
From: Chastity Pratt <cpratt@bridgemi.com>
Sent: Monday, January 26, 2015 1:31 PM
To: Busch, Stephen (DEQ)
Subject: Re: interview for article on Flint drinking water

Hi, Steve,
Thank you for the detailed response! I'll circle back around to you if we have further questions.

On Mon, Jan 26, 2015 at 1:06 PM, Busch, Stephen (DEQ) <BUSCHS@michigan.gov> wrote:

Ms. Pratt Please see responses to your questions below.

Stephen Busch, P.E.

Lansing and Jackson District Supervisor

Office of Drinking Water and Municipal Assistance

MDEQ

[517-643-2314](tel:517-643-2314)

From: Chastity Pratt [<mailto:cpratt@bridgemi.com>]
Sent: Monday, January 26, 2015 11:35 AM
To: Busch, Stephen (DEQ)
Subject: interview for article on Flint drinking water

Hi,

I am a reporter for Bridge Magazine working on a deadline story about Flint's drinking water. My story will focus on state involvement and state policy.

My major questions:

1. Several agencies and officials are involved - can you clarify DEQ's role in the Flint water situation?

The City of Flint water system is one of over 1400 Community Water Systems in Michigan regulated under the Michigan Safe Drinking Water Act (1976 Public Act 399, as amended), which incorporates requirements of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act. The DEQ Office of Drinking Water and Municipal Assistance has been given authority for oversight of these regulations. DEQ regulatory oversight is mainly conducted through inspections, review of monitoring information (this includes sample results and operations data), issuance of construction permits for water systems, and planning (reliability, emergency response, capital improvement, operation and maintenance, etc.) As both community water systems and the DEQ desire the mutual goal of safe water, the DEQ works proactively in partnership with water systems to provide compliance assistance. This also includes activities such as source water protection and infrastructure funding.

2. What is the DEQ's response to the mayor's request for assistance?

As indicated by phone this letter was directed to the Governor's Office and should be followed up with that office for response at this point in time.

3. What on-going testing is DEQ doing with Flint water and how often?

The City is required to follow all state and federal monitoring requirements under Act 399. This includes sample analysis of over 90 contaminants with health based drinking water standards along with monitoring of its source, treatment, and distribution operations. Sample analysis frequency is based on the specific contaminant type, its level of detection if any, and its potential variability.

In regards to total coliform and e.coli bacteria compliance monitoring, the City is required to analyze at least 100 samples each monthly compliance period from its distribution system.

In regards to Total Trihalomethane (TTHM) compliance monitoring, the City is required to collect quarterly samples from 8 locations in its distribution system. The TTHM standard is based on a Running Annual Average for each of the 8 locations, rather than individual sample results. The location and timing of these samples is based on worst case conditions in the water system to identify the highest level of long term exposure.

4. So far, how many drinking water violations have occurred in Flint since the switch to Flint River water and what sanctions - if any - does the city face?

The City has had the following Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) standard violations:

E.Coli Acute bacteria MCL violation, August 2014

Total Coliform bacteria MCL violation, September 2014

TTHM locational running annual average MCL violation, October-December quarter (2 of 8 sites)

There are generally two requirements in regards to the violations: Public Notification and corrective action

Public Notice for acute health threats like the e.coli MCL must be made within 24 hours of the violation.

Public Notice for non-acute health threats such as total coliform bacteria and TTHM must be made within 30 days of the violation.

Corrective action regarding bacteria detections generally involves taking steps to disinfect and repair the affected areas and sampling to obtain confirmation the bacteria source is has been addressed.

The City has remained in compliance with this standard for each of the monthly monitoring periods since September, including thus far in January

Corrective action for TTHM involves taking steps to reduce the amount of TTHM so that they are below the standard. The City is required to complete an Operational Evaluation report within 90 days of the violation. This report includes examination of treatment and distribution operational practices (source water quality, treatment changes, storage tank operations, excess storage capacity, distribution system flushing, treatment problems that contribute to TTHM formation. The City proactively completed an Operational Evaluation following sample results from August 2014, and is now completing another operational evaluation further evaluated based on information from the November monitoring. November monitoring showed individual sample results now below the standard at 7 of 8 locations. However, as noted compliance is determined based on a running annual average at each location.

5. What does DEQ tell Flint residents who call DEQ with concerns about discolored water?

Callers indicating discoloration or other aesthetic water quality issues are directed to contact the Flint DPW to allow the DPW staff to investigate the situation. Generally color, odor and taste are aesthetic water quality issues not related to any health based standards including total coliform bacteria, e.coli bacteria, and TTHM.

Treated water is monitored for color at the Water Treatment Plant as part of its operation, and has not been abnormal. The City of Flint has over 500 miles of distribution piping and conditions in some isolated sections of water main piping or private premise plumbing may cause changes to aesthetic conditions such as color, taste, or odor.

Those are my major questions. Could you please give me a call today?

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Chastity Pratt Dawsey

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