
From: Baird, Richard (GOV)
Sent: Monday, December 21, 2015 7:51 PM
To: Nick Lyon
Subject: Fwd: DHHS

Sent from my Verizon Wireless 4G LTE DROID

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Ken Sikkema <ksikkema@pscinc.com>
Date: Dec 21, 2015 7:39 PM
Subject: Fwd: DHHS
To: "Baird, Richard (GOV)" <bairdr@michigan.gov>
Cc:

FYI...

----- Forwarded message -----

From: <chris@environmentalcouncil.org>
Date: Monday, December 21, 2015
Subject: DHHS
To: Ken Sikkema <ksikkema@pscinc.com>

Virginia Tech Researcher Claims Stonewalling On Lead Data

The Department of Health and Human Services had data that showed there were elevated lead levels in Flint's water, but delayed in releasing that data to others for review, Virginia Tech professor Marc Edwards said in an article posted to his website documenting the city's water crisis.

Department officials agreed and said the experience led to changes in how they examine data.

Mr. Edwards said the department had data from shortly after Flint changed its water source that showed a spike in blood lead levels in children in two at-risk neighborhoods, but did not disclose that data until September 2015.

"They discovered scientifically conclusive evidence of an anomalous increase in childhood lead poisoning in summer 2014 immediately after the switch in water sources, but stood by silently as Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) officials repeatedly and falsely stated that no spike in blood lead levels (BLL) of children had occurred," he said in the post.

DHHS spokesperson Jennifer Eisner agreed the department had data that showed the spike, but said its analysis at the time overlooked factors that, in retrospect, would have shown there was a water quality problem.

"When initially looking at the citywide and county elevated blood lead level numbers, the increase appeared to be consistent with the seasonal fluctuation seen in the summer months," Ms. Eisner said. "It wasn't until the Hurley report came out that our epidemiologists took a more in-depth look at the data by ZIP code, controlling for seasonal variation, and confirmed an increase outside of normal trends. As a result of this process, we have determined that the way we analyze data collected needs to be thoroughly reviewed."

Mr. Edwards said DHHS officials also stonewalled him on getting access to that data.

He said data he had gotten easily in 2006 documents for a similar review took several weeks to receive after his request sent September 2. When he did finally receive the data, he said it was a version that omitted the lead level spike from summer 2014 that the department had created in July.

He said a series of emails he received under a recent Freedom of Information Act request showed an intention by DHHS officials to keep the reports from the public.

"Our FOIA reveals a shocking DHHS graph created in October 2015. It shows the statistically significant spike in blood lead that occurred in summer 2014 - the scientific result that DHHS has never publicly acknowledged," Mr. Edwards said in his post.

Ms. Eisner said the department has worked to make the data available. "Summary reports outlining blood lead level testing are posted online on a bi-weekly basis, and we work closely with local partners to fulfill data requests as we receive them," she said.

- See more at:

http://www.gongwer.com/programming/news.cfm?article_id=542490102#sthash.o7NcxHOQ.dpuf

Sent from my iPad

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