

got water?

The Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974 and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Drinking Water Standards

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Overview

- Need for Drinking Water Standards
- History of Safe Water Act
- Who develops drinking water standards?
- Standards development process
- Enforcement
- Summary

Effects of Contaminants

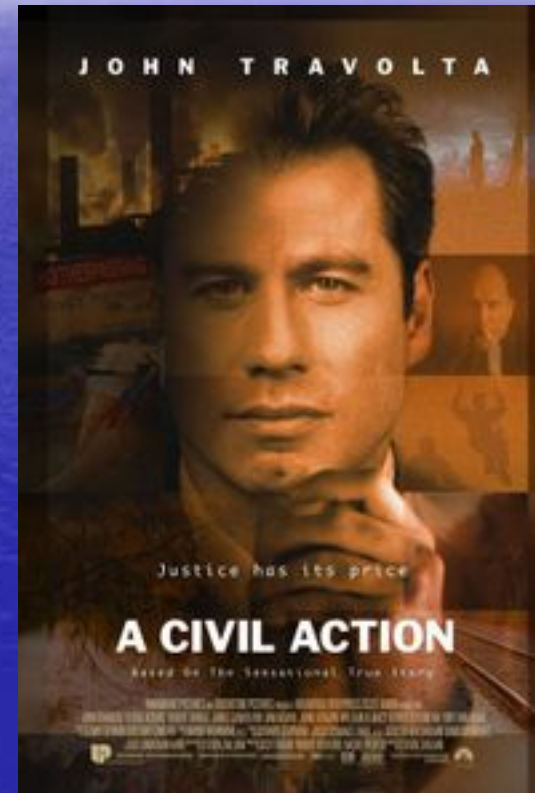
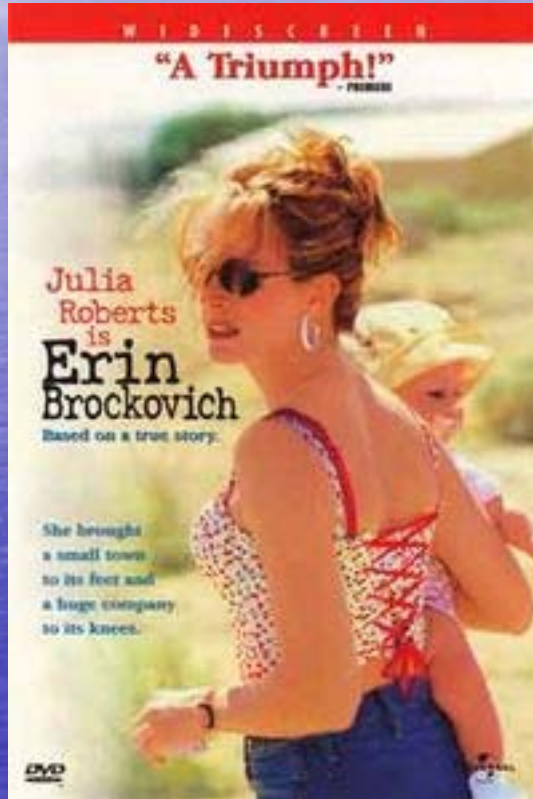
ACUTE

- Immediate result of consumption of high levels of contaminants
- Most commonly caused by microbial bacteria
- “Sensitive Populations” (i.e. children & elderly) are more susceptible

CHRONIC

- Result of consumption of contaminants over a sustained period of time
- Contaminants include chemicals, radionuclides and minerals
- Possible effects are cancer and impaired organ function

Chronic Effects



History

**Safe Drinking
Water Act
(1974, 1986,
1996)**

Multiple Barrier Approach

**EPA
Regulations**

**Source
Water
Protection**

**Distrib.
System
Integrity**

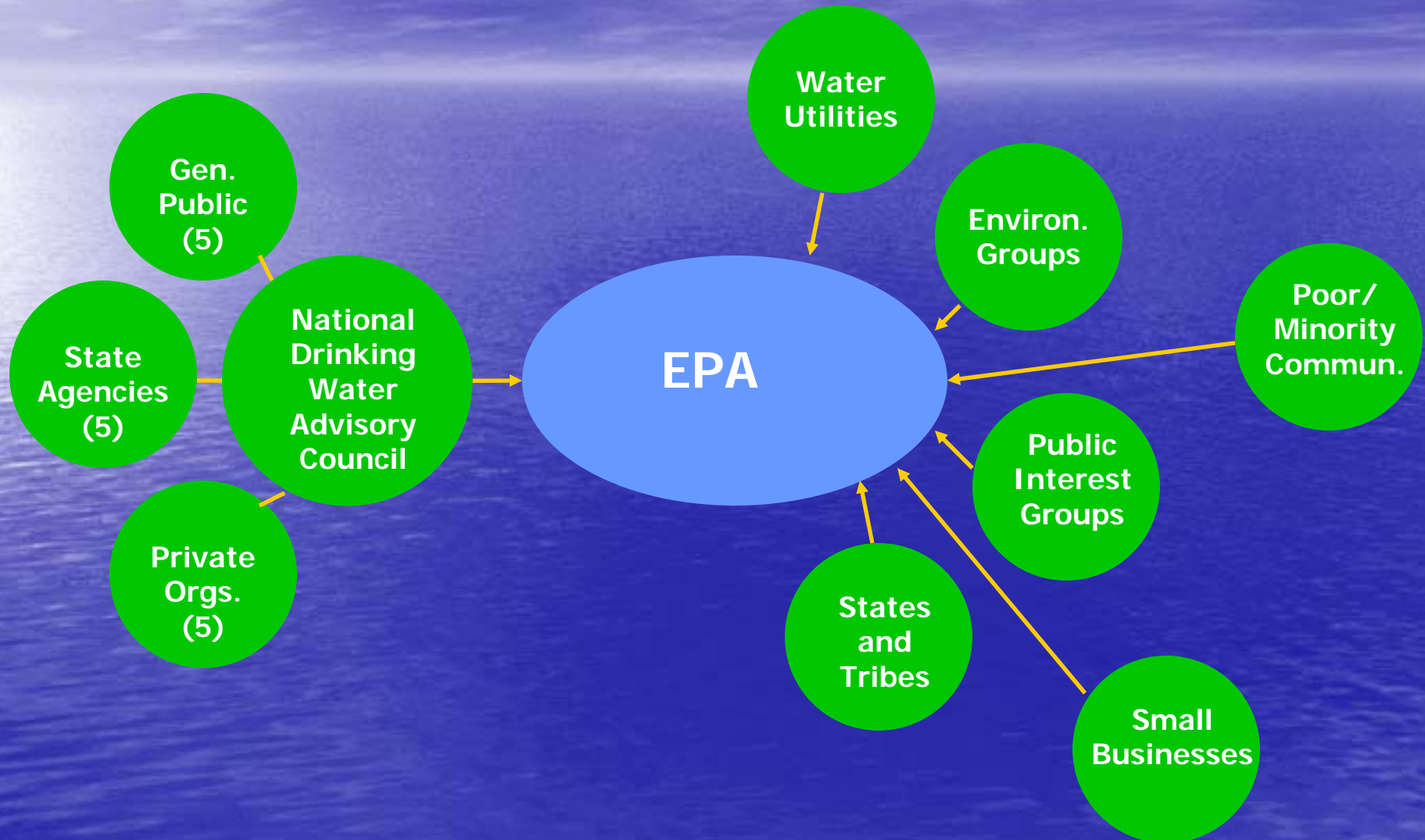
Public Info.

Treatment

**Nat'l Primary
Drinking
Water Regs.
(MCL, TT)**

**National
Secondary
Drinking
Water Regs.**

Who develops standards?



Development Process

1. Identify Problems



2. Establish Priorities



3. Set Standards

Development Process

IDENTIFY PROBLEMS

- Generate and publish Contaminant Candidate List (CCL)

ESTABLISH PRIORITIES

- Designate 5 or more to evaluate for regulation; others for further research in health risks or likelihood of occurrence
- Identify unregulated contaminants for monitoring by public water systems

SET STANDARDS

- Determine Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG)
- Determine enforceable Max. Contaminant Level (MCL)
- Perform cost/benefit analysis
- Treatment Techniques, Variances and Exemptions

Violations of Standards

- EPA designates enforcement to the state (or tribe) level
- Water suppliers must test and monitor water prior to distribution
- Exceeding regulated contaminant levels or failure to monitor constitutes a violation punishable by fine or penalty
- Violations must be reported within a timeframe appropriate to the severity of the violation

Summary

- Water is essential to sustaining life, but at the same time can contain contaminants that pose a threat to human health
- The Safe Drinking Water Act has established regulatory infrastructure to protect the safety and quality of our national drinking water supply and aid in protecting against potential bioterrorism attacks
- Though standards and their purposes vary, the standardization process is effective and remains the same