

SCWA HONORED WITH NATIONAL APPOINTMENT

SCWA's CEO Jeffrey Szabo Named to Serve on U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's National Drinking Water Advisory Council



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Suffolk County Water Authority Chief Executive Officer Jeffrey Szabo has been named to serve on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's National Drinking Water Advisory Council, making him the first SCWA official to ever serve on that prestigious body.

The 15-member council provides the nation's top environmental agency with independent advice and recommendations on the federal drinking water program so the EPA can gain a broad perspective from state and local water and health professionals, academics, citizen water advocates and other representatives from rural areas. The council also has two representatives of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, who act as liaisons to the council.

Szabo, who was sworn in for a three-year term, was selected by the EPA administrator along with four other new appointees.

Diane VanDe Hei, Chief Executive Officer of the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies (AMWA), which nominated Szabo for the post, said it is "very valuable to have Jeff on the council" because he can bring the perspective of large drinking public water suppliers to the agency. "His knowledge of groundwater systems will provide

the EPA with information and knowledge while it is developing rulemaking that will impact all water systems across the United States," she said.

Members may be asked to participate in ad hoc working groups to develop policy recommendations, advice letters or reports on specific water issues.

Szabo has served as SCWA CEO for more than a decade, overseeing the operation of a non-profit public benefit corporation which provides water for 1.2 million Suffolk residents and is the nation's largest public water utility to rely on a sole source water aquifer.

He is also board secretary for the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies and was the architect in the creation of the Long Island Commission for Aquifer Protection (LICAP), which advocates for a coordinated, regional approach to groundwater resources management on Long Island.

During his SCWA tenure, Szabo has created a 10-year strategic business plan which has already led to the implementation of automated meter reading technology and mobile workforce technology to electronically track everything from customer work orders to water main projects. The strategic business plan also addresses providing long-term water supplies for vulnerable areas and aggressively combatting pollution from 1,4-dioxane and other contaminants with treatment systems pioneered at SCWA, while suing polluters to recover the costs.

"It's a high honor for the Suffolk County Water Authority and for Jeff in particular to be named to this prestigious panel," said SCWA Chairman Patrick Halpin. "As the largest national supplier of water from a sole source aquifer, and a leader in testing and developing treatment systems, Jeff can now share our expertise and experience at the highest levels of our government."

SCWA ONE YEAR AHEAD OF SCHEDULE

To Meet New PFOS/PFOA Regulation

Investments in GAC Treatment Systems Throughout Service Territory Help Utility Supply Drinking Water Adhering to Highly Protective Standard



The [Suffolk County Water Authority](#) through a substantial investment in new granular activated carbon (GAC) treatment systems has treatment in place throughout its service territory to meet or surpass a new state regulation on perfluorinated compounds. The new state regulations on PFOS/PFOA as well as 1,4-dioxane went into effect August 26, 2020, but, like many other water suppliers on Long Island, SCWA received a two-year deferral to install new treatment systems in order to comply with the tough new standards.

[SCWA](#)—which has been at the forefront of testing and developing treatment for emerging contaminants for years—has treatment in place to remove the perfluorinated compounds PFOS and PFOA virtually everywhere at which detections have been found above the new state maximum contaminant level of 10 parts per trillion, one of the most protective standards for the compounds in the country.

“This achievement demonstrates the [Suffolk County Water Authority’s](#) commitment to providing drinking water that meets or surpasses even the most stringent water quality standards,” said SCWA Chief Executive Officer Jeffrey Szabo. “It is the result of proactive planning, of getting in front of this issue early on.”

[SCWA](#) has invested nearly \$13 million since 2016 to add 29 GAC treatment systems at 32 wells. 15 of the systems are brand new, while the other 14 were either offline or relocated from one site to another as needed. GAC, which is used to remove a wide variety of contaminants, effectively removes PFOS and PFOA from groundwater.