

Shekter Smith, Liane (DEQ)

From: Busch, Stephen (DEQ)
Sent: Thursday, October 16, 2014 3:25 PM
To: Wurfel, Brad (DEQ); Shekter Smith, Liane (DEQ); Benzie, Richard (DEQ); Howes, Sarah (DEQ); Feuerstein, Heather (DEQ); Sygo, Jim (DEQ); Willard, Veronica (DEQ)
Cc: Prysby, Mike (DEQ)
Subject: Media Contact - Flint DW Chloride - Michigan Radio NPR

I was just contacted by Kate Wells, Michigan Radio NPR regarding the recent news about General Motors concerns regarding chloride levels in Flint's Drinking Water.

I explained that chloride does have a secondary level set by EPA which is not for health related issues but rather for taste and aesthetic concerns. Chloride which can generally come from salt, NaCl, sodium chloride, is a normal part of people's diets, and the amounts in Flint's drinking water would likely be minor compared to normal dietary intakes.

She asked about how chloride could be causing corrosion issues at GM. I indicated that I wasn't sure how they were utilizing the water or what their process consisted of. I did indicate that we normally look at other parameters in drinking water such as pH and alkalinity when considering its corrosivity.

She asked about where water is analyzed. I indicated that most chemical analysis is performed at a certified laboratory, and that Flint has generally used the State Drinking Water Lab. She asked about how results are reported and I said that results go back to the system which then provides results to the DEQ, and that the State DW lab will report directly to the DEQ in addition to the City.

She asked about consumer confidence reports (CCRs). I explained that these are federal requirements for all Community Water Systems. I informed her that detections for regulated contaminants would be reported but that with the exception of sodium, unregulated contaminants such as chloride are not required to be reported. That sodium is included so people with low sodium diets can determine their intake from water. I also clarified that the City's current CCR which had to be issued by July 1 would reflect results from 2013 (when Flint was on DWSD) and that 2014 results would be in the CCR issued in 2015.

She asked whether there would be similar health related issues from chloride as there are with sodium since they are both in salt, but I indicated that I'm not aware of any such issue and that if there were EPA would have asked it to be reported on the CCR and/or established a primary standard for it.

She asked about salt entering water, it's visibility, and I explained that when salt is present in water it will dissolve into sodium and chloride, that it would not be visible in the water, especially at the levels indicated.

Stephen Busch, P.E.
 Lansing and Jackson District Supervisor
 Office of Drinking Water and Municipal Assistance
 MDEQ
 517-643-2314