**Water injustices**

**Essential Question for Students to Pursue: Is unsafe tap water quality, and higher numbers of drinking water violations, disproportionately affecting poor and minority communities?**

**Source: The Color of Drinking Water**

[NATIONAL UTILITY DATA SHOW SAFE DRINKING WATER ACT VIOLATIONS ARE GREATER IN LOW-INCOME COMMUNITIES WITH HIGHER BLACK AND HISPANIC POPULATIONS](http://mannyteodoro.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/SwitzerTeodoro-JAWWA-2017-Color-of-Drinking-Water.pdf)

**Findings:**

In communities with higher populations of black and Hispanic individuals, SDWA health violations are more common. The Safe Drinking Water Act (**SDWA**) is the federal law that protects public drinking water supplies throughout the nation.

The finding: as Hispanic, or black, population increases, the number of violations committed by a water department/utility is statistically significant, indicating a serious potential concern over ethnic bias.

# Source: Water Injustice: Economic and Racial Disparities in Access to Safe and Clean Water in the United States

<http://blueplanetproject.net/waterjustice/2017/03/26/water-injustice-economic-and-racial-disparities-in-access-to-safe-and-clean-water-in-the-united-states/>

**Indigenous community water systems.** Water contamination

occurs more often in Native American water systems.

Overall, tribal public water systems are twice as likely to

violate health-based water quality regulations as non-tribal

systems. Nearly one in eight tribal public water systems

violated a health standard in 2013.51

**Indigenous communities.** Native American communities

disproportionately lack access to safe water and wastewater

disposal.59 Rural American Indian and Alaskan Native

populations have the lowest rates of access to indoor plumbing

in the country.60 Between 7.5 percent and 12 percent of

Native American households lack piped water systems. In

the Navajo Nation, as much as 30 percent of households lack

piped water service, and bacteria contaminate more than 70

percent of domestic water sources.61

**Source:** Drinking Water Infrastructure and Environmental Disparities: Evidence and Methodological Considerations

<https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/pdf/10.2105/AJPH.2011.300189>

Concerns about water systems and drinking water quality among American Indians and Alaskan Natives have been evident since the1950s (E. Leopardi, personal communication, April 4, 2007). Overall, an estimated 8% do not have piped water, and11% do not have safe piped water.4

in 2007 to 2008, 16% of tribally owned and operated systems had a health-based violation compared with 7% nationwide.

**Essential Question for Students to Pursue: Do we have a right to clean water?**

[The following are pertinent articles to use with students as they develop their answer to this essential question]

**The Racist Roots Of Flint’s Water Crisis**

<https://www.huffpost.com/entry/racist-roots-of-flints-water-crisis_n_56b12953e4b04f9b57d7b118>

[**A Question of Environmental Racism in Flint**](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/22/us/a-question-of-environmental-racism-in-flint.html)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/22/us/a-question-of-environmental-racism-in-flint.html>

[**The Human Right to Water in the United States: A Primer for Lawyers & Community Leaders**](https://www.northeastern.edu/law/pdfs/academics/phrge/water-primer.pdf)

## [**The Water Wars of Arizona**](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/19/magazine/the-water-wars-of-arizona.html?rref=collection%2Fissuecollection%2Fthe-72218-issue)**-** Attracted by lax regulations, industrial agriculture has descended on a remote valley, depleting its aquifer — leaving many residents with no water at all.