

UNDERtheCAP

A Quarterly Newsletter on issues and products for environmental analysis professionals, courtesy of



Volume 2, No. 1

Beaver, West Virginia

Winter, 1997

NEW PRODUCT LINE!
Dynalon®
 PlasticWare

To meet ever-increasing customer quality demands, QEC now is carrying selected Dynalon® plastic ware from Bibby Sterilin LTD.

Bibby is one of the world's leading manufacturers of reusable and disposable plastic ware for the laboratory, and also makes science equipment and glassware. The company manufactures more than 10,000 product lines at facilities in England, Wales and the United States. Bibby factories in England and

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LEVEL V: WIDE MOUTH HDPE		
ITEM #	CAPACITY	NO. IN CASE
5213-D004	125ml/4 oz.	380
5213-D008	250ml/8 oz.	180
5213-D016	500ml/16 oz.	100
5213-D032	1L/32 oz.	55
LEVEL V: NARROW MOUTH HDPE		
ITEM #	CAPACITY	NO. IN CASE
5211-D004	125ml/4 oz.	440
5211-D008	250ml/8 oz.	180
5211-D016	500ml/16 oz.	100
5211-D032	1L/32 oz.	55
LEVEL VI: WIDE MOUTH HDPE		
ITEM #	CAPACITY	NO. IN CASE
6213-D004	125ml/4 oz.	380
6213-D008	250ml/8 oz.	180
6213-D016	500ml/16 oz.	100
6213-D032	1L/32 oz.	55
LEVEL VI: NARROW MOUTH HDPE		
ITEM #	CAPACITY	NO. IN CASE
6211-D004	125ml/4 oz.	440
6211-D008	250ml/8 oz.	180
6211-D016	500ml/16 oz.	100
6211-D032	1L/32 oz.	55

QEC issues new Level II 'Certificate of Compliance'

Due to increasing customer demand, QEC is making available a "Certificate of Quality Environmental Compliance (C-QEC)" for all its Level II product lines.

QEC traditionally has processed its containers to three distinct levels of quality to meet individual sampling container requirements and/or preferences:

Level III Our Level III containers are most frequently used by the analytical industry when they must have the utmost assurance that the containers are of the highest quality. These containers are pre-cleaned and assembled in accordance with the most recent EPA guidelines for specification and guidance for contaminant-free sample containers. Our stringent Quality Assurance/Quality Control incorporates all of the major elements of EPA publication 9240.0-05A relating to inspection, washing, rinsing, drying, packaging and storing.

The Level III containers undergo analyses by a certified laboratory specializing in environmental analysis to ensure they meet or exceed all analyte specifications at the CRDL and CRQL levels mandated by the EPA. Once the containers have passed this analytical scrutiny, a Certificate of Analysis is issued by the laboratory director and accompanies each shipment of Level III containers.

This procedure ensures that our Level III containers provide the customers with the ultimate in integrity and confidence that they are using a contaminant-free container.

Level II Our Level II containers undergo the same rigorous inspection, cleaning and assembly procedures as our Level III product line. Only after passing our rigorous QA/QC protocol will these containers carry a Certificate of Quality Environ-



mental compliance.

Level I Our Level I containers are made of the same high quality materials and are subjected to the same materials specifications as our Level III and Level II products. The Level I products are pre-assembled and ready for immediate customer use with no additional processing or further processing by the customer. Generally, these containers are used by the analytical community only when conditions do not warrant the need for pre-cleaned containers.

"It is important for our customers to realize that both our Level II and Level III containers undergo identical cleansing procedures," said Barry Barajas, QEC general manager. "Being familiar with our procedures should increase the level of confidence our customers have in all of our product lines."

And while C-QEC now ensures adherence of our Level II containers to this rigorous procedure, these containers *should not be substituted* for Level III products when requirements so dictate, Barajas added. "Our customers must be aware that a Certificate of Quality Environmental Compliance is not interchangeable with a Certificate of Analysis."

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...On product liability and accountability

James L. Hern, Ph.D.



The community of environmental consulting has become an incredibly dynamic industry over the past five years. For those involved, we have all seen a considerable change in market character and the subsequent change in approach of many consulting firms. Five years ago, trends were to enlarge to increase market share of a seemingly inexhaustible market. At that time modest, less aggressive competitive interactions existed between most companies. Today we see a steady but low growth environmental market and reflective corporate actions of downsizing and even discontinued effort as a result of significantly lower revenues and extreme competitiveness.

In the midst of this aggressive over supply industry, an awareness of technical liability and accountability of product quality continues to grow. As a result, in many instances conflicts between cost, service and technical adequacy become evermore difficult to resolve. Much of the environmental industry has seen the emergence of low quality, technically irresponsible organizations that offer extremely low costs, and depend on their work never being challenged for continued existence.

In today's marketplace it is estimated that only 40 to 60 percent of the data generated from environmental consultants is valid. Of that only 20 to 50 percent is defensible. As client knowledge increases and technical awareness focuses within the environmental arena, it will become even more important that the future of any organization will depend not only on the management and service factors of individual companies, but also the technical adequacy of every facet of their work.

State and federal agencies responsible for the health and safety of our populace and our related ecosystems will no doubt require more accountability within this industry in the very near

future. The growth curve of accountability is steadily increasing, both from the client viewpoint and as a result of regulatory demand. It will be the responsibility of each consulting firm to guarantee that the minimum standards of credibility are achieved in every study involved in evaluating our environmental health.

At present, many financial factors are governing the survival of virtually every company in the environmental industry. Hopefully, the increasing emphasis on technical adequacy will become a deciding factor in the future of many organizations and not cost alone.

An unfortunate part of this complex situation is that, during the change from rock bottom costs to minimum technical adequacy, many clients will experience fatal flaws in environmental studies within the next two to five years. Although many consumers are experiencing a significant decrease in the cost of environmental services, some will unfortunately be caught in a trap of poor quality and unusable evaluations leading to significant future costs and/or regulatory penalties.

"It is estimated that only 40 to 60 percent of data from environmental consultants is valid."

With the current growth of technical awareness, client and agency demand will most likely control these issues after the year 2000. However, until then clients must be cautious and carefully choose those who perform these important and necessary services. Unfortunately, most state certification programs are extremely lacking and need significant improvement to remove the probability of inadequate technical professionalism. Effort must be taken to properly evaluate each provider, and clients must demand that professional services be conducted as they are represented by every environmental consulting firm. Although the competitiveness of the market at present does lend itself to the careful but thorough buyer, the discerning client who selects a reputable and

responsible organization will probably not choose the lowest cost firms. In a world of complex regulations and increasing competitiveness, it has become obvious to the unsuspecting client that it is virtually "a jungle out there."

McCune named general sales manager

Mike McCune has been named to the position of general sales manager for QEC, in addition to retaining his ongoing duties as head of the company's South Atlantic Marketing Region.

"Mike's new responsibilities are both in recognition of the outstanding job he has done for us in new market development during the past year, and to begin developing our structure to meet the demands of continued growth throughout the United States," said

Dan Fields, executive director of sales and marketing.

McCune was brought on board by QEC in 1995 to head the newly-formed South Atlantic Region. Sales revenues in the region have more than doubled under Mike's efforts.

A native of south Florida, Mike has held a variety of sales and marketing positions throughout his career.

Dynalon®

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Wales are ISO 9002 accredited and have built an outstanding reputation for providing its customers with the highest quality products.

These products are available from QEC assembled and bulk packaged (Level V), or pre-cleaned and bulk packaged (Level VI). For your precise product needs and pricing, please contact your QEC marketing representative.

Effective Service—

Keeping the customer delighted!

Ask any real estate professional what sells a house and the universal answer will be “location... location... location.”

Ask a successful marketing professional in the environmental industry what keeps a good customer and the universal answer is “service...service...service!”

It is an axiom among professional sales and marketing executives that, generally speaking, capturing a new customer “only” requires offering a product with stellar quality at an outstanding price. They also will quickly tell you that to keep that customer happy and ordering year after year there must be a total commitment to effective customer service.

Recent surveys by marketing-oriented firms indicate that the vast majority of customers quit purchasing from certain vendors not because of price or quality concerns. It’s because they are feeling neglected... or taken for granted... or at the wrong end of an ineffective communications chain.

“It is the primary responsibility of our sales team to develop new markets for QEC,” said Dan Fields, executive director for sales and marketing, but it is everyone’s job here to ensure that our reputation for service is unequalled in the industry.”



QEC general manager Barry Barajas echoes that commitment: “Our entire team— from the production floor to the shipping docks— understands that our goal is to make the customer delighted with our product. From the day we receive an order, our entire effort is targeted at delivering that product on a hassle-free basis.”

QEC’s key to service is its on-going communications program. “We focus on each customer as a unique entity,” according to general sales manager Mike McCune. “and we build a communications plan for each. Underpinning the communications effort is a commitment to frequent, personal contact spearheaded by the sales staff.”

“Even in this era of high tech— with faxes, electronic voice messaging, e-mail, and even computerized ordering, most people still want to talk with a living, breathing human being on occasion,” said Barajas.

Another important reason for that type of “high touch” activity is to build an intimate relationship with each customer. While “partnering” is an over-used phrase today, Fields said the concept remains valid. “It is only through the forging of such strong ties that clients will remain with a supplier through all the business cycles of a market.”

“My complement of customers ranges from the smallest lab ordering one box of vials per year, to one of the industry leaders whose monthly order is 100 times greater,” said Mid-Atlantic marketing manager Phil Lilly, “Yet we customize a service plan for each.”

Building such a relationship helps the QEC marketing team be more than just salesmen: they are problem solvers for the customer.

“And that is perhaps the most important aspect of effective service and the added value QEC brings to the table in today’s business climate,” added Fields.

C-QEC program for Level II products

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Usage of Level II containers had been growing in popularity, and now constitutes approximately 24 percent of all QEC products shipped, Barajas noted. This includes the Level VI product lines, which are the bulk-packed Level II products.

“Many of our traditional and several new customers have requested we provide them with a certificate assuring them of the high-quality cleansing procedure used for our Level II containers,” said Mike McCune, general sales manager. With our new C-QEC we can now meet that request.”

For additional information on our new C-QEC certification process, please contact your regional sales manager, or call QEC general manager Barry Barajas at 1-800-255-3950.

Join us in Atlanta— PittCon '97!

Humorist Will Rogers once said he had never known a stranger: just friends he hadn’t met yet.

That’s pretty much the motto for QEC’s marketing team—and no single event gives us more opportunity to meet and make new friends than the annual PittCon gathering. QEC will be one of more than 900 exhibitors at PittCon '97, scheduled for March 16-21 at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta.

Representing QEC will be general manager Barry Barajas, regional sales manager Phil Lilly, and general sales manager Mike McCune.

“PittCon is always an exciting time to meet with our existing customers and to introduce our product line to prospective clients,” McCune said.

QEC’s marketing team can be contacted daily at **Booth 1617** located on the **east side** of the exhibition hall. Our display will feature a full line of QEC’s sampling containers and accessories. Our marketing team will be able to answer any questions you may have.

Plan to stop by our PittCon booth and get your free VOA vial, “preserved” with our signature sweet treats!

See y’all in Atlanta!

QEC growth creates new marketing regions

Continued strong demand for QEC's products has resulted in the planned creation of two new marketing regions.

The Northeast Marketing Region generally will encompass that area and those customers previously served by Taurus, Inc.— a distributor of QEC products in that region for the past two and a half years.

In a strategic move, Taurus decided to exit the environmental container business in early October to focus its efforts in other business ventures. To insure a smooth transition, Taurus will be assisting QEC with the customer assimilation activities in the Northeast.

A regional marketing manager will be named shortly to head that region, according to Dan Fields, QEC executive director for sales and marketing. In the interim, any questions concerning the QEC product line should be directed to general manager Barry Barajas at QEC headquarters in Beaver, WV.

Another new marketing manager is

expected to be announced in early 1997 to head the company's planned Southwest Marketing region. "we anticipate having this office open for business during the first quarter of 1997," according to sales manager Mike McCune. "in addition to selecting new people to staff this office, we also are investigating the most comprehensive delivery systems to serve new customers in this region and existing customers on the West Coast.

Based on marketing surveys and analyses and on customer feedback, "it is entirely possible" that additional regional marketing offices will be opened in 1997, according to Fields.

"It is our philosophy to move forward with these activities only when we can assure ourselves and ultimately the customer that we can provide the same high level of service and competitiveness that has made us a leader in our initial areas."



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**Questions
Comments
Ideas...**



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