



The Environmental Protection Agency is setting the first drinking water standard for a toxic rocket fuel ingredient linked to thyroid problems in pregnant women and young children, the Obama administration is to announce on Wednesday.

Environmental Protection Agency administrator Lisa Jackson will say that setting the standard will spark new technologies to clean up drinking water, according to a press release obtained by The Associated Press. Based on monitoring conducted from 2001 to 2005, 153 drinking water sources in 26 states contain perchlorate. The standard could take up to two years to develop.

Perchlorate is also used in fireworks and explosives. In most cases, water contamination has been caused by improper disposal at rocket testing sites, military bases and chemical plants.

"As improved standards are developed and put in place . clean water technology innovators have an opportunity to create cutting edge solutions that will strengthen health protections and spark economic growth," Jackson says in the statement.

Jackson will probably make that case before a Senate panel Wednesday, where she is expected to face opposition from freshman Republicans who plan to take on the EPA over air pollution regulations, controls on the gases blamed for global warming and other regulations.

Democrats, who have pushed for the EPA to regulate perchlorate, approve of the administration standing up for rules that protect public health, even if they burden business. President Barack Obama recently announced a review of all regulations to reduce barriers to economic growth and investment.

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