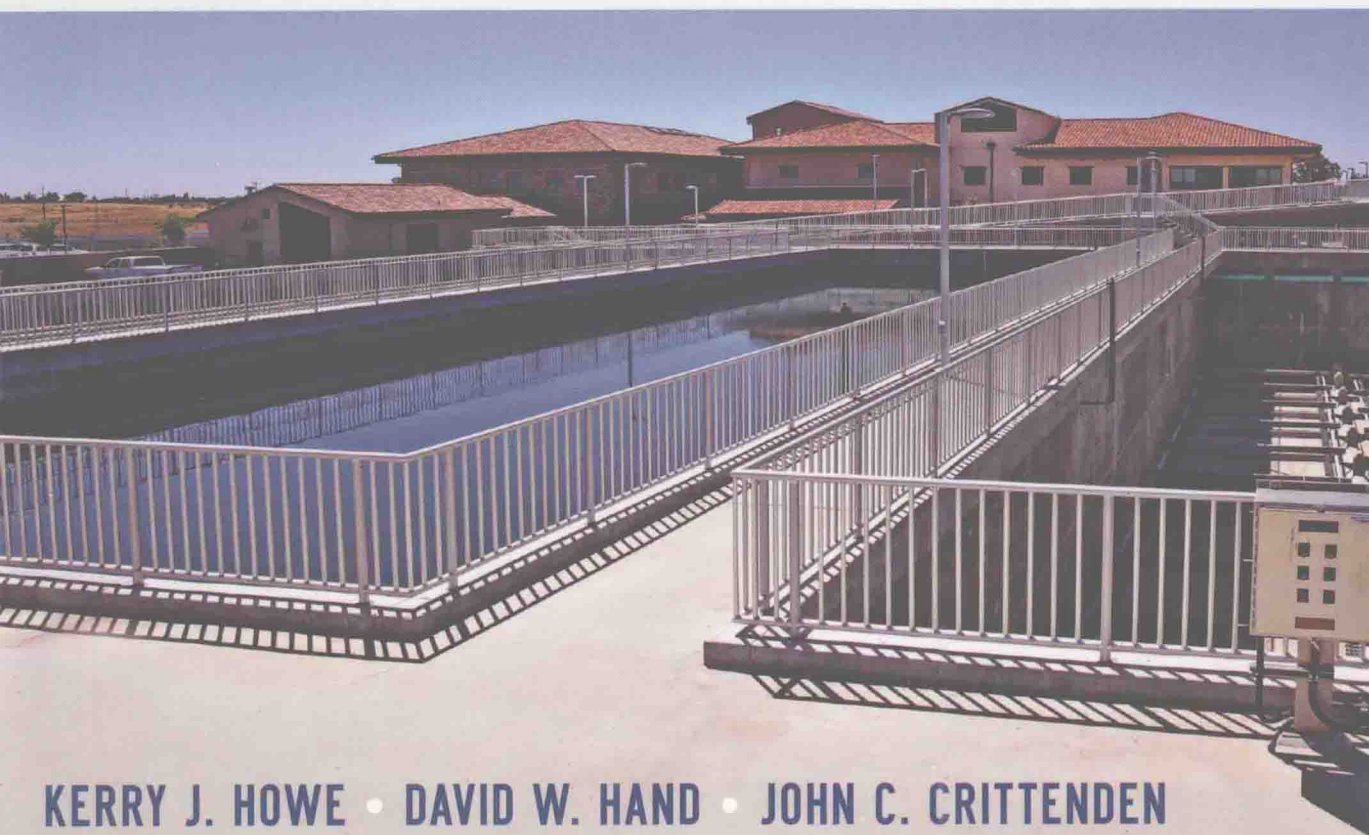




# PRINCIPLES OF WATER TREATMENT



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# Principles of Water Treatment

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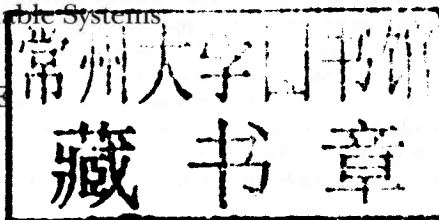
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# Preface

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Without water, life cannot exist. Thus, securing an adequate supply of fresh, clean water is essential to the health of humankind and the functioning of modern society. Water is also known as the universal solvent—it is capable of dissolving a vast number of natural and synthetic chemicals. Increasing population and the contamination of water with municipal, agricultural, and industrial wastes has led to a deterioration of water quality and nearly all sources of water require some form of treatment before potable use. This textbook is designed to serve as an introduction to the field of water treatment and the processes that are used to make water safe to drink.

The authors of this book have collaborated on two books that are intertwined with each other, both published by John Wiley and Sons, Inc. The other book, *MWH's Water Treatment: Principles and Design*, 3rd ed. (Crittenden et al., 2012), was the source for a significant portion of the material in this book. The focus of this present book is on principles of water treatment; it is suitable as a textbook for both undergraduate and graduate courses. The other book is an expanded edition, nearly triple the length of this one, that provides more comprehensive coverage of the field of drinking water treatment and is suitable as both a textbook and a reference for practicing professionals. The unit process chapters of *MWH's Water Treatment: Principles and Design* contain a detailed analysis of the principles of treatment processes as well as in-depth material on design. *MWH's Water Treatment: Principles and Design* also provides extensive chapters on the physical, chemical, and microbiological quality of water, removal of selected contaminants, internal corrosion of water conduits, and case studies that are not included in this book. Students who use this textbook in a class on water treatment and go on to a career in design of water treatment facilities are encouraged to consult *MWH's Water Treatment: Principles and Design* on topics that were beyond the scope of this textbook.

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# Contents

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<b>Preface</b>	<b>xv</b>
<b>Acknowledgments</b>	<b>xvii</b>
<b>1</b>	
Introduction	1
1-1 The Importance of Principles	2
1-2 The Importance of Sustainability	4
References	4
<b>2</b>	
Water Quality and Public Health	5
2-1 Relationship between Water Quality and Public Health	5
2-2 Source Waters for Municipal Drinking Water Systems	9
2-3 Regulations of Water Treatment in the United States	17
2-4 Evolving Trends and Challenges in Drinking Water Treatment	21
2-5 Summary and Study Guide	23
References	24
<b>3</b>	
Process Selection	25
3-1 Process Selection Based on Contaminant Properties	26
3-2 Other Considerations in Process Selection	30
3-3 Sustainability and Energy Considerations	34
3-4 Design and Selection of Process Trains	39
3-5 Summary and Study Guide	42
Homework Problems	43
References	45

## 4

Fundamental Principles of Environmental Engineering	47
4-1 Units of Expression for Chemical Concentrations	48
4-2 Chemical Equilibrium	51
4-3 Chemical Kinetics	60
4-4 Reactions Used in Water Treatment	63
4-5 Mass Balance Analysis	66
4-6 Introduction to Reactors and Reactor Analysis	73
4-7 Reactions in Batch Reactors	77
4-8 Hydraulic Characteristics of Ideal Flow Reactors	80
4-9 Reactions in Ideal Flow Reactors	84
4-10 Measuring the Hydraulic Characteristics of Flow Reactors with Tracer Tests	88
4-11 Describing the Hydraulic Performance of Real Flow Reactors	95
4-12 Reactions in Real Flow Reactors	101
4-13 Introduction to Mass Transfer	103
4-14 Molecular Diffusion	104
4-15 Diffusion Coefficients	106
4-16 Models and Correlations for Mass Transfer at an Interface	115
4-17 Evaluating the Concentration Gradient with Operating Diagrams	126
4-18 Summary and Study Guide	131
Homework Problems	133
References	138

## 5

Coagulation and Flocculation	139
5-1 Role of Coagulation and Flocculation in Water Treatment	140
5-2 Stability of Particles in Water	142
5-3 Principles of Coagulation	149
5-4 Coagulation Practice	150
5-5 Principles of Mixing for Coagulation and Flocculation	162
5-6 Rapid-Mix Practice	163
5-7 Principles of Flocculation	165
5-8 Flocculation Practice	170
5-9 Energy and Sustainability Considerations	186
5-10 Summary and Study Guide	187
Homework Problems	188
References	190

## 6

Sedimentation	193
6-1 Principles of Discrete (Type I) Particle Settling	196
6-2 Discrete Settling in Ideal Rectangular Sedimentation Basins	201

6-3	Principles of Flocculant (Type II) Particle Settling	205
6-4	Principles of Hindered (Type III) Settling	206
6-5	Conventional Sedimentation Basin Design	211
6-6	Alternative Sedimentation Processes	220
6-7	Physical Factors Affecting Sedimentation	228
6-8	Energy and Sustainability Considerations	230
6-9	Summary and Study Guide	231
	Homework Problems	232
	References	234

## 7

	Rapid Granular Filtration	235
7-1	Physical Description of a Rapid Granular Filter	236
7-2	Process Description of Rapid Filtration	242
7-3	Particle Capture in Granular Filtration	246
7-4	Head Loss through a Clean Filter Bed	255
7-5	Modeling of Performance and Optimization	258
7-6	Backwash Hydraulics	266
7-7	Energy and Sustainability Considerations	273
7-8	Summary and Study Guide	274
	Homework Problems	275
	References	278

## 8

	Membrane Filtration	281
8-1	Classification of Membrane Processes	282
8-2	Comparison to Rapid Granular Filtration	284
8-3	Principal Features of Membrane Filtration Equipment	286
8-4	Process Description of Membrane Filtration	296
8-5	Particle Capture in Membrane Filtration	301
8-6	Hydraulics of Flow through Membrane Filters	305
8-7	Membrane Fouling	309
8-8	Sizing of Membrane Skids	316
8-9	Energy and Sustainability Considerations	319
8-10	Summary and Study Guide	321
	Homework Problems	322
	References	325

## 9

	Reverse Osmosis	327
9-1	Principal Features of a Reverse Osmosis Facility	329
9-2	Osmotic Pressure and Reverse Osmosis	335
9-3	Mass Transfer of Water and Solutes through RO Membranes	339
9-4	Performance Dependence on Temperature and Pressure	343

9-5	Concentration Polarization	348
9-6	Fouling and Scaling	353
9-7	Element Selection and Membrane Array Design	359
9-8	Energy and Sustainability Considerations	361
9-9	Summary and Study Guide	364
	Homework Problems	365
	References	368

## 10

	Adsorption and Ion Exchange	369
10-1	Introduction to the Adsorption Process	370
10-2	Adsorption Equilibrium	377
10-3	Adsorption Kinetics	382
10-4	Introduction to the Ion Exchange Process	386
10-5	Ion Exchange Equilibrium	395
10-6	Ion Exchange Kinetics	399
10-7	Fixed-Bed Contactors	400
10-8	Suspended-Media Reactors	423
10-9	Energy and Sustainability Considerations	429
10-10	Summary and Study Guide	430
	Homework Problems	431
	References	435

## 11

	Air Stripping and Aeration	437
11-1	Types of Air Stripping and Aeration Contactors	438
11-2	Gas-Liquid Equilibrium	443
11-3	Fundamentals of Packed Tower Air Stripping	449
11-4	Design and Analysis of Packed-Tower Air Stripping	459
11-5	Energy and Sustainability Considerations	471
11-6	Summary and Study Guide	472
	Homework Problems	473
	References	475

## 12

	Advanced Oxidation	477
12-1	Introduction to Advanced Oxidation	479
12-2	Ozonation as an Advanced Oxidation Process	486
12-3	Hydrogen Peroxide/Ozone Process	494
12-4	Hydrogen Peroxide/UV Light Process	505
12-5	Energy and Sustainability Considerations	518
12-6	Summary and Study Guide	519
	Homework Problems	520
	References	522

**13**

<b>Disinfection</b>	<b>525</b>
13-1 Disinfection Agents and Systems	526
13-2 Disinfection with Free and Combined Chlorine	532
13-3 Disinfection with Chlorine Dioxide	538
13-4 Disinfection with Ozone	538
13-5 Disinfection with Ultraviolet Light	543
13-6 Disinfection Kinetics	555
13-7 Disinfection Kinetics in Real Flow Reactors	565
13-8 Design of Disinfection Contactors with Low Dispersion	567
13-9 Disinfection By-products	572
13-10 Residual Maintenance	575
13-11 Energy and Sustainability Considerations	576
13-12 Summary and Study Guide	578
Homework Problems	579
References	581

**14**

<b>Residuals Management</b>	<b>585</b>
14-1 Defining the Problem	586
14-2 Physical, Chemical, and Biological Properties of Residuals	591
14-3 Alum and Iron Coagulation Sludge	595
14-4 Liquid Wastes from Granular Media Filters	599
14-5 Management of Residual Liquid Streams	601
14-6 Management of Residual Sludge	604
14-7 Ultimate Reuse and Disposal of Semisolid Residuals	614
14-8 Summary and Study Guide	616
Homework Problems	617
References	618

<b>Appendix A Conversion Factors</b>	<b>621</b>
--------------------------------------	------------

<b>Appendix B Physical Properties of Selected Gases and Composition of Air</b>	<b>627</b>
--	------------

B-1 Density of Air at Other Temperatures	629
B-2 Change in Atmospheric Pressure with Elevation	629

<b>Appendix C Physical Properties of Water</b>	<b>631</b>
--	------------

<b>Appendix D Periodic Table</b>	<b>633</b>
----------------------------------	------------

<b>Appendix E Electronic Resources Available on the John Wiley &amp; Sons Website for This Textbook</b>	<b>635</b>
---	------------

<b>Index</b>	<b>637</b>
--------------	------------

# 1 Introduction

<b>1-1</b>	<b>The Importance of Principles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1-2</b>	<b>The Importance of Sustainability</b>	<b>4</b>
	<b>References</b>	<b>4</b>

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Securing and maintaining an adequate supply of water has been one of the essential factors in the development of human settlements. The earliest communities were primarily concerned with the quantity of water available. Increasing population, however, has exerted more pressure on limited high-quality surface sources, and contamination of water with municipal, agricultural, and industrial wastes has led to a deterioration of water quality in many other sources. At the same time, water quality regulations have become more rigorous, analytical capabilities for detecting contaminants have become more sensitive, and the public has become more discriminating about water quality. Thus, the quality of a water source cannot be overlooked in water supply development. In fact, most sources of water require some form of treatment before potable use.

Water treatment can be defined as the processing of water to achieve a water quality that meets specified goals or standards set by the end user or a community through its regulatory agencies. Goals and standards can include the requirements of regulatory agencies, additional requirements set by a local community, and requirements associated with specific industrial processes.

The primary focus of this book is the principles of water treatment for the production of potable or drinking water on a municipal level. Water treatment, however, encompasses a much wider range of problems and ultimate uses, including home treatment units and facilities for industrial water

treatment with a wide variety of water quality requirements that depend on the specific industry. Water treatment processes are also applicable to remediation of contaminated groundwater and other water sources and wastewater treatment when the treated wastewater is to be recycled for new uses. The issues and processes covered in this book are relevant to all of these applications.

This book thoroughly covers the fundamental principles that govern the design and operation of water treatment processes. Following this introduction, the next three chapters provide background information that is necessary to understand the scope and complexity of treatment processes. Chapter 2 describes the relationship between water quality and public health, introduces the types of constituents that are present in various water supplies, and outlines some of the challenges faced by water treatment professionals. Chapter 3 introduces how the physicochemical properties of constituents in water and other factors guide the selection of treatment processes. Chapter 4 introduces the core principles necessary for understanding treatment processes, such as chemical equilibrium and kinetics, mass balance analysis, reactor analysis, and mass transfer. Chapters 5 through 13 are the heart of the book, presenting in-depth material on each of the principal unit processes traditionally used in municipal water treatment. Chapter 14 presents material on the processing of treatment residuals, a subject that can have a significant impact on the design and operation of treatment facilities.

## 1-1 The Importance of Principles

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From the 1850s to about the 1950s, water treatment facilities were frequently designed by experienced engineers who drew upon previous successful design practices. Improvements were made by incremental changes from one plant to the next. Treatment processes were often treated as a “black box,” and detailed understanding of the scientific principles governing the process was not essential in completing a successful design. In recent years, however, significant changes have taken place in the water treatment industry that require engineers to have a greater understanding of fundamental principles underlying treatment processes. Some of these changes include increasing contamination of water supplies, increasing rate of technological development, and increasing sophistication of treatment facilities.

Early treatment practices were primarily focused on the aesthetic quality of water and prevention of contamination by pathogenic organisms. These treatment goals were relatively clear-cut compared to today's requirements. Since about the 1950s, tens of thousands of chemicals have been developed for a wide variety of purposes—about 3300 chemicals are produced in quantities greater than 454,000 kg/yr (1,000,000 lb/yr) in the United States. Some chemicals have leaked into water supplies and have carcinogenic or other negative health impacts on humans. Many water supplies are now

impacted by discharges from wastewater treatment plants and urban storm sewers. Engineers may be required to identify and design treatment strategies for chemicals for which no previous experience is available. As will be demonstrated in Chap. 3, treatment processes depend on well-established physicochemical principles. If the scientific principles are understood, it is possible to identify candidate processes based on the expected interaction between the properties of the contaminants and the capabilities of the processes. For instance, by knowing the volatility and hydrophobicity of a synthetic organic chemical, it is possible to predict whether air stripping or adsorption onto activated carbon is a more suitable treatment strategy.

Technology has been accelerating the pace at which treatment equipment is being developed. Engineers are faced with situations in which equipment vendors and manufacturers have developed new or innovative processes, and the engineer is assigned the task of recommending to a client whether or not the equipment should be evaluated as a viable option. Potable water is a necessary part of modern society, properly working processes are a matter of public health, and consumers expect to have water available continuously. Practical knowledge of previous successful design practices may not be sufficient for predicting whether new equipment will work. Understanding the scientific principles that govern treatment processes gives the engineer a basis for evaluating process innovations.

Treatment plants have gotten more complex. Sometimes facilities fail to work properly and the engineer is called in to identify factors that are preventing the plant from working or to recommend strategies to improve performance. Often, the difference between effective and ineffective performance is the result of scientific principles—a coagulant dose too low to destabilize particles, a change in water density because of a change in temperature, treatment being attempted outside the effective pH range. In these instances, scientific principles can guide the decision-making process regarding why a process is not working and what changes to operation would fix the problem.

As a result, the range of knowledge and experience needed to design water treatment facilities is extensive and cannot be learned in a single semester in college; today's design engineers need both knowledge about the fundamental principles of processes and practical design experience. This book provides a solid foundation in the former; other books focus more on the latter, such as books by Kawamura (2000) and AWWA and ASCE (2004). In addition, a companion book written by the authors, *MWH's Water Treatment Principles and Design*, 3rd ed. (Crittenden et al., 2012), covers both principles and design. While the coverage of that book is broad, it is nearly triple the length of this book and is difficult to cover in detail in a single engineering course. This book takes a focused approach on principles of water treatment and does so with the perspective of applying principles during design and operation so that it will serve as a useful introduction into the field of water treatment.



## 1-2 The Importance of Sustainability

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Another concept in this book is that sustainability and energy consumption should be considered in selecting treatment processes, designing them, and operating them. There are several reasons for this approach. First, the withdrawal, conveyance, treatment, and distribution of potable water—and subsequent collection, treatment, and discharge of domestic wastewater—is one of the most energy-intensive industries in the United States. Only the primary metal and chemical industries use more energy. A focus on sustainability and energy considerations will help the water treatment industry develop ways to be more efficient while conserving resources.

Water demand has grown in urban areas and adequate supplies of locally available, high-quality water are increasingly scarce. Simultaneously, the ability to detect contaminants has become more sophisticated, negative health effects of some constituents have become more evident, regulations have become more stringent, and consumer expectations of high-quality water have become more strident. The growing trend toward use of poor-quality water sources, coupled with these other effects, has stimulated a trend toward more advanced treatment that requires more energy and resources. Increasing energy and resource use will contribute to greater pollution and environmental degradation; incorporating sustainability and energy consumption into process and design practices will offset that trend and allow higher levels of water treatment without the negative impacts.

Ultimately, the most important reason to consider sustainability in water treatment plant design is an issue of leadership. Environmental engineering professionals—the engineers who design water treatment facilities—ought to be more knowledgeable about environmental considerations than the general public and should demonstrate to other professions that successful design can be achieved when the environmental impacts are taken into account. The section on sustainability and energy considerations at the end of each of the process chapters in this book is a small start in that direction.

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- Kawamura, S. (2000) *Integrated Design and Operation of Water Treatment Facilities*, Wiley, New York.