

Rural Water Policy Advisory [2/19/2018]

White House Budget Proposes Elimination of USDA Rural Water Initiatives Again: The White House fiscal year 2019 budget request was sent to Congress on Monday with a familiar cut to USDA discretionary spending ([more](#)). Similar to last year, NRWA is working to persuade Congress to retain the USDA rural water initiatives through the Congressional appropriations process (2017 campaign in [video](#)).

2019 MAJOR SAVINGS AND REFORMS		17	
ELIMINATION: RURAL WATER AND WASTEWATER GRANTS <i>Department of Agriculture</i>			
<p>The Budget would provide a \$1.2 billion Rural Water and Wastewater direct loan level, but proposes to eliminate the grant component of this program. Coupled with this change is a proposal to increase the population limit served by this program from 10,000 to 20,000. While the Administration believes that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or private sector sources should provide the main funding for this activity, the Department of Agriculture (USDA) financing at the higher population limit can address the remaining gap in available financing for relatively small (\$2 million-\$5 million range) water infrastructure loans in rural communities.</p>			
Funding Summary (in millions of dollars)			
	2017 Enacted	2019 Request	2019 Change from 2017
Budget Authority.....	509	0	-509

EPA to Brief NRWA on Changes to the Lead and Copper Rule on February 21: As part of their "[Federalism](#)" Consultation on revisions to the Lead and Copper Rule, EPA will provide NRWA with a briefing this Wednesday. If you would like to attend the internet-based briefing, please contact [us](#). Considering the current Administrator is very committed to following the exact meaning of the statutes the EPA is charged with interpreting and implementing, NRWA is likely to raise the question of the scope of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). In particular, does Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) allow the Agency to regulate the amount of lead in the public's drinking water that is solely a consequence of the premise plumbing of the person's personal property. The SDWA defines the term "primary drinking water regulation" to mean a regulation which specifies contaminants *"in public water systems."*

Lethal Pneumonia Outbreak Caused By Low Chlorine In Flint Water ([NPR](#)). Flint had been in violation of the EPA disinfection byproducts rules ([Goggle](#)).

Norovirus Outbreak at Olympics Linked to Contaminated Water: The outbreak infected 194 persons. Analysis of the Horeb Odaesan Youth Training Center's water discovered fecal coliform bacteria ([LATimes](#)).

New York Times Reports that "The problem [of violations of federal Safe Drinking Water Act] is particularly severe in low-income rural areas," ([NYTimes](#)).

Representatives Tom Graves (GA), Kay Granger (TX), Robert Aderholt (AL) and Tom Cole (OK) Are All Competing to Succeed Retiring House Appropriations Committee Chairman Rodney Frelinghuysen (NJ).

New Hampshire's New Lead in Water Law: Starting July 1, 2019, a landlord must install a water filter if a health department tests the water and lead is found above the EPA "action level" of 15 parts per billion.

EPA Administrator Faces Profanities from Fellow Passengers While Traveling ([The Hill](#)).

Environmental Working Group Says More Than 1,000 Communities have Water Tainted With Lead Above Action Level: In the most recent tests of tap water conducted by utilities through the end of 2017, 1,124 community water systems exceeded the action level ([EWG](#)).

[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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