

Water tanks travel too

Problem: Treating drinking water in the caravan.
New water container system in English vehicles

Millions of Germans will be on the road this summer again. The best way to get to know people and places is to take a trip in a caravan or RV. At the beginning of the journey, drinking water is filled into the tanks at central locations. Thanks to a product from Carbonit Filtertechnik GmbH campers can be sure of the quality of their drinking water in the future.

Levels of contaminants, which are regulated in Europe by the Drinking Water Regulation (TrinkwV.), must not be adhered to in places like Africa or India. Here there are other laws which do not always ensure that the water is free of pollutants. In addition, fresh drinking water in caravan tanks can become contaminated with bacteria. For one thing, the material polyethylene which the tanks are made of, is a perfect breeding ground for bacteria. On the other hand, hoses and seals contain rubber plasticisers which collect on the surface of the material in time. This in turn fosters bacteria growth in the system, especially in warm countries. The reason: bacteria grow especially well in sun and heat. Bacteria growth in closed tanks can pose a health risk.

Cleaning drinking water systems – caravan hirers are liable

This is why caravan hirers are required by the EU Drinking Water Regulation to clean and disinfect the entire drinking water system after every hire, even during the busy peak season. If the hirer cannot prove this, he is liable if the crew become ill as a result of drinking contaminated water. It is also recommended that private owners of RVs and caravan trailers protect themselves. For example the journal "Reisemobil International" call for owners of non-commercial vehicles to clean their drinking water system before every trip.

Cleaning methods: Advantages and disadvantages

Dealers and manufacturers offer disinfectants. Additives containing chlorine kill disease causing bacteria and germs within 15 to 30 minutes. The disadvantage: chemical preparations like chlorine are aggressive oxidation and bleaching agents. They also kill bacteria which are vitally important, like those in the human digestive system. Chemical substances which are add-

ed to the water in the caravan tanks can be deposited in the body and cause lasting health problems.

For this reason, more and more owners and hirers are installing TÜV tested activated carbon block filters (for example CARBONIT) into their systems. They are deemed highly safe and an inexpensive way to produce healthy water. The good thing about the technology: the filters function without chemicals and not only extract germs from the water, but also medicine residues, polar pesticides, arsenic, copper, lead, sulphate, manganese and asbestos fibres which are not even limited by the European Drinking Water Regulation.

Drinking Water Container from Germany in English Caravans

CARBONIT-Filtertechnik GmbH from Salzwedel (Saxony-Anhalt) has been producing special systems since Spring 2006 for use in caravan trailers and RVs in Great Britain. "The system is compact, but above all safe", says CARBONIT Managing Director Dr. Peter Westerbarkey. Unlike in continental Europe, the drinking water reservoirs there are not carried along in vehicle tanks, but rather in a type of mobile rain barrel. The water is taken by hose from barrels outside, filtered through the caravan wall and then put to use. In England the caravan supplier Truma already offers the technology from Germany as standard.

CARBONIT systems are not only suitable for use in the caravan sector. Products made by the company from Saxony Anhalt include a filter to chemically treat lime-scale, a small travel filter and a filter for the household tap or for installation in the central water system. Carbonit is a member of the Westa Group in Güterloh and has an average annual increase in turnover of 30 percent.

Additional information on water containers, filter technology and studies can be found at www.carbonit.de.

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