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Office of the White House Press Secretary

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NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The President has signed S. 433, the Safe Drinking Water Act, which directs EPA to establish national standards for public drinking water supplies and to establish programs to protect underground sources of drinking water; provides for States to assume enforcement responsibility, subject to Federal approval and review; creates standby authority to allocate chlorine and other purification chemicals; authorizes research on health effects of contaminants; and provides grants for demonstration projects and for operator training.

The bill will direct EPA to:

- issue interim regulations, designed to take effect 2 years after enactment, to insure that public water systems produce water which meets national standards; these national standards will be based on health effects, and the regulations will also include criteria for siting, operation, maintenance, and quality of intake water;
- promulgate revised (final) regulations, following a 2-year study by the National Academy of Sciences; such revised regulations to take effect no later than 4 years and 3 months after the date of enactment;
- promulgate optional standards for the taste, odor and color of drinking water;
- establish a Federal-State permit program for control of wastes injected into the ground which may threaten underground sources of drinking water;
- issue regulations under which States can assume primary responsibility for enforcing both the drinking water and underground injection programs, subject to Federal approval and review, with Federal enforcement for States which fail to qualify; and,
- review every State permit for variance or exemption from any aspect of the national standards, and approve, modify, or set aside the State action.

S. 433 will also authorize:

- grants to the States to cover administrative expenses;
- an extensive program of new technology demonstrations;
- a program of loan guarantees for small water systems;
- grants for the training of water system operators; and,
- standby authority to allocate chlorine and other chemicals used for water purification and for wastewater treatment.