



**CHILDREN'S
ENVIRONMENTAL
HEALTH
NETWORK**

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Clean Water Rule Protects Water Systems and Public Health

Access to clean water is essential for the health of all Americans, especially children. The recently finalized Clean Water Rule, drafted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, clarifies the authority of the federal government to monitor the health of smaller streams, rivers, lakes and wetland areas that supply 1 in 3 Americans with a portion of their drinking water. The Children's Environmental Health Network (CEHN) strongly supports this rule and the safeguards it will provide for our nation's very valuable water systems, and for our children's health.

Contamination of water used for drinking or recreational purposes poses some significant health and development problems--including gastrointestinal illnesses, neurodevelopmental problems, and others--especially to children, who face potentially greater exposure to, and vulnerability from, certain contaminants, due to their unique physiological and behavioral traits. Some adverse health effects from exposure to contaminated water may be pronounced, and some carry life-long ramifications.

These concerns become even more critical when considering future trends. Climate change is poised to cause droughts, sea level rise, strong storms, flooding, and warmer water temperatures, all of which can disrupt access to clean and potable water. Children, especially those in already disadvantaged communities, stand to be significantly impacted by water insecurity. Addressing the protection of our water supply now, in the face of climate change, is essential.

"The final Clean Water Rule announced recently by the Environmental Protection Agency and the Army Corps of Engineers includes important provisions to further protect the general public and our most vulnerable populations, such as children, from increased pollution of our waters, said CEHN Executive Director, Nsedu Obot Witherspoon. "We applaud the collaborative efforts made to create this clear and sensible rule as we continue to strive for the healthiest waters possible for our children of today and tomorrow."

CEHN is a national multi-disciplinary organization whose mission is to protect the developing child from environmental health hazards and promote a healthier environment. To learn more, visit www.cehn.org.

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