

**ASSEMBLY CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION No. 155**

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 5, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman ANNETTE QUIJANO

District 20 (Union)

Assemblywoman VALERIE VAINIERI HUTTLE

District 37 (Bergen)

Assemblyman P. CHRISTOPHER TULLY

District 38 (Bergen and Passaic)

SYNOPSIS

Strongly urges DEP to adopt standards for certain drinking water contaminants as recommended by NJ Drinking Water Quality Institute.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/15/2020)

1 **A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION** strongly urging the Department of
2 Environmental Protection to adopt standards for certain drinking
3 water contaminants as recommended by the New Jersey Drinking
4 Water Quality Institute.
5
6 **WHEREAS**, The maintenance of high quality potable water is essential
7 in order to safeguard the health and welfare of the people of the
8 State; and
9 **WHEREAS**, Recognizing this, in 1977, the Legislature passed the “Safe
10 Drinking Water Act,” which, among other things, directed the New
11 Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to adopt and
12 enforce State primary drinking water regulations; and
13 **WHEREAS**, In 1983, amendments to the act created the Drinking Water
14 Quality Institute (DWQI), a panel of experts tasked with developing
15 standards for hazardous contaminants in drinking water and
16 recommending those standards for adoption by the DEP; and
17 **WHEREAS**, The 1983 amendments also directed the DEP, after
18 considering the recommendations of the DWQI, to establish
19 standards for 22 listed organic compounds and any other
20 contaminants that are present in New Jersey drinking water and
21 may be harmful to human health; and
22 **WHEREAS**, Despite the State’s strides in improving the quality of
23 drinking water, today many contaminants remain unregulated,
24 including several specified in the 1983 amendments; and
25 **WHEREAS**, Since at least 2005, the DEP has failed to adopt new or
26 more stringent standards for approximately 14 contaminants, even
27 though the DWQI has made recommendations concerning those
28 contaminants; and
29 **WHEREAS**, The DWQI’s recommendations include new or more
30 stringent standards for: perchlorate, a hazardous industrial
31 chemical used in the production of explosives; radon-222, a
32 radioactive gas and known human carcinogen; and formaldehyde,
33 an organic compound used in embalming to temporarily preserve
34 human and animal remains; and
35 **WHEREAS**, As the agency responsible for ensuring the safety of the
36 State’s drinking water supply, the DEP has a duty to adopt new and
37 more stringent drinking water standards when doing so would
38 protect the health and welfare of New Jersey residents and visitors;
39 and
40 **WHEREAS**, The DWQI’s recommendations are based on the latest
41 scientific information concerning the health effects of, and testing
42 and treatment methods for, various contaminants and, consequently,
43 the recommendations of the DWQI should be swiftly considered
44 and adopted by the DEP; now, therefore,
45
46 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the General Assembly of the State of New*
47 *Jersey (the Senate concurring):*

1. The Department of Environmental Protection is strongly urged to consider and adopt the standards for the following drinking water contaminants, as recommended by the New Jersey Drinking Water Quality Institute:

Perchlorate, recommended in October 2005;

Radon-222, recommended in February 2009;

Benzene, recommended in March 2009;

Carbon tetrachloride, recommended in March 2009;

1,3-dichlorobenzene, recommended in March 2009;

1,4-dichlorobenzene, recommended in March 2009;

1,2-dichloroethane, recommended in March 2009;

Formaldehyde, recommended in March 2009;

n-Hexane, recommended in March 2009;

Methyl ethyl ketone, recommended in March 2009;

Vinyl chloride, recommended in March 2009;

DCPA and degradates, as recommended in March 2009;

1,1-dichloroethane, recommended in March 2009;

1,1,2-trichloroethane, recommended in March 2009;

2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State, shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly or the Secretary of the Senate to the Governor, the Commissioner of Environmental Protection, and each member of the New Jersey Drinking Water Quality Institute.

STATEMENT

This concurrent resolution would strongly urge the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to adopt drinking water standards for 14 hazardous contaminants, as recommended by the Drinking Water Quality Institute (DWQI).

In 1977, the Legislature passed the “Safe Drinking Water Act,” which, among other things, directed the DEP to adopt and enforce State primary drinking water regulations. Amendments to that act in 1983 created the DWQI, a panel of experts tasked with developing standards for hazardous contaminants in drinking water and recommending those standards to the DEP. The 1983 amendments also directed the DEP, after considering the recommendations of the DWQI, to establish standards for 22 listed organic compounds and any other contaminants that are present in New Jersey drinking water and may be harmful to human health.

Despite the State's strides in improving the quality of drinking water, today many contaminants remain unregulated, including several specified in the 1983 amendments. Since at least 2005, the DEP has failed to adopt new or more stringent standards for approximately 14 contaminants, even though the DWQI has made recommendations concerning those contaminants. The DWQI's

1 recommendations include new or more stringent standards for:
2 perchlorate, a hazardous industrial chemical used in the production
3 of explosives; radon-222, a radioactive gas and known human
4 carcinogen; and formaldehyde, an organic compound used in
5 embalming to temporarily preserve human and animal remains.

6 As the agency responsible for ensuring the safety of the State's
7 drinking water supply, the DEP has a duty to adopt new and more
8 stringent drinking water standards when doing so would protect the
9 health and welfare of New Jersey residents and visitors. The
10 DWQI's recommendations are based on the latest scientific
11 information concerning the health effects of, and testing and
12 treatment methods for, various contaminants. As such, the
13 recommendations of the DWQI should be swiftly considered and
14 adopted by the DEP.