

## Walker Weakens Proposed Changes to Manure Pollution Rules

Written by Wisconsin Conservation Voters, Ryan Billingham

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***Natural Resources Board now last line of defense against groundwater crisis.***

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MADISON, WI – As citizens call on the Department of Natural Resources to develop strong manure pollution rules, Governor Scott Walker – at the behest of the Dairy Business Association – used his unchecked power to significantly weaken the scope of a set of rules aimed at protecting Wisconsin's water from manure pollution.



The new information about Walker's secretive meeting with the DBA comes just two days before a Natural Resources Board meeting where the rules will be discussed. Citizens from across the state – some of whom are personally impacted by manure-contaminated drinking water, lakes, and rivers – are planning to attend the meeting to make sure the NRB knows the importance of developing strong water protections.

"This move makes it abundantly clear Gov. Walker puts very little value on the health and safety of Wisconsinites," said Kerry Schumann, executive director of Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters. "Instead, he seems to favor business interests that refuse to make common sense changes to drinking water regulations."

Governor Walker's brazen move diminishes more than a year's worth of work by a coalition of citizens, government officials, and the Department of Natural Resources – called the

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Groundwater Collaboration Working Group – to address Wisconsin’s groundwater pollution crisis.

The group’s [final report](#) was initiated by a petition filed with the Environmental Protection Agency. The DNR facilitated a workgroup to find solutions in areas of the state most susceptible to groundwater pollution.

A public meeting of the NRB on Aug. 3 in Ashland will allow pre-registered citizens to speak. Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters will deliver about 2,000 letters from citizens.

Walker’s decision to do the bidding of the Dairy Business Association will leave Wisconsin families with unsafe drinking water and polluted lakes and rivers.

In some areas of the state, more than 30 percent of private wells are polluted with nitrates, bacteria, endocrine disruptors, and other dangerous substances.

In light of Gov. Walker’s latest collusion with polluters, it is imperative that the rule changes are based on the original scope of the Groundwater Collaboration Working Group’s final report.

“The NRB has now become the last line of defense in the battle for meaningful change that will protect Wisconsin’s most precious resource,” Schumann said.

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*Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to electing conservation leaders, holding decision makers accountable, and encouraging lawmakers to champion conservation policies that effectively protect Wisconsin’s public health and natural resources.*