

Rural Water Policy Advisory [3/12/2018]

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NRWA to EPA on LCR: From [Friday's comments](#) on the drinking water Lead and Copper Rule (LCR), "NRWA shares the EPA's goal of eliminating all lead from the public's drinking water. Local governments and state governments exist solely to protect and assist their citizens. The provision of safe drinking water is perhaps the most elemental purpose of local government. NRWA supports the Agency's concept of 'shared responsibility' among federal, state, and local governments - and the public. Any new LCR should be fundamentally modified to reflect this principle. Unfortunately, much of the local opposition to the current rule is based on its arbitrary and uniform mandates that result in many communities believing many of the rule's requirements are unnecessary or diverting the community from implementing the most effective policy from preventing lead in drinking water. Regarding the principle of respecting the authority of Congress by administering enacted statutes within the authority granted by Congress, we respectfully urge the Agency to consider if the existing LCR's mandate that allows for the effects of a private homeowner's plumbing (i.e. a kitchen faucet) on the water passing through that fixture should result in very burdensome and possibly unrelated requirements on the utility (i.e. treatment installation or adjustments, removal of underground water lines, and alarming public notices) is authorized under the SDWA. The SDWA limits EPA's authority to regulate the quality of drinking water "in the water in public water systems." We believe the current LCR regulatory nexus between the results of tap sampling (when EPA has made no finding of contamination or any adverse effect on the water leaving the public water systems) and correlating mandates on the greater community exceeds the authority provided under the SDWA."

House of Representatives Rural Water Dear Colleague Letters: Thank you Hawaii and New York Rural Water Associations for having your Representatives (again) sponsor our House of Representatives Dear Colleague letters supporting rural water funding priorities ([letters](#)). All House Members can co-sign the letters. On Friday, Congresswoman Hanabusa commented to Hawaii Rural Water Association, "*Mahana, it's our pleasure!*" There are currently over 50 current cosigners including: Colleen Hanabusa, John Katko, Rick Larsen, Liz Cheney, Paul D. Tonko, David B. McKinley, Peter DeFazio, David Rouzer, Alcee L. Hastings, John J. Faso, Gwen Moore, Jack Bergman, Peter Welch, Claudia Tenney, Dave Loebsack, Frank A. LoBiondo, Terri Sewell, Rick Crawford, Jerry McNerney, Walter B. Jones, Seth Moulton, Gerald E. Connolly, Keith Ellison, Michael E. Capuano, Madeleine Z. Bordallo, John Garamendi, Niki Tsongas, Daniel T. Kildee, James P. McGovern, Tim Walz, Josh Gottheimer, Joseph P. Kennedy III, Jamie Raskin, Ron Kind, Donald M. Payne, Jr., Mark DeSaulnier, Carol Shea-Porter, Suzan K. DelBene, Denny Heck, Robin L. Kelly, Emanuel Cleaver, II, Filemon Vela, Jacky Rosen, Richard M. Nolan, Alma S. Adams, Michelle Lujan Grisham, Bennie G. Thompson, Luis V. Gutierrez, Tom O'Halleran, Ruben J. Kihuen, Al Lawson, and Kevin Cramer.

The Justice Department (DOJ) is Tightening its Oversight of Attorneys' Fees Paid to Environmental Groups that Win Citizen Groups Lawsuits against EPA ([Inside EPA](#)).

The Philadelphia Water Department Criticized for Allegedly High Levels of Chrom-6 and Flouride in the Drinking Water, but Officials Say Claims are Flawed ([news](#)).

Michigan Crafting Lead Rule That Conflates Action Level with Health Level: The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality is moving forward with proposed changes to the lead and copper rule to lower the action level of 15 parts per billion (ppb) of lead to 10 ppb. The Michigan Environmental Council explained, "*Though no amount lead is safe in water, reducing that down is going to be very important* ([Michigan Radio](#))."

New Hampshire Closer to Setting New Limits on PFOA: More than 500 private drinking wells in NH have tested positive for perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS), and related compounds. New Hampshire currently uses a maximum limit of 70 parts per trillion of PFOA in drinking water, a non-enforceable guideline that the EPA set. But the state is one of many that has raised concerns that the EPA limit is not protective enough of health. Some states have adopted stricter standards, including Vermont which now uses a maximum limit of 20 parts per trillion for PFOA in drinking water. The bill moving in the state legislature would direct the Department of Environmental Services to set maximum allowable limits of PFOA, PFOS, plus perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA), and perfluorohexane sulfonic acid (PFHxS) for public drinking water by 2019. The department also would review the current maximum allowable limits in groundwater for PFOA and PFOS by 2019 and create maximum allowable limits in groundwater for PFNA and PFHxS, by 2019.

Islamic State Followers Seeking to Use Chlorine for Attacks in the U.S.: U.S. officials have intercepted “chatter” by Islamic State followers who were discussing how to conduct attacks with chlorine in the U.S. in a manner similar to how the substance was used by the group in Syria, among other plots involving “simple” weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). Speaking of the threat, Dr. Lonnie Carlson of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Office said, “We are working on a real world threat related to [the Islamic State] in the WMD space that is really an export of something happening in the Middle East that is causing us to devote thousands of dollars in very near-term funding.” Dr. Carlson declined to provide additional information on the threat but noted more details would be provided soon. A spokesperson for the White House also declined to comment, noting that the Trump Administration is “constantly monitoring and evolving the response” to the WMD threat ([The Cipher Brief](#)).

DeKalb County (GA) 48-inch Broken Main Replaced in 24 Hours ([WSB TV](#)).

California Attorney General Announces Embezzlement Charges Against Water District Employees: Five defendants are being charged, including two for misusing over \$100,000 in public funds amidst widespread corruption at the Panoche Water District (PWD). The defendants allegedly spent public money for personal expenses such as illegal slot machines, kitchen remodeling, and residential landscaping. Defendants illegally buried barrels of hazardous waste without permits or authorization.

[National Rural Water Association](#)

Contact: Mike Keegan, Policy Analyst <keegan@ruralwater.org>
(Washington, DC)

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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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