

Permitting of PFAS Compounds in NJPDES Discharges to Surface Water

A Public Hearing sponsored by the New Jersey Clean Water Council

SPEAKERS

Shawn LaTourette Appointed by Governor Philip D. Murphy, Shawn M. LaTourette became New Jersey's Commissioner of Environmental Protection on June 14, 2021. He had served as Acting Commissioner since January 16, 2021. Commissioner LaTourette is responsible for formulating statewide environmental policy while directing programs that protect public health and ensure the quality of New Jersey's air, land, water, and natural and historic resources.

A lawyer and policymaker with more than 20 years of experience in environmental protection, Commissioner LaTourette began his career defending victims of toxic exposure, including organizing and advocating for the needs of vulnerable New Jersey communities whose drinking water was contaminated by petrochemicals. Throughout a career shaping environmental law and policy, he has served in executive roles and as a trusted adviser to governments, community and non-profit organizations, and leaders in industry and infrastructure, while also litigating high-stakes lawsuits involving environmental, energy and public health concerns.

Commissioner LaTourette first joined the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) as the chief legal and regulatory policy adviser to then-Commissioner Catherine R. McCabe in 2018. He was elevated to DEP Chief of Staff in 2019 and to Deputy Commissioner in 2020. Since 2019, he has been responsible for running DEP's operations while formulating policy and regulatory reforms to advance Governor Murphy's environmental, climate change and clean energy priorities. Commissioner LaTourette has developed and led initiatives that prioritize environmental justice while facilitating greenhouse gas emissions reductions, climate change resilience and adaptation, renewable energy deployment, water infrastructure enhancement, brownfields redevelopment, community renewal, and natural resource conservation and restoration.

Guided by a deep commitment to equity and a professional philosophy that uniting economic development and environmental improvement promotes the public good, Commissioner LaTourette has been regarded as a consensus builder adept at achieving balance among competing priorities. His diverse background — in protecting vulnerable communities, facilitating the development of infrastructure and public works, managing business risk, promoting conservationist policies and advocating for equity — has made him a leading force in policy, program and project development, especially those at the complex juncture of economic development, energy and environmental protection.

Born and raised in New Jersey, Commissioner LaTourette graduated magna cum laude from Rutgers University and earned his law degree summa cum laude from Rutgers Law School, where he was the class salutatorian and the recipient of multiple environmental and governance awards, and published scholarship on environmental law, natural resource damage and climate issues.

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Virginia Wong is the Chief of the Clean Water Regulatory Branch in the Water Division of U.S. EPA Region 2. Region 2 covers New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, and eight federally recognized Indian Nations. In her position, Virginia directs and manages the entire point source control program, water quality standards, and dredging, sediments and ocean disposal. Virginia has over 30 years of experience in wastewater management, industrial waste, pretreatment, NPDES permit and enforcement programs. Email: wong.virginia@epa.gov

Tess Richman is a biologist in EPA's Biosolids Program within the Office of Water. Her work focuses on regulatory and programmatic activities. Over the past four years Tess' work has included planning two EPA Biosolids National Meetings, publishing Biosolids Biennial Reports No.8 and No.9, developing guidance on lagoon clean outs, streamlining requirements for products derived from sewage sludge, and supporting risk assessment for chemicals found in biosolids. Tess graduated from Lawrence University with a BA in biology and economics. Email: Richman.tess@epa.gov

Jennifer Bush has been with the State of Michigan's Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) for just under two years. During this time, Jennifer has worked in the Water Resources Division on the Emerging Pollutants Section team, with a role as the statewide contact for both PFAS in biosolids and PFAS in municipal wastewater treatment plants that do not have an Industrial Pretreatment Program. Prior to working at the State of Michigan, Jennifer worked in consulting with experience in investigative field work, environmental reporting, and environmental compliance. Jennifer is a graduate of Michigan State University and has a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Studies and Sustainability, along with a minor in Law, Justice, and Public Policy. Email: BushJ14@michigan.gov

Anthony McCracken Sr., AICP/PP is currently the chairman of the New Jersey Clean Water Council and has served on the council for many years. He previously served as President of the New Jersey Section of the American Water Resources Association. Anthony is a nationally certified land use planner and is licensed in the State of New Jersey as a Professional Planner. In 2022, he retired as the Assistant Director of Planning in the Planning Division for Somerset County, New Jersey. Email: cwc@dep.nj.gov