Demonstration Expected to Validate New Paradigm in Emergency Response; Render Bottled Water Obsolete in Disaster-Relief

2/10/2011 10:15:21 AM

ALBANY, Ore./SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — January 13, 2011 -- Hydration Technology Innovations (HTI), the sole commercial producer of the Forward Osmosis membrane for water filtration, today announced a research project to pilot its HydroPack to be held in Kenya January 18-28.

The goal of the pilot is to prove the cost, logistical and health benefits of the HTI HydroPack over bottled water in disaster relief scenarios. The results of the research will be shared with international governments, the U.S. military and NGOs throughout the world.

“In order to provide the best possible outcome for disaster victims, a paradigm shift needs to take place that recognizes the HydroPack as a superior solution to bottled water,” said Walter Schultz, CEO, HTI. “Technology has something new to offer that is less expensive, relieves a significant portion of the logistical burden posed by bottled water and has health benefits beyond bottled water. This research will give us independent data that will allow disaster relief organizations and international governments to consider the HydroPack as a superior solution.”

A parallel study will take place to examine the effectiveness of the HydroPack instructions, created by noted designer Austen Angell and his industrial design firm Modern Edge, to bypass language barriers, including literacy.

Kenya Water for Health Organization (KWAHO), an independent, indigenous non-governmental organization (NGO), will administer the research. The project will be observed by the Red Cross, UNICEF and the Kenyan Government and will be held in Mudimbia, Kenya, a village comprised of 87 households.

“This area of Kenya experiences frequent flooding and at any given time, 40 percent of its residents do not have access to clean water,” said Catherine Mwango, Executive Director, KWAHO. “If the research is proven out, the HydroPack has the potential to change the way that governments and NGOs respond in a disaster situation. The HydroPack may be a compelling solution to first responders.”

The HydroPack filters water using the natural process of Forward Osmosis. Each single-use pouch contains an osmotic charge (nutrient powder containing sugars and electrolytes) that is activated when the pouch is placed in any water source. The osmotic charge draws contaminated water through the Forward Osmosis membrane, which in the case of the HydroPack, is its packaging. After a period of 10-12 hours, the pouch is full and ready to drink.

“The HTI HydroPack greatly reduces logistical burdens,” Nathan Jones, Vice President of Government & Institutional Sales, HTI. “It is light, compact, utilizes existing water sources and is significantly less expensive to airlift. Additionally, the drink that is

produced has nutrients and calories essential to health and hydration. We believe these advantages will make the HydroPack the new standard for first response disaster relief."

HTI's HydroPack Forward Osmosis membrane is impactful and unique. HTI developed the novel membrane by employing specialty cellulose ester materials produced by Eastman Chemical Company.

"We have a close relationship with Eastman and their technical staff and have greatly benefited from their material science expertise. We look forward to a continued fruitful relationship with Eastman and producing the next generation of Forward Osmosis membranes," said Keith Lampi, Vice President of Operations, HTI.

The Kenya Water Research Project will be held for a period of 10 days. Participants will be provided with a kit containing enough HydroPacks for each member of the household. Participatingfamilies will be asked to fulfill as much of their daily hydration needs as possible with the HydroPacks for a period of ten days and report on their general health, ease of use and the taste of the filtered water.

Videos explaining the research project in Kenya can be viewed by going to HTI's website at http://www.htiwater.com/news/index.html.