

To its markets, IBM just adds water

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NEW YORK — Expanding beyond its base in computers, [International Business Machines Corp. \(IBM\)](#) is adding water-related technologies to its businesses, [The Wall Street Journal](#) reported in its March 13 edition.

The new IBM business will involve the design and installation of water sensor systems and related software to monitor water in pipes, reservoirs, rivers and harbors, the newspaper said. The company is also doing research into water filtration membranes.

In a related [story](#) in the computer industry publication [InformationWeek](#), IBM announced March 12 that it and three research partners have developed a new type of membrane which would remove toxins, salts and other impurities from water. The research partners are Central Glass of Japan, the King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology in Saudi Arabia, and the University of Texas at Austin.

In its article, [The Wall Street Journal](#) also said IBM researchers have created a new type of desalination membrane “that goes beyond current systems and removes arsenic and boron salts from contaminated groundwater, making it safe for humans.”

These developments are in line with IBM’s launch recently of its Big Green Innovations program, to expand the company into carbon management, alternative energy and water management, according to the [Journal](#). The newspaper said the company is promoting its ability to use technology to create a “smarter planet” in which physical phenomena such as electricity, vehicle traffic and water are monitored by the company’s products.

Sharon Nunes, who heads the Big Green Innovations program, was quoted by the [Journal](#) as saying that IBM estimates information technology for water management will become a \$20 billion market.