



UA Water Quality Program

Policy Brief

An Industry & Public Education Initiative

***United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices
Of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry
Of the United States and Canada***

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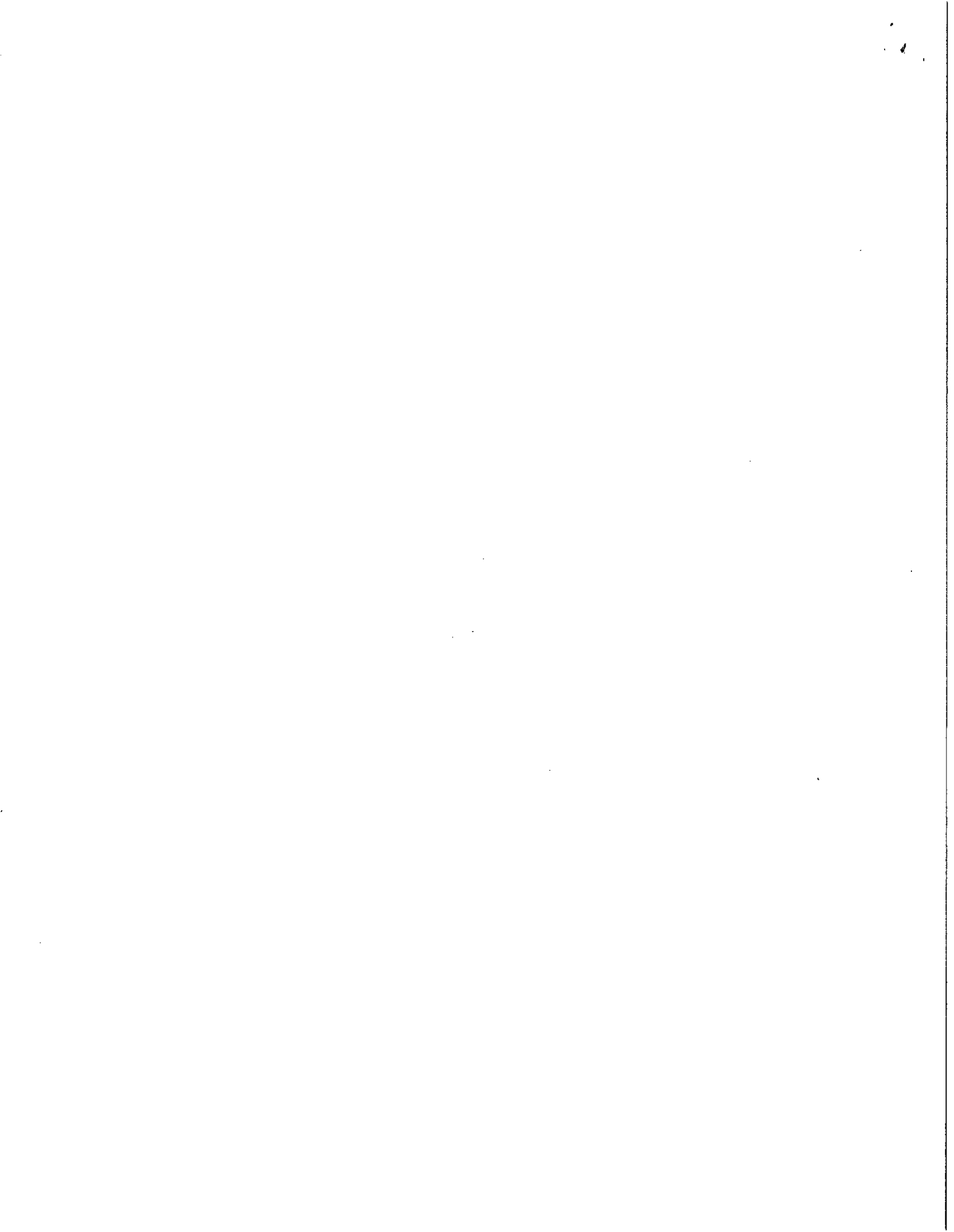


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I. Introduction

The United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the United States and Canada (UA or United Association) represents 345,000 members and is the leading labor organization for the piping trades in North America. Supported by a network of 300 state-of-the-art education centers and an annual \$250 million training investment, UA members maintain the highest skill levels in the industry.

UA professionals are employed throughout the construction and maintenance industries and work on all facets of water and wastewater treatment systems. In light of recent reports revealing increased threats to water quality, the United Association conducted extensive research and field investigations on the root causes of these problems, as well as potential solutions, the findings of which are presented below.

II. Executive Summary

Many public water systems in the U.S. today face daunting challenges from *at least three key sources* of contaminants that are posing serious risks to public health. *Lead*, highlighted by the recent crisis in Flint, Michigan, is a big part of the problem. Another significant threat is presented by various types of unsafe chemicals that are being found with increased frequency in our public water systems. A third challenge is a recent major spike in cases involving bacterial contaminants, including *Legionella*, which causes the sometimes deadly Legionnaires' disease.

Most Americans get their water from some 52,000 "*Community Water Systems*" (CWSs), including municipal water utilities and other water suppliers, which are regulated by federal law.¹ While we rely CWSs to deliver water that is safe for human consumption, new challenges in sourcing and distributing clean water are making this task increasingly difficult. Many CWSs have acted responsibly to address these issues. However, in an increasing number of jurisdictions, there are compelling reasons for concern.

One of the most extensive studies to date, issued under the auspices of the National Academy of Sciences, highlighted two key facts underscoring this problem: (a) *up to 45 million Americans* have been exposed to potentially unsafe water in recent years; and (b) *up to 10% of CWSs are found in violation of important public health standards* in any given year.² Another report estimates that nearly 3,000 jurisdictions are facing water quality problems far worse than those found in Flint, MI.³ Moreover, some water quality experts, argue that existing safety standards are no longer adequate to guarantee water quality, which suggests the actual level of risk may be significantly higher than indicated by these reports.

In response to these issues, some public water suppliers are investing major resources to replace lead pipes, address new bacteria or chemical threats, and adopt other measures to ensure water quality. In other jurisdictions, however, dangerous contaminants are being overlooked, ignored, or simply not dealt with in time to prevent serious risks to human health. CWSs that fall in the latter category, including certain urban municipal systems and many systems in small rural communities, often lack financial and/or technical resources to address such problems.

These findings and other emerging data reveal legitimate growing concerns over U.S. water quality. The public, in turn, is taking notice. For example, a recent survey shows that a majority of Americans who drink tap water are concerned about the safety of the water they drink.⁴ What's more, reports regarding declining water quality have generally focused on water supply sources and water and wastewater infrastructure. However, recent evidence reveals that new public health threats are also being found *inside* homes and buildings, i.e., within *premise piping* systems.

Multiple factors are driving these problems. While crumbling water infrastructure tops the list, there also have been a plethora of new chemicals introduced into the environment over the past several decades, as well as new threats from various types of bacteria. In some cases, the very strategies or products used for treating contaminants result in unintended contamination. In addition, the main statutes and industry codes designed to ensure water quality are in critical need of reform. Federal funding is woefully inadequate, and even that which is available often cannot be accessed because states and localities lack required matching funds. Regulatory responses, which are usually vital for addressing emerging threats, are frequently developed in a narrow, ineffective manner and still take an inordinate amount of time to complete. Lax enforcement and oversight present additional serious challenge.

Given the scope and severity of the problems, policy makers, industry leaders and other stakeholders should commence a national debate on these issues as the first step toward finding solutions. Moving forward, both short-term and long-term solutions are needed. To prevent immediate risks, more and better water quality testing is needed. Improved procedures must also be devised for monitoring, treating and preventing contaminants. For the long-term, more rigorous health standards should be incorporated into industry codes and state and federal legislation, while major structural reforms must occur to secure adequate funding needed to protect water supply sources and rebuild water infrastructure.

III. Growing Safety Risks to U.S. Water Systems

A. New Evidence of Threats to Water Quality

Over the last several decades, water quality in most areas of the U.S. has been relatively good. Due to generally effective safety standards that for the most part have been properly maintained by water utilities and government regulators, most Americans could assume their water supply was free of health risks. In more recent years, however, emerging evidence reveals serious flaws in many aspects of our water supply systems. For example, one report estimates that nearly 25% of drinking water in the U.S. is improperly monitored or unsafe for consumption.⁵

The problems now surfacing pose health risks to an increasingly larger segment of the population. According to an extensive review of national data on water safety violations, *every year, millions of Americans are continuously exposed to water systems that fail public health standards.* This fact and other highly disturbing trends regarding U.S. water quality were disclosed in a study conducted by Columbia University and the University of California at Irvine.⁶

Published in January 2018 by the National Academy of Sciences, *National Trends in Drinking Water Quality Violations* included this central finding: *"health-based drinking water violations are widespread, with 9-45 million people possibly affected during each year of the past 34 years."*⁷ Significantly, the highest degree of violations was concentrated in the latter years of the study. Numerous other reports bolster these findings and confirm that there are serious grounds for concern. See Appendix A hereto.

Another macro perspective on water quality can be seen in other EPA enforcement data, which provides similar evidence of systemic failures in U.S. water supply. Over the past several years, the EPA has brought *at least seven massive law enforcement actions* in various jurisdictions across the country. Violations of water safety standards in these cases have been so extensive that municipalities have been required to incur *hundreds of millions of dollars* in costs in each of these cases to correct critical, widespread problems with water and wastewater systems.⁸

Examination of the above-referenced data shows that systems are threatened by three principal sources of contaminants: (1) *lead and other metals*; (2) various types of *harmful bacteria*, including *Legionella*; and (3) *dangerous or potentially dangerous chemicals*.⁹ As further discussed below, industry studies, bolstered by recurring media reports, indicate that these three contaminant sources, individually and collectively, pose growing threats to U.S. water quality. Moreover, the potential harm to public health from unsafe water cannot be understated. Whether contamination is from lead, bacteria, or dangerous chemicals—water failing critical safety standards can cause death or serious illnesses, including various types of cancer.

Another critical finding from these reports is that those who can least afford to deal with these challenges are also the hardest hit: financially-strapped municipalities; economically disadvantaged communities; and small towns and rural areas lacking resources for necessary corrective actions. However, given evidence of such widespread failures, there are grounds for reassessing U.S. water quality generally and the current policies and standards currently relied upon for ensuring public safety.

Clean water is a necessity of life. No one wants to wake up and find out that their city or town is facing major health risks from its water system.

B. Internal Versus External Piping Systems

As alarming as they are, the key findings discussed above do not reveal the whole story. Virtually *ALL* of the problems discussed above stem from *external water supply systems*, for example, pollution in original water sources (e.g., rivers, lakes, reservoirs) or contamination issues that develop within water infrastructure (i.e., water and waste water treatment plants and distribution systems).

Another significant and potentially far-reaching concern is that similar contamination issues can be found within "*premise piping*" systems on the inside of buildings. Thus, while the aging piping that makes up our water infrastructure is one of the biggest drivers of water quality problems, the fact is that many piping systems on *the inside of homes and buildings* are likewise antiquated and in some cases even older than piping systems maintained by water utilities.

Consequently, even when water coming into a building is safe, public health risks can be created by contamination from metals, bacteria, and chemicals found within premise piping systems. For example, incoming water may be relatively free of bacteria at the point it enters a building, but become unsafe due to certain internal conditions. This occurs when water becomes stagnant and is combined with heat and nutrients that foster bacteria growth. Such problems have been driving the recent spike in cases of Legionnaires' disease (caused by *Legionella* bacteria). Another study reviewing internal piping challenges reported that "thousands of preventable injuries and deaths are annually caused by microbial, chemical and physical hazards from building water systems."¹⁰

Lead contamination can also create health threats for premise piping. The U.S. General Accounting Office found that in a 2016-2017 survey of water testing for school districts, which covered some 35 million students, 37% of the districts that conducted tests found elevated lead levels in the water systems. Many other school districts had either not tested for lead or didn't have any records of testing.¹¹

Public health risks relating to premise piping is clearly more of an issue with older buildings. However, newer building using modern construction materials may also present unknown risks, especially since internal water quality is subject to only very limited testing at most.

It should also be stressed that a unique aspect of premise piping that should also be considered is the fact that safety issues are *not just about drinking water*. When respect to internal piping, it must be recognized that health hazards can come from mere exposure to water, such as when toxins are inhaled or permeate the skin while bathing or showering. The latter is caused by exposure to water particles in the air, which is precisely how Legionnaires' disease is transmitted.

Part of the problem with premise piping is there is almost a complete absence of government regulation. The fact is federal law does *not* generally regulate internal piping systems. Historically, the primary means for ensuring water quality on the inside of buildings has been state and local plumbing codes, which simply require premise piping systems to deliver "*potable*" water, i.e., water safe for human use and consumption. However, most of these laws require very limited testing of water quality and this normally occurs on for new facilities at the end or close-out of the construction process. If bacteria, lead or other contaminants enter these systems at any subsequent point, which could be years or even decades later, they will usually not be detected until harm is caused.

The absence of government regulation in this area is not altogether surprising. For the past several decades, the quality of incoming water from most public water systems has been relatively safe. As a result, there was no real need to worry. EPA standards have only very limited, narrow application to premise piping and in most situations have no impact whatsoever. State and local laws, including plumbing codes, were never designed to deal with the multiple challenges now being presented to internal systems by aging pipes, modern chemical threats or unforeseen conditions fostering bacteria growth.

In light of these facts and growing evidence of new risks presented by premise piping, policy reforms should be developed to address challenges in this area. With respect to short-term risks, new standards and protocols are needed for internal piping systems, especially for older buildings or other facilities that require more intensive monitoring, including schools and healthcare facilities.

IV. Three Key Threats: Metals, Chemicals & Bacteria

A. Lead & Other Metals

Various types of metals, including lead, can cause serious health hazards for water systems. The travesty of Flint, Michigan—where thousands of residents, including children, were diagnosed with lead poisoning—put a needed spotlight on lead issues especially and water quality generally. Key findings regarding Flint include the following:

- Water in Flint became contaminated when the city switched its water supply from Lake Huron to corrosive Flint River water, which caused lead to leach from the system's old pipes.¹²
- As many as 8,000 children under the age of 6 were exposed to unsafe levels of lead in the drinking water; tens of thousands of older children and adults were likewise exposed.¹³
- Investigative reports are predicting that Flint residents will likely have long term health problems from consuming lead-contaminated water.¹⁴

As troubling as this incident is, subsequent research shows many other jurisdictions face similar or worse water quality issues.¹⁵ In fact, a Reuters' investigation of lead testing results across the country in 2016 "found *nearly 3,000 areas with recently recorded lead poisoning rates at least double those in Flint during the peak of . . . [its] contamination crisis. And more than 1,100 of these communities had a rate of elevated blood tests at least four times higher.*"¹⁶ Viewing similar data, another report showed that "*over 18 million people were served by 5,363 [CWSs] that violated the [EPA's] Lead and Copper Rule.*"¹⁷

In just one of these examples, a report on Newark, New Jersey revealed that approximately 273,000 residential customers were affected by excessive lead levels in the city's water supply.¹⁸ According to another report, data from the California Department of Health revealed that high lead levels were "found in parts of downtown Los Angeles and the Bay Area. In Alameda County, eight communities reported levels equal to or greater than Flint's rates. In Los Angeles, four communities reached or surpassed Flint's levels."¹⁹ Virtually all the testing in these cases was triggered by the crisis in Flint; adequate nation-wide testing of our water systems has yet to occur.

In addition, it is generally well known that lead contamination poses serious health risks and is especially dangerous for infants and children. Lead poisoning it can harm the central nervous system, create learning disabilities and cause other serious medical problems.²⁰ There is no known safe level of lead and children and infants are particularly at risk because their bodies absorb lead faster than adults.

Other metals used in pipes present similar problems. For example, galvanized pipe can pose health risks when its protective coating becomes corroded over time, allowing base metal materials, e.g., lead or iron, to leach into the water. Lead risks are generally well known; iron can be a source of nutrients for bacteria—which, in turn, can foster the spread of *Legionella*. As discussed below, *Legionella* causes the sometimes-deadly Legionnaire's disease, a major health threat that has been on the rise in recent years.

Contamination from lead and other metals can be found in both external public water systems or within internal piping systems. As noted above, since only extremely limited testing is required for the latter, the actual scope of public health risks from lead could be substantially higher than already alarming rates revealed by recent industry research. Moreover, while some new water testing requirements for lead are being imposed in the wake of Flint, these are occurring only in a handful of states and have limited application, e.g., testing in school systems only.²¹

B. Chemical Contaminants

According to EPA data, approximately one fifth of U.S. water sources are tainted with potentially harmful chemicals.²² Other research indicates that such chemicals, referred to as *chemicals of emerging concern*, can be found in U.S. water systems pose "*potential health risks to 15 million Americans in some 27 states.*"²³ What's more, a single chemical spill or leak can contaminate the water supply for the entire city, placing millions of residents at risk.²⁴

Chemical threats, which can be caused by both naturally occurring and man-made contaminants, take many forms. While the EPA requires testing for nearly a hundred different types of chemicals, the actual number of substances found in water that are potentially dangerous to public health could be in the thousands. These include inherently dangerous toxic substances that have been traced to current or former military and industrial sites that have leached into groundwater.

One such class of chemicals is Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFASs), which the EPA recently identified as a "national priority" due to their pervasive presence in drinking water systems. PFASs are a common type of chemicals used in a variety of industrial and residential applications, including cleaning products. However, PFASs are known to cause serious health complications; a 2016 Harvard study discovered higher than safe levels of PFASs in the drinking water of 33 states.²⁵ Some recent cases involving this issue have been particularly alarming. For example, the water supply for one Michigan town was recently found to have been contaminated with the highest PFAS levels found in drinking water "anywhere in the country -- possibly the world."²⁶

There are hundreds of other chemicals sometimes found in water that may likewise present serious health risks, including those that become unsafe when they interact with other substances. A major category here involves chemicals that are designed for a useful, even critical purpose, e.g., disinfecting water, but result in unintended consequences. Known as disinfection byproducts (DBPs), these chemicals are used widely in many CWSs on a regular basis.

However, concentrations of DBPs in excess of 20 parts per billion, which are being found with increasing frequency in water supply systems, likely pose major human health risks. Such risks can even be triggered when water contaminated in this manner is used for bathing or showering. Moreover, since most DBPs are not even regulated, they don't appear on the radar screens of many water utilities or state environmental agencies.²⁷

In sum, DBPs and countless other potentially dangerous chemicals are being found with increasing frequency in water supply systems. Yet, these substances are not even covered by existing water quality standards, thereby likely posing another growing threat to public health.

C. *Legionella* & Other Bacteria

While CWSs have a long history of keeping water fairly safe from bacteria, studies now show a ten-year trend and rapid escalation of bacteria-related contamination cases.²⁸ The most serious threat in this area is *Legionella*, a waterborne bacterium that results in a severe and sometimes fatal type of pneumonia known as Legionnaires' disease (LD). When *Legionella* is formed within piping systems, for example, in showers, it becomes vaporized into water droplets that are inhaled, causing the disease.

While bacteria-type contaminants can be found in water infrastructure systems, they are of particular concern in premise piping.²⁹ This is because certain conditions that exist within internal piping systems, including heat and stagnant water, can cause *Legionella* and other types of bacteria to flourish.

Over the past few years, major outbreaks of LD have alarmed CWSs and federal regulators. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) estimates that cases involving LD and Pontiac fever (a milder influenza-type illness) *have increased 286%* in the U.S. from 2000 to 2014; 5,000 of these cases were reported to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).³⁰ The CDC, in turn, reports that *LD cases have more than quadrupled from 2000 to 2016.*³¹

In New York City alone, there was a *78 percent increase* in LD cases in 2017, which triggered a number of recent emergency measures, including 90-day testing requirements for hospitals.³² While the main focus in Flint was lead contamination, the city's water supply was also found to be tainted with *Legionella*; in 2016, researchers identified 72 LD cases in Flint, including 12 deaths.³³

Certain segments of the population, including the elderly and those with respiratory problems, are particularly susceptible to LD and other bacteria-related disease, making hospitals and nursing homes especially vulnerable. Estimates indicate that 25% of LD cases arising out of hospital or healthcare settings are fatal.³⁴ In response to this threat, CMS recently issued a directive requiring healthcare facilities to institute new water management programs to address new health risks from bacteria-based contamination threats.³⁵ As a result, hospitals, nursing homes, and other health care facilities across the country are now struggling to implement new procedures and safeguards to counter these risks.

Legionella and other bacteria-related contaminants are described as “opportunistic premise plumbing pathogens” (OPPPs).³⁶ Two other OPPs contaminants are *mycobacterium avium* and *pseudomonas aeruginosa*; the former causes pulmonary issues while the latter causes infections in the blood or pneumonia. The CDC noted a significant increase in *pseudomonas* and the most recent estimate points to 51,000 cases per year. The incidence and prevalence of OPPPs is expected to grow, especially in light of the aging population and greater amount of people with comprised immune systems.

V. Root Causes of Crisis: Multiple Driving Forces

As demonstrated above, recent problems surfacing from metals, chemicals and bacteria-based contaminants collectively present increased and potentially widespread threats to U.S. water quality. A review of extensive evidence concerning these problems reveals they are the result of a myriad of factors, which include the following:

A. Antiquated Infrastructure

The American Water Works Association, a leading trade association in the water industry, estimates the U.S. will need approximately *one trillion dollars over the next twenty-five years* to rebuild aging water infrastructure.³⁷ There’s little question that antiquated infrastructure is one of the leading causes of system failures, a fact that becomes more obvious with each passing year.

Older pipes, especially those made of lead and galvanized iron or steel, have exceeded or are quickly reaching the end of their life-span. The majority of the systems we rely on for drinking water were built in the first-half of the 1900s and have an expected utility of 75-100 years, making much of this infrastructure antiquated and prone to failure.³⁸

The most recent research shows that rural areas are particularly at risk, which is usually because smaller public water systems lack resources to address current challenges. But this is not just a rural problem as recent urban failures demonstrate. For example, over the past several years, major cities across the country have been subject to strict mandates from the courts to repair or replace massive water infrastructure systems due to persistent, widespread law violations. Each of these cases tend to involve hundreds of millions of dollars in fines and infrastructure costs.³⁹

It is, therefore, not surprising that the 2017 *Infrastructure Report Card*, issued by the American Society of Civil Engineers, gave U.S. water and waste water systems grades of *D* and *D+* respectively.⁴⁰ Such rankings for systems vital to human life for one of the richest nations on earth should sound an alarm for policy makers and industry stakeholders that broad-scale reforms are needed. The problem is that a number of similar reports have been issued in the past and government action and support seems to be declining rather than increasing.

Aging pipes face greater risks of contamination and are susceptible to mechanical piping failures. One major consequence of this can also be seen with the prevalence of water main breaks across the United States. In 2017 Philadelphia experienced nearly 1,000 water-main breaks,⁴¹ causing major disruptions to business and transportation throughout the city. These pipe were originally installed in 1927. This was not an isolated incident. A recent study conducted by Utah State University found that since 2012 water main breaks in the United States and Canada have risen by 27% overall and up to 40% for certain types of pipe.⁴² Without major new investments needed to replace these systems, such failures will continue and escalate.

The effects of water main breaks are not limited to disruption to transportation and repair costs, but also includes loss of business and property damage.⁴³ In addition, these breaks lead to increased health risks, for example, where abrupt loss of pressure permits contaminants to enter the water supply system.⁴⁴ These factors illustrate just some of the types of high costs caused by continuous neglect of infrastructure. And, mechanical failures are only one consequence of aging infrastructure. Public health risks and costs associated therewith are likely even more impactful. The astronomical health costs incurred by a city like Flint, MI, which were driven in part by older piping systems, underscore this point and should serve as a warning for the future.

B. Insufficient Resources

While major reforms are needed to promote greater compliance with federal and state water quality standards generally, the fact is that many jurisdictions lack the resources and technical knowledge to adequately monitor water systems or institute remediation measures. This challenge is serious since literally thousands of public water systems across the country are facing these problems

Research from the 2018 National Academy of Sciences report referenced above demonstrated that many of the jurisdictions failing current standards include rural areas and other localities that simply lack the financial and/or technical capabilities to meet increasingly sophisticated water quality challenges.⁴⁵ Significantly, this same report indicated that *privately-owned* water utilities, which tend to have greater resources, were less likely to have widespread violations than many publicly-owned water systems.⁴⁶

Regardless of how CWSs are structured—public, private or mixed—all water supply systems must be assured of adequate funding to be capable of monitoring and maintaining compliance with critical safety standards. Yet, current federal funding for water infrastructure continues to fall far below the amount needed to rebuild rapidly deteriorating systems. For example, while states requested \$82 billion for water infrastructure projects this year, ultimately only \$14.4 billion was committed to federal grant and loan programs.⁴⁷ Current challenges demand substantially greater funding from the federal government; major funding increases from state and local government will likewise be critical.

C. Modern Pollution Sources

Another major threat to water quality in modern society can be found in both naturally occurring and man-made chemicals, which are being identified as a new health risk with increasing frequency. These substances include numerous types of unsafe chemicals that have been improperly discharged into the environment from various sources, including military and industrial sites. In addition, certain modern farming procedures have also been shown to result in increased contamination of water systems.⁴⁸

Chemical contaminants can present health risks when they enter public water supply sources, groundwater or other supply sources, such as lakes and rivers. Moreover, the fact that water subsequently goes into a water treatment plant and is processed does not ensure its safety. While current treatment procedures may be capable of removing or neutralizing some of these threats, such procedures are generally only designed for treating contaminants *known to be in the water*. Many modern contaminants that are being detected in water supply systems are *not* generally known to CWSs or even covered by existing water quality regulations.

D. Outdated Water Quality Policy

Current water policy is antiquated in many ways insofar as it has failed to keep pace with new and evolving challenges. Effective water quality testing has proven especially elusive in recent years. EPA rules, which establish minimum legal standards for drinking water quality, are outdated in many respects and do not require testing sufficiently rigorous to address a multitude of emerging contaminants. For example, standards established by the Safe Drinking Water Act have not been revised or updated with any major changes since 1996, even though numerous new types of potentially dangerous bacteria and chemicals have been identified.⁴⁹ As a result, many chemicals, as well as bacterial-based substance that pose credible threats, are not subject to any regulation whatsoever. Examples here include PFASs and *Legionella*.

For these reasons, industry experts are increasingly questioning whether current federal and state laws have become obsolete or otherwise inadequate. As noted, this is largely because existing standards do *not* require testing for many emerging contaminants, including those known to be unsafe. Such risks are likely compounded because internal water quality is *not* typically regulated by state or local health laws or plumbing codes. Certainly, in terms of premise piping, very few protections exist to prevent contamination from dangerous metals, bacteria, or chemicals. As a result, unsafe conditions may not be detected until it's too late and they've already harmed human health.

E. Ineffective/Piecemeal Regulations

The driving forces of the current water crisis are more complex than aging pipes or lax enforcement and monitoring of existing laws. Even when corrective measures are attempted they are often too narrow in scope, leading to piecemeal solutions that may address one problem but overlook others. For example, new state laws are being proposed to require lead testing for schools, for lead while completing ignoring potential bacteria threats or potentially dangerous chemicals.

It would obviously be tragic to institute new testing procedures that verify a school or other facility is lead-free only to later discover the water is tainted by other contaminants. In fact, while the lead catastrophe in Flint was unfolding, citizens in this very same region were simultaneously afflicted with a large-scale outbreak of Legionnaire's disease. During most of this time, virtually all the government agencies involved focused all testing activities solely on lead.

Similar problems can be seen at the federal level. For example, acting, in part in response to Flint, the EPA is planning new water regulations for lead and copper. While this update is clearly needed, this rulemaking does *not* address other contaminants, including *Legionella* and numerous unsafe chemicals. In addition, current EPA safety standards generally do not even apply to premise piping systems. This means that even if a new lead and copper rule is developed for public water systems, health risks from internal piping will continue unabated.

The inverse problem can be seen in a new 2018 directive issued by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, which requires healthcare facilities to devise water management plans to prevent the spread of bacteria, especially *Legionella*, by mandating the use of new internal water management systems. Although critically needed due to the recent spike in LD cases, this directive does *not* seek to mitigate risks posed by other substances that might exist in these same systems, whether metals or chemicals.

This piecemeal approach to policy making undercuts the ability of federal and state government to meet growing challenges, especially since water quality standards for internal piping are already often sparse and ineffective.

VI. Solutions: Reforming Water Quality Policy

A. Establish a National Leadership Task Force

To address growing water quality challenges, a national industry task force should be convened with representatives from key stakeholder groups, including water utilities, federal and state regulators, community groups, and other organizations with technical knowledge in the industry. The collective expertise of such a task force could help develop new policy goals and recommendations for needed reforms, including those relating to future funding, legislative and industry code standards and improved procedures and protocols for water quality testing.

B. Generate Future Funding Sources

Water systems in some parts of America have been in operation for a hundred years or longer, and even newer systems must be capable of handling modern sources of contaminants. Given the current state of U.S. water quality, there's no question that major capital funding is needed to repair, replace, and update existing infrastructure.⁵⁰ Resources for these efforts will be required from all levels of government: federal, state, and local. Assistance may also be needed from the private sector, for example, through privatization of municipal water systems or other forms of public-private partnerships.

Specifically, in seeking to plan new funding sources, all realistic options should be considered to raise essential capital, including the following:

- Increase amounts available through existing federal programs including the Clean Water and Safe Drinking Water Acts (SRFs) and the State Revolving Fund;
- Revise the current federal standards and formula for federal water funding for state and local government participation, i.e., reduce the current matching funds requirement;
- Create a new national trust fund similar to the federal highway fund and raise new sources and types of bond funding;
- Facilitate privatization of public CWSs in appropriate circumstances, especially for those in smaller, rural jurisdictions struggling to maintain compliance with public health standards.
- Promote the use of other innovative public-private partnerships as a means for developing and executing major water projects requiring significant capital construction.⁵¹

State governments will also need to develop new funding sources. For example, to assist struggling CWSs, a recent budget proposal in California calls for the creation of a "*Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund*" that would be used to help pay for updates to failing water systems and would be funded by a fee of less than \$1 per month for most consumer water bills.⁵² In addition, Michigan recently announced that it will be the first state to require water utilities to replace *all* water drinking lines containing lead.⁵³

While the scope of these challenges is significant, there's simply no choice. The reality is that the *cost of inaction* will be *exponentially greater*. These include not only direct costs of major infrastructure failures but also liability exposure for governmental entities and water utilities alike, which could be astronomical, as indicated by the recent flood of legal claims in towns and cities recently affected by this crisis.⁵⁴ For these reasons, developing solutions to America's water quality problems is needed as a matter of public health as well as economic necessity.⁵⁵

C. Reform Water System Testing Protocols

It's increasingly evident that a significant portion of water problems surfacing today are due to incomplete or otherwise inadequate testing procedures. More advanced technology and improved testing protocols are needed to address these problems.

1. **Water Management Plans: Tailor Water Testing Methods to Facility Needs:** Most testing of water systems is done in the context of *Water Management Plans* (WMPs).
 - ✓ Some facilities, such as hospitals and other healthcare facilities, require more comprehensive, sophisticated WMPs, usually designed by a cross-disciplinary team of experts of facilities management, healthcare experts, and experienced contractors.
 - ✓ While such facilities must be particularly vigilant for bacteria threats, risks from metal and chemicals cannot be ignored and may at least warrant random or other limited scope testing.
 - ✓ Testing of other facilities need not be as rigorous, but should likewise be tailored according to the needs of each situation. Older facilities, e.g., may be more at risk of lead contamination but may still require spot checking for certain bacteria and chemicals.
 - ✓ In sum, the testing strategy for any given facility must be determined by a technical assessment of all relevant factors, including the type and age of the facility, the type of population served by the facility (e.g., elderly people, young children), the type of piping used for both service lines, and the internal systems.
2. **Lessons from UA Pilot Program:** A number of the key recommendations offered in this report are based on critical information gathered in a pilot program administered by the UA in 2017. Key points are as follows:
 - In response to the Flint tragedy and other issues arising around the country, water testing was conducted in eight cities across the U.S. on a pilot basis in an attempt to identify the most serious threats to public health. Testing services in these cases were performed by experienced plumbing or mechanical contractors and UA professionals using new technology, including open-cell foam time exposure tests, which sometimes yields more useful data.
 - One of the most important lessons gleaned from this pilot program was that our water systems need both *more and better testing*. Whether it is for water at the point of supply sources, or within infrastructure of the public water system or within premise piping—*more comprehensive testing for known contaminants is critical*.
 - Likewise, *more effective testing* methods and protocols are needed to ensure that water samples are collected, tested and evaluated in a manner that will yield greater accuracy in terms of potential threats. In many cases, this may require testing beyond the requirements of existing law where such standards are inadequate.
 - Aided by advanced, innovative testing procedures, these pilots yielded important results. For example, water systems examined in Flint revealed serious threats from bacteria including *Legionella* and chloroform chemicals—in addition to the previously discovered lead issues. In the cases of East St. Louis, IL and New York City, more comprehensive testing found evidence of *Legionella* and dangerous lead levels not likely discoverable in more routine tests.

D. Develop Effective Water Quality Standards

Existing federal and state laws that govern water quality are fragmented, ineffective and obsolete in many ways. To ensure public health and safety, major reforms will be required in applicable laws, as well as related industry codes incorporated by reference into these laws.

1. **Federal Law:** At the federal level, reforms will likely require amendments to the two leading federal statutes: The Safe Drinking Water Act, 42 U.S.C. § 300f (1974) and the Federal Water Pollution Control Amendments of 1972 (known as the Clean Water Act), 33 U.S.C. § 1251 (1972).

As noted, the EPA is in the process of re-writing *its Lead and Copper* regulation.⁵⁶ The proposed rule calls for new measurement requirements for lead, including the number of locations required for testing and methods used.⁵⁷ While these reforms may prove helpful, many are likely to carry high implementation costs; thus, it is unclear how much impact the proposed changes will have unless current funding challenges are addressed.

What's more, the new rule *focuses only on lead and copper*. However, numerous reports have shown that U.S. water quality is increasingly at risk from dangerous chemicals and bacterial contaminants, showing that the EPA's current rulemaking would benefit from a more comprehensive policy.

2. **State Law:** States enact laws to implement federal standards established under the Clean Water and Safe Drinking Water acts. In some cases, states only seek to ensure that public water systems comply with minimum federal standards; in others, they enact measures that go beyond minimum federal requirements.
 - With respect to the former, states need better guidance to ensure full compliance with the essential federal minimum requirements. Greater technical and regulatory guidance in monitoring and maintaining water quality can especially benefit smaller communities struggling to meet current standards
 - Regarding the latter, state statutes need to be developed from a more informed perspective to avoid repeating past mistakes, for example, by enacting more comprehensive laws and policies rather than the piecemeal responses used in the past.
 - Greater sharing of best practices by state governments could also help, especially with respect to key policy issues, including higher minimum water quality standards, better and more frequent testing requirements, and improved monitoring and enforcement rules.
3. **Industry Codes:** Due to the highly technical nature of water quality issues, public law often relies on certain professional industry codes, which are incorporated into law by reference.
 - These source documents are developed by experienced engineers and other professionals with technical expertise in the industry and have a critical, substantial impact on the overall effectiveness of water policy.
 - Industry codes and standards in the water industry include those from the American Society of Sanitary Engineers (ASSE) and the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE). Examples of codes that should be re-examined and likely updated include the following:
 - Uniform Plumbing Code
 - Uniform Mechanical Code

- ASHRAE Standard 188-2015
 - ASHRAE Standard 12
 - ASSE Standard 12000
4. **Qualified Contractors & Technicians:** Water system testing, monitoring, and remediation work on water systems must be performed by properly qualified contractors and technicians.
- Skill certifications programs should be developed in this area by qualified, independent, third-party groups, such as ASSE. Without such assurances, any future reforms, no matter how well intended or carefully crafted, will fail to guarantee adequate public safety.
 - Specifically, to ensure adequate levels of quality and safety, it's essential that contractors and persons supervising this work at a minimum be trained and certified in accordance with ASSE Standard 12050 and ASSE Standard 12060 for technicians.
5. **New Testing Rules:** There's no question that insufficient data collection, water testing and system monitoring are causing major challenges for ensuring water quality.⁵⁸ Therefore, proper testing rules are a critical first step in formulating new testing standards. These should require:
- (a) Use of best practices' protocols and procedures for water quality testing that can more effectively detect and assess public health risks;
 - (b) Rigorous, comprehensive testing for contaminants known to pose risks to water quality, including lead, dangerous bacteria, and chemicals of emerging concern; and
 - (c) Increased and improved testing of water supply sources, both original water sources and infrastructure components of water utilities, and other CWSs.

E. Launch Industry & Public Education Initiatives

Given the scope of the problems at hand and a general lack of knowledge among many stakeholders of the issues, a full-scale education campaign on water quality is needed. The general public, including homeowners and business owners, must also be educated on the nature and severity of the problems and potential solutions, including the need for immediate and widespread water system testing.

A national communications campaign should be launched to educate the public, industry stakeholders, and policy makers on all three key risk areas and needed policy reforms. Such measures should include creating new water testing standards and procedures, reforming and updating applicable statutes and regulations, and developing adequate funding. It's also critical that major funding streams for rebuilding water infrastructure be developed. Most taxpayers today have become long accustomed to paying significant monthly bills for both cable TV and cell phones; they need to understand there will be an ongoing cost for ensuring clean water in the future just as there is for roads and bridges and schools.

VII. Conclusion

To address growing threats to U.S. water quality, immediate action is imperative. Growing awareness of the adverse effects of failing water systems should make it clear that such reforms are urgent. As noted above, the 2018 National Academy of Sciences report warned that every year up to 44 million Americans are relying on water systems that fail basic safety standards, while a 2017 New York Times' investigation found 25% of our drinking water is unsafe for consumption or so poorly monitored that there is no way of assuring public safety.

Initially, broad-scale education efforts should be launched to inform policy makers, industry stakeholders and the public of the scope and gravity of the problem and need for major policy reforms. In addition, new testing procedures should be implemented as quickly as possible to correct flaws in existing approaches and identify all piping systems in need of immediate remediation. Finally, new quality standards must be established while adequate funding mechanisms are developed to address massive infrastructure needs.

Endnotes

- ¹ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, <https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/drinking/public/index.html>.
- ² Maura Allaire et al., *National Trends in Drinking Water Quality Violations*, 115 PNAS 2078 (2018).
- ³ Erik Olson & Kristi Fedinick, *What's in Your Water? Flint and Beyond*, NAT'L RESOURCES DEF. COUNCIL 5 (June 2016) (emphasis added).
- ⁴ Jacey Fortin, *America's Tap Water: Too Much Contamination, Not Enough Reporting, Study Finds*, NEW YORK TIMES, May 4, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/04/us/tapwater-drinking-water-study.html>.
- ⁵ *Id.*
- ⁶ Allaire, *supra* note 2, at 2078.
- ⁷ Allaire, *supra* note 2, at 2078. Some reports on this issue estimate even higher risks. See Agnel Philip et al., *63 Million Americans Exposed to Unsafe Drinking Water*, USA TODAY, Aug. 15, 2017.
- ⁸ See Appendix B hereto.
- ⁹ See Allaire, *supra* note 2, at 2080, Table 1; see also Appendix B.
- ¹⁰ William F. McCoy & Aaron A. Rosenblatt, *HACCP-Based Programs for Preventing Disease and Injury from Premise Plumbing: A Building Consensus*, 4 PATHOGENS 513, 514 (2015) (emphasis added).
- ¹¹ U.S. General Accounting Office, *K-12 Education: Lead Testing of School Drinking Water Would Benefit from Improved Federal Guidance*, GAO-18-382 (2018).
- ¹² M.B. Bell & Joshua Schneyer, *Off the Charts: The Thousands of U.S. Locales Where Lead Poisoning is Worse Than in Flint*, REUTERS, Dec. 19, 2016.
- ¹³ Michael Wines & John Schwartz, *Unsafe Lead Levels in Tap Water Not Limited to Flint*, NEW YORK TIMES, Feb. 8, 2016.
- ¹⁴ Kristi Pullen Fedinick et al., *Threats on Tap: Widespread Violations Highlight Need for Investment in Water Infrastructure and Protections*, NAT'L RESOURCES DEF. COUNCIL 4-10 (May 2, 2017).
- ¹⁵ Michael Wines & John Schwartz, *Unsafe Lead Levels in Tap Water Not Limited to Flint*, NEW YORK TIMES, Feb. 8, 2016.
- ¹⁶ *Off the Charts: The Thousands of U.S. Locales Where Lead Poisoning is Worse Than in Flint*, *supra* note 10, at 1 (emphasis added).
- ¹⁷ Erik Olson & Kristi Fedinick, *What's in Your Water? Flint and Beyond*, NAT'L RESOURCES DEF. COUNCIL 5 (June 2016) (emphasis added).
- ¹⁸ *Lead in Newark's Drinking Water*, NAT'L RESOURCES DEF. COUNCIL (Sept. 20, 2017), <https://www.nrdc.org/resources/lead-newarks-drinking-water>.
- ¹⁹ Michael Ríos, *Some California Children Exposed to Higher Lead Levels Than Those in Flint*, PBS NEWS, Mar. 24, 2017, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/california-children-exposed-higher-lead-levels-flint>.

- ²⁰U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *Effects of Exposures to Lead in Drinking Water* Is there a safe level of lead in drinking water?* <https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/basic-information-about-lead-drinking-water#health> (last visited July 23, 2018)
- ²¹ U.S. General Accounting Office, *supra*, note 11.
- ²²*Drinking Water Contaminant-Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)*, EXTENSION 1 (Dec. 6, 2010) <http://articles.extension.org/pages/31561/drinking-water-contaminant-volatile-organic-compounds-vocs>.
- ²³ Joseph Erbenraut, *Report: 15 Million Americans' Drinking Water Tainted by Toxic Chemical*, HUFFINGTON POST, 2017.
- ²⁴ Steve Johnson, *Unsafe Levels of Toxic Chemicals Found in Drinking Water of 33 States*, THE HARVARD GAZETTE (Aug. 9, 2016) (reviewing data from a Harvard University study); David S. Beckman, *The Threats to Our Drinking Water*, NEW YORK TIMES (Aug. 6, 2014) (chemical from coal plant in Charleston, W. Va contaminated water for 300,000 people).
- ²⁵ Karen Feldsher, *Unsafe Levels of Toxic Chemicals Found in Drinking Water of 33 States*, THE HARVARD GAZETTE (Aug. 9, 2019), <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2016/08/unsafe-levels-of-toxic-chemicals-found-in-drinking-water-of-33-states/>.
- ²⁶ Garret Ellison, *Rockford Well May Have Highest PFAS Level in U.S. Drinking Water*, MICHIGAN LIVE (Jan. 31, 2018).
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- ²⁸ Elena Naumova et al., *Hospitalization due to selected infections caused by opportunistic premise plumbing pathogens (OPPP) and reported drug resistance in the United States older adult population in 1991-2006*, 37 J. PUB. HEALTH POL. 500 (September 12, 2016).
- ²⁹ Joseph Falkinham et al., *Epidemiology and Ecology of Opportunistic Premise Plumbing Pathogens: Legionella pneumophila, Mycobacterium avium, and Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, 123 ENVTL. HEALTH PERSPECTIVES 8 (August 2015), <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4529011/>.
- ³⁰ Memorandum from the Dep't Health & Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), Balt., Md. on Requirement to Reduce Legionella Risk in Healthcare Facility Water Systems to Prevent Cases and Outbreaks of Legionnaires' Disease (LD) to State Survey Agency Directors (July 6, 2018)(CMS Memorandum), <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Provider-Enrollment-and-Certification/SurveyCertificationGenInfo/Policy-and-Memos-to-States-and-Regions-Items/Survey-And-Cert-Letter-17-30-.html?DLPage=1&DLEntries=10&DLFilter=legi&DLSort=3&DLSortDir=descending> (last visited July 11, 2018).
- ³¹ *Legionnaires' Disease*, CTR. FOR DISEASE CONTROL & PROTECTION, <https://www.cdc.gov/Legionella/surv-reporting.html> (last visited Mar. 14, 2014).
- ³² Lauren Weber, *Legionnaires' Disease Is Rising at An Alarming Rate In the U.S.*, HUFFINGTON POST, Dec. 14, 2017, at 2 (reviewing CDC data).
- ³³ Janet Pelley, *Beyond Lead: Flint Water Strongly Tied to Legionnaires' Disease*, CHEMICAL & ENGINEERING NEWS (July 26, 2016).
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- ³⁹ See Appendix B.
- ⁴⁰ See. AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS, *supra* note 36.
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- ⁴⁵ Allaire, *supra* note 2, at 2080, Figure 3.
- ⁴⁶ *Id.* at 2078, 2080-81.
- ⁴⁷ Press Release, Bluefield Research, *States Request \$82B for Water Infrastructure, 25% Increase from Prior Year* (May 29, 2018), <http://www.bluefieldresearch.com/ns/state-requests-water-infrastructure-funding/>.
- ⁴⁸ *Water Contamination*, CTR. FOR DISEASE CONTROL & PROTECTION, <https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/other/agricultural/contamination.html>.
- ⁴⁹ Annie Snider, *What Broke the Safe Drinking Act?* POLITICO, May 10, 2017.
- ⁵⁰ *State of the Water Industry Report*, American Water Works Association (2018), https://www.awwa.org/Portals/0/files/resources/water%20utility%20management/sotwi/2018_SOTWI_Report_Final_v3.pdf.
- ⁵¹ See e.g., *America's Aging Water Infrastructure*, BIPARTISAN POLICY CENTER 3-4 (Sept. 2016) <https://bipartisanpolicy.org>, (includes a chart of all existing federal programs to fund water infrastructure development through the EPA, USDA, HUD, IRS, Indian Health Service, and Bureau of Reclamation); *A New Model to Modernize U.S. Infrastructure*, BIPARTISAN POLICY CENTER 57-65 (May 2016), <https://bipartisanpolicy.org/library/modernize-infrastructure/>; *Charting New Waters Convening Report: Financing Sustainable Water Infrastructure*, JOHNSON FOUNDATION 19-23 (Jan. 2012) <http://www.johnsonfdn.org/aboutus/chartingnewwaters>.
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- ⁵⁴ Abigale Elise, *Potent Carcinogen Contaminated Drinking Water Used by Millions*, KETV OMAHA (Apr. 20, 2017).
- ⁵⁵ Karla Lant, *Fragile Water Infrastructure, Often on the Verge of Collapse*, ENVIRONMENTAL MONITOR (Jan. 12, 2018).
- ⁵⁶ *Lead and Copper Rule Revisions White Paper*, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (Oct. 2016), https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-10/documents/508_lcr_revisions_white_paper_final_10.26.16.pdf.
- ⁵⁷ *Id.* at 13.
- ⁵⁸ Allaire, *supra* note 2, at 2083.

APPENDIX A:

UA WATER QUALITY PROGRAM POLICY BRIEF—SOURCE MATERIALS

COMPREHENSIVE REPORTS & STUDIES

Source	Key Findings
<p>Maura Allaire et al., <i>National Trends in Drinking Water Quality Violations</i>, 115 PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES 2078 (Feb. 2018).</p> <p>http://www.pnas.org/content/early/2018/02/06/1719805115</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “In 2015, nearly 21 million people relied on community water systems that violated health-based quality standards.” • Repeat violations occur at a substantially higher rate in rural communities than urbanized areas. • Comprehensive data analysis of 17,900 community water systems from 1982-2015.
<p>Kristi Pullen Fedinick, Ph.D. et al., <i>Threats on Tap: Widespread Violations Highlight Need for Investment in Water Infrastructure and Protections</i>, NAT’L RESOURCES DEF. COUNCIL (May 2017).</p> <p>https://www.nrdc.org/sites/default/files/threats-on-tap-water-infrastructure-protections-report.pdf</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that approximately 19.5 million Americans fall ill each year from microbial, waterborne pathogens, such as cryptosporidiosis and Legionnaires’ disease. • “No comprehensive estimates have been published of the number of cancers, reproductive and neurological diseases, or other serious chronic health problems caused by contaminated tap water.” • “Systems serving less than 500 people accounted for nearly 70% of all violations and a little over half of all health-based violations.” • “It is recommended that Congress increase funding for drinking water infrastructure to at least \$8 billion per year, roughly triple the current amount of \$2.3 billion.”

<p>Agnel Philip, et al, <i>63 Million Americans Exposed to Unsafe Drinking Water</i>, USA TODAY (Aug. 15, 2017).</p> <p>https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2017/08/14/63-million-americans-exposed-unsafe-drinking-water/564278001/</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “In several Southwestern states, 2 million people received groundwater tainted with arsenic, radium or fluoride from their local water systems.” • “Millions of Americans are also exposed to suspect chemicals the EPA and state agencies don’t regulate. Two of these chemicals, perfluorinated compounds PFOA and PFOS, remain unregulated after decades of use as an ingredient in firefighting foam, Teflon and other consumer products. These perfluorinated compounds have been linked to low birth weights in children, cancer and liver tissue damage, according to the EPA.”
<p>President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, <i>Report to the President: Science and Technology to Ensure the Safety of the Nation’s Drinking Water</i>, EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT (Dec. 2016).</p> <p>https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/pcast_drinking_water_final_executive_summary_final.pdf</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal corrosion of lead and copper pipping yields contamination by these metals in the drinking water as well as the release of arsenic and other metals. • “From 2014-2016 outbreaks of Legionnaires occurred in several U.S. cities, including Flint, Michigan; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Hopkins, Minnesota; and New York City.” • The EPA has determined that there is no safe exposure level to lead and set the action protocol at 10% of taps. However, millions still experience lead exposure because a small subset of homes have lead levels over the EPA threshold. • Bacteria and other microbes account for the highest number of violations, followed by disinfection byproducts and finally, arsenic, lead, and copper.

REPORTS ON LEAD & OTHER METALS

Citation	Key Topics & Points
<p><i>Lead in Drinking Water in Schools and Childcare Facilities</i>, U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (last visited Feb. 9, 2018).</p> <p>https://www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/lead-drinking-water-schools-and-childcare-facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “98,000 schools and 500,000 childcare facilities are not regulated by EPA.” • Many schools that are served by public water systems may have never been tested for lead.
<p><i>Water</i>, CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL (last visited Feb. 9, 2018).</p> <p>https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/tips/water.htm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDC addresses processes for testing and remediating lead. • It is important to determine if header (street) pipes contain lead because this can indicate whether residential lead contamination is coming from the street pipes or pipes inside the home.
<p>Michael Rios, <i>Some California Children Exposed to Higher Lead Levels Than Those in Flint</i>, PBS NEWS (Mar. 24, 2017).</p> <p>https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/california-children-exposed-higher-lead-levels-flint</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “In a California community, approximately 14 percent of children tested had higher lead levels than the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s 5 micrograms per deciliter of blood threshold.” • “By comparison, 5 percent of children in Flint, Michigan tested above the threshold.”
<p>Annie Snider, <i>What Broke the Safe Drinking Act?</i>, POLITICO (May 10, 2017).</p> <p>https://www.politico.com/agenda/story/2017/05/10/safe-drinking-water-perchlorate-000434</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perchlorate, a chemical that can affect brain development, has been found in the water supplies of 16 million Americans. • Only 2 states require that water companies test for perchlorate and let residents know when it’s in their water.
<p><i>Lead Contamination in Wisconsin</i>, SIERRA CLUB- JOHN MUIR CHAPTER (May 2017).</p> <p>https://www.sierraclub.org/sites/www.sierraclub.org/files/sce-authors/u2196/Lead%20white%20paper%20final%20%282%29.pdf</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Thousands of children in Wisconsin have lead poisoning- about 4.5 percent of children, compared with 4.9 percent in Flint, Michigan.”
<p>Agnel Philip, et al, <i>63 million Americans Exposed to Unsafe Drinking Water</i>, USA TODAY (Aug. 15, 2017).</p> <p>https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2017/08/14/63-million-americans-exposed-unsafe-drinking-water/564278001/</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drinking water is unsafe for approximately 63 million people in America. • “In Fayette County, West Virginia where the water was not being maintained or tested, one resident showers with a cap after doctors told him that the town’s water gave him two infections near his brain.”
<p><i>Lead in Newark’s Drinking Water</i>, NAT’L RESOURCES DEF. COUNCIL, (Sept. 20, 2017), https://www.nrdc.org/resources/lead-newarks-drinking-water.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An estimated 273,000 residential customers in Newark are affected by the city’s excessive lead levels in its water supply. • “Newark’s lead levels have reached 27 parts per billion in some areas, nearly twice the federal action level of 15 parts per billion.”

Citation	Key Topics & Points
<p>Michael Wines & John Schwartz, <i>Unsafe Lead Levels in Tap Water Not Limited to Flint</i>, NEW YORK TIMES (Feb. 8, 2016).</p> <p>https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/09/us/regulatory-gaps-leave-unsafe-lead-levels-in-water-nationwide.html</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After officials in Sebring, Ohio found unsafe levels of lead in the city's water, they waited five months before telling residents to not drink the water.
<p>Erik Olson & Kristi Fedinick, <i>What's in Your Water? Flint and Beyond</i>, NAT'L RESOURCES DEF. COUNCIL (June 2016).</p> <p>https://assets.nrdc.org/sites/default/files/whats-in-your-water-flint-beyond-report.pdf?_ga=2.8434485.1453355261.1520861715-485876678.1520435356</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead causes serious developmental and behavioral defects in children. • "Weak regulatory language and poor enforcement limit the effectiveness of the Safe Water Drinking Act and Lead and Copper Rule."
<p>M.B. Bell & Joshua Schneyer, <i>Off the Charts: The Thousands of U.S. Locales Where Lead Poisoning is Worse than in Flint</i>, REUTERS (Dec. 19, 2016).</p> <p>https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/usa-lead-testing/</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "CDC estimates that 2.5% of small children have elevated lead levels nationwide." • Report described instances of lead poisoning in California, Maryland, Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.
<p>Brandi N. Clark, et al, <i>Lead Release to Drinking Water from Galvanized Steel Pipe Coatings</i>, ENVTL. ENGINEERING SCI. 32, 8 (Aug. 2015).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct lead release occurs when lead is present in the zinc coating and gets released directly into the water flowing through the pipes.
<p>Sheldon Masters & Marc Edwards, <i>Increased Lead in Water Associated with Iron Corrosion</i>, ENVTL. ENGINEERING SCI. 32, 5 (May 2015).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Several studies have identified links between high levels of particulate lead and particulate iron, suggesting that mitigation of lead problems might be associated with reducing other particulates present."
<p>Sravya Maru, <i>Lead Exposure in Children through Water and Soil</i>, PUB. HEALTH 560: ENVTL. MGMT. & RISK ASSESSMENT (Dec. 2015).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air, soil, and water all transfer lead. • Factories, such as producers of aviation fuel, waste incinerators, and lead-acid battery manufacturers release lead into the air. • Over-time, lead-based paint comes off exterior buildings, such as houses, and falls into the soil.
<p>Rebecca Renner, <i>Out of Plumb: When Water Treatment Causes Lead Contamination</i>, ENVTL. HEALTH PERSPECTIVES, 117, 12 (Dec. 2009).</p> <p>https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2799485</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Lead in drinking water accounts for 10-20% of children's exposure to lead." • Drinking water naturally contains a minimal amount of lead; however, lead enters into the tap water through lead pipes, joints, and other fixtures. • Changes in water treatment have increased lead levels in tap water because treatment chemicals may cause lead pipes to deteriorate.
<p>Mark Payne, <i>Lead in Drinking Water</i>, CANADIAN MED. ASS'N J. (July 2008).</p> <p>https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2474873</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Homes built before 1950 often contained lead plumbing and homes as recently as 1990 may contain lead solder."

REPORTS ON TOXIC CHEMICALS

Source	Key Findings
<p>Xiaohua Li, <i>EPA Method 524 for Determination of VOCs in Drinking Water Using Agilent 5975T LTM GC/MSD with Static Headspace</i>, AGILENT TECHNOLOGIES (Oct. 2010).</p> <p>http://hpst.cz/sites/default/files/attachments/5990-6442en-epa-method-524-determination-vocs-drinking-water-using-agilent-5975t-ltm-gc-msd-static.pdf</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VOCs in drinking water is a serious threat to human health; EPA whitepaper addresses its method for detection. • A fast and accurate method of onsite water testing has been developed to separate and test 54 volatile organic compounds in 9 minutes.
<p>Garret Ellison, <i>Rockford Well May Have Highest PFAS Level in U.S. Drinking Water</i>, MICHIGAN LIVE (Jan. 31, 2018).</p> <p>http://www.mlive.com/news/grand-rapids/index.ssf/2018/01/58930-ppt_pfas_drinking_water.html</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “A Michigan town has tainted groundwater with 58,930 parts per trillion of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl, potentially the highest levels of the two chemicals anywhere in the world.” • Residents are advised to avoid the water and wells in the area tested for record-high levels of the chemicals. The tests are concerning because “contamination levels in human blood are often 100 times higher than those in the drinking water.”
<p>Abigale Elise, <i>Potent Carcinogen Contaminated Drinking Water Used by Millions, Says Report</i>, WCVB (Apr. 20, 2017).</p> <p>http://www.wcvb.com/article/potent-carcinogen-contaminated-drinking-water-used-by-millions-says-report/9533939</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to several lawsuits, Dow and Shell facilities have contaminated water in 13 states, exposing millions of people to chemical carcinogens. • “The water in Aptos, California was contaminated with TCP from a farm that operated in 1950—over a half a century ago.”

REPORTS ON LEGIONNELLA & OTHER BACTERIA

Source	Key Findings
<p>Leonard N. Fleming, <i>State's Top Doc Threatened Flint Researchers</i>, THE DETROIT NEWS (Feb. 20, 2018).</p> <p>http://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/michigan/flint-water-crisis/2018/02/20/eden-wells-threaten-flint-research/110636072/</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "A professor at Wayne State University testified that Eden Wells, Michigan's Medical Executive, tried to conceal information related to the connection between Flint's lead contaminated water and the Legionnaires outbreak."
<p>Karla Lant, <i>Fragile Water Infrastructure, Often On the Verge of Collapse</i>, ENVIRONMENTAL MONITOR (Jan. 12, 2018).</p> <p>http://www.fondriest.com/news/fragile-water-infrastructure-often-verge-collapse.htm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "In order to maintain and expand service in line with projected demands for drinking water over the next 25 years it will cost an estimated \$1 trillion."
<p>Chief Medical Executive Faces Manslaughter Charge in Flint Water Crisis, CBS News (Oct. 9, 2017).</p> <p>https://www.cbsnews.com/news/eden-wells-chief-medical-executive-faces-manslaughter-charge-flint-water-crisis/</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical Chief allegedly withheld water-quality test data that showed concentrations of <i>Legionella</i> in Flint's water that caused LD cases and deaths. • One county reported nearly 100 cases of LD.
<p>Katharine M. Benedict et al., <i>Surveillance for Waterborne Disease Outbreaks Associated with Drinking Water-United States, 2013-2014</i>, MORBIDITY & MORTALITY WKLY. REP., 66, 44,(CTR. FOR DISEASE CONTROL), Nov. 2017.</p> <p>https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/wr/pdfs/mm6644a3-H.pdf</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the deaths (13) associated with drinking water outbreaks between 2013 and 2014 were caused by Legionella.
<p>Sam Boyer, <i>A "Real Uptick" in Claims for Legionnaires' Disease</i>, INSURANCE BUSINESS MAGAZINE (Nov. 22, 2017).</p> <p>https://www.insurancebusinessmag.com/us/news/environmental/a-real-uptick-in-claims-for-legionnaires-disease-85645.aspx</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insurance companies are underwriting more liability policies for building owners for protection against LD related lawsuits. • "At Disneyland in California, nine people who visited in September 2017 developed Legionnaires' disease. Three others, who had been nearby the park also got sick, including one with additional health issues who died."
<p>Dave McKinney & Tony Arnold, <i>Surviving War, but Not the Veterans' Home</i>, WBEZ CHICAGO (Dec. 12, 2017).</p> <p>http://interactive.wbez.org/legionnaires/</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "In three years, legionellosis killed 13 people and sickened approximately 61 residents and staff at a veterans' home." • "Legionella bacteria are commonly found in approximately 50 percent of all large buildings."

Source	Key Findings
<p>Lauren Weber, <i>Legionnaires' Disease Is Rising At An Alarming Rate In the U.S.</i>, HUFFINGTON POST (Dec. 14, 2017).</p> <p>https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/legionnaires-disease-cases-continue-to-rise-nationally_us_5a303039e4b01bdd7657ddff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDC data shows that for more than a decade, LD cases across the country have been increasing. • "There have been 6,238 reported cases of LD nationwide, a 13.6 percent increase from 2016." • The CDC reported a 78 percent increase in the number of LD cases reported in New York City.
<p>Laurel E. Garrison et al., <i>Vital Signs: Deficiencies in Environmental Control Identified Outbreaks of Legionnaires' Disease- North America, 2000-2014</i>, MORBIDITY & MORTALITY WEEKLY REPORT, (CTR. FOR DISEASE CONTROL), June 7, 2016.</p> <p>https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6522e1.htm?s_cid=mm6522e1_w</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The most common settings of <i>Legionella</i> outbreaks were hotels and resorts, longer-term care facilities, and hospitals." • Most outbreaks were caused by inadequate water disinfectant levels or water temperatures within the range of bacterial growth. • External changes to a water distribution system, such as a nearby construction site or a water main break, caused outbreaks in about 7% of cases.
<p>Sanly, Liu et al, <i>Understanding, Monitoring, and Controlling Biofilm in Drinking Water Distribution Systems</i>, ENVTL. SCI. & TECH. 50, 17 (2016).</p> <p>http://pubs.acs.org/doi/full/10.1021/acs.est.6b00835</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Biofilm formation poses a significant problem to the drinking water industry as a potential source of bacterial contamination, including pathogens, and, in many cases, affecting the taste and odor of drinking water."
<p>William F. McCoy & Aaron A. Rosenblatt, <i>HACCP-Based Programs for Preventing Disease and Injury from Premise Plumbing: A Building Consensus</i>, 4 <i>Pathogens</i> 513, 514 (2015).</p> <p>https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26184325</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Thousands of preventable injuries and deaths are caused annually by microbial, chemical, and physical hazards from building water systems."
<p>Pramod K. Pandey et al, <i>Contamination of Water Resources by Pathogenic Bacteria</i>, <i>AMB EXPRESS</i> 4, 51 (June 2014).</p> <p>https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4077002/</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterborne pathogen contamination of water resources caused a reported 5,905 cases of illness or death.
<p>Hyun-Jung Jang, <i>Effects of Phosphate Addition on Biofilm Bacterial Communities and Water Quality in Annular Reactors Equipped with Stainless Steel and Ductile Cast Iron Pipes</i>, <i>THE JOURNAL OF MICROBIOLOGY</i> 50, 1 (Feb. 2012).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The addition of phosphate to the plumbing systems, under low residual chlorine conditions, promotes a more significant growth of biofilm and leads to a greater rate reduction of disinfection byproducts in DCI pipe than in STS pipe."
<p>Joe Gelt, <i>Microbes Increasingly Viewed as Water Quality Threat</i>, <i>ARROYO</i> 10, 2 (1998).</p> <p>https://wrrc.arizona.edu/publications/arroyo-newsletter/microbes-increasingly-viewed-water-quality-threat</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Microbial pathogens and contaminants in drinking water have caused various gastrointestinal illnesses in people across the country."

APPENDIX B

EPA Law Enforcement Actions

*Note: all cases involve violations of the Clean Water Act for failure to properly obtain a permit prior to discharging pollutants into the watershed OR discharging pollutants in excess of the permitted amount.

**All cases involve sewage overflows into nearby water sources, which are regulated as discharges under the Clean Water Act. Raw sewage contains a variety of pollutants including microorganisms, viruses, chemicals, and floatable materials. Health risks from human exposure include mild gastroenteritis, hepatitis, and dysentery. A sewage overflow occurs because the wastewater system becomes overwhelmed, usually from excessive rainfall, and the system backs up or overflows due to lack of maintenance and general system capacity. Aging infrastructure and antiquated pipes simply do not have the capacity to transfer all wastewater during periods of rainfall.

City	Estimated Cost of Corrective Actions	Pollutants	Impact on Water Supply
Evansville, Indiana ¹	\$500 million	Sewage; polluted runoff (nitrogen and phosphate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sewage and storm water overflows into the Ohio River, which is a drinking water source for more than 3 million people.
Revere, Massachusetts ²	\$50 million	Sewage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discharges of untreated wastewater into nearby system of rivers, creeks and brooks, which serve as the primary drinking water sources for some New England communities. Reduction in the water quality for swimming, fishing and other recreational activities that take place in the area – the Mass. Dep’t of Health has issued advisories related to consuming fish caught from waters of the Mystic River.

¹ Karen Thompson, "City of Evansville, Indiana Agrees to Upgrade Sewer Systems to Comply with Clean Water Act," EPA Press Release, Jan. 10, 2011, <https://www.epa.gov/enforcement/reference-news-release-city-evansville-indiana-agrees-upgrade-sewer-systems-comply-clean>; *Ohio River Facts*, Ohio River Foundation, http://www.ohioriverfdn.org/education/ohio_river_facts/ (last visited Feb. 27, 2018).

² David Deegan, "Settlement With Revere Mass. Addresses Wastewater, Stormwater Discharges," EPA Press Release, Aug. 25, 2010, https://archive.epa.gov/epapages/newsroom_archive/newsreleases/ab4e14bf117967e28525778a006588ee.html; *Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs) in New England*, EPA, <https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/documents/combinedseweroverflows.pdf> (last visited Feb. 27, 2018); *Combined Sewer Overflows*, Mystic River Watershed Assoc., <https://mysticriver.org/csos/> (last visited Feb. 27, 2018).

City	Estimated Cost of Corrective Actions	Pollutants	Impact on Water Supply
Toledo, Ohio ³	\$315 million	Sewage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sewage overflows into Swan Creek, the Maumee River, and the Ottawa River, which are the city's main waterways.
Akron, Ohio ⁴	At least \$900,000	Sewage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sewage overflow causes back up into basements and residential property. • The overflow is also released into the Cuyahoga River, which can be used for drinking water, recreation, and other public uses.
Jeffersonville, Indiana ⁵	\$100 to 150 million	Sewage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discharges and overflows of millions of gallons of sewage into the Ohio River annually – the Ohio River serves as the drinking water source of millions of people.
Nashville, TN ⁶	\$300-400 million	Sewage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discharge of over 200 million gallons of untreated sewage and overflows of billions of gallons of combined sewage into the Cumberland River and its tributaries – the water supply for Nashville.
Baton Rouge ⁷	\$330-460 million	Sewage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discharge occurs in streets, private property, nearby water sources, which also serve as drinking water supply.

³ Toledo, Ohio Agrees to Make Major Improvements to City's Sewer System at an Estimate Cost of \$315 Million, Press Release, 10-1180, Dep't of Justice, Oct. 21, 2010, <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/toledo-ohio-agrees-make-major-improvements-city-s-sewer-system-estimated-cost-315-million>.

⁴ City of Akron Ohio Agrees to Improve Sewer System to Resolve Clean Water Act Violations, Press Release No. 09-1227, Dep't. of Justice, Nov. 13, 2009, <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/city-akron-ohio-agrees-improve-sewer-system-resolve-clean-water-act-violations>; *Drinking Water Source Assessment for the City of Akron*, Ohio EPA (April 2003), <http://www.wapp.epa.ohio.gov/gis/swpa/OH7700011.pdf>.

⁵ City of Jeffersonville, Indiana Agrees to Upgrade Sewer System to Comply with Clean Water Act, EPA Press Release, Sept. 17, 2007; Ohio River Facts, *supra* note 1.

⁶ Metropolitan Government of Nashville Agrees to Extensive Sewer Systems Upgrade, EPA Press Release Oct. 24, 2007, <https://www.epa.gov/enforcement/reference-news-release-metropolitan-government-nashville-and-davidson-county-tenn-agree>; *Nashville Struggles with Water, Sewer Systems*, NPR (June 1, 2008), <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=91041009>.

⁷ Baton Rouge to Make Major Improvements to the Sewer System Under Clean Water Agreement with U.S. and Louisiana, EPA Press Release, Nov. 13, 2001, <https://www.epa.gov/enforcement/reference-news-release-baton-rouge-east-baton-rouge-parish-make-major-improvements-sewer>.

