

## **NOWRA Statement on Water Quality Research Foundation Study – *Changes in Septic Tank Effluent Due to Water Softener Use***

NOWRA has heard anecdotal reports that our position regarding the recently completed Water Quality Research Foundation water softener study has not been accurately communicated on a consistent basis. NOWRA was indeed closely involved in the design and conduct of the study and provided extensive review and comment on the actual study report. In order to clear up any misconceptions or inaccuracies about its position, the NOWRA Board of Directors approved the following statement at its May 2013 board meeting:

NOWRA has been collaborating with the Water Quality Association for more than a decade in an effort to develop a science-based approach to understanding the impact of water softener regenerate on septic system operation. Both WQA and NOWRA are affected by concerns raised by some manufacturers, service providers, and others that regenerate discharges to decentralized systems could be detrimental to system performance. Consequently WQA and NOWRA have a mutual interest in better understanding the problem and identifying corrective solutions.

We were pleased to be a collaborative partner with WQA on the Water Quality Research Foundation study (as summarized in a report titled, “Changes in Septic Tank Effluent Due to Water Softener Use,” by John T. Novak). We consider it important that softeners be demonstrated to be safe and effective. NOWRA believes the study offers promise in understanding how onsite wastewater treatment systems can be impacted by softener regenerate and how negative impacts can be avoided. While NOWRA agrees with the findings of the study, which was primarily a bench scale laboratory study, we have suggested that additional research involving more extensive field monitoring of operating septic systems be undertaken in order to confirm this study’s findings. We look forward to continuing to collaborate with the Water Quality Association on this important topic.