

# There is no alternative for water

*Top U.S. Desalination Experts Tackle Issues Behind Lack Of U.S. Traction*

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NanoH2O, a global provider of reverse osmosis membranes for desalination, hosted five of the top U.S. experts in desalination at its manufacturing facility in El Segundo, California, for a timely discussion on the global water crisis, issues behind the lack of desalination plants in the U.S. and the role innovation, technology and renewable energy are playing in accelerating the adoption of desalination as an important source of freshwater supply.

Consensus among the panel of experts was that the biggest driver for widespread adoption is reducing the cost of desalinating water by lowering energy consumption. Key topics addressed throughout the discussion included innovative financing methods, the environmental impact of desalination and the future of dwindling water resources.

Tom Pankratz, editor of *Water Desalination Report*, led the discussion as moderator, and offered this key point on the topic of market growth: "In 2011, we are expecting \$10 billion in capital investments towards new desalination plant capacity and we expect to see this growth for the next five to six years, with the bulk of this capacity being for seawater desalination."

Offering a global view, Veolia Water Solutions & Technologies North America chairman of the board Finn Nielsen added: "Veolia is aggressively investing in reducing the costs and environmental impact of desalination. We see materials science and process engineering research funded by venture capital and universities, as well as innovative companies like NanoH2O where the technology breakthroughs for cost reduction will arise."

Chiming in on the future of water financing, Debra Coy, analyst with Svanda and Coy Consulting added: "There is an opportunity for growth. Billions of dollars in pension fund money are looking for ways to get involved in water; private capital is making its way into water."

NanoH2O CEO Jeff Green concluded the discussion with this insight: "Desalination is the key technology platform to address water scarcity for the next fifteen to twenty years. The technology is well understood and all the environmental and cost issues are being addressed by the industry responsibly. As we look to the future for a sustainable fresh water supply, a shift in attitude towards a portfolio approach to alternative water sources that includes desalination is needed. Otherwise California and many other parts of the United States are going to feel the pain. **This isn't energy, there is no alternative for water.**"