



Photo Credit: Lucien Gassie, Wyoming Sanitary Survey Rule Manager. Photo taken near Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming.

EPA Region 8 Wyoming Drinking Water Monthly Newsletter

January, 2025

Webinar: EPA Extended Webinar Events on Lead

At the 21st Annual EPA Drinking Water Workshop on September 17-19, 2024, several talks were given on lead. Due to widespread interest, EPA has two extended webinar events based on these talks as part of its Small Drinking Water Systems Webinar Series. While these extended webinars are designed for State and Tribal personnel responsible for drinking water regulations, compliance and treatment technologies, water system operators, technical assistance providers and local government personnel may also benefit.

On January 28, 2025, from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm Mountain Time, there will be an extended webinar on Lead Chemistry, Communication and Local Engagement. The extended webinar will include presentations on:

- Lead Chemistry; Lead and Galvanized Iron Pipe Scale;
- Corrosion Control Methods and Approach;
- Ohio’s Lead Strategy and Local Engagement Tool, and
- Michigan’s Communication About Lead - 1/5 Sampling, Lead/Galvanized Lines, and Public Advisories.

More information on the January 28, 2025, extended webinar on Lead Chemistry, Communication and Local Engagement, including registration, can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/water-research/small-drinking-water-systems-webinar-series>.

THIS MONTH

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On December 3, 2024, there was an extended webinar on Lead Reduction Updates and Lead Service Line Identification and Replacement. Presentations included: EPA Update on Lead Reduction in Drinking Water; Technical Assistance Project on Lead Service Line Identification (LSLID); New and Emerging Technologies for LSLID; Predictive Modeling for LSLID Using Machine Learning Tools; and Water Sampling for LSLID.

You can watch the recording of the December 3, 2024, extended webinar on Lead Reduction Updates and Lead Service Line Identification and Replacement at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m1PSV4WcPkk>.

You also can query additional webinar recordings by topic (for example, lead) and by date (for example, descending) on EPA's Small Drinking Water Systems Webinar Series website, at <https://www.epa.gov/water-research/small-drinking-water-systems-webinar-series>.

If you have any questions, please contact Jill Minter, Lead Service Line Coordinator, at minter.jill@epa.gov or 303-312-6084.



Webinar: Mapping Potential Wetland Areas for Landscape and Nutrient Management Across the Conterminous United States

Advancements in Mapping Potential Wetland Areas Across the Conterminous United States presented by Lauren Krohmer, EPA Office of Research and Development

Increased availability and accessibility to 10-m landcover, topographic, and environmental data alongside tools and computers to process these data at the continental scale support large-scale landcover modeling. EnviroAtlas researchers harnessed 17 datasets at 10-m resolution and the Random Forest algorithm to identify locations across the conterminous United States that are likely to support a wetland ecosystem based on biophysical characteristics. The associated suite of products from this research provides opportunities to highlight locations for wetland construction, conservation, and restoration to contribute targeted ecosystem services related to nearby threats, including pollution from agricultural runoff and flooding.

Interception of Agricultural Surface Runoff by Wetlands Across CONUS presented by Scott Alford, EPA Office of Research and Development

Wetlands are widely valued for their effectiveness in reducing nutrient loads in surface waters, but there is growing need for targeted wetland conservation and construction to maximize impacts on water quality management while efficiently investing resources in wetland projects. This presentation will describe efforts to identify existing and potential wetland areas that intercept agricultural nonpoint source pollution in the form of surface runoff as a means of nutrient management across the conterminous United States (CONUS). This framework represents the initial steps in developing CONUS scale wetland prioritization tool to be used for water quality management.

Webinar Details

- Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025
- Time: 12:00-2:00 p.m. Mountain Standard Time
- Registration: [Click here to register](#).

Webinar: 2025 Virtual Operator Conference

This free, virtual training conference offers drinking water operators a chance to learn more about timely topics, improve fundamental skills, and get support for specific challenges while earning up to 12 hours of CEU credit. While there is no substitute for in-person training, this online event was created to specifically target operators of small and rural public water systems who may not have the means or ability to travel. Conference instructors are technical assistance providers from the RCAP network.

In 2024 the conference was pre-approved or acceptable for drinking water CEUs in Wyoming. The team is currently submitting applications for 2025 and will begin sharing status updates soon.

Webinar Details

- Date: February 4-6, 2024
- Time: 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. Mountain Standard Time
- Registration: [Click here to register](#).

Resource: Cybersecurity Fact Sheet for Water and Wastewater Systems

WASHINGTON - The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) are releasing information about a common cybersecurity vulnerability at water and wastewater systems using unsecured Human Machine Interface devices. Human Machine Interfaces can remotely connect to water system controls, and without the appropriate cybersecurity measures, they can present a vulnerability. Unauthorized remote users could exploit Human Machine Interfaces to view and adjust real-time system settings. These unauthorized adjustments can potentially disrupt the facility's water and/or wastewater treatment process. [The EPA and CISA fact sheet](#) provides water and wastewater utilities with recommendations for cybersecurity measures that will limit the vulnerability of Human Machine Interfaces and secure them against malicious cyber activity. [Learn more about EPA's cybersecurity resources for water systems here](#).

Background

Threat actors have demonstrated the capability to easily identify and exploit internet-exposed HMIs at water and wastewater systems. For example, in 2024, pro-Russia hackers successfully manipulated HMIs at water and wastewater utilities, causing water pumps and blower equipment to exceed their normal operating parameters. These instances have resulted in operational impacts and have forced victims to revert to manual operations.

Announcement: EPA Releases Draft Health-Based Recommendations for PFAS Levels in Bodies of Water

On December 19, 2024, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced draft national recommendations for health-based levels of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in waterbodies. Once final, these recommended criteria can be used by states and authorized Tribes to set water quality standards that help protect people from exposure through consuming water, fish and shellfish from inland and nearshore waterbodies that may be polluted by these PFAS.

EPA's draft recommended human health criteria identify concentrations of three PFAS in a water body at or below where they are not expected to cause adverse human health effects from chronic (lifetime) exposure. The three chemicals are perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS), and perfluorobutane sulfonic acid (PFBS). Human health criteria are not regulatory requirements and do not, on their own, compel any action. Rather they are information for entities, including state and Tribal regulators, to consider when making policy decisions that protect water quality.

See the [full news release here](#).

Announcement: EPA Report Highlights Water Affordability Challenges in the U.S.

On, December 17, 2024, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency released a report to Congress detailing water affordability across the U.S. among households and utilities.

The report — “[Water Affordability Needs Assessment](#)” — summarizes decades of research by utilities, academics, and associations, and includes recommendations, such as potentially establishing a federal water assistance program; increasing education, outreach, and knowledge around solutions to address affordability; and increasing ways to reduce water infrastructure capital and operating costs.

EPA estimates that between 12.1 million and 19.2 million households throughout the U.S. lack access to affordable water services. Nationally, the cost of unaffordable water service bills ranges from \$5.1 billion to \$8.8 billion.

“Accessing clean and safe water is part of everyday life, and it should be affordable for everyone across the country,” said EPA Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator for Water Bruno Pigott. “The Biden Administration and Congress recognized communities need assistance, and that’s why the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law includes \$50 billion for water and wastewater projects, almost half of which is to be provided in grants.”

See the [full news release here](#).

Funding: Department of the Interior’s WaterSMART Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects

The objective of this notice of funding opportunity is to invite States, Indian Tribes, irrigation districts, water districts, and other organizations with water or power delivery authority to leverage their money and resources by cost sharing with the Bureau of Reclamation on small-scale on-the-ground projects that seek to conserve, better manage, or otherwise make more efficient use of water supplies. Proposed projects that are supported by an existing water management and conservation plan, System Optimization Review, or other planning effort led by the applicant are prioritized.

[Click here for more information](#)
[Deadline to Apply is Jan 14, 2025](#)

Resource: Impact of Winter Weather on Water Systems

With winter weather upon us, [water systems face increased challenges](#). The combination of freezing temperatures, increased water demand, and potential infrastructure vulnerabilities can significantly impact the quality and reliability of drinking water. [Understanding these challenges and how to mitigate them](#) is crucial for ensuring safe and consistent water supply during the colder months.

Freezing Temperatures and Infrastructure

One of the primary concerns during winter is the risk of pipes freezing and bursting. When water inside pipes freezes, it expands, which can cause pipes to crack or burst. This not only leads to water loss but also poses a risk of contamination if the integrity of the water system is compromised. To prevent this, water utilities often implement measures such as:

- **Insulating Pipes and Infrastructure:** Ensure that pipes are properly insulated and that heating systems are in place to maintain a stable temperature in critical areas.
- **Regular Maintenance:** Conduct regular inspections and maintenance of water systems, including checking for leaks and ensuring that all equipment is in good working order.

- **Heating Systems:** Installing heating systems in critical areas to maintain a stable temperature.
- **Communication with Customers:** Encourage homeowners to be proactive about protecting their pipes from freezing in colder months.



Increased Water Demand

Winter weather can lead to increased water demand for various reasons, including the need for heating systems that use water, such as boilers and radiators. Additionally, people tend to use more water for hot showers and baths during colder months. This increased demand can strain the water supply system, making it essential for utilities to manage resources efficiently.

Contamination Risks

Snow and ice can carry pollutants, like salt for de-icing roads, that may enter the water supply through runoff. When snow melts, it can pick up contaminants from roads, agricultural fields, and other surfaces, which then flow into water sources. To address this, water treatment facilities must be equipped to handle higher levels of pollutants and ensure that the water is safe for consumption.

Mitigation Strategies

To ensure the reliability and safety of drinking water systems during winter, [several strategies can be employed](#). Organizations should establish a comprehensive cold weather safety plan. This plan should outline precautions to take before, during, and after the onset of freezing temperatures. Key elements include:

- Winterize water systems and ensure that exposed plumbing is properly drained.
- Inspect building heating systems to keep areas with plumbing above 40°F.
- Clear access to fire hydrants, sprinkler system rooms, and life safety equipment.
- Monitor and manage snow accumulation on roofs and around facilities to prevent damage and ensure safety.
- Review emergency evacuation procedures to ensure that snow, ice and cold weather conditions are adequately addressed.

[Resource: WaterTA](#)

All communities deserve access to clean, reliable water. Yet too many communities across America face challenges in providing safe drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater services to their residents. The [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#) presents an unprecedented opportunity to address water infrastructure needs by providing \$50 billion in new funding – the [largest federal investment in water in the history of our nation](#). New and existing EPA [Water Technical Assistance \(WaterTA\) programs](#) will be utilized to support effective implementation of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

EPA's free Water Technical Assistance (WaterTA) supports communities to identify water challenges, develop plans, build capacity, and develop application materials to access water infrastructure funding. To implement WaterTA, EPA collaborates with states, tribes, territories, community partners, and other key stakeholders. Learn more about [WaterTA services and programs](#).

EPA WaterTA aims to assist communities with applications for federal funding, quality infrastructure, and reliable water services. If your community is facing water infrastructure challenges and could benefit from support, we encourage you to learn more about [who can receive WaterTA and the challenges WaterTA can help your community address](#) then complete and submit a webform request by clicking on the link below:

[Request Water Technical Assistance for Your Community](#)

Reminder: Public Water System Facility and Contact Changes

Please contact EPA Region 8 Drinking Water Program if your system has a change in the treatment process; you add or remove a water source; there is a change in the number of people served or the number of water connections; or different contact information becomes available for your water system. This allows us to keep you up to date on monitoring requirements and keeps our inventory current. Failure to notify EPA about water source or treatment changes may result in a violation.

To access the EPA's change form, send an email to R8DWU@epa.gov requesting the form or you can find the form on [EPA Region 8 Drinking Water Operations website](#).

Upcoming Regulatory Deadlines

Date	Event	Location
Last day of every calendar month	Last day to collect monthly total coliform samples	Sites approved on your RTCR sample plan
10 th of every month	Last day for EPA to receive total coliform and DBP samples collected during the previous month	N/A

Gentle Reminder for yearly monitoring requirements:

It is about that time of the year to check if you have met your yearly monitoring requirement. If you know you still need to sample, please plan to collect the sample before the end of 2024. If you are not sure of what you need to sample for and what you have sampled for so far, please review your Monitoring and Reporting requirements also known as To Dos sent to you in February and compare that with the results recorded in Drinking Water Watch report at:

<https://sdwisdww.epa.gov/DWWR8WY/index.jsp>

EPA Drinking Water Program Contacts

- Kyle St Clair, Wyoming Liaison – 303-312-6791 – stclair.kyle@epa.gov
- If there is an after-hours or holiday emergency, please call 303-312-6327.

Questions related to a specific newsletter article, please contact:

- Tamara Barbakova, Funding – 303-312-6970 – barbakova.tamara@epa.gov
- Bryce Faliskie, Water Security and Resiliency – 303-312-6651 – faliskie.bryce@epa.gov
- Angela Mendrala, Inventory Changes – 303-312-6533 – mendrala.angela@epa.gov
- Jill Minter, Lead Service Line Inventory – 303-312-6084 – minter.jill@epa.gov
- Kendra Morrison, PFAS and Chemical Rule – 303-312-6145 – morrison.kendra@epa.gov

Other R8 Drinking Water Employee Contact Information Can be Found [Here](#).

You can view this newsletter and previous newsletters by visiting: <https://www.epa.gov/region8-waterops/epa-region-8-wyoming-drinking-water-monthly-newsletters>

Additional water and environmental topics for the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) and Clean Water Act (CWA) can be [found here](#).

If you would like to be added or removed from this newsletter distribution list, please email Kyle St Clair at stclair.kyle@epa.gov.