

# Rural Water Policy Advisory [1/15/2018]

**NRWA President Urges EPA to Reform Lead and Copper Rule:** On Monday, President Fletcher represented NRWA at EPA's formal "closed-door" Federalism consultation at EPA headquarters. EPA officials participating in the consultation included the newly sworn-in Assistant Administrator for Water, David Ross. EPA's Office of Water presentation on potential revisions to the rule stayed very close to the information contained in this [presentation](#). Fletcher raised the issue of in-home monitoring during the consultation part of the forum. EPA commented that there is no credible alternative to the current in-home tap sampling to assess the efficacy of corrosion control treatment. Mandatory replacement of ALL lead service lines is very much alive in the Agency's potential rule modification, as is mandatory pitcher filter service to households that are impacted by lead service line disruptions.

**Utah's Senator Hatch Urges EPA to Provide Internet Based Delivery of Tier 2 Public Notices** ([Senator Hatch to EPA](#), January 11, 2018).

**Congress to Extend Fiscal Year as Friday Shutdown Approaches:** The current government spending authorization expires on Jan. 19. Although Republicans hold control of Congress, their thin margin in the Senate means Democratic votes will be needed for any stopgap funding measure as well as for a broader budget agreement. Already, Congress has had to pass three short-term extensions of spending authority to buy time to agree on funding priorities for the fiscal year that began October 1. On Friday, House Speaker Paul Ryan expressed confidence that both parties will ultimately agree to keep the government running and avoid a shutdown.

**Congress Considers a Return to Earmarking:** The House Rules Committee will hold a hearing Wednesday and Thursday on whether to bring back earmarking funds for lawmakers' preferred projects, a practice that has been banned since 2011. Under the ban, Congress gave EPA discretion over allocation of technical assistance funding which had previously been earmarked by Congress to NRWA. EPA has used its discretion to reduce effective on-site technical assistance to small and rural communities by 72% and eliminated all EPA funded circuit riders-type technicians.

**West Virginia Wastewater Crew Carjacked at Gunpoint** (news). Mike McNulty, general manager of the Putnam Public Service District utility and NRWA board of directors member said, "We are very grateful that our co-workers were not injured."

**Study Finds Phoenix has Most Affordable Water Rates and EPA Affordability Standard is Flawed** ([radio news](#)).

**Indiana City Versus Rural Water Dispute Touches Numerous Issues:** Section 1926(b), wholesale contracts, annexation, and advance refunding bonds ([news](#)).

**Kentucky County Water District Facebook Post Says Situation Is "Dire":** Following nearly two weeks of water outages, Martin County Water struggles to keep water on. Water pressure decreased dramatically during last week's freezing cold. A lengthy Facebook post says leaders may have to cut off water to the entire county in order to fill the tank reservoir while blaming finances for an inability to hire new employees to fix issues like the water loss rate of 50 percent and a need rate increase of 49%. The Water District thanks Kentucky Rural Water Association for EPA compliance assistance and asks everyone in the community to conserve water ([Lex18 News](#)).

**Environmental Working Group (EWG) Report Misleads the Public:** From Alan Roberson, ASDWA: *"The EWG [report](#) with the headline that 170 million Americans drink radioactive water based on its analysis of public water system compliance monitoring data. EWG calculated their exposure numbers based on the California Public Health Goal (PHG), which is much lower than EPA's Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL). The PHG is a goal (comparable to EPA's Maximum Contaminant Level Goal) and is not a legally enforceable standard. This headline is **misleading** as only 158 public water systems serving 276,000 Americans in 27 states reported radium levels above EPA's MCL."*

**Reuters Interviews EPA Chief, Scott Pruitt:** Says former President Barack Obama had made the rules by executive order and without Congress. "We only have the authority that Congress gives us," Pruitt said. He added that he also hoped Congress could produce an infrastructure package this year that would include replacing municipal water pipes as a way of combating high lead levels in certain parts of the United States. "That to me is something very tangible and very important that we can achieve for the American people," he said ([Reuters News](#)).

**Person Drinking While Watching the Rachel Maddow Show Led to Death Threats Against EPA's Scott Pruitt:** The threats were serious enough to open a joint inquiry with the FBI and the Oklahoma Joint Terrorism Task Force ([news](#)).

**Michigan Adopts EPA's Health Advisory Level PFOA and PFOS** ([Detroit News](#)).

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**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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