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UGR Scientists Develop A New Method To Purify Water Based On The Simultaneous Use Of Ozone And Activated Coal

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A research team of the University of Granada [<http://www.ugr.es>] has developed a new method of water purification which has aroused the interest of many, as well as research centres, such as the Swiss Institute for Environmental Science and Technology and the US company Carole Engineers. It is a system based on the simultaneous use of ozone and activated coal, highly effective and specialized on the treatment of water for human consumption and, besides, it is faster and more reliable than the proceedings existing in the market.

The research work, which started four years ago with the object of reducing the necessary ozone dose to eliminate different types of organic pollutants present in water allocated for human consumption, leaded to a much more complex result, as the scientists managed to prove that "they could not only reduce the dose, but also produce an increase in the speed of elimination of the organic pollutants present in water thanks to the transformation of the ozone into radicalary species of great reactivity to such pollutants", points out the supervisor of the project and professor of the University of Granada, José Rivera Utrilla.

A more feasible and economical process

The use of ozone is one of the most effective water at present but, however, the effectiveness of the ozone is limited faced with some of the most toxic pollutants. Therefore, the researchers completed the ozonization process adding low doses of activated coal -a material with high absorbent properties both of organic and inorganic compounds which can be prepared from a variety of raw materials and industrial waste such as almond shells, olive pits, oil coke, wood, mineral coal and biomass- "which make the process technologically more viable, economically more feasible and, in addition, with the quality of increasing the effectiveness of ozone as a depurative agents", points out professor Sánchez Polo, one of the researchers of the group.

The novelty and effectiveness of this new system for water treatment has allowed this research group of the UGR [<http://www.ugr.es>] to process several patents, which will be conceded in the next months, as well as the contribution of the National Plan for Research through the financing of all the research work.

Although the method has been designed to be applied on water purification process, it can also be applied on the purification of urban sewage, swimming pools and liquid effluents, like those of the textile industry, whose pollutants have centred part of the project.

Urban sewage purification to be reused on irrigation systems is other of the main applications of this new treatment system and a possible solution to tackle problems of water supply like present ones due to the drought. By means of this method, water purification and reuse would be "less expensive, faster and more effective through other systems which are being used at present", the researchers say.

About the UNIVERSITY OF GRANADA - COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

The University of Granada (UGR) was founded in 1531, under the initiative of Emperor Charles V. In this way, Granada asserted its vocation as a university city, open to different cultures, peoples and beliefs, continuing the tradition of the Arab University of Yusuf I (Madrassa, 14th century). With 475 years of tradition, the University of Granada has been an exceptional witness to history, as its influence in the city's social and cultural environment grew until it was to become, over a period of almost five centuries, an intellectual and cultural nucleus in Southern Spain in its own right. The University of Granada has also made a strong commitment to its future by fostering the development of quality research, whose guiding criteria are to stress traditional lines of research, to support investigation which - although less developed - may prove useful to a changing society and to forge bonds with firms and institutions. As a result of its growth in scientific production, the UGR is among the top Spanish universities. More than 400 research groups are working in all different areas of knowledge, in collaboration with both national and international research groups. The University of Granada offers to 81,600 students - 10 per cent of which are foreign students - 75 degree courses distributed in 28 centres. The UGR is the leading European destination for Erasmus/Socrates students, the most important Spanish university in graduation prizes, the third in the number of doctoral courses with the Distinction of Quality granted by the Ministry of Education and Science and the sixth in scientific production.

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