

From: [Busch, Stephen \(DEQ\)](#)
To: [Benzie, Richard \(DEQ\)](#)
Cc: [Prysby, Mike \(DEQ\)](#)
Subject: RE: Update: Call with White House Flint Liaison
Date: Wednesday, March 11, 2015 9:57:31 AM

Jennifer was cc'd on the VN letter.

I had also previously emailed her the latest table of results following the monitoring in February for a letter she was responding to.

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 MDEQ
 517-643-2314

From: Benzie, Richard (DEQ)
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2015 6:15 PM
To: Busch, Stephen (DEQ)
Cc: Prysby, Mike (DEQ)
Subject: FW: Update: Call with White House Flint Liaison

I meant to ask you today if we (you) should forward a copy of the March 5th violation notice sent to Flint about their TTHM RAAs to Region 5 EPA to keep them informed. I did not see where they would otherwise receive a copy of that letter and I thought it might help Region 5 EPA staff to relay correct information when asked about the current status of this violation.

From: Crooks, Jennifer [<mailto:crooks.jennifer@epa.gov>]
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2015 5:52 PM
To: Busch, Stephen (DEQ); Prysby, Mike (DEQ)
Cc: Benzie, Richard (DEQ)
Subject: Update: Call with White House Flint Liaison

Update on what's been happening here regarding Flint:

Paul Joice is the White House Flint Liaison for HUD, living in Flint and working in the mayor's office. He needed some background on the Flint drinking water issues, so Tom and I—along with 4 managers from Headquarters, briefed him. Tom prepared a summary of notes taken at the meeting FYI—see below.

Becki Clark for the Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water at HQ, requested that Dr. Michael Wright, toxicologist/epidemiologist, from Office of Research and Development, sit on the Flint Technical Advisory Counsel. I believe Mike Prysby is sitting on the committee too. Since Mike is out of the office until April, did you sit in on the first meeting of this Advisory Council, Steve? What did you think of the meeting?

I have also been inundated with controlled correspondence emails referred to me from the White

House. Several have had some questions about the health effects, so I have been including a paragraph explaining the health effects, which I think provide exactly the right info related to TTHMs being a chronic contaminant. I have cc'd Mike and Steve on the letters, so you all will get them, but here is the paragraph FYI:

“In your e-mail, you noted concerns regarding the health effects of TTHMs. By law, the City must inform consumers of health standard exceedances. The TTHM health standard was exceeded so the City must let consumers know the potential risk, to give consumers the opportunity to make informed decisions. The risk of developing long-term health problems, such as liver, kidney, central nervous system, and cancer, is low for those in general good health and the concern for these illnesses are only after years of ingestion. The risk of developing health problems is higher for some sub-populations, such as the immune-compromised and pregnant women; therefore, this group may want to seek alternative sources of water, such as bottled water, or purchase a home water treatment device. Consumers may want to talk with their doctors to help them make individual health decisions.”

Thank you all for keeping us in the loop from your seat in Lansing.

Jennifer

From: Poy, Thomas

Sent: Monday, March 09, 2015 3:10 PM

To: Hyde, Tinka; Henry, Timothy

Cc: Crooks, Jennifer

Subject: Call with White House Flint Liaison

Tinka/Tim: We (R5 and OGWDW) had a call with the White House Strong Cities/Strong Communications Flint Liaison this morning. Below are my notes of the discussion.

Flint Drinking Water Conference Call – 3/9/15

Participants: R5/GWDWB – Tom Poy, Jennifer Crooks

HQ/OGWDW – Eric Burneson, Elizabeth Corr, Becki Clark, Roy Simon

White House Strong Cities/Strong Communications Flint Liaison – Paul Joice (HUD) (works directly with Flint's mayor)

Tom Poy summarized what has gone on with Flint's Drinking Water:

- Switching from finished Detroit water (Lake Huron source) to Flint River in April 2014.
- Karegondi pipeline will provide Flint with raw water from Lake Huron when completed in 2016.
- MDEQ has been working with Flint from the start to get their treatment plant running properly.
- Summer 2014, Flint had an E coli detect because of distribution system issues (broken valves causing stagnation of water).
 - o Chlorine levels increased which increases potential of forming disinfection byproducts when chlorine reacts with organic carbon.
 - o Flushing increased which can stir up sediment in the water mains.

- December 2014, Flint exceeded the MCL for TTHM which is based on a running annual average (RAA) (avg of 4 quarterly samples).
- MDEQ has worked with Flint since August 2014 when chlorine levels were increased, to tweak operations to reduce TTHM formation.
- February 2015 sampling has TTHM concentrations well below the MCL but since compliance is based on an RAA, it will take another quarter or two of lower concentrations to make the average go down below the MCL.
- Flint has hired a consultant to help with their PWS.
- Flint has formed a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to help with their PWS; Dr. Michael Wright (ORD toxicologist) is EPA's representative.
- The Technical Advisory Committee met last week for the first time.

Paul Joice said that he was at the TAC meeting but did not participate as there were not enough seats for the large crowd. He heard that it was a good meeting. Paul said that he would like Dr. Wright to be able to make a public statement about health effects. The public notice for the TTHM violations say that sensitive subpopulations should consult their physicians but the physicians don't have any info on TTHMs.

Paul had questions about Flint's drinking water:

- 1) What are the health effects of TTHMs and what level of exposure is a concern?
- 2) What message should be provided on TTHMs?
- 3) What can be done about Flint's aging infrastructure and falling population base?
- 4) What about citizen complaints about their water looking funny, tasting funny, and smelling funny?

Paul said that having Dr. Wright on the TAC will help resolve Q1 and Q2.

Paul said on Q4, that he lives in the city and his water looks and tastes fine. I said that taste and odor issues could be the result of the flushing that Flint had done due to the bacteria and TTHM problems. Flushing can stir up sediment in the pipes. I said that there have also been complaints about rashes from using the water but that this may not be solely due to high TTHM levels. It could be because of increased chlorine in the water, changes in water chemistry (pH, hardness, etc.). It would take some investigative work to determine what part of the distribution system is having these problems and would need additional health/medical data to try to figure out a cause. Paul said that many of the people who complained did not want to give out their home addresses.

On Q3, I said that many systems across the country have aging infrastructure and while there is SRF monies available, this money does not cover the needs out there. Paul asked about regionalization. Eric Burneson acknowledged that there are economies of scale with regionalization but the benefits are realized more for smaller systems than ones the size of Flint. We could not generalize whether regionalization was a good idea for Flint and other communities in Genesee County because it is a very site specific issue.

Paul said that our conference call helped him under the Flint situation better.

