

## Governor Phil Murphy

# Governor Murphy Leads Multi-State Petition to Request Nationwide Monitoring of Microplastics in Drinking Water

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**TRENTON** – Governor Phil Murphy today led a coalition of seven states to sign

[a petition](#)

([https://d31hzhk6di2h5.cloudfront.net/20251126/24/85/ad/24/77a93608fa1b601e94b31756/Microplastics\\_Petition.pdf](https://d31hzhk6di2h5.cloudfront.net/20251126/24/85/ad/24/77a93608fa1b601e94b31756/Microplastics_Petition.pdf))

to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency requesting nationwide monitoring of drinking water supplies for microplastics, with the goal of better understanding the occurrence of contamination in drinking water supplies.

Joining Governor Murphy in signing the petition were Delaware Governor Matt Meyer, Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker, Maryland Governor Wes Moore, Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers, Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer, and Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont.

The petition to Administrator Lee Zeldin requests that the EPA include microplastics in the 2027 renewal of the agency's Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule 6 (UCMR-6). Including a new contaminant in the UCMR – in this case, microplastics – is often the first important step in determining whether a drinking water standard is warranted.

“New Jersey is proud to lead six other states at the forefront of an emerging public health and environmental issue that affects all of us,” **said Governor Murphy**. “We deserve to better understand the potential for microplastics contamination in our drinking water. We appreciate the collaborative partnership of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and the environmental team at the Division of Law in the Department of Law and Public Safety in helping New Jersey take the lead on this multi-state effort.”

“Pollution from microplastics is widespread across the nation and the globe, and our understanding of potential public health consequences is rapidly expanding, especially for children,” **said New Jersey Environmental Protection Commissioner Shawn M. LaTourette**. “The collection of monitoring data for microplastics from the nation’s drinking water supplies is a critical first step in developing strategies and standards that will better protect the health of all Americans.”

“This is a momentous step towards gathering critical information we need about microplastics in our drinking water,” **said Wenonah Hauter, Executive Director of Food & Water Watch**. “We thank Governor Murphy for his leadership on this petition, and we appreciate the other Governors who signed on. We now call on the EPA to grant this petition. People have a right to know about microplastic contamination of their drinking water.”

### Microplastics in the Environment

Microplastics pose special concerns due to their suspected overall prevalence and their ability to accumulate and



persist in the environment. They are generally described as tiny particles less than 5 millimeters in diameter composed of polymers and various chemical additives that were either originally part of the plastic product or were adsorbed from the surrounding environment.

Microplastics enter the environment through a variety of point and non-point sources. Point sources include direct discharges from industrial processes and wastewater treatment plants, where microplastics can enter aquatic systems due to the potential ineffectiveness of current filtration systems to remove these tiny particles.

Non-point sources are more diffuse and include runoff from urban areas, agricultural lands, and roadways, and can include transport of microplastic particles from the tire wear and synthetic fibers into water bodies.

Primary sources of microplastics are microbeads in cosmetics and plastic pellets used for making plastic products. Microplastics also enter the environment as the result of the wear and fragmentation of larger plastic items such as textiles and tires, during use or from environmental exposure.

Other sources include paints, plastic-coated fertilizers, and mulch films used in agriculture, plastic film from food packaging, rubber from shoes, nylon thread from fishing nets and clothes made from synthetic fibers, polystyrene from food containers and packaging materials, and polypropylene from plastic bottles and food wrappers.

These microplastic particles are transported by water currents in ocean, rivers, lakes, and streams, where they can be suspended in the water column, deposited in sediments, or washed ashore. Additionally, atmospheric transport distributes microplastics widely. Microplastic fallout is known to impact even remote and pristine regions such as the Arctic and Mount Everest.

### **Health Effects of Microplastics**

The potential risks microplastics pose to human health are currently the subject of extensive research. Physically, their size and shape can lead to cellular and tissue damage, while chemically, they may carry hazardous additives.

Various toxic chemicals can attach to these particles, presenting a significant risk to human and environmental health due to their presence in aquatic, terrestrial, and atmospheric environment. For example, they can accumulate and transport harmful substances like bisphenol A (BPA), phthalates, PFAS, PCBs, vinyl chloride, styrene, pesticides, and heavy metals. Some of these toxicants are added during the manufacturing process, while others are absorbed as microplastics degrade.

### **Resources**

NJ Department of Environmental Protection Science Advisory Board:

<https://dep.nj.gov/wp-content/uploads/sab/sab-microplastics-nanoplastics.pdf> (<https://dep.nj.gov/wp-content/uploads/sab/sab-microplastics-nanoplastics.pdf>)

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration: What are microplastics?

<https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/microplastics.html> (<https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/microplastics.html>)

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency:

<https://www.epa.gov/water-research/microplastics-research> (<https://www.epa.gov/water-research/microplastics-research>)

World Economic Forum: Microplastics everywhere: Are we facing a new health crisis?

<https://www.weforum.org/stories/2025/02/how-microplastics-get-into-the-food-chain/>  
(<https://www.weforum.org/stories/2025/02/how-microplastics-get-into-the-food-chain/>)

Harvard Medicine:

<https://magazine.hms.harvard.edu/articles/microplastics-everywhere>  
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