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Aqua Metals Wins Platts Global Metals Rising Star Award for Innovations in Lead Industry

Company Also Named a Finalist in the 'Industry Leadership – Base Metals' Category

ALAMEDA, Calif., May 24, 2016 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- [Aqua Metals, Inc.](#) (NASDAQ:AQMS), ("Aqua Metals" or the "Company"), which is commercializing a non-polluting electrochemical lead recycling technology called AquaRefining™, was named the winner of the *Rising Star* category in the 2016 [Platts Global Metals Awards](#) program, which honors the top performers, leaders and innovators in the metals industries.

Aqua Metals was recognized for its [AquaRefining](#) process, the industry's first commercially viable alternative lead-acid battery recycling technology. The company was also named a finalist in the *Industry Leadership Award – Base Metals* category. All finalists and awardees were chosen from more than 100 nominees across 17 countries.

"It is an honor to earn the accolades of such a highly respected organization for our work to revolutionize the lead industry," said Dr. Stephen Clarke, chairman and CEO of Aqua Metals. "As we enter a 'Battery Age,' lead-acid technologies can experience continued market dominance with the development of a recycling method that is economically sustainable and environmentally responsible. This distinction affirms that Aqua Metals has developed just that."

More than 95 percent of the rechargeable batteries used around the world are based on lead-acid chemistry. One main reason for this is that recycling other battery types – for example, lithium-ion – has proven to be cost-prohibitive and at best only reclaims 3 to 5 percent of the materials, compared to lead acid battery recycling, which reclaims over 99 percent of materials.

While lead-acid batteries are the only battery chemistry that is nearly 100 percent recyclable, smelting – the current (and only) method for recycling these products – is a major contributor to global greenhouse gas emissions and also creates harmful airborne dusts and solid waste byproducts. As emissions regulations tighten and smelters close down due to environmental non-compliance, the industry is in need of practical alternatives to drastically reduce the environmental and human health impacts of lead-acid battery recycling while improving the economics and logistics.

Aqua Metals also [recently announced the signing of definitive agreements with Interstate Batteries](#), the largest independent battery distribution system in North America. Interstate Batteries agreed to supply more than a million automotive and other lead-acid batteries as feedstock for Aqua Metals' AquaRefineries. Interstate Batteries will also make a strategic

investment of approximately \$10 million into Aqua Metals.

Aqua Metals' patented AquaRefining approach is a closed-loop, room temperature electrochemical process that emits virtually no harmful byproducts, while yielding lead recovery of nearly 100 percent. The modular design of the AquaRefining technology enables unprecedented scalability, allowing facilities to efficiently meet even the most stringent environmental regulations and opening the door for the co-location of lead-acid battery manufacturing, distribution and recycling.

The Aqua Metals team was presented with the Platts Global Metals *Rising Star* Award during a black tie gala, held on May 19, 2016 in London.

About Platts

Platts is the leading independent provider of information and benchmark prices for the commodities and energy markets. Customers in over 150 countries look to Platts' expertise in news, pricing and analytics to deliver greater transparency and efficiency to markets and help them make better informed trading and business decisions. Founded in 1909, Platts' coverage includes oil and gas, power, petrochemicals, metals, agriculture and shipping. A division of McGraw Hill Financial, Platts is headquartered in London and employs over 1,000 people in more than 15 offices worldwide. Additional information is available at <http://www.platts.com>.

About Aqua Metals

Aqua Metals (NASDAQ:AQMS) is reinventing lead recycling with its patented AquaRefining™ technology. Unlike smelting, AquaRefining is a room temperature, water-based process that is fundamentally non-polluting. These modular systems allow the lead-acid battery industry to simultaneously improve environmental impact and scale production to meet rapidly growing demand. Aqua Metals is based in Alameda, California, and is building its first recycling facility in Nevada's Tahoe Reno Industrial Complex. To learn more, please visit www.aquametals.com.

Safe Harbor

This press release contains forward-looking statements concerning Aqua Metals, Inc., the lead acid battery recycling industry, the future of lead acid battery recycling via traditional smelters, the Company's development of its commercial lead acid battery recycling facilities and the quality, efficiency and profitability of the Company's proposed lead acid battery recycling operations. Those forward-looking statements involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors that could cause actual results to differ materially. Among those factors are: (1) the fact that the Company has not yet commenced revenue producing operations or developed its initial commercial recycling facility, thus subjecting the Company to all of the risks inherent in a pre-revenue start-up; (2) risks related to Aqua Metals' ability to raise sufficient capital, as and when needed, to develop and operate its recycling facilities; (3) changes in the federal, state and foreign laws regulating the recycling of lead acid batteries; (4) the Company's ability to protect its proprietary technology, trade secrets and know-how and (5) those other risks disclosed in the section "Risk Factors" included in the final prospectus relating to the Company's IPO filed with the SEC on July 31, 2015. Aqua Metals cautions readers not to place undue reliance on any forward-looking statements. The Company does not undertake, and specifically disclaims any obligation, to update or revise such statements to reflect new circumstances or unanticipated events as they occur.

Aqua Metals Media Relations:
Antenna
Sharon Golubchik
Director
201-465-8008
aquametals@antennagroup.com

Aqua Metals Investor Relations:
MZ North America
Greg Falesnik
Senior Vice President
Main: 949-385-6449
greg.falesnik@mzgroup.us
www.mzgroup.us



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