



# Protect Public Water Supplies

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## *Adopt Recommendations of the WV Public Water System Supply Study Commission*

The WV Public Water System Supply Study Commission (PWSSSC) was established by SB373 to provide an annual report with policy recommendations to the legislature. Its second report, issued on December 15, 2015, is available at: <http://tinyurl.com/pwsssc2015>.

Key policy recommendations include:

### **Permit release of information that is already in the public domain.<sup>i</sup>**

Legislation (SB423) passed in 2015 created conflict and uncertainty about what information can be presented to the public regarding potential contaminant sources, even if this information is currently within the public domain. §22-30-14 needs modified<sup>ii</sup> to clarify that public water systems can share information already subject to public disclosure. This modification is necessary for effective source water protection planning.

**Provide information to downstream public water systems to adequately prepare for emergencies.<sup>iii</sup>** In order to minimize contamination risk and to prepare for emergencies, public water systems need up-to-date information about contaminants that pose a threat to the water supply. These recommendations make sure utilities are notified about substantive changes to aboveground storage tanks, the toxicity of chemicals stored upstream, and mobile threats (such as trains) to the water supply. Spills must also be reported in a timely manner.

**Continue a \$2 million appropriation to BPH.<sup>iv</sup>** Funding is necessary to continue the Bureau for Public Health's state-level Source Water Protection Program efforts and to provide grant monies to small water systems that are updating their protection plans.

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<sup>i</sup> 2015 PWSSSC Report, Recommendation 1.2, pg. 4.

<sup>ii</sup> 2015 PWSSSC Report, Appendix D: Recommended revisions to §22-30-14, pg. 37.

<sup>iii</sup> 2015 PWSSSC Report, Recommendations 1.3, 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3, pgs.4, 6-8.

<sup>iv</sup> 2015 PWSSSC Report, Recommendation 3.1, pg. 5.