

Successful conference on micropollutants

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Topics: Pollutants | Wastewater

The Micropol & Ecohazard 2013 Conference came to an end on 20 June 2013. Over 350 participants from around 40 countries gathered together in Zurich at the invitation of the Eawag organisation committee and under the direction of Prof. Hansruedi Siegrist, to learn about the latest developments in the analysis, behaviour and elimination of micropollutants in the urban water cycle. An intensive programme of lectures and poster sessions was on offer. Attracting particular attention were the young researchers, some of whom were presenting their scientific findings to a specialist conference for the first time.

Young water experts lauded

The best scientific poster presentations were awarded prizes. Among the recipients were Fabio Polesel (DTU Denmark) for his presentation on "Activity-based fate modelling for risk assessment of three ionizable organic compounds (triclosan, furosemide, ciprofloxacin", as well as Anja Henneberg (University of Tübingen, Germany) for her poster presentation on "Activated charcoal filtration and ozonation for an improved surface water quality: investigation of native fish". Eawag PhD student Jennifer Schollee received a poster award for her presentation entitled "Nontarget screening of transformation products formed in biological wastewater treatment using multivariate analysis".

In addition, Amadine Michel (German Technical and Scientific Association for Gas and Water (DVGW) in Karlsruhe and TU Dresden, Germany) Deutscher Verein des Gas- und Wasserfaches (DVGW) in Karlsruhe und TU Dresden, Deutschland) was awarded the prize for the best lecture by a "young water professional". In her lecture, Michel presented a new method for identifying the presence of trisiloxane surfactants in surface waters. These surfactants are currently widely used in industry and agriculture as well as for household purposes in applications ranging from pesticides, polyurethane foam products and cosmetics to car cleaning substances, and thus find their way into our rivers and lakes. Thanks to the method developed by Michel, these substances can now be detected in surface water for the first time. The method is based on a liquid/liquid extraction process followed by identification using HPLC-MS/MS. The determination limit is in the region of a few nanogrammes per litre (ng/l). Amadine Michel was able to detect the presence of trisiloxane surfactants with a concentration of c. 50 ng/l in the River Neckar.

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