

# This startup is using the world's biggest agwaste product to transform global water management



Photo credit: Pexels

[Glanris](#) is a circular economy solution that processes rice hulls to turn them into a high-performance hybrid water filtration media. It's faster, more efficient, and significantly cheaper than traditional water filtration methods.

“The rice hull filtration method was developed by a professor from a local university in Memphis, the mayor introduced me to some people who wanted to launch it as a business,” says Glanris CEO Bryan Eagle.

This is the thing that ultimately got me most excited about it; today, most rice hulls worldwide are burned, so if we can stop burning hulls and turn it into a water filtration media, not only do you stop billions of pounds of greenhouse gases from being produced every year, but you're sequestering carbon for the next 10,000 years.

Glanris is already active in the U.S. industrial sector, next they aim to enter the consumer water filtration market, working with brands like Brita, as well as municipalities – they've already had interest from utilities in India, the UK, France, and the Netherlands.

“21 of the world's top 37 aquifers are running dry. A way to address water scarcity is to get better at reusing the water we're already using and we're going to have to be desalinating more sea water. In order to do both of those you need low-cost, sustainable, green filtration products.”

***Bryan Eagle, CEO, [Glanris](#)***

As Glanris prepares for international expansion, in coming years, the startup plans to be producing its rice hull filtration media globally: it's a global problem, and we've got a global solution. We want to take the largest agricultural waste product in the world – 218 billion pounds of rice hulls – and convert it from a product that's burnt, to a product with a circular economy application, solving our water security and scarcity problems.

“We're up to 20% more effective at filtration, in 1/3 of the time, and at 1/10th of the cost. So, better, faster, cheaper. We're a hybrid; our methods do several things in one filter, so you only have to use one tank, compared to traditional filtration methods which use four tanks to get inferior results,” says Eagle.

And if instead of using just one tank of our media, we run the water through two filtration tanks – traditional filters use four tanks right now –

we could purify to near drinking water standards at about 1/5 the cost. It's a green product and we're sequestering carbon and saving the planet at the same time, so what's not to love about this?

We're focusing on industrial and residential clients for now, because getting approval for use in municipalities can take years. Every big company today is using water somewhere in their process and they need to treat it before they can discharge it. A lot of these big companies have Chief Sustainability Officers who are saying, why are we discharging this water? Why aren't we just reusing this water? They're really interested in green sustainable solutions and getting away from microplastics in filters.

“This is something where they can absolutely start to promote the fact that they're not pumping water out of the ground every day, they pump it out once and they reuse it many, many times and they're cleaning it with a green sustainable filter. So their Chief Sustainability Officer is very happy, as is their plant manager because it's an easier, simpler process, their CFO is happy because they're saving money,” Eagle explains.

This fall Glanris will be entering the residential market. “Whether it's a carbon block filter on your refrigerator, a whole home filter, or a Brita jug, all of these guys want green sustainable filtration products, and we can deliver that. Industrial and residential will be our first two big markets, and they're looking for innovation and green products,” says Eagle. “Once people use our product, they keep buying or refreshing their filters, so it's a recurring revenue model.”

Demand for water is forecast to exceed sustainable supplies by 40% within the next 9 years, threatening water resources for 3 billion people – lives and livelihoods may well depend on how fast Glanris sells its solutions.

## **About the author**



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The Green Techpreneur is produced by [Marianne Lehnis](#) – a climatetech journalist and Forbes Contributor.

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