



Tzvi Levinson, Adv.
Gil Dror, Adv., M.Sc.
Julia Lietzmann, Adv. (Germany)
Christina Folman, Adv. (Cyprus)

צבי לוינסון, עו"ד
גיל דרור, עו"ד, M.Sc.
יוליה ליצמן, עו"ד (גרמניה)
קריסטינה פולמן, עו"ד (קפריסין)

November 2007

New Water Treatment Technologies

Recently, new water treatment technologies that can increase the potential of water sources have been discussed in Israel. New technologies are not always included in routine methodologies due to the inconsistency between rapid technological development on the one hand and slow development of some regulatory systems on the other.

Regulation of technological developments can be approached in different ways. One such way is to define accurately which technologies will be used (eg, in the Israeli regulations, disinfection by chlorine is mandatory). The regulator hereby has certainty in determining the exact methodology for water treatment. This is particularly important for regulating the treatment of drinking water. However, this approach may prove to be very rigid and prevent the use of new technologies. An alternative approach is to be technology neutral. In these cases, the regulator does not define a specific technology as the only possible technology for water treatment, but rather defines the standards with which the water supplier should comply. For example, in the Israeli regulations for the sanitary quality of drinking water, a set of thresholds is determined without mentioning the exact technological measures that should be taken in order to comply with these standards.

In some cases, due to the use of innovative technologies for the treatment of water, new permits or licences are required. For example, in order to disinfect water by ultraviolet radiation, it is essential to obtain a radiation permit. Some new technologies for the desalination of sea water can produce hazardous waste by-products. In these cases, additional regulatory obligations regarding transportation and the disposal of hazardous waste become relevant.

A relationship between the legal system and new technologies for water treatment does exist. In the global market, it is important for producers to be aware of the regulatory systems in their consumer countries. With Israel's growing developments in water treatment, Israeli producers should be aware of their obligations worldwide.