Lead/Safe Drinking Water Act: Earthjustice Petition to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Addressing Syracuse, New York

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Earthjustice submitted a July 28th document to the United States Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") styled:

Petition for Emergency Action under the Safe Drinking Water Act, 42 U.S.C. § 300i and 42 U.S.C. § 300j-1(b), to Abate the Imminent and Substantial Endangerment to Syracuse, New York Residents from Lead Contamination in Drinking Water ("Petition").

Earthjustice submitted the Petition on behalf of the following organizations:

- Families for Lead Freedom Now
- The New York Civil Liberties Union
- The Natural Resources Defense Council

The Petition alleges that the City of Syracuse:

…is experiencing a lead water crisis and residents deserve immediate, comprehensive, and durable emergency action to protect them from lead in their drinking water.

The Petition argues that the City of Syracuse has admitted that samples of its tap water show "astronomically high levels of lead over a year ago, yet the City has taken very little action."

Earthjustice requests that EPA issue an Emergency Administrative Order under Section 1431 of the Safe Drinking Water Act ("SDWA") and provide assistance and grants under SDWA § 1442(b), 42 U.S.C. § 300j-1(b).

Section 1431 of the SDWA provides EPA the authority to take appropriate enforcement action when contaminants:

…may present an 'imminent and substantial endangerment' to human health and state and local officials have not acted to protect public health.

The Petition includes sections such as:

- Legal Background
- Safe Drinking Water Act Section 1431
- Federal Lead and Copper Rule
- Surface Water Treatment Rule

- Factual Background
- Lead is Dangerous and Disproportionately Affects Vulnerable Communities
- Syracuse Lead Crisis
- Syracuse's Water Has a Lead Problem
- Syracuse Has a Lead Action Level Exceedance
- Because Syracuse Failed to Investigate Properly, Petitioners Investigated
- EPA Must Act to Protect Syracuse Residents, Which Can Succeed Only if the Community Is Engaged Meaningfully in Identifying and Executing Remedies
- Recommended Remedies

A copy of the Petition can be downloaded here.