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To: Wurfel, Brad (DEQ)
Subject: MIRS

Ananich: Feels Like State Is Dragging Its Feet Because Flint Is Poor

Senate Minority Leader Jim ANANICH (D-Flint) said he doesn't know why state officials are not aggressively pushing to hook Flint's municipal water supply back to the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD), but it feels like the city's impoverished residents is a factor.

State and local officials said Friday they would be testing more Flint water and sinking \$1 million more in filters to address higher lead levels in the water coming from the city's relatively new water source -- the Flint River (See "State Plan For Flint Water Includes More Testing, \$1 Million For Filters," 10/2/15).

Previously, Flint residents had been receiving their water from DWSD from 1968 to 2014 until the Flint emergency manager, at the urging of many community leaders, made the switch as a cost saving measure until a pipeline carrying "raw" water from Port Huron was finished.

Ananich was asked if he believes this type of situation would still be going on if questions were raised about the quality of water in West Bloomfield or Birmingham -- two of the state's more affluent areas.

"No, I think it would have been resolved a long time ago," Ananich said. "There's this saying about people in Flint; that we're resilient.

"But at what point in time is it acceptable that we have to be resilient over things that in the 21st Century in the most advanced country in the world, surrounded by the freshest water in the world, that we have questions about whether we are poisoning our kids? It's just unacceptable to me."

Asked to respond to whether efforts to move Flint back to the DWSD water -- which didn't react to the lead in Flint's pipes, causing the elevated lead readings -- was based on Flint being a poor city, Ananich said he didn't know, but it feels like it.

"I can tell you how that it feels. 'These are poor folks. Well, we'll get to it when we get to it,'" he said. "The outrage needs to come from everybody. The citizens are outraged and I think they need to be more so."

On the logistics of switching Flint back to DWSD water, Ananich said it's "absolutely possible." From talking to Detroit officials, Ananich was told it could be done on either the "short-term" or "long-term" basis.

Genesee County still gets its water from DWSD, so it would be a matter of buying more of it. However, Ananich couldn't speak in detail about how a switch would work, but stressed this is why an emergency coordinator needs to be activated as if the city had been hit by a tornado.

Every day that goes by without the water getting switched is another day children in Flint will be exposed to more lead in their water, leading to future health issues, he said.

"The lack of urgency that I've received from many departments of state government is alarming and

unfortunate. It's not something I'm going to put up with," he said.

"The quicker the city and state moves toward making this happen, the quicker we can have a secure safe drinking water source again. The longer people delay, it's compounding the problem."

Snyder Press Secretary Sara **WURFEL** said the Governor and the administration are "deeply committed to building solid and strong communities and a Michigan that works for everyone -- regardless of an area's makeup or socioeconomic status. That certainly includes Flint.

She said she would hope some of the work done in Flint previously -- from the Secure Cities public safety initiative and targeted resources to help the city tackle infrastructure needs -- would speak to the Governor's ability to work with community, faith and business leaders in cities like Flint.

"We are committed to partnering with the city of Flint and collaborating across local, state and federal levels to bring all resources and ideas to bear," Wurfel said.

Water Filters Available For MDHHS Clients

Free water filters will be available to current Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) clients and Flint residents at four locations beginning 9 a.m. Tuesday through a partnership between the MDHHS and the Genesee County Community Action Resource Department.

Free National Sanitation Foundation certified water filters are being provided to Flint residents as part of the administration's approach to addressing water concerns in the area.

Current MDHHS clients are encouraged to visit either the 125 E. Union St. or 4809 Clio Road MDHHS office location to obtain a free, certified home water filter. Residents who are not currently enrolled in MDHHS assistance programs should visit the Genesee County Community Action Resource Department offices located at 2727 Lippincott and 601 North Saginaw in Flint.

Sent from my iPhone