



Green Beagle



PRESS RELEASE

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New devices help citizens test water. Results can assist enforcement.

A small portable water-testing device could revolutionize regulatory action on polluted water bodies. According to the project manager of Green Beagle, Wang Qiuxia, the portable water quality analyzer is of great use for citizens' water quality testing. The small device can test for many substances, including some heavy metals, as long as reagents are well prepared. Moreover, it is quick as well as convenient. The analyzer is currently delivered in Tianjin and jointly managed by Green Beagle and a local environmental organization Tianjin Lvlin". Both free testing and equipment borrowing to do testing right on the outlets is mediated. The activity is enabled thanks to the IPEN/Arnika/Green Beagle's project "Strengthening the capacity of pollution victims and civil society organizations to increase chemical safety in China" (1).

Everyone is entitled to know the truth about our environment," said Feng Yongfeng, the founder of Green Beagle. Luckily, on 28th August, China Water Security Fund, in which the well-known Deng Fei acted as a co-founder, was established in Beijing. It was said that there would be 7 sections under the China Water Security Plan matching with this fund, among which citizens' independent water testing is one part.

As a matter of fact, such kind of testing has been conducted across the civil society for nearly half a year. Last April, Green Beagle already started to test river outlets and water discharge from waste water treatment plants in Beijing City, and found it was true that there existed substandard water in those water areas, which served as a great motivation for Beijing waste water management information disclosure.

"Recently we have conducted a quality testing on water discharged from sewage treatment plants in Beijing and found no anomalies in those routine indicators," said Tian Yangyang, a volunteer from Green Beagle. "However, it is really a very good exploratory practice and a good opportunity for the public to participate in the protection of rivers," added Tian Yangyang.

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What attracts people most is the equipment used in this practice. Volunteers say that it is a self-paying water quality analyzer by environmental NGOs. It costs about 50,000 Yuan (around 6000 Euros), among which one-fifth is donated by warm-hearted internet users. The analyzer is currently delivered in Tianjin and jointly managed by Green Beagle and a local environmental organization named “Tianjin Lvling”. If there are water samples that need testing, the public can send them to Tianjin and Lvling will provide free testing. If the samples are too many or need to be detected on the spot, people can borrow the equipment and do testing right on the outlets. Citizen testing has attracted a lot of attention, and people think that it will be a trend to assist in discovering new information and assisting with enforcement.

The emerging of citizens water testing has received support from various testing enterprises, equipment manufacturers and water purifier providers, and they also participate in the practice gradually. Microceramics Environmental Co., from Suzhou city, provided the whole nation with free drinking water testing by its own resources and devices; Hach, a portable water quality analyzer maker, launched a free water testing campaign in Zhejiang Province; and recently, an environmental NGO named Changsha Shuguang allied with a local water testing company to make free tap water detection for citizens, which worked very well. Facing the increasingly serious water pollution, there are more and more businesses and social forces are ready for doing something.

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Footnotes:

1) Strengthening the capacity of pollution victims and civil society organizations to increase chemical safety in China is an EU-funded project of IPEN with partners Arnika – Toxics and Waste Programme and Green Beagle that aims to strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations and communities impacted by pollution to increase chemical safety in China. The Project (also known as the China Chemical Safety Project) is being implemented in China over two years with the EU contribution.

2) Water testing



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