

Hicks-Ray Associates



July 13, 2011

TO: WESTCAS Membership

FROM: Fred B. Hicks and Tom Ray

SUBJECT: Senate Environment and Public Works Committee Hearing

Yesterday, the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee held a hearing entitled, "Oversight Hearing on the Environmental Protection Agency's Implementation of the Safe Drinking Water Act's Unregulated Drinking Water Contaminants Program."

With a single exception, since 1996 the EPA has not made a determination to regulate any new drinking water contaminant. Congress requested that the GAO investigate EPA's unregulated contaminant program for drinking water and this report was released yesterday. The full Senate EPW hearing was called to review the GAO report and to hear from a variety of witnesses on the issue.

This is a huge topic and well worth the attention of WESTCAS members. We have attached the following to get you started on what happened at yesterday's Senate hearing:

- A list of those who testified.
- The opening statements of Senator Boxer and Ranking Republican Inhofe.
- The testimony of Butch Araiza, General Manager of the West Valley Water District in California.
- The testimony of the Director of the GAO's Natural Resources and Environment section.
- The GAO Report itself.

This is quite a "data dump" on everybody, but the attachments are quite readable and well organized. They provide real insight to the much larger issues concerning how EPA should regulate emerging contaminants and how to balance the ability to detect contaminants in ever smaller concentrations with their actual threat to public health.

Attendees at the recent WESTCAS annual conference heard a presentation on the West Valley perchlorate treatment system that is in operation today. Just a reminder that the Senate testimony of yesterday featured a direct link to an active WESTCAS member.

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