

# TUWaterWays

Water News and More from the Tulane Institute on Water Resources Law and Policy  
January 31, 2018

## **Subsidence, Sea Level Rise & Craft Beer**

No, we're not suggesting the new motto for the City of New Orleans. However, in the Hampton Roads region of Virginia, folks are beginning to recon with the same sea level rise concerns coastal Louisiana has had for some time now. The regional sanitation authority has opened up a new plant that treats wastewater from toilets and sinks so well that you can safely drink it. "Nothing new" you say? You'd be right. The technology to treat wastewater well enough to make it potable again has existed for some time. But what makes the Hampton Roads Sanitation District's [approach](#) unique is what they plan to use it for. Rather than pump that water back into the rivers in the region, they plan to inject it into the underground aquifers to alleviate the impacts of subsidence. For a start, the plan is to inject 1 million gallons a day back into the aquifer and see if it helps keep coastal Virginia afloat in decades to come. Next on the list? Provide the refurbished wastewater to craft breweries (an idea that has been popular in [Oregon](#) for a while). [Cheers](#) to a new take on the [magic three Rs](#) that we'll definitely be keeping an eye on.

## **[Despacito](#)**

In late 2017, Puerto Rico, where roughly 3.4 American citizens live, was hit by a devastating hurricane, leaving the island inaccessible for days and [immense levels of destruction](#) across the island. This week, FEMA will be ceasing its distribution of food and water to Puerto Ricans, stating that they [needed to stop distributing the aid](#) in order for balance to be restored on the island through the use of supermarkets and normal distribution channels. The [problem](#) with that is over one third of Puerto Rico is still without electricity, and some municipalities are reporting that up to 80% of their citizens remain without power, and many remain out of work or school due to the storm. In some cases, this means that families are left with a choice between buying fuel for generators (or just a generator in the first place) or food and water. Furthermore, in the most remote areas of the tropical island, no running water has been returned, and the only available water sources are high in salinity or majorly polluted. What remaining FEMA resources do exist will be put in the care of the Puerto Rican Emergency Management Agency, or NGOs working on the ground, for distribution. Some of the smaller and less wealthy municipalities fear this will lead to inequitable distribution and mismanagement of the limited resources. Even before the hurricane, Puerto Rico was a poor island, with a government heavily in debt. There is no word on how power and running water will be restored to the island. Here's hoping for more moments like [this](#) and [this](#). (On the

The **Tulane Institute on Water Resources Law and Policy** is a program of the Tulane University Law School.

The Institute is dedicated to fostering a greater appreciation and understanding of the vital role that water plays in our society and of the importance of the legal and policy framework that shapes the uses and stewardship of water.

## **Coming up:**

**Deadline: February 2, 2018**

[Water Challenge Pitch Competition](#)

New Orleans, LA

**March 1-2, 2018**

[Coastal Law in Louisiana](#)

New Orleans, LA

**March 9-10, 2018**

[23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Environmental Law and Policy Summit](#)

Tulane Law School

New Orleans

## **Water jobs:**

[Staff Attorney or Policy Analyst - Water](#)

National Resource Defense Council

Chicago IL

[Environmental Policy Fellow](#)

Duke University

Durham, NC

[Water Rights Specialist](#)

State of Washington

Ellensburg, WA

[Program Officer](#)

Walton Family Foundation

Washington, DC

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brighter side of hurricane recovery, [the USVI](#) has returned power to most residents and [Dominica](#) has kicked off their Carnival season)

### **The Perfect Storm**

A [recent study](#) revealed that the tiny particles of pollution that are released into the atmosphere can increase the intensity and size of storms. The study focused on aerosol particles, which, although tiny, inundate the atmosphere and may have “appreciably changed” the way storm clouds form. More disturbingly, the particles, which are a result of industrial production, are impacting weather even in places remote from human activity. The study focused on remote parts of the Amazon, where it found even though human life and industry were thousands of miles away, there was still a noticeable presence of aerosol particles and disturbances to weather patterns. While unintentional, this gave the scientists pause, fearing that the damage to the world’s largest rainforest would have other, unintentional impacts on weather across the globe. Guess this means we’ll have to swap to [gel](#) from [hairspray](#) as we prepare our [moustaches](#) for hours of parading.

### **Laissez Les Bon Temps Rouler**

Happy Mardi Gras everyone! We are so excited to share in yet another season of wonder, parading, costuming and revelry with you all, whether here in New Orleans or afar. We’ve recently learned that over [93,000 pounds](#) of Mardi Gras beads were collected from the catch basins around the city after a massive effort that resulted in the cleaning of 23,000 basins. This may mean you need to step up your [hand eye coordination](#) for the parades (ground scores are still off limits), or find one of the [handy recycling bins](#) that are being tested this season. However you choose to keep New Orleans beautiful during the upcoming weeks, enjoy yourself while you do!