

Press Release

IFAT Munich 2024

Focusing on the water issues of our time

April 3, 2024

- Ways to create a sponge city
- New EU directive provides stimulates the market
- Shaping digital transformation

Whether it's climate resilience, opportunities offered by digitalization, optimized wastewater treatment, or global water justice, the environmental technology trade fair IFAT Munich 2024 once again reflects current topics in the water and wastewater industry.

From May 13 to 17, 2024, the environmental technology trade fair IFAT Munich will once again show what challenges and market stimulus the international water and wastewater industry is currently dealing with. Among this year's key topics at the Munich trade fair is adapting to the consequences of climate change. The trade fair's event program includes several dates that address aspects of this urgent social task. For example, the German Association for Water, Wastewater and Waste (DWA), the German Association of Cities, the German Association of Towns and Municipalities, the German County Association, the German Technical and Scientific Association for Gas and Water (DVGW), and the Association of Municipal Enterprises are organizing the "Day of Resilient Municipalities" on May 16 from 9.30 a.m. Its lectures and panel discussions will take place on the Blue Stage – a stage specifically for water topics – in Hall B2.

Building blocks for sponge cities

To become more climate resilient, cities and municipalities are required, among other things, to cope with the effects of increasing and more severe dry spells and heavy rainfall. A promising concept for this is the water-conscious city, also

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known as the sponge city. IFAT exhibitors provide helpful building blocks for its implementation. Examples include the ViaTree tree infiltration system from Mall GmbH in Donaueschingen, the EcoBloc infiltration system from Otto Graf GmbH in Teningen, and the Stormclean rainwater treatment system from ACO GmbH in Büdelsdorf.

Implementing the European Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive

New legal requirements, namely at EU level, can also have a significant market-shaping effect. A current example is the European Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive. It has been comprehensively revised after more than 30 years, and the compromise from Brussels is now available. “The planned changes will have a significant impact on wastewater treatment in Europe, especially for the removal of anthropogenic trace substances, increasing energy efficiency and generating energy at municipal wastewater treatment plants, or for the treatment of mixed water,” says DWA President Prof. Uli Paetzel. Against this backdrop, the Association is organizing a session on 14 May at 4.30 p.m. on the Blue Stage at which developments and decisions on implementing the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive will be explained and discussed from a legal, technical and operational perspective.

Exhibitors will also be focusing on the more demanding requirements. For example, Huber SE from Berching will be presenting the newly developed RotaFilt cloth filter. It reliably separates fine suspended substances, such as sludge flakes and microplastics, and removes phosphorus by flocculation filtration. And ProMinent GmbH from Heidelberg will be showing how micro-pollutants such as drug residues can be removed with ozone, and how ozone can be generated particularly economically with modular systems.

Where is digitalization heading?

The digital transformation is also in full swing in the water and wastewater industry. The Munich industry get-together provides answers in a depth rarely found to questions such as: Where do we stand in this process? What opportunities and risks does it entail? What direction can the digital journey take in the future? This focus

topic will be concentrated in the Spotlight Area “Digitalization in the water industry” at the West Entrance of the Munich exhibition grounds. The special exhibition area organized by the DWA directly behind the association stands will focus on best practice solutions. Among other things, the DVGW will be presenting the “Source of the future. Water for generations” project. As part of the project, the Lake Constance Water Utilities plans to use new facilities to also secure the drinking water supply for around four million people for the coming decades. Visitors can use augmented reality to immerse themselves visually in the facilities and experience the use of digital technologies.

Last but not least, local early flood warning offers scope for forward-looking digital developments. At the stand of Endress + Hauser from Weil am Rhein, interested visitors can find out more about the Netilion Flood Monitoring system. It uses artificial intelligence to accurately assess flood situations at an early stage on the basis of data collected on site by water level measuring devices and rain and soil moisture sensors, combined with weather forecasts and information on the terrain.

Digital twins are one of the key concepts of Industry 4.0 – also in the water industry. At the trade fair, Siemens AG from Erlangen will be demonstrating one such virtual model that depicts the entire plant life cycle. It enables lean processes to be implemented, from design and engineering to operation, maintenance and optimization.

Water justice for a more harmonious world

Water also has a geopolitical dimension, perhaps more than ever today. Water shortages or the uneven distribution of this blue gold can lead to regional or cross-national tension. Factors such as advancing climate change, the growing world population and armed conflicts exacerbate the situation. Conversely, fair and sustainable water use has the potential to promote harmonious coexistence at all levels. It is no coincidence that this year’s World Water Day on March 22 was held under the motto “Water for Peace”. “Many of our exhibitors’ technologies and systems can be seen as contributions to greater global water justice and hence more peace,” says Philipp Eisenmann, Exhibition Director of IFAT Munich. For example, the mobile, pallet-sized PurAID water treatment system from the manufacturer

Pureco in Budapest, Hungary. The cost-effective modular system is suitable for supplying water in rural and remote areas. It removes arsenic, iron, manganese, ammonia, fluorine, bacteria and viruses from ground water, well water and existing but contaminated mains water.

The European Water Association (EWA) and the International Water Association (IWA), among others, will be addressing this topic in the event program: On 14 May at 2.30 p.m., they are jointly organizing the panel discussion “Invest in Water – Invest in Security” on the Blue Stage. “We have invited international players to report on their measures and experiences in supporting the water sector worldwide, which aim to promote security and peace,” explains EWA Secretary General Johannes Lohaus.

You can find more information about IFAT Munich at www.ifat.de/en

About IFAT Munich

IFAT Munich is the world’s largest and leading environmental technology trade fair. Every two years, the world-leading trade show presents solutions for water, sewage, waste and raw materials management as well as strategies to make maximum use of resources and to close raw material cycles. The next IFAT Munich will be held at the exhibition center in Munich from May 13 to 17, 2024.

IFAT worldwide

Messe München not only demonstrates its considerable expertise in organizing environmental technology trade shows with the world’s leading trade fair IFAT Munich. Other international events include IE expo China in Shanghai, IE expo Chengdu in Chengdu, IE expo Guangzhou in Guangzhou, IE expo Shenzhen in Shenzhen, IFAT Africa in Johannesburg, IFAT Eurasia in Istanbul, IFAT India in Mumbai, IFAT Delhi in New Delhi, Singapore International Water Week (in cooperation with IFAT) in Singapore as well as IFAT Brasil in São Paulo from 2024 onwards. Together, the ten IFAT events form the world’s largest network for environmental technologies.

Messe München

As one of the world’s leading trade fair organizers, Messe München presents the world of tomorrow at its more than 90 trade fairs worldwide. These include eleven of the world’s leading trade fairs such as bauma, BAU, IFAT, electronica, and ISPO. Messe München’s portfolio comprises trade fairs for capital and consumer goods, as well as for new technologies. Together with its subsidiaries, it organizes trade fairs in China, India, Brazil, South Africa, Turkey, Singapore, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Thailand, and the U.S. With a network of more than 15 affiliated companies and almost 70 representations worldwide, Messe München is active in more than 130 countries. The more than 150 events held annually attract around 50,000 exhibitors and around three million visitors in Germany and abroad.