

Member Advisory: EPA & HHS Announce New Federal Actions on Microplastics

Members,

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) yesterday announced new, highly coordinated federal actions related to microplastics as part of the Administration's broader Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) initiative.

What Happened

- EPA released the draft of the Contaminant Candidate List (CCL 6), which for the first time includes microplastics as a contaminant candidate group under the Safe Drinking Water Act screening process.
- The draft also includes pharmaceuticals, PFAS, and disinfection byproducts as additional candidates.
- Once published in the *Federal Register* on April 6, EPA will open a 60-day public comment period.
- This is **not a new drinking water regulation**. It is a **screening and prioritization step** used to guide future research, occurrence analysis, and potential regulatory decisions.
- The separate Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR) 6 rule in development operates in tandem with the CCL. EPA will use the UCMR process to collect national occurrence data for up to 30 CCL-listed contaminants, which could include microplastics if selected. The UCMR 6 rule should be issued by end of year.

HHS / ARPA-H Action

- HHS announced a new \$144 million research initiative directed at developing tools to measure, study, and potentially remove micro- and nanoplastics from the human body.
- Identified as the Systematic Targeting Of MicroPlastics (STOMP) project, the research effort is led by HHS' Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H).

PLASTICS' Response

- In our public statement, we underscored that as innovators and problem solvers, the industry supports science-based research, sound methodologies, and practical policy solutions grounded in credible data, while highlighting the bipartisan [Plastics Health Research Act](#) as a constructive federal pathway.
- We also directed policymakers, stakeholders, and the public to microplasticsinfo.org – a science-based resource hub that PLASTICS supports as a partner – for additional research and policy context.

What Comes Next

Our team and the EHS+ Committee are actively developing comments on both EPA's draft CCL 6 and the broader UCMR 6 monitoring issues related to microplastics, with a focus on:

- prioritizing regulatory efforts on those measures that will contribute the most to improving public health
- decision-making based on sound science, including clear scientific definitions and validated analytical methods
- risk- and exposure-based regulatory frameworks
- occurrence data and monitoring feasibility
- implications for future drinking water monitoring and Safe Drinking Water Act actions

We will continue coordinating with members and external technical experts and will keep members updated as both comment pathways advance.

Bottom Line

Given the converging pressure from MAHA-aligned stakeholders and the formal seven-governor UCMR 6 petition, this action was not unexpected.

Importantly, EPA is **not proposing new regulations at this stage** but rather advancing additional research and prioritization. While we do not welcome seeing the industry's materials singled out at yesterday's press conference, the current focus on the CCL and future UCMR 6 monitoring questions creates an important opportunity to strengthen the scientific record ahead of any future drinking water decisions.

PLASTICS will continue supporting robust science and advocating against any future policy action that is not grounded in credible data, validated methods, and sound risk assessment.