

Rural Water Issues Advisory [12/16/2019]

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House and Senate Negotiators Reach Agreement on Final Spending Plan Including Funding for all Rural Water Priority Funding Requests: The current fiscal year continuing resolution continues through December 20. The details (spending levels) in the deal are expected to be made public today.

PFAS Legislation that Was Dropped Last Week from the Annual Defense Authorization Bill Now Being Considered for House Spending Bill: NRWA was successful in having the adverse PFAS dropped from the defense bill ([NRWA statement](#)) only to see the effort move to including it in the spending bill. Time is running out, however, and the issue not germane to the spending bill. As recent as last Friday, NRWA was asked for comment on a new Safe Drinking Water standard setting process that could be unique to PFAS. We speculated that this was for possible inclusion in the spending bill and would be included in the Congressional mandate for EPA to craft MCLs for certain PFAS substances. Any final agreement between the House and Senate to include new legislation for regulating PFAS should be announced this week. NRWA is urging the key Congressional Committee leadership to use alternatives to MCL in aiding communities affected by PFAS ([NRWA Testimony](#)). The final NDAA bill did include some other PFAS provisions meant to increase EPA's regulatory scrutiny such as requiring increased contaminant release reporting, greater manufacturing, use and sale disclosures, new guidelines on treatment and disposal and funding for research and investigations ([S. 1790 conference report, section 321-23](#)).

Town Hall Senior Living Community is the Best Tasting Non-chemically Treated Water in Maine ([Bangor Daily News](#)).

Louisiana Rural Water Association to the Rescue: Feature in national water journal identifies LRWA as solution to state initiative to help the most challenged drinking water utilities ([Circle of Blue](#)).

“Breakthrough” on NRWA’s Eight-Year Effort to Have EPA Allow Electronic Delivery of EPA Tier 2 Public Notices: Last week, a state rural water association inquired to their regional EPA contacts in the context of an (9/25/19) EPA Report that found e-delivery is permitted ([EPA OIG](#)). At last year’s (2018) NRWA WaterPro Conference, Paul Fulgham (Rural Water Association of Utah) asked if EPA had given further consideration to allowing water systems to distribute Tier 2 Public Notification (PN) electronically and also if EPA will consider “softening” the required language regarding health effects in public notices ([report from Kansas Rural Water Association, p. 70](#)). Last week, EPA responded that *“EPA Office of Water committed to do the following by 9/30/20: ‘Define for primacy agencies and public water systems acceptable methods and conditions under which the electronic delivery of Tiers 2 and 3 notices meet the Safe Drinking Water Act’s direct delivery requirement.’”* Florida Rural Water Association Executive Director, Gary Williams, commented, *“Florida Congressman Bill Young introduced legislation and promoted E-Delivery of CCR... we still can’t believe he said yes when we asked him. He always told us he really supported us... and said this was something he could lead on.”* In addition to Rep. Young’s 2011 legislation (H.R. 1340: [link](#)), NRWA has been assisted by: Senator Wicker - MS, in 2105 ([link](#)), ASDWA in 2015 ([link](#)); Senator Hatch - UT, in 2018 ([link](#)); and Senator Burr - NC, in 2018 ([link](#)).

AWWA’s Initial and Critical Comments on EPA’s Lead and Copper Rule Revisions ([AWWA](#)).

Sixteen-Year-Old European Environmental Activist Gets Twitter Attention from President of the US and Former US First Lady ([Washington Post](#)).

FDA Identifies Lettuce as Source of E. Coli Outbreaks: Last week, FDA identified a common romaine lettuce grower in Salinas, CA linked to three separate foodborne illness outbreaks caused by strains of E. coli O157:H7 ([FDA](#)). The outbreak has sickened 102 people across 23 states.

Ann Arbor (MI) PFAS Levels Raise After Initial GAC Treatment Decline: After installing a very costly treatment, the city's test results showed levels as low as 2 parts per trillion in April - levels of PFAS were back to 25-29 ppt in October and 25.3 ppt in November. Levels in the city's raw intake water were at 38.6 ppt in November. In part due to the costs of dealing with PFAS, the City Council is expected to vote on additional water rate increases in 2020 ([Michigan Live news](#)).

Villages (Florida) Couple Climbs Out Tailgate after Minivan Sinks into Created by Water Main Break ([Villages News](#)).

National Rural Water Association

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The National Rural Water Association is the country's largest public drinking water and sanitation supply organization with over 30,000 members. Safe drinking water and sanitation are generally recognized as the most essential public health, public welfare, and civic necessities.

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