

Rural Water Policy Advisory [12/18/2017]

NRWA Invited by EPA to Review Lead and Copper Rule with Local Government Organizations: EPA is asking groups representing state and local elected officials to meet with the agency in January to discuss possible changes to the Safe Drinking Water Act's lead and copper rule (LCR) with a tentative schedule of proposing revisions by August of next year and finalizing them in February, 2020. In a [December 14 letter](#) to 10 national groups representing elected officials and eight groups representing municipal water utilities, schools and western states' governors, EPA said it is requesting "your attendance to obtain your input on the options under consideration. At the meeting, the agency will present background information on the rulemaking and will answer questions you may have. You will have the opportunity to provide input to the agency during the meeting and may provide written input to the EPA within 60 days after the meeting." NRWA will be represented at the forum by President Steve Fletcher (Illinois Rural Water Association and Washington County Water Company). Represented before by John Sasur (Mass. Rural Water Association), NRWA participated in a year-long review of the LCR in 2015 which resulted in a [comprehensive recommendation for revisions](#) to the LCR including NRWA's priority of detaching in-home sampling from water utility compliance within the rule:

"Implementation of this approach over time has revealed numerous challenges. Recruitment of customers to take in-home samples can be difficult and costly. Customers are not professional samplers and, thus, may implement the sampling protocols inconsistently. Research on sampling protocols also has shown that sampling results may vary, and not necessarily consistently, based on the configuration and length of lines from the water main to the sampling tap and whether the sample is a first draw or a subsequent sample intended to reflect water that had been in a LSL for some time. The LCRWG recommends two types of on-going monitoring: 1) a more robust WQP monitoring program to improve process controls for CCT, and 2) voluntary customer initiated tap water sampling coupled with a more robust and targeted public education program to encourage sampling, in part to provide direct information to consumers that they can use to reduce potential exposures to lead from drinking water in their home and to provide ongoing information to the PWS to identify and correct unanticipated problems."

Congress Set to Pass Another Funding Extension Until January 19: The chairman of the U.S. House Appropriations Committee on Wednesday introduced a bill to fund the government until Jan. 19 while Congress works on longer-term legislation. Congress must pass a funding bill by Dec. 23 to prevent a partial government shutdown ([House Appropriations Committee announcement](#)).

EPA Criticized for Delaying Release of Revisions to the Lead and Copper Rules ([NBC news](#)): Environmentalist comes to the new EPA's defense on the delay.

PBS TV News Feature on Unregulated 1,4-Dioxane in Drinking Water ([PBS](#)): Are you prepared to answer to the public or the media on what you are doing to test for and treat for ALL unregulated chemicals in the environment? The PBS feature is a comprehensive analysis of all issues and arguments concerning the federal drinking water program and emerging drinking water chemical contaminants.

Image of the Week - President Trump Literally Cuts the Red Tape on Regulations: On Thursday, the President used very large golden scissors to cut a red ribbon covering over 185,000 pages of federal regulations. Trump later tweeted, "Today, we CUT THE RED TAPE! It is time to SET FREE OUR DREAMS and MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!" ([CNN](#))."

North Carolina Rural Water Responds to Major Water Leak in the Town of Tarboro that Emptied Three Storage Tanks and Closed Schools (news).

Over 700 EPA Personnel have Retired, Quit, or Taken Voluntary Buyouts Since Administrator Pruitt Took Over ([Think Progress](#)).

Trump to Remove Climate Change as a National Security Threat: The Trump administration will reverse course from previous Obama administration policy by eliminating climate change from a list of national security threats in the National Security Strategy to be released this week ([Watts Up with That](#)).

Vandals Damage Four Fire Hydrants in Iowa Rural Water District County ([news](#)).

White House Reviewing Pruitt's Plan To Replace EPA Regions With State Offices: EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt is said to have submitted to the White House a plan for shuttering the agency's regional offices and replacing them with smaller offices in all 50 states. EPA was required to submit the plan to the White House's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in September as part of a Trump administration executive order directing OMB to develop broader plans for restructuring federal agencies.

Senate Confirms New EPA Water Chief: On Thursday, the Senate confirmed David Ross to be EPA's Assistant Administrator for Water. Ross is the former Director of Wisconsin's Environmental Protection Unit.

New Federal One Call Rules: The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration of the U.S. Department of Transportation is taking additional steps to enhance pipeline safety following a [July 2017 pipeline safety rulemaking](#). PHMSA is currently emphasizing state enforcement of One Call regulations and it currently considers 24 state programs to have [inadequate enforcement](#). Where PHMSA deems enforcement inadequate, the agency can take targeted federal enforcement action against an excavator or other party that unlawfully causes damage to a pipeline that is regulated by PHMSA or the state. Action by PHMSA would be based on applicable state law and limited to pipelines of interest to the agency's mission.

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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