

thereby stopping the flow of water into the sample collection funnel 44 and allowing the sample to drain out of the funnel 44 through drain port 62, then through the open valve in switch 45, into drain pipe 47, and from there to the distributor 48.

Sample collection funnel 44 may be designed to have very steep sides, so that sample fluids will drain completely, thereby preventing cross contamination of samples.

FIGS. 4 through 7 show the design of the distributor 48. The distributor body 48 is shown in FIGS. 6 and 7, and the distributor rotor 68 is shown in FIGS. 4 and 5. As shown in FIG. 4, drain pipe 47 extends down into a distributor inlet fitting 63. Fitting 63 is secured to the distributor rotor 68 at 65. Water passes through the fitting 63 into channel 66, and channel 66 directs the water out to a discharge hole 67 at the perimeter of the bottom 69 of the rotor 68. FIG. 5 shows the bottom 69 of the rotor 68 and the location of the discharge hole 67. As shown in FIGS. 6 and 7, rotor 68 rides in the recess 78 of the distributor body 48. The bottom 69 of the rotor 68 rests on a ledge 79 in recess 78. FIG. 6 shows that sixteen drain holes 80 are arranged around the perimeter of ledge 79. The holes 80 allow sample water to drain out of the distributor 48 through fittings 85 and into sample collection tubes 54. Holes 87 in the outside of the distributor body 48 are for securing the distributor to some stable platform, as shown in FIG. 9. A funnel drain 84 in distributor 48 allows any water that has leaked between the rotor 68 and the ledge 79 to drain down through drain hole 83, thereby preventing collection of leaking water and cross contamination of samples,

Referring back to FIG. 4, a gear 49 is secured to the top of rotor 68 by screws 64. The rotor gear 49 meshes with a set of reduction gears 59. A conventional DC stepper motor 50 drives a gear 51, and through the set of reduction gears 59. Upon receiving current, the DC stepper motor 50 will make a single rotation, then stop. The reduction gears 59 are sized to translate the single rotation of the stepper motor 50 into an incremental movement of distributor rotor 68. This incremental rotation, shown by the angle at 86 in FIG. 6, will place the discharge hole 67 of the rotor 68 directly over one of the sixteen drain holes 80 in the distributor 48.

When the controller 43 cuts off current to the solenoid switches 41 and 45, water drains out of collection funnel 44 to distributor 48, which distributes the sample to a particular sample bottle 55. A clock 96 in controller 43 allows a pre-programmed amount of time to pass to allow the sample to drain completely from the funnel 44 and through the distributor 48. After that set time has passed, the controller sends a signal to the stepper motor 50, which causes the motor 50 to complete a single rotation and move the rotor 68 to the next distributor sample hole 80.

FIG. 8 shows a design for a collection and distribution unit, indicated generally by 40. Such a unit facilitates transport of the sampler, especially to remote locations. All the components of the sampler, other than the turbine and pump unit 10, can be arranged in collection unit 40 so that on-site set-up only requires the attachment of a few hoses and wires. Upper and lower doors (not shown) in the housing 95, open for access to the components and sample bottles 55. In the arrangement shown in FIG. 8, a cylindrical PVC housing 95 is used to hold the collection and distribution components. The sample funnel 44 is secured at the top. Sample inlet pipe 27 enters through the open top of the housing 95 and mates with solenoid switch 41. The controller computer 43 is mounted in a sealed box 93 in front of the funnel 44 (wiring is not shown in this figure). The data

computer 58 is mounted in its own box 94 below the controller 43. Drain pipe 47 directs sample water to the distributor rotor 68, and the motor 50 reduction gear set 59 are mounted below the data computer 58. The battery 53 or batteries are not shown in this figure, but they may be secured around the distributor rotor 68 on the platform 97. The distributor 48 is screwed to the platform 97. The collection bottles 55 are stored in the bottom compartment of the unit 40.

FIGS. 9A and 9B show the schematic for the invention. Referring to FIG. 9A, switch 101 allows the user to select one sample volume, which is shown as 100 milliliters, and switch 102 allows the selection of a different volume, shown here, as an example, as 10 milliliters. It will be appreciated that any number of switches may be used to choose a wide variety of settings. Two six volt batteries 53 provide power to the unit. A relay 103 provides switching for the solenoid switches 41 and 45. A connector 104 plugs into the data computer 58. Any conventional single board computer, such as a CMD118A8 board produced by Axiom Manufacturing, may be used as the data computer 58. The data computer counts the pulses from the reed switch 26 on the pump 19 push rod 18. The pulses can be stored in memory and a program can be developed to take samples after a certain number of pulses have been counted. The data computer also has an internal clock 98, which can be used to order samples based upon time intervals. Moreover, the data computer 58 can calculate, store in its memory, and chart data concerning the test site's flow speed. To do this, empirical information relating the speed of the propeller 14 to the speed of water driving the propeller 14 is gathered. That empirical data is compared to the pulse signals from the reed switch 26, and the clock 98 is used to provide the test flow's velocity.

Referring to FIG. 9B, relay 108 is another switch controlling the stepper motor 50. Relay 109 is another switch controlling the solenoid switches 41 and 45. Relay 110 turns the controller 43 on when a signal is received from the data computer 58. Relay 111 selects which float, 71 or 81, the controller will use to control the amount of sample taken. Re-set switch 112 can re-boot the system if it locks-up. Relay driver 113 amplifies the voltage and current. Diode 114 prevents back-feeding of signals to the data computer. Internal buses are shown at 115. Connector 116 plugs into the controller computer 43. A conventional microprocessor, such as a Parallax Industrial Basic Stamp II, may be used. The controller 43 receives the signal from the data computer 58 to take a sample, and controls the sample taking process by sending current to solenoid switches 41 and 42, waiting a pre-set time for the sample to drain from the funnel 44 and through the distributor 48, then sending a signal to the stepper motor 50, which shifts the distributor rotor 68.

It will be appreciated by those skilled in the art, that the turbine and pump unit 10 is ideally suited to many applications. The description provided above is but one embodiment set in the context of taking water samples from a stream or river. But, the invention may also be used to take samples from any moving fluid, including canals, irrigation ditches, storm drains, and sewer systems. The fluid need not be limited to water. Moreover, the present invention may also be adapted to taking samples from pipes. As shown in FIG. 10, the pump unit 19 may be attached to the turbine housing 11 and sealed to prevent fluids from escaping. The inlet pipe 22 can be directed through the turbine housing 11 to take samples from within the housing 11. In this way, the housing 11 may be inserted between sections of pipe 120 and used to pump samples.

The drawings and description set forth here represent only some embodiments of the invention. After considering these,