

Rural Water Policy Advisory [10/23/2017]

President Steve Fletcher (IL), Executive Director Gary Williams (FL), and Executive Director Pat Credeur (LA) Featured in Rural Water Video on Importance of Emergency Response Preparation ([YouTube](#)).

EPA Announces FY 2017 Technical Assistance Grant: On Friday, EPA announced their Request for Applications ([EPA](#)) for this year's technical assistance initiative. The period for submitting applications ends December 4, 2017. On July 25, 2017, [EPA replied to the five Senators](#) acknowledging that the Agency will dedicate the Congressionally-funded technical assistance appropriations to the Grassroots Rural and Small Community Water Systems Assistance Act. There is no mention of the new Act in the EPA request for applications.

Indiana Drinking Water Taste Contest Winner Takes First Place Again: Connersville, Indiana wins for the fourth time in eight years. The Alliance of Indiana Rural Water bestowed the award upon the Connersville Utilities on Wednesday at the Fall Conference in Fort Wayne ([news](#)).

DOJ Poised To Issue Guide Clarifying Sessions' Settlement Directive: On October 19, a U.S. DOJ official said the department may soon issue long-awaited guidance for implementing Attorney General Jeff Sessions' directive barring third-party payments in settlements that are often used to fund EPA supplemental environmental projects (SEPs). Sessions issued a [June 5 directive](#) barring DOJ attorneys from negotiating settlements that require payments to environmentalists and other nongovernmental organizations in consent decrees.

New York Times Feature on How New EPA Leadership Are Changing the EPA Staff Decisions Resulting in Public Health Risk from Drinking Water: Scientists and administrators in the EPA's Office of Water were alarmed in late May when a top Trump administration appointee insisted upon the rewriting of a rule to make it harder to track the health consequences of the drinking water contaminant perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and therefore harder to regulate it. EPA told the [New York Times](#), "*No matter how much information we give you, you would never write a fair piece*" ([NYTimes](#)).

White House Adds Clues to Deregulatory Agenda: Neomi Rao, administrator of the White House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs recently stated that a list of rules that federal agencies intend to cut in the upcoming year will appear in the fall regulatory agenda, which is scheduled to be published by the end of November.

President Donald Trump Goes to Twitter to Highlight Rolling Back of EPA Rules: In response to a New York Times story claiming the President has failed to deliver on key campaign promises aimed at rolling back Obama administration policies, the President tweeted a message on October 15 touting a series of environmental and energy decisions he has made, including abandoning the Paris climate agreement, rolling back EPA rules and approving key fossil fuel projects ([Twitter](#)).

U.S. Proposes New Cyber Security Controls to Protect Power Grid: U.S. grid operators will have to take measures to guard against the risk of being infected by malware from electronic devices like laptops and thumb drives under proposals put forward by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ([announcement](#)).

EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt's Directive to End "Sue-and-settle" Agreements: On October 16, the Administrator signed a directive formally enacting the ban on the agreements along with a memo to agency staff on how to implement it ([news](#)).

Environmental Working Group, *Trouble in Farm Country*: EWG headline adds, “Ag Runoff Fouls Tap Water Across Rural America.” Article states, “Federal policies do little to keep farm pollution from getting into tap water in the first place... Nationwide, 97 percent of public drinking water systems with nitrate at or above that level serve 25,000 people or less... Those 1,683 communities are surrounded by millions of acres of cropland on which nitrogen-rich fertilizers and manure are applied every year ([EWG](#)).”

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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