



December 1, 2023

New EPA Rule a Step Forward for “Filtered Not Bottled” Water, More Amendments Needed

As strongly recommended by Plastic Pollution Coalition and other leading experts and community advocates, on November 30 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) included in the [newly drafted Lead and Copper Rule Improvement](#) (LCRI) language that **could mitigate the distribution and use of hundreds of billions of single-use plastic water bottles across the United States** over the next 10 years.

The LCRI strengthens the Lead and Copper Rule that was originally published in 1991 to control lead and copper in drinking water, and the [Filtered Not Bottled](#) campaign has been pushing for the inclusion of language to **proactively recommend the distribution point-of-use filters to impacted households** within the LCRI. The newly drafted rule requires water systems with consistently high levels of lead to make available to customers filters certified to remove lead from water, rather than single-use water bottles. This is a very significant step forward.

“It is critical we do not allow additional serious pollutants to be introduced into the environment and our bodies while the U.S. addresses getting toxic lead out of our drinking water. Plastic pollutes at every stage of its existence. We are grateful the EPA draft rule will advance access to filters, which can provide families with a safer, sustainable clean water solution to protect them for many years to come, while also reducing the use of plastic bottled water.” — Julia Cohen, Co-Founder and Managing Director, Plastic Pollution Coalition

While the proposed rule did include critical language for filter distribution, it fell short on other key measures, such as the need to advise against the use of toxic plastic pipes such as PVC, as outlined in the report authored by Beyond Plastics and Plastic Pollution Coalition, [The Perils of PVC Plastic Pipes](#). The EPA will be [accepting public comment on the proposed rule](#) before it is finalized in October 2024, and will also be hosting an information webinar on December 6, 2023, and a virtual public hearing on January 16, 2024.

“I applaud the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s decision to require the removal of lead pipes used for drinking water nationwide, but EPA administrator Michael Regan needs to take that one step further and advise local governments not to replace lead service lines with PVC



plastic pipes. Like all plastic, PVC and CPVC contain chemical additives—some toxic and many untested for toxicity—that can leach into our drinking water. The Biden administration must ensure we don't leap from the frying pan into the fire by replacing lead pipes with another material that threatens public health, like PVC, especially when safe alternatives exist.” — Judith Enck, former EPA Regional Administrator and current Beyond Plastics President

Making pitcher filters available to the communities most impacted by lead is a big step forward for clean water free of lead and plastic pollution. Ultimately, it's a move that will help communities impacted by lead pipes, as well as those where plastic is produced, transported, and disposed.

[Learn more.](#)

Press Contact: Erica Cirino, Communications Manager
Plastic Pollution Coalition
Erica.Cirino@plasticpollutioncoalition.org
(323) 936-3010 x1

Plastic Pollution Coalition is a non-profit communications and advocacy organization that collaborates with an expansive global alliance of organizations, businesses, and individuals to create a more just, equitable, regenerative world free of plastic pollution and its toxic impacts.