

Drinking Water: Report from the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology



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The President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology ("PCAST") has issued a December 2016 report titled: *Report to the President – Science and Technology to Ensure the Safety of the Nation's Drinking Water*

The PCAST is described as an advisory group of the Nation's leading scientists and engineers, appointed by the President to augment the science and technology advice available to him from inside the White House and from cabinet departments and other Federal agencies.

The *Report* states that President Obama asked the PCAST in response to concerns about the safety of the nation's drinking water to investigate how science and technology can more effectively address these concerns.

PCAST has first released its recommendations in an Executive Summary of what is stated to be the upcoming full *Report* on safe drinking water.

The *Report* addresses issues associated with United States drinking water including:

- The Nation's Drinking-Water System
- Drinking-Water Contamination at the Source
- Contamination Issues at Drinking-Water Treatment Plants
- Contamination Issues in Distribution Systems
- Regulatory Oversight of Drinking-Water Safety
- The Special Case of Lead
- Risk Comparisons
- Monitoring Issues
- U.S. Drinking-Water Safety in Practice
- Best current and emerging treatment technologies
- Best current and emerging monitoring technologies
- Ongoing National Activities on Science and Technology for Safe Drinking Water
- Federal Agencies
- EPA Drinking-Water Action Plan

The *Report's* "near-term" target recommendations include:

- Increased Monitoring of Drinking-Water Contaminants, Especially for Vulnerable Populations
- Big-Data Analytics for Drinking-Water Systems
- Increase Data Collection and Sharing Through Citizen Science Efforts

- Developing the Drinking-Water Treatment and Distribution-System Workforce

“Long-term” strategic recommendations include:

- Federal Coordination of Research and Development Focused on Safe Drinking Water
- Developing the Next Generation of Technologies to Improve Safety of Drinking Water
- Developing Comparative Risk Assessment Methodologies and Capacity
- Safe Drinking Water Demonstration Projects

[A copy of the Executive Summary can be downloaded here.](#)