
From: Crooks, Jennifer <crooks.jennifer@epa.gov>
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2015 2:30 PM
To: Benzie, Richard (DEQ); Prysby, Mike (DEQ); Busch, Stephen (DEQ)
Subject: RE: question on flushing/water rates in MI

Thank you, Richard. Yes, Steve B explained to me this morning, that the commodity charge is based upon the amount of water the resident is using; however, the base rate/service charge would include operation and maintenance costs, including flushing.

Jen

From: Benzie, Richard (DEQ) [mailto:BENZIER@michigan.gov]
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2015 12:57 PM
To: Crooks, Jennifer; Prysby, Mike (DEQ); Busch, Stephen (DEQ)
Subject: RE: question on flushing/water rates in MI

There currently is no regulatory oversight of rates in Michigan.

But be careful about saying residents aren't paying for water used for flushing -- as the overall costs of operating the water system have to be reflected in the revenue stream somewhere. The rates probably reflect the cost of producing "lost" water, just not in an accountable manner. If you say they are paying for it (even directly), it may still generate a negative reaction if they realize the costs are "hidden" and being borne by all customers.

From: Crooks, Jennifer [mailto:crooks.jennifer@epa.gov]
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2015 12:12 PM
To: Benzie, Richard (DEQ); Prysby, Mike (DEQ); Busch, Stephen (DEQ)
Subject: question on flushing/water rates in MI

Richard---I have a couple of questions for you regarding the citizen complaint on Flint, that I'm responding to.

Regarding the water rates part of this email, "Flint river. runs right through the city of flint. they have been opening the hydrants and letting water pour out of them to "purge" the system, **then charging consumers double for their mistake**"

I was going to remind the citizen that they are only charged based upon what the water meter reads at individual connection (home). The citizens aren't directly paying for what is being flushed. I was going to say that the flushing program removes stagnant water in the system, which can increase levels of trihalomethanes and increase bacteria growth, among other activities.

Also, who regulates water rates in Michigan? I don't think MI has a rate commission, right? Any oversight on individual water supply rates?

Jennifer

From: Crooks, Jennifer
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2015 8:22 AM
To: Richard Benzie; Prysby, Mike (DEQ); Busch, Stephen (DEQ)
Subject: FYI: (CWA - FY15-124819-3709-CV) Referred to Region - Michigan

Forgot to cc you all, Jen

From: Crooks, Jennifer
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2015 8:09 AM
To: Dee, Rhiannon
Cc: Poy, Thomas
Subject: RE: (CWA - FY15-124819-3709-CV) Referred to Region - Michigan

Rhiannon—Let me tell you, this Flint situation is a nasty issue—I've had people call me 4 letter words over the phone, yell at me, and call me a crook—yes, the last one was a play on my last name—I didn't think it was funny, though I'm developing a thick skin ☺.

I can respond to the Flint drinking water issue, and the water rate issue, and refer them back to the State if they have further questions. But I cannot respond to the sewerage dump (who receives the report when there is a sewer overflow?) or the chemical—though Richard is probably right—the 'toxic chemical' is probably chlorine—and that's what I'll say in my response. One citizen was confused about 'chlorides' being 'chlorine'....

Let me know if you would like me to respond to this citizen complaint as I explained above.

Jennifer

From: Dee, Rhiannon
Sent: Friday, February 06, 2015 10:50 AM
To: Benzie, Richard (DEQ)
Cc: ostlundp@michigan.gov; Busch, Stephen (DEQ); Prysby, Mike (DEQ); Crooks, Jennifer; Poy, Thomas; Vantil, Barbara
Subject: RE: (CWA - FY15-124819-3709-CV) Referred to Region - Michigan

Richard,

While I understand this complaint conflates various issues, my intention of forwarding it on to Pete and Barry was to relay the potential NPDES impacts of the complainants allegations.

Best,

Rhiannon Dee
 Program Analyst
 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
 Water Division, WC-15J
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From: Benzie, Richard (DEQ) [<mailto:BENZIER@michigan.gov>]
Sent: Friday, February 06, 2015 9:38 AM
To: Dee, Rhiannon
Cc: ostlundp@michigan.gov; Busch, Stephen (DEQ); Prysby, Mike (DEQ); Crooks, Jennifer; Poy, Thomas
Subject: RE: (CWA - FY15-124819-3709-CV) Referred to Region - Michigan

I'm not sure what this complainant is alleging. Do you want Michigan to respond to the allegation that a "company or individual dumped millions of gallons of raw sewage into the city of Flint drinking water" or the allegation that "they(?) have dumped a potential cancer causing chemical into the city's drinking water" or the allegation that the city of Flint is flushing hydrants and charging customers double? The Office of Drinking Water and Municipal Assistance cannot address the issue surrounding the dumping of raw sewage and we don't interfere with water rates, but maybe an explanation of the issues that have confronted the city of Flint and their public water supply will help you understand the overall problem.