
From: Wurfel, Brad (DEQ)
Sent: Tuesday, October 06, 2015 9:39 PM
To: Azure Gilman
Subject: Re: Questions about Flint water from Al Jazeera America

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 6, 2015, at 5:28 PM, Azure Gilman <Azure.Gilman@aljazeera.net> wrote:

Hello,

My name is Azure Gilman, and I'm a digital reporter from Al Jazeera America. I have a few questions about the water in Flint, Michigan.

1. LeeAnne Walters says that when the water in her house was tested by the city and the MDEQ found to have high lead levels, city officials consistently said that her house was an exception, and that this was not a widespread problem. Can you comment on this?

Our staff have been informed that this homeowner had an unusually long lead service line which appears to have contributed to her situation. However, this question is better addressed by the city. They looked into it and eventually replaced it for the resident.

2. Why did the MDEQ lower the total number of water samples required for Flint to test from 100 to 60?

Sample requirements are based on population. Updated census data received in 2015 showed Flint's population dropped below 100,000.

3. Were the same houses tested in both the first and the second round of water testing by the city?

Not in every case, but that is not an absolute requirement. This program relies on voluntary participation by residents. The city sent 200 sample bottles to residents with lead service lines (requirement for eligibility) in January 2015, and got 60 samples back by June. Participation has historically been a well-documented challenge in Flint.

4. Why were two water samples in the second round of water testing?

I'll presume you meant to say why were two samples dropped from the count? Eligibility. The lead and copper rule requires the system operator to get samples from homes with lead service lines. No businesses. No homes with filters. And participants have to follow a specific screening protocol. When those things don't happen, the samples unfortunately must be dropped from the results.

5. Does the MDEQ have any official comment about the safety of drinking water in the City of Flint, particularly in terms of lead levels, at this time?

The city, the state and the U.S. EPA are taking necessary steps to address lead concerns in Flint. Free lead filters for all flint residents are a precautionary step to ensure public health while we look more closely at exposure concerns. Flint residents who have concerns about lead exposure should take advantage of free water testing and blood lead level testing for children.

Best,

Azure Gilman
azure.gilman@aljazeera.net
310.493.9657

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