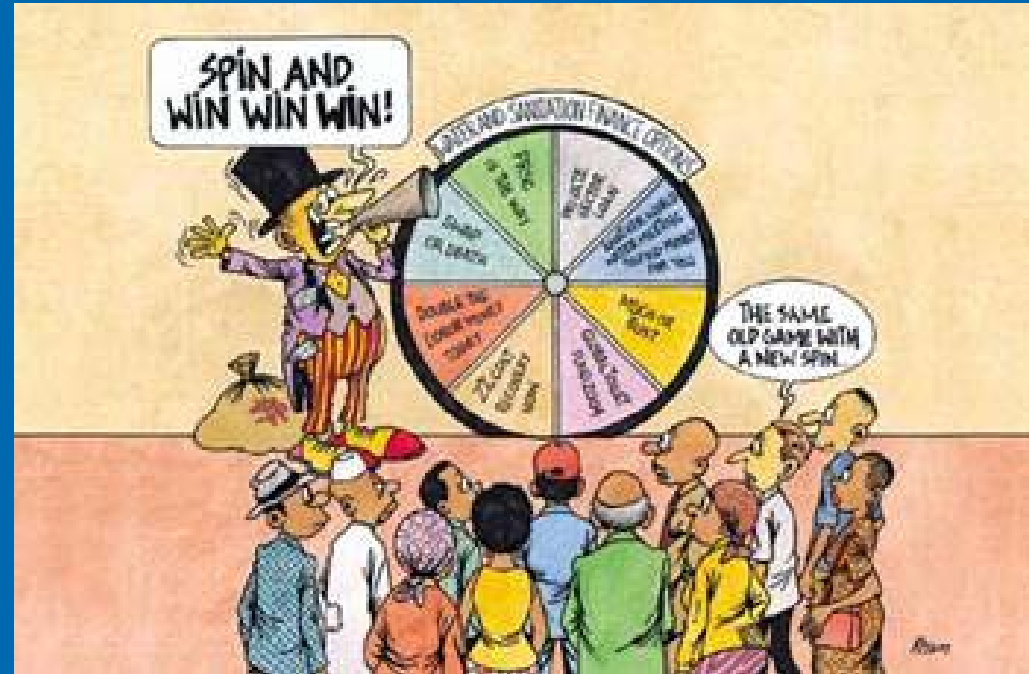
More health quackery  
nonsense — catalyst  
altered water





# Where Bottled Water is Going

Driving interest  
in global  
privatization and  
international  
vending sales



# Two Categories of Water Treatment Scams

1. Those convincing consumers to purchase treatment devices that do not work
2. Those convincing consumers to purchase treatment devices they do not need

There are scams associated with remedying both health and nuisance problems.



# Water Treatment and Health Quackery Scams

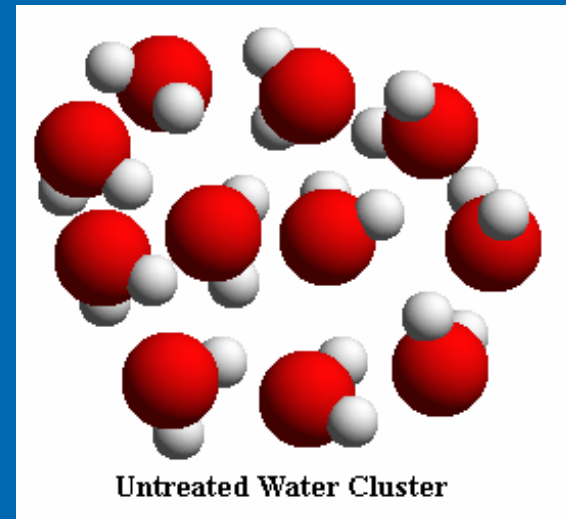
- Devices that produce oxygenated, super-oxygenated, or antioxidant water
- Devices that produce special structure-altered or special clustered water
- Devices that produce alkaline or ionic forms of water
- Devices that produce water with some special form of energy or other magical properties



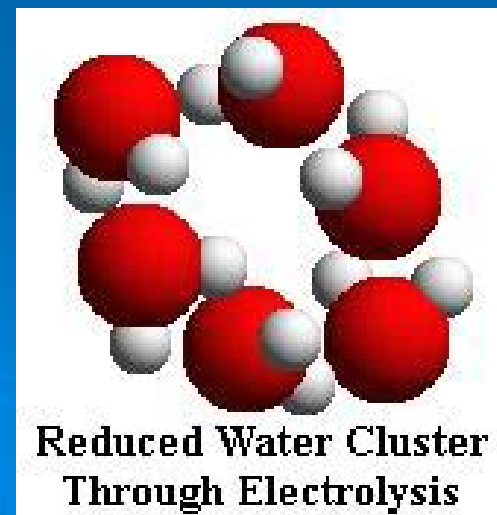
# Oxy-Plus Water Treatment Devices



# Bottled Water or Treatment Device Health Quackery Scams

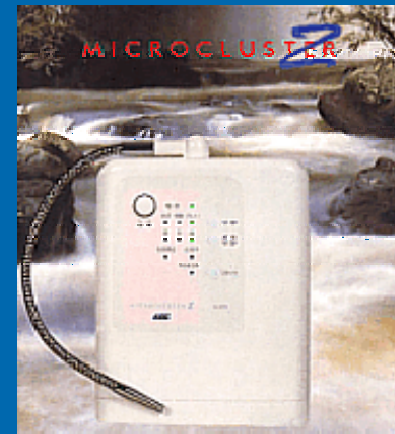


Cluster  $H_2O$  <sub>dot</sub> con structure-altered water  
Quackery nostrums and nonsense



# Health Quackery Treatment Scams

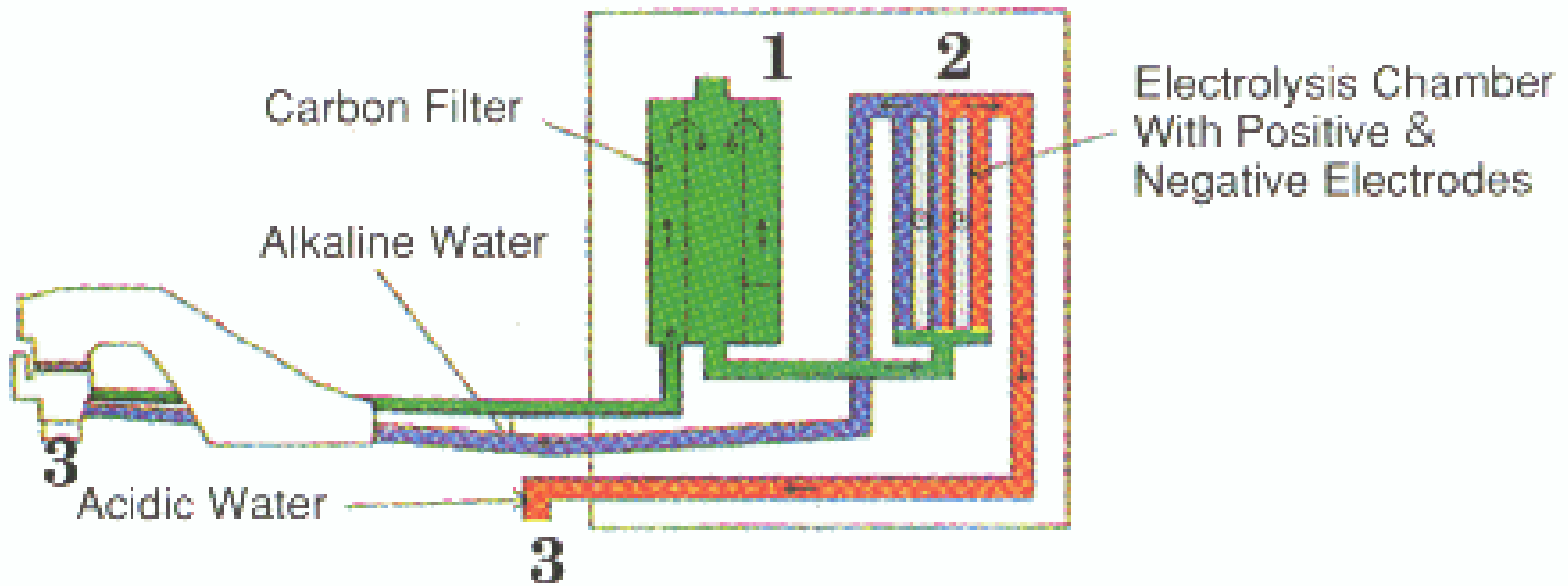
Devices for producing water with micro-clusters



# Ionic Devices/Alkaline Water



# Ionizer for the Faucet





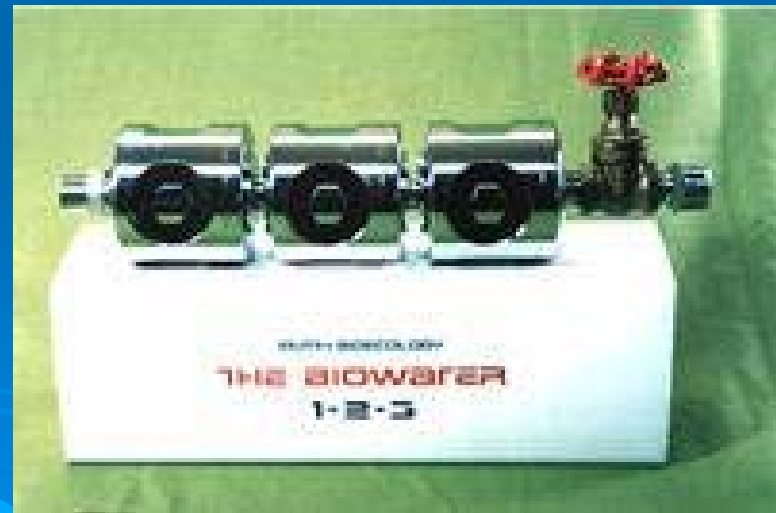
# Health Quackery Treatment Scams

- **The Bio-Alkalizer for around \$1500**



# Health Quackery Treatment Scams

There are several opinions as to just what bio-water is. The main thing is that it is a scam.

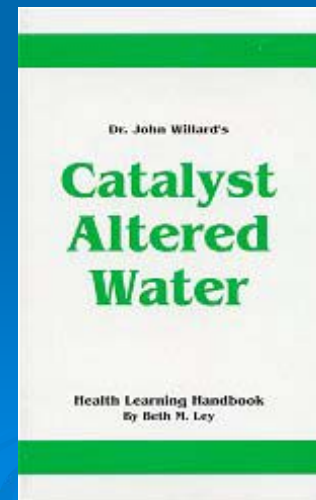


# More Water Treatment Nonsense

The magic of magnetism



Catalyst altered water

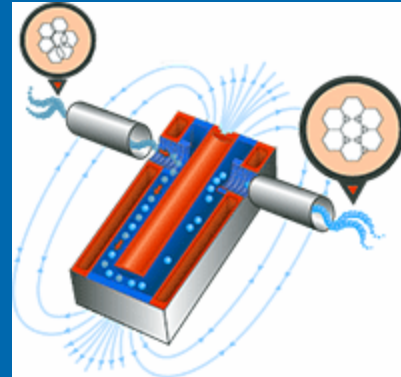


# Magnetic Water Treatment *Nonsense*



# More Pseudoscience Health Quackery

- Blue water revitalizer
- (Grander effect)



- The silver water kit

**Our kit includes . . .**

A photograph of the MonoAtomic Silver Kit components. The kit includes a black power supply unit, a glass of water, and several bottles and containers. The components are labeled with numbers 1 through 8.

- (1) MonoAtomic Silver Machine
- (2) A.C. Adapter
- (3) 1.0oz. Salt Solution
- (4) Two storage bottles
- (5) Topical applicator
- (6) Silver electrodes
- (7) Scotchbrite Pad

- Prepare within seconds.
- All natural.
- Most comprehensive kit available today.
- Our silver probes will last the average person over five years!

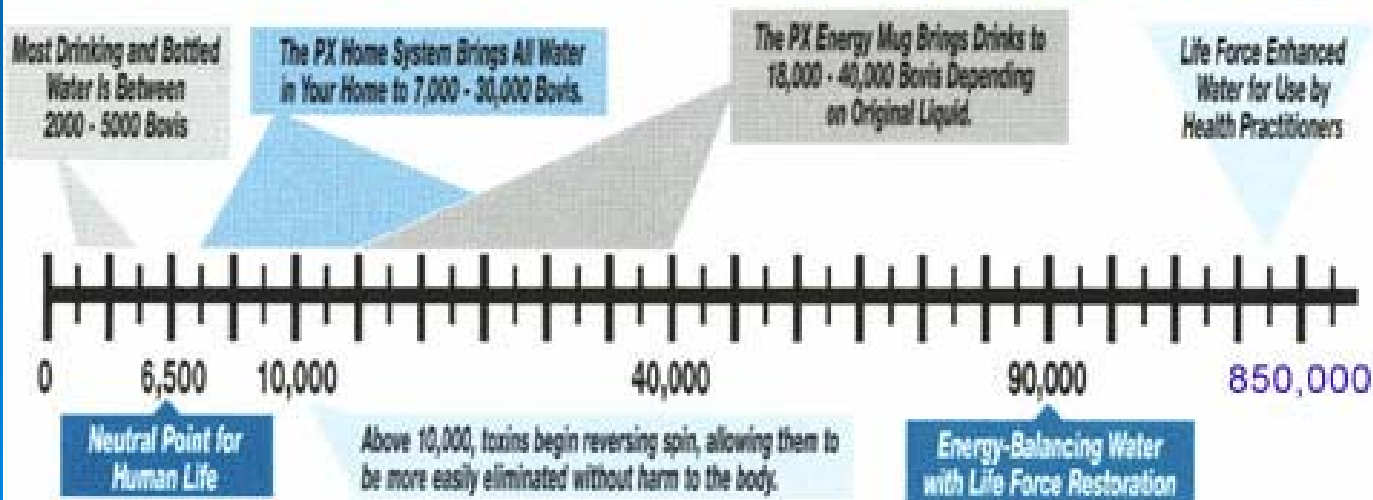
*MonoAtomic Silver Kit*

# Specially Energized Water



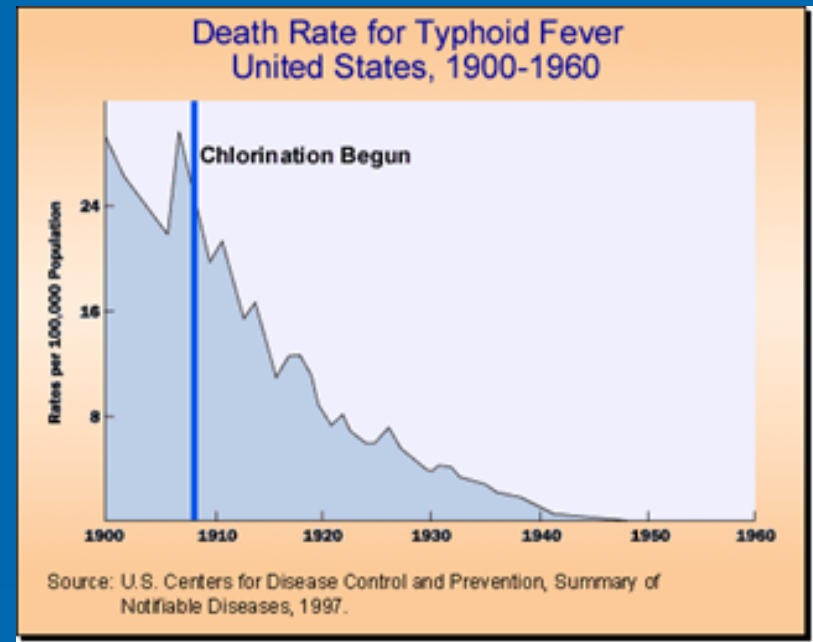
## HTN's ENERGIZED ELECTRON™ Concentrated Water

### The PX ENERGY MUG and the LIFE FORCE or BOVIS SCALE

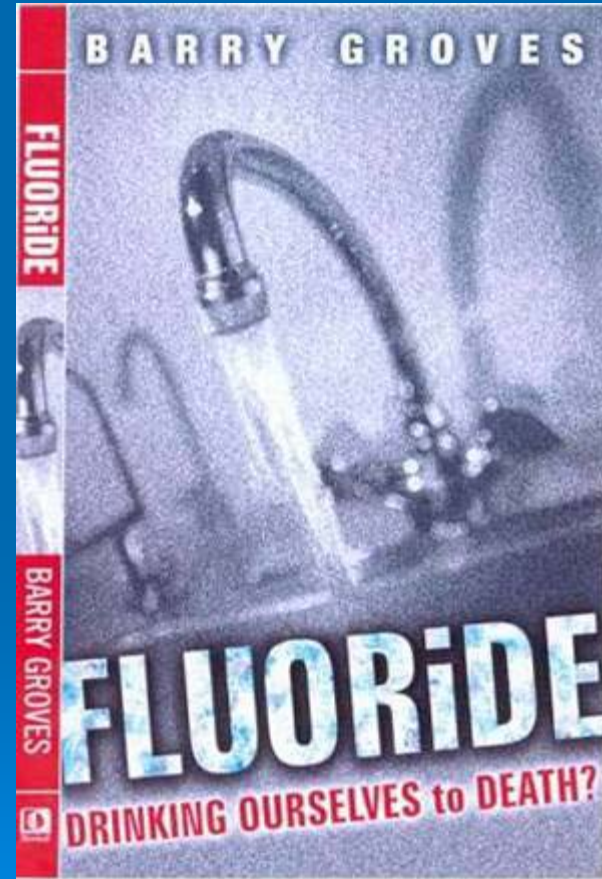


# Other Health-Related Water Treatment Scams

**Scare Tactics:**  
The hazards of  
chlorination and  
fluoridation



# Anti-Fluoridation Movement



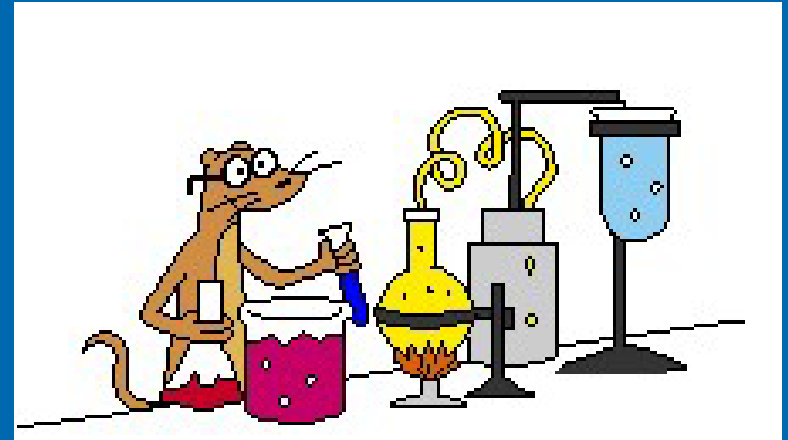


# Nuisance-Related Water Treatment Scams

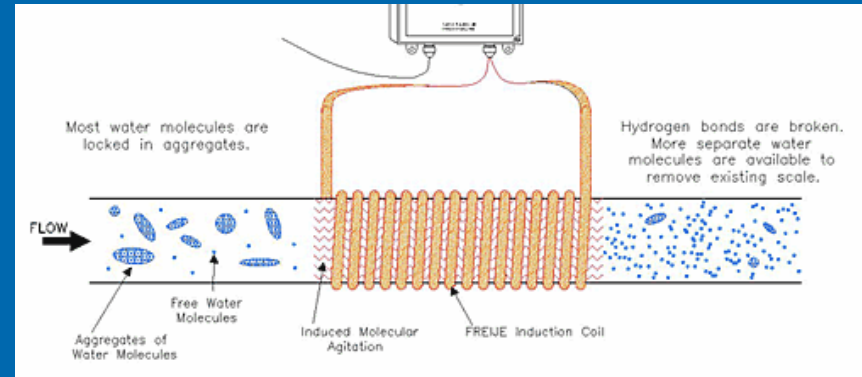
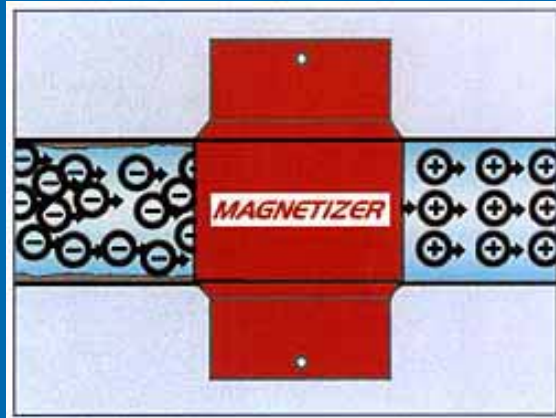
- Often associated with water testing scams
- Treatment needs are often misrepresented on the Internet
- Unscrupulous sales reps often rely on a consumer's ignorance of water treatment
- A sales rep may even utilize Consumer Confidence Reports to aid in selling treatment devices
- Installed treatment systems can sometimes cause problems
- Very expensive treatment systems may come with an expensive maintenance agreement or no maintenance agreement at all

# Three Types of Water Testing Scams

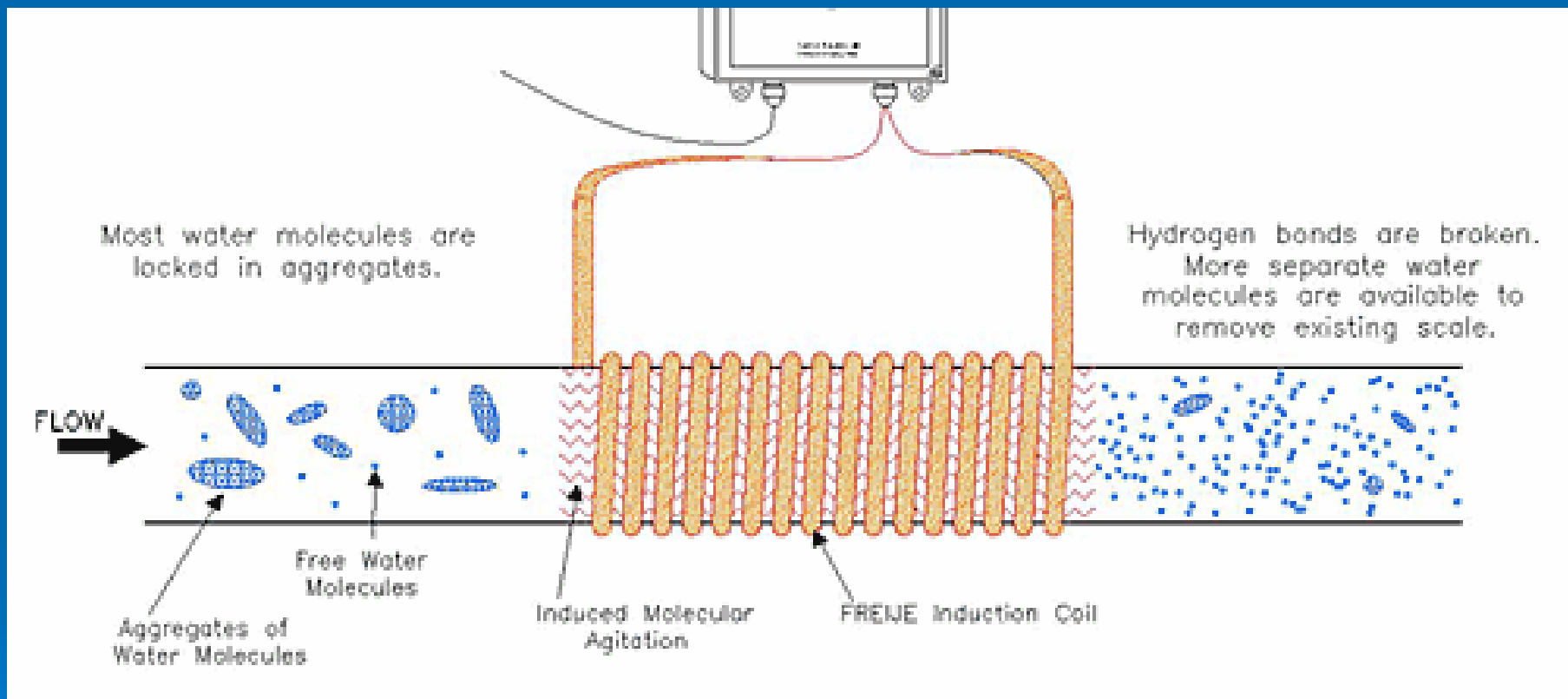
- On-site demonstration tricks
- Misinterpretation of lab test results
- Fake lab test results



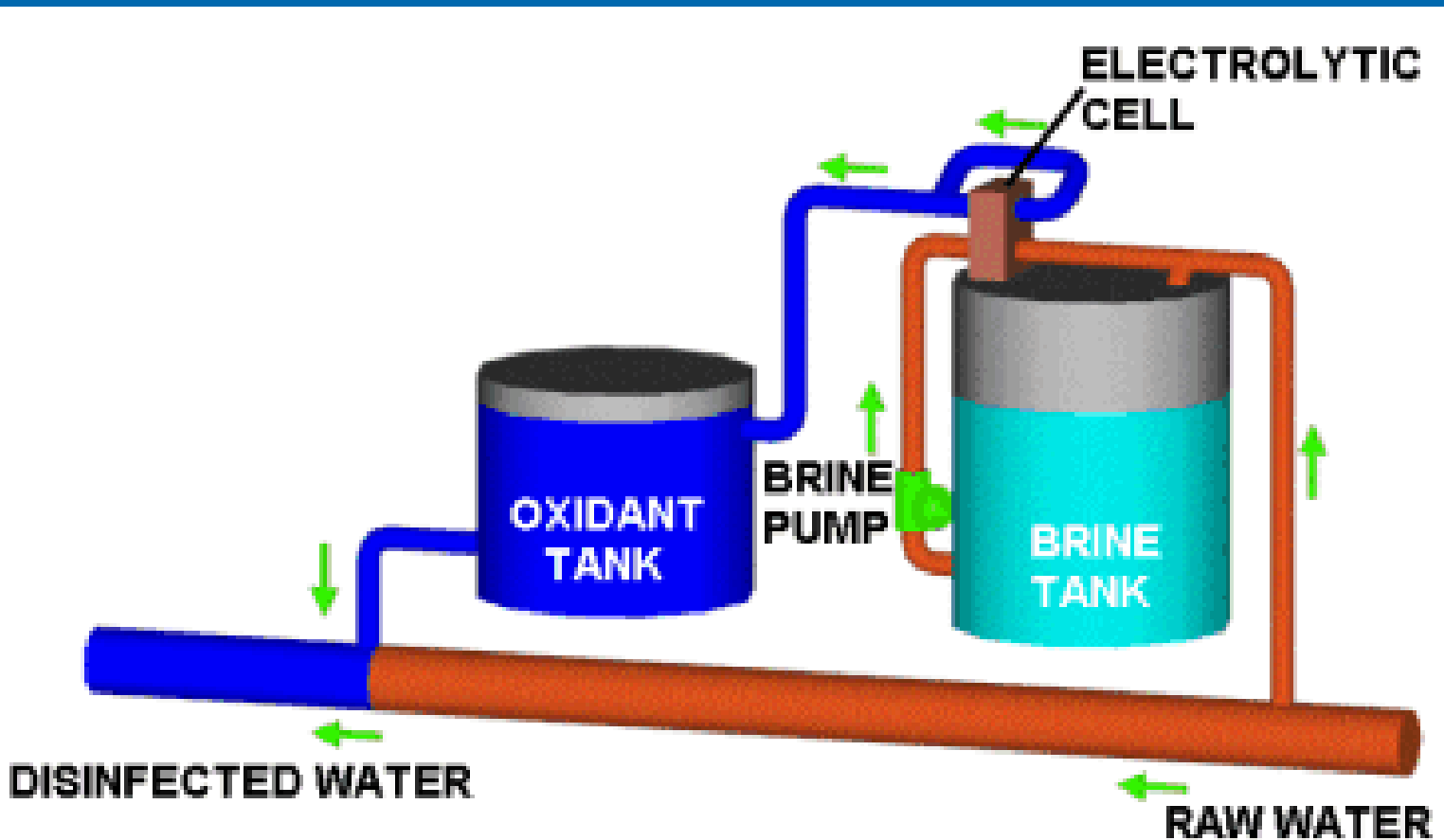
# Magnetic Water Conditioners for Treating Scale and Hard Water



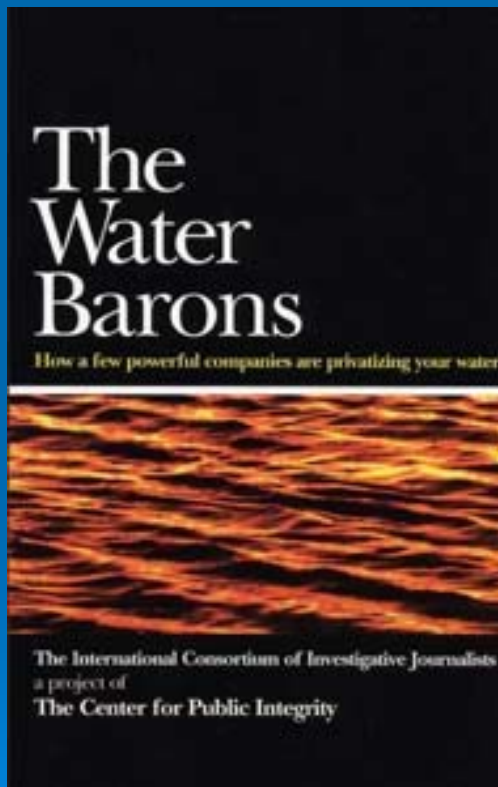
# Reducing Cluster Size to Prevent Scaling



# All New Techniques are Not Scams



# Expect to Hear More About Privatization in the Future



# Why Drinking Water Scams Work

- **Because survival is more important to us than truth, logic, and reason**
- **Because we are prone to be superstitious and use irrational thinking**
- **Because many people are scientifically illiterate and cannot tell the difference between science and pseudoscience**
- **Because science education does not equilibrate to logical and critical thinking**

# Basic Characteristics of Drinking Water Scams

- Like most scams, they sound too good to be true
- They are not based on clear proven scientific principles
- They have no peer-reviewed reputable support literature
- They have testimonials from crackpots who promote pseudoscience
- They have fake testimonials from satisfied customers
- There is pressure to purchase or invest immediately



# Where to Report Drinking Water Scams

- **Any type of scam**
  - Report to local sheriff
  - Report to state attorney general office
- **False health and product labeling**
  - Report to U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
- **Fraudulent mail**
  - Report to U.S. Postal Service
- **Fraudulent marketing**
  - Report to U.S. Federal Trade Commission

# Reporting Scams Through Internet

- **U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**  
<http://www.fda.gov/medwatch>
- **U.S. Postal Service**  
<http://www.usps.com/postalinspectors/fraud/MailFraudComplaint.htm>
- **U.S. Federal Trade Commission**  
<http://www.consumer.gov/>

# For More Information on Drinking Water Scams and Other Scams

## ➤ Local Sources

- Sheriff's office, district attorney's office, or consumer protection offices
- Public water system representatives
- County Cooperative Extension Offices

# For More Information on Drinking Water Scams and Other Scams

## ➤ State Sources

- Consumer protection unit of state Attorney General's office
- State primacy agency that enforces the Safe Drinking Water Act



# For More Information on Drinking Water Scams and Other Scams

## ➤ Federal Sources

- Federal Citizen Information Center (FCIC)  
<http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov>
- Bureau of Consumer Protection of the U.S.  
Federal Trade Commission  
<http://www.consumer.gov>
- Office of Groundwater and Drinking Water,  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
<http://www.epa.gov/safewater>



# For More Information on Drinking Water Scams

- Over 50 Scam Links on Alabama Water Quality Information Website

[http://www.aces.edu/waterquality/links/links\\_list\\_sub.php3?Code=138](http://www.aces.edu/waterquality/links/links_list_sub.php3?Code=138)

- Reliable Internet Information on Fraud

- Consumer Fraud Watch Network

<http://www.consumersgroup.com/crimewatch>

- Net Scams Online Protection

<http://www.netscams.com/scams.jsp>

- National Fraud Information Center

<http://www.fraud.org/>

- Legal Information on Scams and Fraud

<http://www.cobrandpublic.findlaw.com>