

## Elect Joe Biden and Kamala Harris!



The stakes have never been higher for our water, health, or climate. We need a President who has a bold vision to address the climate crisis, who follows the science, and who will put our water and communities first. Joe Biden will be that President.

The country can't afford another 4 months of the Trump administration, let alone another 4 years. In late September, during a trip to California in the wake of devastating climate-fueled fires, the President had the gall to say "it'll get cooler" and "I don't think the science knows, actually" during a discussion that mentioned climate change. That is a stunning amount of deliberate ignorance from the President.

That alone should make him unfit to serve. But it goes deeper than that — the Trump administration has spent the last four years weakening the Clean Water Act, refusing to take steps to address the climate crisis, and doing everything it can to pad the profits of corporate polluters like the fossil fuel industry. This has to stop.

### How it stops is electing Joe Biden and Kamala Harris.

A Biden-Harris administration will use the power of the federal government to fight environmental injustice. Biden has committed to holding polluters accountable for the damage they do to communities. A Biden administration will restore our country's global role in addressing climate change and has committed to significant investments in clean energy and to aggressive reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Biden and Harris are committed to critical democracy reforms to ensure that people and community voices are not drowned out by money in politics, lack of ballot access, and ethics problems.

The bottom-line: Joe Biden and Kamala Harris will lead the way in restoring critical environmental and public health protections to safeguard our water and communities. It's that simple.

Make sure when you cast your ballot, you cast it for Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, along with Clean Water Champions like Rep. Grace Napolitano (Dist. 32) and Rep. Jared Huffman (Dist. 2).

For more information: <https://cleanwateraction.org/biden-harris>

**Be a Clean Water Voter in 2020.** You might cast your ballot differently this year. To make sure your vote gets counted, make a plan. That means doubling checking your voter registration status; deciding if you want to vote via absentee ballot, and knowing the rules; finding out if your polling location has changed; and more.

We've created a handy resource — learn more here:

<https://cleanwateraction.org/features/be-clean-water-voter-2020-voter-information>



# Major Victory to Protect Water and Firefighters

Clean Water Action is thrilled that Governor Newsom has signed SB 1044 (Allen) into law. Clean Water initiated this essential bill in 2019 in partnership with state firefighters and environmental partners. SB 1044 will phase out the use of PFAS-containing firefighting foams, which are used for Class B liquid fuel fire (think oil and petroleum), replacing them with effective non-PFAS alternatives.

Monitoring to date has found PFAS (per- and polyfluorinated substances) in water sources of 19 million Californians. Fish and other wildlife in San Francisco Bay contain some of the highest levels of PFAS on the planet. Meanwhile, California's biomonitoring program has also found particularly high levels of the chemicals in the blood of firefighters.

PFAS (per- and polyfluorinated alkyl substances) are a group of an estimated 7800 man-made chemicals used in a wide variety of products, including food packaging, cookware (Teflon™), carpeting, clothing, and of course, firefighting foams because of their grease and water resistant qualities. They are often called "forever chemicals" because they travel easily and persist permanently in the environment. PFAS have been linked to cancers, reproductive and developmental harm, high cholesterol, and impaired

*To learn more about PFAS in firefighting foam and in general, view our video at <https://youtu.be/rBT3oGa4qWo>*



## Legislative Round-up

### *Legislature drops the ball on plastic*

Millions spent by packaging and other industry interests paid off when the state Legislature failed to approve the California Circular Economy and Plastic Pollution Reduction Act on the last day of the 2020 legislative session. SB 54 (Allen) and AB 1080 (Gonzalez) would have set California on course to eliminate single-use plastic from California's waste stream.

In the Assembly, SB 54 missed moving forward by four votes, as a staggering 24 out of 80 members chose not to cast a vote. Those "non-votes" included Bay Area Assembly members Evan Low and Bill Quirk. Similarly, Senator Steven Glazer refused to vote on AB 1080.

**The tools they use to save us shouldn't be dangerous for them.**



immune systems. Research during the Covid-19 pandemic has also shown that PFAS can interfere with the effectiveness of vaccines.

In a year when unprecedented crises have taken up the attention of state government, legislators and the Governor agreed on the importance of action to remove this massive source of PFAS contamination of our water. The bill passed with no opposition and bipartisan support. Clean Water is proud of the role our staff played in getting this bill introduced and adopted, and we thank Senator Ben Allen and his staff for their leadership and stamina over the last two years. But most of all, we thank our brave firefighters who put themselves at risk not only fighting fire, but by exposure the chemicals that they are exposed to.

### *Fossil fuel industry targets fenceline communities*

Despite broad statewide support for AB 345 (Muratsuchi), a bill that called for state regulators to establish buffer zones between oil and gas production and adjacent communities, the bill was brought to an abrupt halt in the Senate Natural Resources Committee. Three Democrats (Senators Caballero, Hertzberg and Hueso) joined Republican Senators Borgras and Jones to kill the bill, fulfilling the wishes of the wealthy oil and gas lobby.

The fight for healthy communities continues; Clean Water Action will be asking for your help in the next month to ask the governor to do what the legislature could not.

# San Carlos Youth Center remains steadfast champions of sustainability — even through a pandemic



Clean Water’s ReThink Disposable program has collaborated with San Carlos Youth Center (SCYC) on a [short video](#) and [case study](#) detailing the recent transition that SCYC made from single-use disposables to reusable foodware used for their youth cooking program.

With ReThink Disposable’s support, food created during the cooking class program will no longer be served in single-use disposable food service ware. Kids are now offered “camp-style” enamelware along with stainless steel utensils. Imparting cooking skills to young people is a rich life lesson. Now, the youth center imparts an even bigger life lesson about the connection between healthy food, healthy bodies/minds, and a healthy planet.

San Carlos Youth Center is an after-school service provider, uniquely positioned to impact the future actions and attitudes of the young people they work with. By providing a safe and fun after-school space, the youth center can influence decision-making and purchasing decisions for young people to carry forward.

After an initial investment of \$984 in durable, non-plastic, PFAS-free foodware, San Carlos Youth Center’s transition **prevents 18,898 pieces of single-use items each year**, weighing 214 pounds. They also earn \$719 in annual net-cost savings. It is also worth noting that SCYC moved forward with this change despite challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a solution to the global waste crisis, ReThink Disposable works with businesses and institutions to eliminate single-use disposables so ubiquitous in our communities. ReThink Disposable takes a preventative approach to the ever-increasing problems of solid waste, microplastics, and climate change. Research conducted in 2011 by ReThink Disposable and 5 partner jurisdictions identified **food and beverage packaging as the primary component (67%) of trash entering the San Francisco Bay and local surface waters**. The program creates win-win opportunities for businesses and the environment by identifying cost-saving practices that also reduce disposable foodware items.



*Before and After: Kids switched from paper plates to durable non-plastic foodware.*



*Before and After: Paper and plastic single-use foodware were replaced with reusable items.*

# Vote Yes on Proposition 16

The events of this year have demonstrated that racism & discrimination are a continuing reality in our society. Clean Water Action is committed to addressing overt and systemic racism both internally and within our society and to supporting those fighting for justice and equity.

Earlier this summer, Clean Water Action supported the passage of ACA 5 in the State Legislature. This measure, adopted by the legislature and placed on the ballot as **Proposition 16**, would repeal Proposition 209. Passed by CA voters in 1996, this constitutional amendment banned affirmative action programs in employment and education in California based on race, gender, ethnicity.

Since 1996 California has been a majority minority state, yet women and communities of color are still under-represented in contracting, employment and education in the state. The pandemic has shown that race is still a factor that disproportionately affects communities of color. This measure would not permit quotas, but would allow race, gender and ethnicity to be included as a consideration in state and local hiring and contracting and in granting access to higher education opportunities.

**Please join Clean Water Action in voting YES on Proposition 16.**

You can see Clean Water Action's California endorsements [here](#).



## Staff changes for Clean Water's Program

It's been a busy summer at Clean Water Action with a raft of new staff and position changes — all while working from home!

**New staff:** Welcome **Vanessa Pope** as our new ReThink Disposable Associate and **Cristal Gonzalez** as our new Water Program Associate.

**Promotions:** long-time California Water Program Manager **Jennifer Clary** has been named California Director. **Andria Ventura**, is now our Legislative and Policy Director in addition to managing our Toxics Program. **Grace Lee** is now the Director of our ReThink Disposables Program In the phone canvass **Cante Tenza Win (Strong Heart Woman) Goodface**, or Tenza, was promoted to Assistant Director while **Kenya Brown** has been named the new crew leader.

For more information about our awesome California program staff, visit the [staff page](#) on our website.

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1444 Eye Street NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20005  
Phone 202.895.0420 | Fax 202.895.0438 | [cwa@cleanwater.org](mailto:cwa@cleanwater.org)  
[@cleanH2Oaction](https://twitter.com/cleanH2Oaction) [Facebook.com/CleanWaterAction](https://www.facebook.com/CleanWaterAction)

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