

Tornado Destruction Report from LRWA: Tornado kills three, injures dozens in Louisiana and Mississippi. At least 3 people are killed and over 30 others injured. Louisiana Rural Water Association (LRWA) Circuit Riders respond to total destruction in RV/trailer park site in St. James Parish. The water system does not lose pressure. The operator specialist is able to valve off the trailer park. The water treatment facility is approximately a mile away and is not touched by the tornado. LRWA offers assistance and generators to the community. All customers are receiving good, clean, clear drinking water. In Plaincourville in Assumption Parish, strong winds topple elevated tower. Water system never loses pressure but boil order issued as a precaution

Flint Crisis Provides Opportunity for WIFIA: The Senate reached a bi-partisan agreement on a Flint financial aid package which includes \$100 million for all states' drinking water state revolving funds. [Senator Inhofe \(OK\) was successful](#) in including \$70 million in the deal to start a new federal program, the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA). WIFIA provides subsidized low-interest loans to large water projects (including corporately owned water companies) that can demonstrate an investment-grade rating ([33 USC § 3907](#)). Flint has *"no current ratings for the City. Prior ratings were withdrawn as the City's financial position led to consideration of the City being placed into receivership,"* according to the City's Annual Financial Report 6/30/2015. The deal must still pass the Senate and House before being presented to the President. WIFIA supporters claim, *"While the SRFs have done good things, most states are unable to finance projects over \$20 million and a tool to finance these larger infrastructure projects is needed."* A [review of state SRFs project](#) reveals that SRFs fund many projects over \$50 million, \$100 million and some over \$1 billion. It appears every large project receives SRF funding.

Perchlorate: The NRDC is suing the EPA for failing to craft a drinking water standard for perchlorate ([NRDC compliant](#)), saying the Flint drinking water crisis shows the need to curb toxins in water. In February 2011, EPA said that the agency should craft such a drinking water limit for perchlorate triggering the two-year clock under SDWA for issuing the limit.

Lawton Michigan Issues Boil Water Advisory After Finding E. Coli: Officials have no idea about source of contamination ([more](#)).

PFOA in New York: EPA is facing pressure to disclose and address elevated levels of perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) in affected communities following the agency's recent decision to lower its unenforceable health advisory level that EPA is using for drinking water contaminated with

PFOA in Hoosick, New York. On Jan. 28, EPA advised residents of the Hoosick Falls, NY, community not to consume drinking water with levels of PFOA above 100 parts per trillion which is a more-stringent level than its existing short-term exposure advisory level of 0.4 ppb for the chemical. New York officials have also called on EPA to address PFOA contamination nationally by lowering its health advisory for the chemical and expeditiously adopting an enforceable drinking water standard for it. EPA's UCMR data shows the presence of PFOA exceeding the UCMR reporting level in a number of public water supplies. A law firm has taken EPA's raw data from the UCMR on PFOA to create [a list of public drinking water supplies](#) across the country that have reported levels of PFOA in their water during the 2013-2015 collection period. Pat McCool with Kansas Rural Water Association cautions, *"The issue of PFOA has the potential of having a very big consequences to public water systems at the local level. Compliance improvements might include adding granular activated carbon (GAC) adsorption process/units at existing treatment plants or constructing a treatment plant with granular activated carbon adsorption process/units. The potential issue of cytotoxins and perchlorate might have the same consequences. In Kansas I think that PFOA might be found in some PWSs; cytotoxins found at some PWSs using surface water; and perchlorate not found in any or maybe a few PWSs. It will get down to presence of the chemicals and at what levels compared to EPA established criteria. Why doesn't the State of New York take action instead of asking EPA to 'address' the matter."*

Senators Blame EPA for Flint: A [February 16, 2016 report](#) from the non-partisan Congressional Research Service seems to indicate that some of the new authorities contained in H.R. 4470 already exist. The report observes that the SDWA mandates that EPA notify residents of drinking water contamination if their state government fails to do so. *"States have first-line enforcement responsibilities to compel systems to comply with SDWA regulations. However, SDWA Section 1414 provides that, when EPA finds that a water system is not in compliance, EPA must notify the state and system and provide assistance to both in order to bring the system into compliance. After 30 days, if the state has not initiated enforcement action, EPA must do so. EPA has not used this authority in Flint,"* reads the report. The CRS report is being highlighted by U.S. Senators who questioned the EPA Administrator on whether she was aware of lead contamination in Flint before the public become aware of the situation ([Senate letter to EPA](#)). Pat McCool with Kansas Rural Water Association comments, *"The problem in Flint is high lead levels in children's blood; a contributing and necessary cause may be that local government employees, state government employees, and EPA employees made wrong decisions or did not address the matter earlier*

on. I cannot conceive of a situation like Flint occurring in Kansas by the way the system (regulations, monitoring, KDHE data review) is set up in Kansas. The only way it would occur is by people committing fraud in sampling, very poor judgement by KDHE employees, or conditions in water quality change occurring that should be recognized by operators and KDHE. Hopefully, it does not occur in Kansas or elsewhere again."

Zika and Public Water and Sanitation: According to the New York Times, "*Cities in the tropics, the climate zone most favorable to the mosquito, have undergone explosive growth: Humanity passed a milestone a few years ago when more than half the population had moved to urban areas. But spending on health care and on basic public health infrastructure, like water pipes and sewers, has not kept pace. Mosquito control has also faltered in recent decades. The mosquito lays its eggs in containers of water, of a sort that are especially common in the huge slums of Latin American cities. With unreliable access to piped water, people there store water in rooftop cisterns, buckets and the like. Old tires and other debris can also become mosquito habitat. Water storage near homes is commonplace in areas where Zika has spread rapidly,*" ([NYTimes](#)).

Lead in the Water in Jackson, Mississippi: See television coverage of city officials discussing issues including references to Beyoncé and accusations the problem is a result of being a Democratic city in a Republican state ([news](#)).

Iowa Rural Water Is "Essentially Poison": At seven-tenths of one part per billion above the federal standard, a customer said, "*That's when I found out it was essentially poison.*" That was for June nitrate levels in water that the Xenia Rural Water District got from the city of Boone. The customer believes that cities and counties in Iowa should notify residents through emergency management systems when water is unsafe. That way, residents could get a text (similar to an Amber Alert) that testing has revealed excessive pollutants in the water ([more](#)).

Wheeling, West Virginia Oil Spill Potentially Contaminating Water: The mayor of Pine Grove urged residents to avoid the water until it is tested after heat transfer oil was released and reached the North Fork of Fishing Creek. The Pine Grove Water Works water intake was closed indefinitely while authorities monitored the spill ([more](#)).

EPA Proposes Revisions to its Risk Management Program: To Improve chemical process safety and further protect communities and first

responders, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing a revision of its Risk Management Program (RMP) regulations. The new EPA proposal: requires "the consideration" of safer technologies and alternatives by including the assessment of Inherently Safer Technologies and Designs in the Process Hazard Assessment; requires third party audits and root cause analysis to identify process safety improvements for accident prevention; modifies emergency planning and preparedness requirements; and modifies access to information to the public (EPA).

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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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