

## For Immediate Release

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### Waterkeeper Groups Sue EPA on Tap Water Safety

*Regulator has missed Safe Drinking Water Act deadlines for toxic and carcinogenic contaminants*

(Washington, DC) [Waterkeeper Alliance](#), Waterkeepers Chesapeake, and California Coastkeeper Alliance [sued the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#) (EPA) today because the EPA has failed to revise regulatory standards on certain contaminants and develop new standards for emerging contaminants as required by the Safe Drinking Water Act.

The environmental groups are represented in this matter by Reed W. Super, Esq. and Mike DiGiulio, Esq. of Super Law Group, LLC.

EPA's mandatory obligations under the Safe Drinking Water Act include identifying unregulated contaminants for monitoring and/or regulation, regulating those contaminants, and reviewing and revising existing drinking water regulations, all according to a timetable mandated by Congress.

But EPA failed to perform these mandatory legal obligations and is unnecessarily putting people's health and lives at risk. For instance, EPA has not promulgated a revised National Primary Drinking Water Regulation for the carcinogenic chemicals tetrachloroethylene or trichloroethylene, even though it determined more than eight years ago that existing standards for these chemicals needed to be more protective. In contrast, it has taken the Trump administration less than [eight months](#) to decide **not** to regulate two highly toxic chemicals, PFOA and PFOS, in Americans' drinking water.

The mandatory duties the environmental groups intend to enforce in this suit involve the following contaminants:

- Chromium (including hexavalent chromium, known from the movie "Erin Brockovich") was regulated in 1991 with an enforceable limit of 100 parts per billion, based on the assumption that it was noncarcinogenic through oral exposure even though it is known to cause cancer when inhaled. Since then, the National Toxicology Program found "clear evidence of carcinogenic activity" when hexavalent chromium is ingested in drinking water. California established a public health goal of 0.02 parts per billion for hexavalent chromium, which is 5,000 times lower than the federal standards. EPA has been studying chromium for years but has not revised its regulations, or completed its review.

- Tetrachloroethylene (“PERC”), trichloroethylene (“TCE”), chlorite, cryptosporidium, haloacetic acids, heterotrophic bacteria, Giardia lamblia, Legionella, total trihalomethanes, and viruses. In 2010, EPA said the existing regulations for the solvents PERC and TCE should be revised to be more protective of human health. In 2017, EPA reached the same conclusion for the other eight contaminants listed here. But EPA has yet to develop revised regulations.

EPA also has a mandatory obligation under the Safe Drinking Water Act to make final regulatory determinations with respect to at least five contaminants published on the Candidate Contaminant List every five years. The fourth regulatory determinations were due by August 6, 2016, over two and a half years ago.

EPA has also failed to publish by the February 6, 2018 deadline the fifth Candidate Contaminant List, which is the list of contaminants that are not subject to any proposed or promulgated National Primary Drinking Water Regulation, but are known or anticipated to occur in public water systems and may require regulation under the Safe Drinking Water Act. This is also due every five years.

“At the same time the Trump administration is proposing to weaken the Clean Water Act and is actively allowing toxic chemicals to pollute our drinking water, it also is failing to comply with the Safe Drinking Water Act, which stops polluted water from reaching our taps,” said Marc Yaggi, Waterkeeper Alliance’s Executive Director. “EPA is supposed to protect human health and the environment, but its actions and omissions are threatening one precious resource we all need: clean drinking water.”

“Because of EPA’s delays, millions of Americans are being needlessly exposed to dangerously high levels of cancer-causing chemicals or pathogens in their tap water,” said Betsy Nicholas, Waterkeeper Chesapeake’s Executive Director.

“California is one of a dozen states where unsafe levels of trichloroethylene and perc have been detected in drinking water,” said Sean Bothwell, California Coastkeeper Alliance’s Executive Director. “Every day the EPA delays updating its standards is another day that families are being exposed to these dangerous chemicals each time they cook, brush their teeth, or drink a glass of water.”