

Rural Water Issues Advisory [1/20/20]

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Rural Water Ignites Starts Funding Priorities Congressional Campaign: Last week, NRWA circulated our 2020 funding priorities to state associations. Each year, state associations organize a grassroots year-long campaign to persuade Congress to fund our priorities including the USDA rural water loan and grant initiatives, the Clean Water and Drinking Water state revolving funds, EPA on-site technical assistance, all rural water circuit riders, source water protection technical assistance, apprenticeship initiative, etc. The annual Rural Water Rally on Capitol Hill will be held on February 3-5 ([agenda](#)). Please [contact us](#) if you would like a copy of this year's Congressional requests.

Navy Citizen Suit Highlights Concerns of Water Utilities Over PFAS Hazardous Water

Determination: A federal judge recently dismissed a landmark citizen suit seeking payment for medical monitoring to detect health concerns that may develop after exposure to PFAS, finding that regulators' failure to designate the chemicals as "hazardous substances" precluded the plaintiffs from filing suit under state law ([Kristen Giovanni, et al. v. Navy](#)). However, the ruling could intensify efforts by environmentalists and others who have pressured EPA and Congress -- so far unsuccessfully -- to quickly designate PFAS as "hazardous substances" under the federal Superfund law. NRWA has been urging Congress to exempt water utilities in any legislation that requires the listing under Superfund.

President Tweets Criticism of Flint's Use of \$390 Million in Water Emergency Funds to Pay for Economic Development, Nutrition Initiatives and Physical Well-being, Education Programs, etc.: Trump retweeted a story by The Daily Caller that examines how nearly \$390 million was spent, focusing on a federally-funded program that gives people exposed to contaminated Flint water \$25 for enrolling in a registry connecting them to services and programs. Trump tweeted: "This is a total disgrace ([MLive.com](#))."

EPA Allows Denver a Variance for Lead and Copper Rule Compliance; What Does it Mean for Small Communities ([special commentary](#)).

Climate Change and Drinking Water:

- NOAA finds 2019 was the second-hottest year on record ([NYTimes](#)).
- Australia's fires have disabled water treatment processes such as chlorine disinfection, caused boil water orders, resulted in untreated water fed directly into drinking water systems, damaged drinking water catchments, washed ash and eroded soil into waterways, increased nutrient runoff stimulating the growth of cyanobacteria, increased particle load on filtration plants, etc. ([Engineering Professor](#)).
- **Federal Appeals Court Rejects Case Brought by 21 Kids to Mandate Federal Government Limit Use of Fossil Fuels:** In a case filed in 2015, "[Juliana vs. the United States](#)," two judges out of a three-judge panel from the Ninth Circuit ruled that the issues raised in the case are best left to Congress. In the blistering dissent, U.S. District Court Judge Josephine Staton said, "*The United States has reached a tipping point crying out for a concerted response — yet presses ahead toward calamity.... It is as if an asteroid were barreling toward Earth and the government decided to shut down our only defenses. Seeking to quash this suit, the government bluntly insists that it has the absolute and unreviewable power to destroy the Nation... My colleagues throw up their hands, concluding that this case presents nothing fit for the Judiciary.*"

Who controls Trump's environmental policy? ([NYTimes](#)).

NRWA WRDA Priorities Fact Sheet ([NRWA](#)).

Study - Widespread Nitrate-tainted Tap Water in Minnesota ([Duluth News](#)).

Small Pennsylvania Communities Refusing to Comply with MS4 ([Bay Journal](#))

Media Focuses on Presidents' Attention to Water Issues - Toilets, Sinks and Showers ([Google News](#)).

Speaker Pelosi Announces Plans to Release Billion Dollar Infrastructure Plan Next Week ([Infrastructure Trade News](#)).

Source Water Protection: Florida chooses to purchase sensitive lands in the Everglades to protect them from oil drilling - an alternative environmental policy to land-use regulation ([WSJ](#)).

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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