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(54) **Thickener blend composition and method for thickening aqueous systems**

(57) A thickener blend composition, and method for thickening aqueous systems, comprising an associative thickener wherein the same group that is attached to or within the backbone of the associative thickener is reversibly switched between being hydrophilic and hydrophobic in nature. When the group that is attached to or within the backbone is rendered hydrophilic, the aqueous

thickener is pourable and readily incorporated into aqueous polymer compositions. When this group is rendered hydrophobic, the thickener performs its thickening function efficiently. Switching is readily accomplished by adjusting the pH of the associative thickener composition and the aqueous polymer composition being thickened.

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