

Fulfilling Anthony's promise

How a new water softening system helped deliver South Florida's best pizza

By Dan Vastyan





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The OneFlow system that Sharp specified would handle all three of the problems that ACFP restaurants were facing; salt use, equipment rental and service, high utility costs and ineffective scale prevention. OneFlow uses TAC (template-assisted crystallization) technology to combat scale. Its primary goal is to reduce the negative effects of water hardness (calcium carbonate) in plumbing systems, appliances and other components. The OneFlow system also eliminates the use of chemical additives, doesn't create wastewater, and results in zero pollution while minimizing installation and maintenance costs. It also uses zero electricity.

OneFlow TAC media starts out as polymeric beads (resin) roughly the size of some powdered laundry detergents. Catalytically





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— Rob Nehls, Harry Warren



active sites, or templates, are “imprinted” or coated on the bead surface.

The template influences the water solution on the bead surfaces, such that hardness ions and their counter-ions (bicarbonate) combine to form inert nanometer-size “seed crystals.” This process, called nucleation, occurs when dissolved molecules or ions dispersed throughout a solution gather to create clusters in the sub-micron size range.

The crystals provide an enormous area for preferential growth of remaining hardness ions still in solution. The remaining dissolved ions attach to the seed crystals and continue harmlessly downstream.

OneFlow systems are sized by flow rate, with applications as small as two GPM for point-of-use scale prevention, to multiple-tank applications for literally any amount of water. A big Army facility at Fort Sill, Okla., is conditioning water at the rate of 900 GPM using 12 OneFlow tanks.

Skepticism

But just because Lipka knew he could trust Sharp’s judgment on the OneFlow tank, ACFP didn’t quite follow suit. While the system seemed to be working flawlessly, they were skeptical because it was just too simple.

“They needed more proof,” Sharp says. “Thomas Williams is an analytical guy, and understandably, he wanted to know how this simple black tank was



doing the task of water softener, and then some. So, I called Rob Nehls, at the rep firm, Harry Warren."

Harry Warren Inc. is an Orlando-based manufacturer's rep firm that takes keen interest in water conservation and treatment.

Nehls organized a meeting between Sharp, Lipka and management at ACFP. The meeting resolved any uneasiness about the technology's ability to perform.

Saving dough

But the benefits didn't stop there. Since the salt-based softeners were only reducing scale marginally, the only option was to continually increase the salt setting or regeneration cycle. In a residence, this is troubling because the amount of salt used increases. But for ACFP, the concern was that higher salt levels would change the flavor or texture of the pizza dough.

"The people at Anthony's were thrilled with the results of the first two OneFlow installations, and decided right after the meeting to replace the softeners at each location, as the respective service contracts expire or the units break," Nehls says.

"We were thrilled, because the new TAC units are easy to install," Lipka says. "PVC in, PVC out; no pumps, meters,

valves, etc. Limited maintenance is required; systems require media replacement every three years.

To remove chlorine and other impurities in the city water that can cause taste and odor, ACFP locations have added Watts light commercial ice and beverage filtration systems. The sediment filter and carbon block ensure the highest in ice and beverage quality. If the facilities weren't equipped with TAC tanks where the water comes into the building, a small, point-of-use system incorporating OneFlow technology would be an option on the manifold beverage filter system.

"There's no doubt the systems we installed are not only going to save Anthony's Coal Fired Pizza on operating expenses," Nehls says. "But it's a change that'll help them deliver on what's important to their customers; the highest quality pizza available anywhere. Their motto is 'Pizza Well Done.' Ours could be 'Water Well Done.'" **<CCR**

