
From: Ronald Fonger [mailto:RFONGER1@mlive.com]

Sent: Friday, December 04, 2015 1:20 PM

To: Wurfel, Brad (DEQ)

Subject: RE: Eisenhower piece

Hey Brad:

I'm afraid I didn't write this one. I forwarded the report on Eisenhower and your email to Dominic Adams as well as emails from the Flint School District that I had received in response to questions about the Freeman report.

That said, I'm forwarding your email to my editors, and you may want to follow up with them (Bryn Mickle and Kristin Longley) or Dominic. His contact information is at the end of the story.

Happy to get together Tuesday or Wednesday -- first part of the day works better -- and I have RTAB at 2 Wednesday. Just let me know

From: Wurfel, Brad (DEQ) [mailto:WurfelB@michigan.gov]

Sent: Friday, December 04, 2015 11:42 AM

To: Ronald Fonger <RFONGER1@mlive.com>

Subject: Eisenhower piece

Hey, Ron.

I continue to have concerns about how the Journal reports this issue. Here are a few from yesterday.

The headline is factually incorrect. Plumbing and fixtures are not the same thing at all. In fact, I sent a note to you guys when I advanced you this piece which specifically said our findings are good news because fixtures are less expensive to replace than plumbing, and our testing indicates there are no deeper plumbing issues so far in the schools we're checking.

More to the point, these two adjoining paragraphs in the story don't even agree:

The DEQ says the leaching lead is likely because of the fixtures and the connected plumbing in the building -- lead solder joints on copper piping, brass valves and brass fittings, brass components in fixtures and galvanized piping.

"The highest contribution of lead appears to be from the individual faucet/fountains and not from the larger diameter supply plumbing within the main school building or the two out building units," the report says.

This paragraph offers a wholly inaccurate reflection of what's going on:

"The more thorough testing at Eisenhower comes after three Flint school buildings tested above the federal limit in initial screenings prompted by the discovery of rising levels of lead in Flint children's blood. Eisenhower was one of those schools, along with the Brownell school building and Freeman Elementary "

The testing of every Flint school was part of the commitment in the Governor's 10-point plan. The findings at all the schools have consistently shown limited instances of initial high samples, specifically associated with limited points in the building, where spikes are followed by dramatic drops on subsequent draws -- clear indication that the lead exposure is limited to faucets and bubblers that should have been replaced a long time ago.

Also, I realize you guys can't say "lead" without saying "toxic," but please don't attribute that to the DEQ. We recognize the levels at some points are elevated.

The results of follow-up testing at Freeman were released Nov. 9, and showed nine of 31 faucets had toxic lead levels, the DEQ said.

I'd like to meet for lunch or coffee next week, get caught up and generally have a discussion beyond phone and email. Happy to drive there for it. Let me know if you've got a date better than others. I'm best Tuesday or Wednesday, and can make any day work except Monday.

Thanks,

b

http://www.mlive.com/news/flint/index.ssf/2015/12/18/faucets_at_flints_eisenhower.html#incart_2box_news_flint

New tests show toxic lead in plumbing at Flint elementary schools

FLINT, MI – Recent water tests at a Flint elementary found toxic lead levels at faucets and drinking fountains, a problem state officials largely attribute to the type of fixtures in the school building.

The report on Flint's Eisenhower Elementary showed 18 of 43 water outlets had lead levels above 15 parts per billion at least once during testing, exceeding the action limit set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The report was based on water samples collected by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality on Oct. 30-31, and included testing from all 43 water fixtures in the school and two out buildings on the property.

The DEQ says the leaching lead is likely because of the fixtures and the connected plumbing in the building -- lead solder joints on copper piping, brass valves and brass fittings, brass components in fixtures and galvanized piping.

"The highest contribution of lead appears to be from the individual faucet/fountains and not from the larger diameter supply plumbing within the main school building or the two out building units," the report says.

The results of follow-up testing at Freeman were released Nov. 9, and showed nine of 31 faucets had toxic lead levels, the DEQ said. Those results were also attributed to the fixtures or connected plumbing.

While the DEQ recommends the school district replace the hardware, if that is not possible running the water "for three minutes following periods of stagnation is likely to reduce lead concentrations and lead exposure," the report said.