



ECOS

PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: ECOS Executive Director Ben Grumbles, (202) 266-4929 or bgrumbles@ecos.org
Environmental Council of the States (ECOS)

ECOS Statement on U.S. EPA's Final National Primary Drinking Water Regulation

Washington, DC – ECOS appreciates U.S. EPA's work to finalize the per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) National Primary Drinking Water Regulation (NPDWR). State and territorial environmental agencies are the main regulators for water, land, and air in almost all of the states and have requested that EPA establish national, science-based standards to protect our precious drinking water supplies from toxic chemicals. Establishing the first-ever enforceable standard for PFAS under the Safe Drinking Water Act is an important step toward safeguarding human health and the environment.

States are committed to working in coordination with EPA and other federal agencies to protect public health and prevent pollution. ECOS understands the technical and feasibility challenges associated with implementing this rule and looks forward to working with EPA to put the nation's drinking water systems on a path to compliance with the new standard. As ECOS coordinates with EPA on this shared challenge, it reiterates a few important considerations:

- Funding is an integral component of state capacity building. While states appreciate EPA's efforts to distribute funds from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to drinking water systems impacted by PFAS and other emerging contaminants, the total dollars allotted are not nearly enough to capture the immense activities required to implement the NPDWR. Additionally, while the rule applies only to public water systems, many Americans are on private wells and also experience challenges with PFAS contamination, but do not receive funding assistance under State Revolving Funds. ECOS requests that EPA continue to work with states to ensure adequate financial and technical support of all public water systems and communities before and after reaching the five-year implementation deadline. ECOS recognizes that Congress will need to provide significantly more funding for state capacity building and infrastructure to achieve compliance with PFAS-related regulations.
- Risk communication is an ongoing challenge. ECOS encourages EPA to work with states to find out what kinds of informational materials would be most helpful and requests that EPA continue to rapidly develop materials that are easily comprehensible, publicly available, and consistently messaged.
- PFAS treatment, disposal, and destruction need continued advancements to enable water systems to fully comply with the NPDWR, and to ensure PFAS is not moved across media, including to air. ECOS encourages EPA to continue to establish science-based recommendations related to treatment technologies, to research and approve methods for total destruction, and to continue to assist states with monitoring. ECOS hopes EPA will work with states to understand and successfully implement the updated interim guidance on destruction and disposal.

"Having federal standards for these forever chemicals in our drinking water provides certainty for the states, our public water systems, and our residents," said ECOS President Elizabeth Biser, Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality. "Addressing PFAS requires a comprehensive approach, and the partnership between EPA and the states is critical to our success on this issue."

ECOS is the national nonprofit, nonpartisan association of state and territorial environmental agency leaders. ECOS oversees the Interstate Technology and Regulatory Council, which continues to provide credible technical guidance on PFAS. For more information, visit www.ecos.org, www.ecos.org/pfas, and pfas-1.itrcweb.org/.