

Thelen, Mary Beth (DEQ)

From: Marc Edwards <edwardsm@vt.edu>
Sent: Thursday, October 15, 2015 10:44 AM
To: Wyant, Dan (DEQ); lwalters313@gmail.com; Andrew Leavitt; Melissa Mays; Dickinson, Jordan
Subject: Urgent Request for Clarification: Letter to Lee-Anne Walters and justification for invalidating her samples.

Hi Dan,

Thank you for your help (if any) with the MDEQ FOIA. I received the documents last night. I was hoping you could help me with something ASAP.

One of the things creating distrust between Flint residents and MDEQ, is a long list of miscommunications and false statements by your employees. I want you to help us understand one of those miscommunications as soon as possible.

On August 4th your employee's Wurfel, Busch and Shekter Smith met with Melissa and Lee-Anne. According to Melissa and Lee-Anne, in a meeting with the governor's Chief of Staff, your employee's could not explain to them, why Lee-Anne's samples were invalidated (i.e., thrown out of the samples used to calculate the 90thile lead).

For your information, on the basis of records from the City, **Lee-Anne's home is the ONLY home in the 2015 sampling pool that is proven to have a lead pipe.** I have compared the sample sites that the city used to the database that Flint has put together, **and of 11 samples in the database that the city claims had a lead pipe, ZERO actually had a lead pipe.** Michigan and Federal law further states that if a sample is taken from a home with a lead pipe, **even if it has a point of use device like a filter or softener,** once that sample is collected it cannot be invalidated (see below). EPA R5 staff explicitly told your employee's in writing, that Lee-Anne's samples had to be counted for compliance purposes. **Your employee's nonetheless, over R5's written instructions and the law, threw out the only Flint LCR samples known to be legitimate in the 2015 sampling round.** They also double counted Melissa's samples for LCR compliance purposes, even though her house does not have a lead pipe, and has no lead plumbing. So I hope you can see the "adding insult to injury" dimension of your employee's actions. The irony-- using samples from the chief critics of MDEQ, to cheat on the LCR monitoring. Specifically, counting a lead free site twice (when it should not be counted at all), and throwing out three samples from the only home known to have lead pipe. We also now have data that shows every single sample we could check in the 2015 round, did not have a lead pipe at all.

Furthermore, according to Melissa and Lee-Anne, the Governors chief of staff ordered your employee's, to as soon as possible, communicate to Lee-Anne why her samples were invalidated. According to Melissa and Lee-Anne, the governor's chief of staff further ordered your employees to "CC" him on that communication. The governor's chief of staff also apparently asked them to get Lee-Anne's address and phone number, so that they could be sure their communication got to her, and they refused, and insisted they had all of Leigh-Anne's information.

In the FOIA production, I was surprised to see that there is an e-mail to Lee-Anne dated August 25th. This is surprising because Lee-Anne never received that e-mail. Moreover, there is an apology to Lee-Anne that the e-mail is late, and furthermore, the chief of staff is not cc'd. Lee-Anne has looked in her spam and other files, and there is no evidence that this late e-mail ever reached her.

I am hoping you can get to the bottom of this, and see first of all 1) why the chief of staff was not cc'd as requested, 2) if this e-mail was actually sent, and produce some evidence that it was, and 3) try to understand why your employee's illegally invalidated Lee-Anne's samples over the objections of EPA and Lee-Anne. And I am hoping you can do this

today. My understanding is that you are out and about trying to re-establish public trust in MDEQ, and this would be a good place to start.

Best Regards,

Marc Edwards

From your own web page.

c. Softeners and Other Point of Use (POU) and Point of Entry (POE) Devices:

Sampling sites with faucets that have POU or POE treatment devices, such as softeners, shall not be used as Tier 1, 2, or 3 sites unless insufficient Tiered sites are available. Field staff shall encourage water supplies to sample from a kitchen or bathroom tap that is not normally connected to the softener. If a sample of softened water is analyzed, then the water supply may consider returning to the same site to collect a sample of unsoftened water. Some residents may be able to bypass the softener at the tap. Both sample results (softened and unsoftened) will be used to calculate the 90th percentile. Sample results shall not be deemed improper on the basis that the water passed through a softener.