



# Clean Water for North Carolina

Working with Communities for Safe Water and Environmental Justice

## Here's What We Do, Working With Communities Across NC



### *Preventing the Harms of "Fracking" and Gas Pipelines in NC*

Clean Water for NC worked with 30 partners to build a grassroots movement to prevent hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking," in NC. Our efforts engaged thousands of folks in hearings and comments, getting some stronger rules and slowing them down until the "gas rush" passed by NC's small supply. We are intensifying our outreach and advocacy in 2016 to prevent the building of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline through 8 eastern NC counties, disproportionately bringing threats to safety, health and landowners in low income areas, African American and Native American populations!

### *Working for Water Justice and Opposing Water Privatization*

Our Water Justice Campaign draws attention to the critical need for protection of the public's drinking water as a basic human right. We provide effective organizing and technical assistance to communities, and help protect rights to safe and affordable drinking water. Recently, we've published a report on the "Stealthy Takeover" of NC Drinking Water Systems, released a short video documenting the impacts of water and sewer privatization on NC communities, and supported neighborhood efforts to hold private water utilities accountable for providing safe water and transparent water quality sampling and reporting!



### *Protecting Rural Drinking Water and Well Users*

From our founding in 1984, we've worked to protect drinking water for everyone in NC, and to build awareness of public water supply sources and their vulnerability to many types of potential contamination. Our research, advocacy and trainings have included supporting funding for low income people whose wells become contaminated, collaborations with researchers on natural contaminants in NC wells, "baseline testing" before fracking can begin, and intensive organizing and strategizing with impacted communities. Many unincorporated neighborhoods can't afford to be annexed into cities, but find their wells contaminated with pesticides or other toxins. CWFNC has helped to organize residents, provided research and advocacy to local officials to find affordable ways to get a safe water supply.



### *Advocating for Safe Clean-up of Coal Ash Sites*

We have worked with residents in 5 of the 14 communities across the state impacted by enormous coal ash dumps from NC's coal fired power plants. For many years, residents have experienced blowing dust, contaminated well water and neglect by state regulators who should be protecting them. We've met with impacted residents to share info about well water safety and health problems, and helped prepare for press conferences and public hearings.

## *Clean Water for North Carolina – Working for Water Justice*

3326 Guess Rd., Ste. 105 Durham, NC, 27705

Hope Taylor, Executive Director: 919-401-9600, [hope@cwfn.org](mailto:hope@cwfn.org)

Asheville office: Amanda Strawderman, Associate Director 828-251-1291, [amanda@cwfn.org](mailto:amanda@cwfn.org)

Xavier Boatright, Organizer: [xavier@cwfn.org](mailto:xavier@cwfn.org)

Visit us at [www.cwfn.org](http://www.cwfn.org)

## ► *Did you know:*

- **There are nearly 3 million people in North Carolina who depend on private wells for their drinking water source.** Since there are no requirements for routine testing of well water, it's up to each well owner to have their water tested! Clean Water for NC recommends testing every 3 to 5 years for key potentially harmful contaminants. To do so contact your own county's environmental health department. For more information on well testing visit [www.cwfnc.org](http://www.cwfnc.org).
- **If your tap water comes from a city, county, or privatized water company that supplies water to 15 or more households, it is subject to the federal Safe Drinking Water Act and must meet minimum water quality standards.** Your water provider is required to send you an annual report on the quality of your water. You can contact your water provider for a copy of the most recent report, or it may be available online. You can also search for compliance information on the NC Drinking Water Watch website, <https://www.pwss.enr.state.nc.us/NCDWW2>.
- **As of 2014, an estimated 119,000 North Carolina households (hundreds of thousands of individuals) had water supplied by private, for-profit utilities such as Aqua North Carolina and Carolina Water Service, or smaller local companies.** While required to meet the Safe Drinking Water Act standards, and have rates set by the NC Utilities Commission, Clean Water for North Carolina has gotten many complaints from customers about high rates, poor water quality and service. If you receive water from a private company and have had trouble resolving issues by contacting the company, contact the NC Utilities Commission, NC Public Water Supply in Raleigh, or get in touch with Clean Water for North Carolina for advice!
- **Pause before you buy that bottled water...it may not be as safe as the water from your tap, and it's much more expensive.** While the EPA regulates tap water, the Food and Drug Administration regulates bottled water. Monitoring is infrequent and fewer contaminants are measured than in public water supplies. Top brands like Aquafina and Dasani, labeled "Purified Water," are usually just tap water from big cities put through a special process mostly to improve taste. Bottled water contributes up to 1.5 million tons of plastic waste per year to landfills, and it costs you thousands of times more per gallon than tap water! Unless you know that there are harmful contaminants in your household tap water, put down that bottle and instead work to hold your local supplier accountable. Also, please support federal funding for maintenance and improvement of our local public water systems; funding has declined steeply in the U.S. since the 1970s.
- **Duke Energy has coal ash stored in wet, unlined pits at its fourteen active or retired coal fired power plants across NC.** Coal ash is the waste left behind after the burning of coal, containing many heavy metals and other toxic elements, which are concentrated in the ash when they are captured from gases escaping through the plants' smokestacks. Near most of these sites, private water wells tested in 2015 showed contaminants associated with coal ash, many above health screening levels set by state health experts to protect people from exposure to dangerous contamination in their water. Those with high levels were warned by the Dept. of Health and Human Services not to drink their water, but the warnings were rescinded a year later for two specific contaminants, hexavalent chromium and vanadium, despite evidence these substances can be harmful in very small amounts. Clean Water for NC is advocating for the reinstatement of those health advisories, and is working closely with allies to provide well testing for limited income households who did not get testing. We lobbied extensively for providing water lines to all residents within ½ mile of coal ash and even further out, where contamination has been found.
- **The NC Legislature and state agency have chosen to LEAVE ash in place in many unlined ash pits.** Many of the largest of these sites will be ranked "low priority," meaning they could just be dried out and capped in place, allowing toxic metals to continue leaching into groundwater. Duke Energy also has permits to store excavated coal ash in new or existing lined landfills, even county landfills, despite documentation that all landfill liners eventually leak, and the risks of transporting ash for hundreds of miles. Learn more about coal ash and its impacts at [actagainstcoalash.org](http://actagainstcoalash.org).