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Winners announced for The Water Council's first Tech Challenge round

MILWAUKEE (April 24, 2019) – The Water Council, together with founding sponsors A. O. Smith Corporation, Badger Meter and Zurn Industries, LLC, a Rexnord company, today announced the first round of [Tech Challenge](#) winners, finalists and honorable mentions.

The Tech Challenge is designed to identify cutting-edge freshwater technologies and ideas with a high potential for commercialization from anyone, anywhere. Each year a series of Tech Challenges will address specific topics identified by corporate sponsors. Selected finalists present in-person to the sponsoring companies for a chance to win prize money, access to corporate R&D resources and an opportunity to partner on the development, marketing, licensing or sale of the winning technology or idea.

“The number and quality of projects from the Tech Challenge has exceeded my expectations for the first year of the event,” said Fred Begale, vice president of engineering at Badger Meter. “We have found a number of interesting projects that we are investigating further as potential augmentation projects to our R&D portfolio.”

The following are the selected Challenge winners:

Heavy Metal Sensor Challenge:

ANDalyze - Illinois, United States – ANDalyze develops and markets analytical instruments that enable real-time and point-of-use, near-lab-quality measurements of contaminants in water.

Biological/DBP Sensor Challenge:

Burge Environmental, Inc. - Arizona, United States – Burge Environmental, Inc., a sensor research and development company, has created MiProbE®, a direct microbial sensor technology that enables real-time measurements of biochemical changes in microbial processes and environments that does not require cleaning or regular maintenance.

Acknowledging the strength of submissions by individuals, teams and companies, The Water Council and corporate sponsors also recognized six finalists and five honorable mentions from the University of Massachusetts Lowell, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, University of Connecticut, Georgia Institute of Technology, Wisconsin Lutheran College, as well as a student from Brookfield Central High School. Applications were received from as far away as Canada, China and the United Kingdom. A total of 18 applications were received for the first Tech Challenge round.

“The development of water technology is ever-expanding and quickly evolving to meet growing global needs,” stated Dr. Robert Heideman, senior vice president and chief technology officer at A. O. Smith Corporation. “With The Water Council’s Tech Challenge, A. O. Smith is excited to connect and partner with innovative, out-of-the-box thinkers, researchers and start-ups to help bring their proposed ideas and solutions to life in day-to-day products.”

Companies can get involved with the program by becoming a Tech Challenge sponsor and in turn will be able to select challenge topics, access and evaluate submissions, judge and interview applicants, and select winners with an opportunity to make deals. Information on how to become a Tech Challenge sponsor can be found on www.thewatercouncil.com/tech-challenge.

“It was exciting to see the diversity of the Tech Challenge responses that identify new innovations related to detecting microbiological organisms or heavy metals,” stated Glen Trickle, director of engineering at Zurn Industries, LLC, a Rexnord company. “These innovations will help us protect human health and the environment.”

The Tech Challenge applications were accepted from November 1, 2018 – January 13, 2019 on WaterTechHub.com. The next round of the Tech Challenge will be announced summer 2019.

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About The Water Council

Headquartered in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA next to the world’s largest freshwater system and home to one of the most influential freshwater technology hubs in the world, The Water Council (TWC) is recognized as a global center for advancing water technologies and stewardship. At its heart, TWC is a non-profit, membership organization that connects, convenes and showcases the hub comprised of more than 238 water technology businesses and the diverse water leadership network of 200 members it is linked to from around the world. While TWC’s mission is centered on driving economic development, attracting and connecting world-class talent and supporting water-focused technology innovation, its larger goal is to help secure freshwater resources for the world by driving solutions to the numerous industries that need and use a large amount of water. Learn more by visiting www.thewatercouncil.com.

About Tech Challenge

Spearheaded by The Water Council (TWC), the Tech Challenge is a new global competition designed to identify cutting-edge freshwater technologies and ideas with high potential for commercialization or implementation. A series of Tech Challenges will run throughout the year, and each Challenge is designed

around specific topics identified by corporate sponsors. Every Tech Challenge is open to anyone with a good idea and candidates can apply to as many of the Challenges as they like. Solutions can come from entrepreneurs, university students or researchers, professionals already working in water-dependent industries, private sector and government labs or just inventive individuals. Challenge finalists will present in-person to the sponsoring companies to compete for prize money, access to corporate R&D resources and the opportunity to partner on the development, marketing, licensing or sale of the winning technology or idea. As with all TWC competitions, potential Tech Challenge participants can submit their applications through WaterTechHub.com.

About A. O. Smith Corporation

A. O. Smith Corporation, with headquarters in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is a global leader applying innovative technology and energy-efficient solutions to products manufactured and marketed worldwide. Listed on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE), the company is one of the world's leading manufacturers of residential and commercial water heating equipment and boilers, as well as a manufacturer of water treatment and air purification products. For more information, visit www.aosmith.com.

About Badger Meter

Badger Meter is a leading innovator, manufacturer and marketer of flow measurement and control products, serving water and gas utilities, municipalities and industrial customers worldwide. Measuring a variety of liquids — from water to oil and lubricants in commercial processes — products from Badger Meter are known for accuracy, durability and the ability to provide valuable and timely measurement information. For more information, visit www.badgermeter.com.

About Zurn Industries

Zurn Industries, LLC, a Rexnord company, is a recognized leader in commercial, municipal, healthcare and industrial markets. Zurn offers the largest breadth of engineered water solutions, including a wide spectrum of sustainable plumbing products. Zurn delivers total building solutions for new construction and retrofit applications that enhance any building's environment. For more information, visit Zurn.com or RexnordCorp.com.