

Rural Water Issues Advisory [4/15/2019]

EPA Administrator Tells Congress that WIFIA Funding Increase Makes up for Funding Cuts to State Revolving Funds Because WIFIA Is More Innovative: The EPA Administrator explained the assertion at the EPA budget hearing this week in response to questioning from Representative McKinley, WV ([Energy and Commerce Committee video](#)).

Delaware Congresswoman Questions EPA Administrator on Agency's Proposal to Cut Funds to Small and Disadvantaged Communities: Congresswoman Lisa Blunt Rochester tells the EPA Administrator of the plight of Ellendale, a small community in Delaware to make her point about funding to small communities ([Energy and Commerce Committee video](#)).

Good Water News Makes News in North Dakota and Kansas: The city of Valley City and Barnes Rural Water District were recognized for their compliance associated with the Safe Drinking Water Act in a Certificate of Achievement ([local news](#)). Strong City (Kansas) Clerk Shari DeWitt was recently named Municipal Clerk of the Year at the banquet for the Kansas Rural Water Association. She had heard a rumor the Strong City Mayor would be getting an award. But DeWitt was in for a surprise when it was announced she was being recognized as Municipal Clerk of the Year ([local news](#)). While she was in Wichita enjoying the banquet dinner, friends and family were already learning the news as they traveled through Strong City. A congratulatory message to DeWitt was already flashing on the electronic sign in Strong City, notifying people before DeWitt even learned the news herself. There is also a new sign hanging just outside of the city offices recognizing DeWitt's accomplishment.

EPA Administrator Promises Summer Lead and Copper Rule Rewrite Proposal Targeting 'Most Corrosive' Pipes: This week at the speaking engagement, EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler said the agency will propose its long-awaited update to the Lead and Copper Rule (LCR) this summer with a three-step structure that aims to map the country's remaining lead drinking water pipes and model their levels of corrosion before prioritizing the "most corrosive" lines for replacement ([Law Firm](#)).

EPA Proposes Reversal of State's (Washington) Water Quality Rule: EPA recently issued, and this week retracted, a request to make changes to how it classifies water quality in Washington state. Specifically, it announced an effort to change a standard set during the Obama Administration for the state's human health criteria for water, often referred to as the "fish consumption rule" since it is designed to result in water quality so healthy people can safely eat locally caught fish ([Earthjustice homepage](#)). The standards are based on exposure of people to toxic chemicals through consumption of locally caught fish and include an assumed fish consumption rate of 175 grams per day and a cancer risk rate of one in 1,000,000 persons.

EPA to Begin Reordering of Regional Offices: This week, EPA will begin implementing a massive reordering of its 10 regional branches to bring them more in line with agency headquarters in Washington, D.C. EPA union officials claim that the continued change at EPA under the Trump administration has unsettled staff. "The employees are anxious, and many do not like it when a change occurs," said Dianna Myers, president of AFGE Local 534 which

represents EPA Region 4 employees. NTEU President Tony Reardon said EPA has the discretion to make such changes, but his union wants to make sure employees are treated fairly and given a chance to transfer. Reardon said, "We are concerned that the realignment is causing some veteran employees to decide to leave EPA rather than be relocated, which is an unfortunate loss of valuable experience to the agency." Nicole Cantello, president of AFGE Local 704 which represents EPA Region 5 employees, said, "It sets up a command-and-control structure where the agency can limit enforcement," adding that she is worried that the Trump administration will not enforce the law and will allow more pollution ([EPA Administrator's realignment memo](#)).

Infrastructure Effort Could Reach \$2 Trillion: Congressional Democrats are laying the groundwork for a broad infrastructure package that could reach \$2 trillion in new investment, and they are hoping to make it a bipartisan push with a House vote by June or July, several members said during a retreat in Virginia.

Cholera Outbreak in Mozambique, Over 4,000 Cases ([Al Jazeera](#)).

Virginia American Water Rate Increase Stirs Opposition: The company filed for a rate increase of 15.84 percent based on a 10.8 percent proposed return on equity. "I don't like handing out public assets to private companies that are not really fully in the interest of serving the public. Because they do have shareholders and they need to make money and I think that may impact the residents," said City of Alexandria Councilman Mo Seifeldein ([local news](#)).

[National Rural Water Association](#)

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