

Rural Water Policy Advisory [12/17/2018]

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The Power of An Association; Farm Bill 2018 Includes all NRWA Priorities: The bill passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 369 to 47 on Wednesday, a day after the Senate passed it 87-13. The measure now goes to President Trump, who has indicated he supports it. The [final package](#) includes reauthorization of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Water Loans and Grants, Rural Water Wastewater Technicians, Circuit Riders, the Rural Water Grassroots Source Water Protection Program, etc.

EPA And Army Propose New "Waters of the United States" Definition: The Trump EPA and the Army are proposing a clear, understandable, and implementable definition of "waters of the United States" that clarifies federal authority under the Clean Water Act. In last week's announcement, the EPA Acting Administrator stated, *"Unlike the Obama administration's 2015 definition of 'waters of the United States,' today's proposal contains a straightforward definition that would result in significant cost savings, protect the nation's navigable waters, help sustain economic growth, and reduce barriers to business development (EPA)."* Public comments will be due 60 days after its still-unscheduled publication in the Federal Register.

Environmentalists Press for Treatment Technique Versus MCL for PFAS: New England environmentalists are pressing states in the region to set an enforceable "treatment technique" standard for PFAS in drinking water. The objective is to have states adopt a new technology-based approach as EPA considers a response under the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) such as an MCL.

Trump Administration to Announce Strategy for Fighting Lead Exposure: The announcement could come as early as this week according to EPA Acting Administrator Wheeler ([The Hill](#)).

"Bottled-water sales have boomed in recent decades amid safety fears about tap water and a shift away from sugary drinks. Between 1994 and 2017, U.S. consumption soared 284% to nearly 42 gallons a year per person ([Wall Street Journal](#))."

Wall State Journal Finds "State and Local Investment Gets Lift From Rising Revenues": *"Infrastructure spending by state and local governments is rising after being sidelined in the last recession and the years following... In 2018, state and local government bond issuance for new projects grew by 19% from the same period a year earlier... Nationwide, state tax revenues grew 6.3% in 2018 compared with an average 2.5% growth rate for the previous seven years ([WSJ.com](#))."*

High Chemical Levels in Blood of People Near Colorado Air Base: Some 220 residents in southern El Paso County, Colorado, found high levels of fluorinated chemicals that likely stemmed from a spill of firefighting foam at a nearby Air Force facility. The residents' average overall level was 10 times that of the 50th percentile for the general U.S. population ([Military.com](#)).

Michigan Communities Sue State over New Lead and Copper Regulation: The estimated \$2.5 billion required to replace lead water service lines will bust local water treatment budgets

and may violate the Michigan constitution, Detroit and several local governments said as they sued the state. The rule would require all lead service lines to be replaced over the next 20 years. At least 5 percent of pipes must be replaced annually. Local governments claim it is unconstitutional to mandate replacement of lead services lines on private property at the supplier's expense ([Detroit News](#)).

Flushable Wipes Case Won't Get to Supreme Court: Kimberly-Clark Corporation failed to convince the U.S. Supreme Court to review a decision reviving a proposed class action suit over "flushable" wipes. California plaintiffs alleged Kimberly-Clark's "flushable" Cottonelle, Scott, Huggies, and Kotex branded wipes don't break up after flushing and are seeking an order directing label changes ([Supreme Court](#)).

[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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