

Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund  
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## **Water Advocates, Communities Living with Toxic Water Praise Passage of Safe Water Funding Bill from Asm. Environmental Safety Committee**

***Momentum behind AB 217 comes as new report finds children at risk from  
“pervasive lead contamination” in school drinking water***

Sacramento, CA -- A coalition of advocates for communities living with contaminated drinking water today praised the passage of AB 217 (E. Garcia) from the Assembly Environmental Safety and Toxic Waste Committee. The bill would provide the ongoing funding needed to deliver safe water to California children and families through a small fee on water users.

“Today, Assembly Environmental Safety Committee members listened to the voices of the people paying the price for unsafe drinking water with their health, and moved AB 217 forward to protect school children and communities from toxics in their drinking water,” said Jennifer Clary, Water Programs Manager with Clean Water Action. “California has long promised the right of safe and affordable drinking water for all, but we can’t deliver on it without sustained funding. Now, momentum for investment in a Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund is growing thanks to Governor Gavin Newsom and the Speaker as well as legislative leaders like Asm. Garcia and Sen. Monning.”

Just last week, a new report released from CALPIRG Education Fund found “pervasive lead contamination” in school drinking water in cities across California, emphasizing the urgency for California’s legislature to pass the Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund. CalPIRG’s [new interactive map](#) of school lead testing results shows children face threats from contaminated water across California, a situation that requires a statewide approach to drinking water safety. Statewide, California’s safe drinking water crisis affects one million Californians each year and causes a range of health issues from cancer and birth defects to heart disease and diabetes. Approximately 300 public water systems in California are out of compliance with drinking water standards and hundreds of thousands more Californians may not even know that their water is contaminated because they rely on unregulated systems or domestic wells. California’s drinking water crisis disproportionately impacts low-income communities and communities of color and can be found in every corner of the state.

For these reasons, over a hundred community organizations support recent legislative proposals to provide ongoing, sustainable funding to repair and maintain the water infrastructure needed to deliver safe water across the state.

Governor Newsom’s January budget and AB 217 (E. Garcia) each provide ongoing funding needed to deliver safe water to California children and families through a small fee on water users, exempting payers with low incomes.

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