

EPA will test drinking water for abortion drugs, among other contaminants

Tessa Redmond
Kentucky Today

WASHINGTON, D.C. (KT) – The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced a scientific study that will use “cutting-edge methods” to expand the agency’s understanding of potential pollutants in drinking water—including abortion drugs.

“Americans have a right to know what is in the water they drink,” said Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. “EPA is going to search for pharmaceuticals, PFAS, and other contaminants that have gone undetected—and give Americans the truth about what is in their water.”

The EPA’s study will test drinking water in several “different metropolitan areas” for 1,400 contaminants, including 1,000+ pesticides and pesticide metabolites, more than 250 pharmaceuticals and personal care products, 70+ PFAS and others.

“EPA’s state-of-the-art study will shed light

on this issue and complement the actions we are already taking under the Safe Drinking Water Act,” said EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin. “What we learn will provide clarity and peace of mind while guiding the agency’s continued efforts to Make America Healthy Again.”

This will be the first time the EPA tests for the presence of mifepristone and misoprostol—both drugs used in a medication abortion—in the nation’s drinking water. It’s a major victory for pro-life advocates who have been lobbying the agency to investigate the impact of abortion drugs on the public water supply for several years.

Kristan Hawkins, president of Students for Life of America (SFLA), called the study a “brilliant move.”

SFLA has claimed tons of human remains, placenta tissue and blood have entered the nation’s waterways every year as access to medication abortion has expanded and women who take the drugs are told to flush

fetal remains and abortion byproducts down the toilet.

According to recent data, medication abortions account for roughly 63% of pregnancy terminations nationwide.

“Despite the staggering growth in usage of the abortion drug mifepristone in the United States over the past two decades, no comprehensive Safe Drinking Water Act assessment, Clean Water Act assessment, or National Environmental Policy Act review has been conducted,” noted the Association of Pro-Life OB-GYNs (AAPLOG) in a comment submitted to the EPA earlier this year. “This is especially concerning in connection with the major actions taken over the past decade to remove safety requirements under the Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategies (REMS), particularly the removal of the requirement for in-person dispensing of mifepristone.”

A peer-reviewed study published in July found mifepristone in water samples taken in three U.S. cities. The

study concluded that conventional water treatment was ineffective at removing the drug’s metabolites, or byproducts—endocrine-disrupting compounds that “should be regarded as significant environmental pollutants.”

“Further investigation is necessary to better understand the impact of any levels of mifepristone or other anti-progesterone activity in the environment and the efficacy of its removal by treatment systems. Concerns about the environmental, clinical and public health impact of mifepristone raise urgent questions about the current lack of meaningful regulation of this widely-used pharmaceutical,” said the study’s authors, Elise Rose, PhD and Michael Varveris, M.D.

AAPLOG said that while the study was “small and does not speak to the actual wildlife and clinical impact that these levels of mifepristone in our water has, it certainly indicates the need for larger and broader study...As the prevalence of abortion drugs

continues to increase, understanding their impact on ecosystems, wildlife, and human reproductive health should be a matter of public concern.”

Some experts, however, are skeptical.

Candace Gibson and Anna Bernstien of the pro-abortion Guttmacher Institute claim the paper’s findings are “unreliable” because the researchers relied on “a broad, non-specific screening tool that cannot detect or quantify mifepristone” and is capable of registering any chemical that mimics mifepristone’s function of blocking progesterone receptors, like agricultural pesticides and flame retardants.

Nathan Donley, the environmental health science director at the Center for Biological Diversity told The 19th in June that mifepristone is taken as a one-time dose by a small portion of the U.S. population—a different story than many pharmaceuticals taken by millions of Americans every day.

“There are legitimate water quality threats that we need to attack

and rectify in a regulatory manner. And then there are things that are out in left field that just distract people,” Donley said.

Abortion rights advocates have said there is no evidence abortion drugs are polluting America’s water supply, but federal agencies have never conducted widespread testing to explore that issue—until now.

In 1996, the FDA did find no significant impact of mifepristone manufacture, use and disposal on the environment after reviewing an environmental assessment submitted by the Population Council—the organization that sponsored U.S. development of the abortion drug and petitioned the FDA for mifepristone’s 2000 approval. SFLA has criticized the FDA for not conducting an independent environmental safety review.

“While we are still working for mandated, ongoing testing, this scientific study is an exciting first step,” Hawkins said.

Looking back to Sept. 24, 2018

Written by Christy Hoots

The following information was entered into the Sept. 24, 2018, edition of The Ledger Independent:

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Pet Adoption Day held at Cummins

In an effort to find homes for pets from the Mason County Animal Shelter, a pet adoption event was held at the Cummins Nature Preserve Park on Saturday.

Ashley Smith, with the shelter, said three dogs and six cats were at the park waiting on people to adopt them.

“We’re trying to find them forever homes,” she said. “We did this last year and it went well. Hopefully, we can

find some people to adopt them.”

There were five volunteers at the event during the day.

Destiny Dow, 12, was volunteering as a part of her Mason County Middle School Amazing Shake project, but it was something close to her heart.

“We always have to do an Amazing Shake project and I’ve always had a bond with animals, so it just seemed like the best option for me,” Dow said. “I want to see these animals get adopted.”

Another volunteer, Jamarion Metcalfe, 11, said he volunteered because he loves animals.

Metcalfe struggled with a leash on one of

the dogs as he talked about why he chose to volunteer with that particular animal.

“I love him. He’s fast and he’s cute. I don’t like to see dogs abandoned,” he said.

Metcalfe said he wanted to see all of the animals adopted.

“We’re trying to get the animals adopted,” he said. “I came because I love animals and I want to see them find good homes.”

According to Smith, the animals she chose to take to the park on Saturday have been at the shelter for about a month and she was hoping the exposure to the public would help get them adopted.

The shelter can hold about eight cats and about 20 dogs.

Those who would like to adopt a pet can fill out paperwork and pay the \$20 adoption

fee. The process takes about 15 minutes and the pet can go home with their new family, Smith said.

Smith said the shelter holds adoption days often. She will also post animals on the shelter’s Facebook page at Mason County Animal Shelter-KY. The shelter is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on Saturdays from 8 a.m. to noon.

“We do what we can to try to get the animals adopted out,” Smith said. “It’s hard when you have so few people. The sheriff’s department has been great about getting the animals off the streets and (the deputy judge-executive) Richard Newberry has been fantastic. He helps with our Facebook page and getting the word out about the animals.”



Photo by Terry Prather

Volunteer Heather Doyle of Maysville gives words of encouragement to an up for adoption dog Saturday at the Cummins Nature Preserve.

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Catholic Rural Life to hold meeting

Submitted by Patrick Hornschemeier

On Thursday evening, October 8, 2026 at 7:00 pm, Catholic Rural Life will hold

its regular meeting in person at Daly Hall at St. Patrick’s Church in Fayetteville. We will be planning a large program in 2027 com-

memorating our 50th anniversary. Come help shape our celebration. Meetings are open to anyone who shares our goals of bringing a Christian perspective to life in rural areas, preserving our rural

heritage and working to promote dialogue between rural and urban leaders.

For directions or more information, contact Pat Hornschemeier at 513-752-0647 or phlaw@frontier.com.



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