

The Electoral College's Rural Voice: Electors are to meet Monday to vote for the next President. Some electors "say they are defending rural and small-town America against big-state liberalism [big cities]" ([AP News](#)). "I feel like the Electoral College gives a very fair perspective, so that those who are in the rural areas are able to have an equal voice with those who are in the urban areas," said an Oklahoma elector.

"Contaminated Water In St. Joseph, La., Leads To Emergency": On Friday, the governor declared a "Public Health Emergency" and *do not drink* recommendation for the town of 1,100 after officials found water going to "three" buildings – one of them the town hall – was "contaminated" with lead at 22 parts per billion ([NPR](#)).

Penn Town with Two "Elevated" Lead Samples Does Not Declare "Public Health Emergency": Two elevated lead levels were found in 2 samples in Duncannon (PA). In response, the town is conducting more testing, modifying the pH level, continuing to replace old pipes, recommending flushing, using cold water, and replacing plumbing, etc. ([news](#)).

Corpus Christi Retrospective:

- Local ABC News' Briana Whitney is continuing updates via [Twitter](#).
- On Wednesday, the public was told a "recent back-flow incident" in the industrial district possibly caused the contamination of the city's drinking water resulting in a *do not drink* order for the city of more than 300,000 ([CNN](#)).
- The chemical "leak" was apparently reported a week earlier, according to an internal email of the regional director for the TX CEQ that indicated a "backflow incident from a chemical tank" was reported Dec. 7 at Ergon Asphalt and Emulsions ([AP News](#)).
- Three to 24 gallons of the chemical possibly entered the city's water after an incident.
- Corpus Christi was "delayed" in response because the company required the city to sign a confidentiality agreement to get the specifics of the chemical called Indulin AA-86, an asphalt emulsifier ([CNN](#)).
- The city divides distribution systems into three zones of risk for chemicals ([news](#)).
- A doctor says level of chemicals in drinking water likely not toxic ([NBC news](#)).
- More than half a dozen lawsuits have been filed against the company ([Caller-Times New](#)).
- **CNN Feature Includes Coverage of the Tweets of Citizens:** CNN selected the following Tweets in their coverage of Corpus Christi:

"Here we go again #CorpusChristi! #ErinBrockovich please come and tell us the #truth."

Erin Brockovich on Russia's RT Television on the Truth about

Drinking Water Safety: The activist appeared on RT last week, Dec. 14th, commenting on the Flint situation ([video](#)). In addition to stating we "cannot give misinformation," Brockovich agreed that EPA's 15 part per billion action level is a health standard, that there are 110 communities in the U.S. that are worse than Flint, that in providing the public with drinking water health science - governments act as "cabal" to "rig" the science, that the Obama Administration's EPA is "neutered," and that the U.S. drinking water safety system is "broken."

USA Today Feature on Lead Rule Violations in Small Communities:

The report relies on EPA compliance data to create a narrative about small and rural community water quality ([USA Today](#)). Here's how *USA Today* got it wrong (NRWA). *USA Today* video features a segment on a Coal Mountain (WV) small water supply that can't afford tests and charges \$9.65 a month for water – run by local volunteers ([video](#)).

Kettleman City (CA) Gets \$10 Million to Reduce Arsenic by .005 PPM ([more](#)).

Small New Mexico Private Water Utility Fined \$1 Million by State:

Animas Valley Water was ordered to pay a \$1 million fine for issues that have left many of its 7,000 customers under a *boil water* advisory since June. Investigations revealed multiple issues including a malfunctioning valve that allowed backwash water to enter the distribution system. The private utility has requested to transfer ownership to a mutual water association ([news](#)).

Upstate New York Dairy Truck Dumps 2,500 Gallons of Cream in Creek; HAZMAT Crews Respond ([more](#)).

Gary, West Virginia Issues *Do Not Drink* Order after Water Plant Noticed the Water Turned Black ([news](#)).

EPA's \$29 Million, Seven Year Fracking Study Backs Away from Safety Claim of Fracking for Drinking Water: On Tuesday, EPA backed away from its earlier conclusion that hydraulic fracturing has not caused "widespread, systemic" damage to drinking water. The final version includes a broad overview of what EPA called activities and "factors that likely result in more frequent or more severe impacts on drinking water resources," including the use of water for fracking in relatively arid areas and spills of fluids used in the process. The agency also highlighted the

possibility that when fracking fluids are pumped into wells with inadequate mechanical integrity, gases or liquids could migrate underground. Senator James Inhofe (OK) called the report *“a clear political move to appease disgruntled environmentalists with the keep-it-in-the-ground movement as the Obama administration comes to an end”* ([EPA Report](#)).

Lower Brule Sioux Tribe’s Rural Water Project’s \$1.5 Million in Questionable Spending: An audit by the Interior Department’s Office of Inspector General found a total of \$1,440,748 in questioned costs including unsupported compensation to tribal council members and employees beyond their lucrative salaries as council members to serve as “steering committee” ([Argus Leader News](#)).

Environmentalists Preparing Attacks on Trump EPA Nominee: Environmental groups are crafting anti-Scott Pruitt ads and urging several Republican senators to oppose the nomination. However, Pruitt is expected to be confirmed given Republicans’ 52-48 majority in the Senate. Democratic Senator Brian Schatz (HI) has said Pruitt’s confirmation is a “litmus test” for lawmakers who have said they accept mainstream climate change science and hopes these attacks will convince enough Republicans to reject Pruitt.

Trump EPA Nominee Backs NRWA Position on Risk Management Plans: Scott Pruitt has opposed EPA’s plan to increase the regulatory burden in the “Modernization of the Accidental Release Prevention Regulations Under Clean Air Act,” writing in a letter to the agency in July that the rule was dangerous and should be withdrawn. In May, 2016, NRWA urged EPA to withdraw the rule because “it expands and increases the regulatory burden on local governments,” ([NRWA Comments](#)). EPA wrote to Senator Boxer (CA) in a Nov. 15 letter that the rule is slated for publication in January.

Vermont Permanently Sets Drinking Water Standard for PFOA and PFOS at 20 PPT ([more](#)).

National Rural Water Association