

Water Solutions of Connecticut: Solving Problems by Looking Inside the Pipes

Dale Abbott has been in the water industry for over 30 years. A plumber since the 60s, he has worked on and repaired a great many problems and continues to do so. His transition to water treatment began with a dream he had in the early years of his career that inspired him to attend a trade show. "There I met Professor John Scippa, who wrote a book on survival and was selling Seagull water systems for home and marine applications," said Abbott. "I was struck like a bolt of lightning about the concept of home filtration systems. Within weeks, I took over doing shows and grew into the field." The result is a wealth of industry knowledge and experience, a thriving company and a passion to provide *purity with security* at the tap.

Abbott launched his family-owned business in 1982, striving to provide top-tier customer service and excellent quality products. "We wanted to change the way people looked at point of use and show them how well they would feel after drinking great-tasting water from their tap that they previously didn't have. That's our real passion, bringing customers back to the tap."

With his grandson Chris, who handles the company website, IT and marketing, Abbott operates the business out of his own home. "We used to have vehicles with logos but they were broken into and vandalized so much that we stopped making ourselves such a high-profile target. Now we concentrate on our personalized customer service in an environment that is home-bound and customers more easily relate to that experience. As a result, we have a very solid client base. We have a great business today, with 90 percent of my original customers and we're still growing. We've created a business with staying power that Chris will take over when I retire," Abbott said.

Water Solutions primarily serves residential markets in Connecticut, Massachusetts and New York, and ships products to all 50 states. "We also serve many small businesses in Connecticut," Abbott said, "but we stay away from well water issues. We offer many different POU/POE one-micron carbon-block technology systems, as well as prefilters and shower filters. Our counter-top water filter unit is our best seller because it's portable, not a permanent installation and ideal for apartment dwellers."

"There are so many water quality issues and I have seen first-hand what is coming out of people's pipes. Many children may have lead poisoning and are medicated to calm them down. Seniors are dehydrated be-

By Denise M. Roberts

Water Solutions of Connecticut

138 Highland Avenue
West Haven, CT 06516
Tel: (203) 937-1466
www.filters2000.com
daleabbott63@comcast.net
Employees: Two



cause they don't like chlorine and won't drink tap water as a result. There is a huge push for bottled water to offset these difficulties for at-risk groups but that is too costly. More information needs to be made available so that consumers know there are cost-effective solutions available to maintain their health. We provide those solutions because we all need a final barrier of defense in our homes." Abbott noted that he's seen more than a few strange things in the water, in addition to the usual suspects, such as rust, turbidity and others. The worst was an eel stuck in a pipe, causing water pressure to drop off. Once the eel was removed, the company installed an under-sink filter system that resolved numerous other problems, including lead and chlorine, which are common in the area.

"The biggest challenge our company faces today is educating the public. A lot of people just don't want to know the truth about what's in their water." For many years, that has been an issue and Abbott said he believes it will take a bold move by the industry to "tell the people like it is: use a filtering system or be a filtering system, at your own peril." He believes there needs to be more media outreach to both inform and involve public agencies in providing honest assessments of water quality, not just at the highly regulated plants but also what flows into the homes. "Yearly water reports are not easily understood and most folks don't bother to read them. Public health agencies may have word of existing or emerging problems but don't provide that information to the broader audience. Unless a crisis develops that creates a boil-water advisory, what is known to them may never reach those who are most affected. As an industry, we need to have the media more involved in an on-the-ground approach to see, first hand, the reality of what our water infrastructure is doing to our tap water. Until those that can help educate the public know what may be flowing into their homes and businesses, they don't seem to pay attention either."

"In spite of that seeming lack by the media to bolster the knowledge of consumers," said Abbott, "we intend to grow our business, a house at a time, and educate our younger generations about drinking water and what they can do to take care of their lives. We are part of the solution, not part of the problem." ♦