CLEAN WATER ACTION | CLEAN WATER FUND

Clean Water Action/Clean Water Fund

Ensuring the Human Right to Water

Water Law Symposium January 24, 2026

Jennifer Clary, California Director

What is Clean Water Action?

- Clean Water Action is a national 501(c)(4) environmental organization. Since its founding during the campaign to pass the landmark Clean Water Act in 1972, Clean Water Action has worked to win strong health and environmental protections by bringing issue expertise, solution-oriented thinking and people power to the table.

- Clean Water Fund's mission is to develop strong grassroots environmental leadership and to bring together diverse constituencies to work cooperatively for changes that improve their lives, focused on health, consumer, environmental and community problems. Clean Water Fund is a nonprofit organization under section 501(c)3 of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code.

CLEAN WATER ACTION

CLEAN WATER FUND

Human Right to Water

"Every human being has the right to safe, clean, **affordable**, and accessible water adequate for human consumption, cooking, and sanitary purposes."

CLEAN WATER WORKS TO ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO SAFE DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION

How?

- Advocating for accessible funding
- Sustainable groundwater management
- Supporting source control efforts to protect water quality
- Advocating for health-protective drinking water standards
- Developing options for water affordability

CLEAN WATER ACTION

CLEAN WATER FUND

ONCE UPON A TIME…

There was no public groundwater database

The only public groundwater data available was from public water system supply wells

It was *Illegal* for members of the public to obtain information on the location and construction of wells

Agricultural discharges were neither monitored nor regulated

Public Water Systems (PWS)

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/drinkingwater/documents/needs/2025needsassessment.pdf

Figure 6: California Water System Classifications[85]

2025 NEEDS ASSESSMENT RESULTS

390
FAILING
Public Water Systems

Population Served **811,964**

62% Receiving $443 M in State Funding & Technical Assistance

589
AT-RISK
Public Water Systems

Population Served **1,490,776**

KEY FINDINGS:

1. 98% of California's population receives water from systems that meet drinking water standards in 2024.
2. 77% of community water systems and K-12 schools have continually been in compliance with drinking water standards since 2017.
3. Approximately 79% of Failing water systems serve disadvantaged communities and 52% serve the majority communities of color in 2024.
4. The Risk Assessment was able to predict risk of failure for 92% of water systems on the Failing list in 2024.

19% Receiving $174 M in State Funding & Technical Assistance

205
HIGH-RISK
State Small Water Systems

93,028
HIGH-RISK
Domestic Wells

5. Small community water systems charge on average $33 more a month for the same volume of water compared to large water systems in 2024.
6. Approximately 90 (3%) community water systems face a high drinking water affordability burden and 375 (13%) are experiencing a medium affordability burden in 2024.

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/drinkingwater/documents/needs/2025needsassessment.pdf

STRATEGIES

- Advocacy – agency, legislature, governor
- Coalition-building
- Ballot Measures
- Legal Action
- Public reports/education

CLEAN WATER ACTION

CLEAN WATER FUND

Thank you!

jclary@cleanwater.org

707.483.6352