
From: Busch, Stephen (DEQ)
Sent: Thursday, March 27, 2014 12:09 PM
To: Wurfel, Brad (DEQ); Feuerstein, Heather (DEQ); Shekter Smith, Liane (DEQ); Benzie, Richard (DEQ); Willard, Veronica (DEQ)
Cc: Prysby, Mike (DEQ)
Subject: RE: Media Contact FW: questions about Flint River

I just had a follow up phone conversation with Mr. Adams, Flint Journal/Mlive.

He had been informed by the City that they had provided all construction information to the Department for review.

I reiterated to Mr. Adams that we have received preliminary engineering plans and specifications regarding this proposed project that we have provided the City comment on, but that we have not received the construction permit application form, which lays out the scope of the project, some of the entities involved, and other considerations related to the construction site.

Mr. Adams again asked for clarification regarding the review process.

I indicated that while a permit application of this complexity would normally require 30-45 days for a complete response, since the City has approached us with these preliminary designs allowing us to address most issues prior to their application, it will likely reduce our response time, and that we have a meeting scheduled with the City on Monday that will in part address some of these remaining design issues. However, staff would still need to review the plans and specifications submitted with a permit application to ensure they are complete and this will take some time prior to issuing the permit.

Mr. Adams asked about inspection of the project, and I indicated that the applicant identifies who will provide inspection of construction work, usually an engineering consultant, or City staff engineer. Mr. Adams asked whether the DEQ does any inspection. I informed him that for this type of project we will do an inspection prior to startup to ensure that the City will be able to comply with the operating requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act.

Mr. Adams asked about the City proceeding prior to a permit, and I explained that if the City hired a contractor prior for the proposed work prior to obtaining a permit, any revisions to the project for permitting would need to be addressed as part of the contract signed with the construction company.

I will let you know if there is any additional follow up from Mr. Adams, but he did not appear to have any additional questions.

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Office of Drinking Water and Municipal Assistance
MDEQ
517-643-2314

From: Busch, Stephen (DEQ)
Sent: Tuesday, March 25, 2014 2:16 PM
To: Wurfel, Brad (DEQ); Feuerstein, Heather (DEQ); Shekter Smith, Liane (DEQ); Benzie, Richard (DEQ); Willard, Veronica (DEQ)
Cc: prysbym@michigan.gov
Subject: Media Contact FW: questions about Flint River

I received the email below from Mr. Dominic Adams with Mlive and the Flint Journal.

I called Mr. Adams back and we discussed the following:

Process for switching from DWSD to Flint River

Water provided by DWSD is treated. The City's of Flint's existing WTP was designed for emergency use of the Flint River in the event of a failure in the DWSD system. So the WTP is already capable of the switchover, they would just close the line from DWSD and start pumps from the intake. The DEQ would need to be notified prior to the switchover in source water as there are regulatory requirements under the Safe Drinking Water Act. Failure to meet regulatory requirements would result in violations, and both the City and DEQ, would prefer to prevent that from occurring if possible.

(He asked about fines and I provided a link to the administrative fines information on our website)

Is time needed for the Detroit line

Other water systems utilize the pipeline from Detroit and will continue to do so without interruption.

Why is the City upgrading the WTP and what is being done

The City WTP is designed for short term emergency operation, these improvements would give them the ability to better operate the plant on a continuous basis. You should be able to obtain the full project scope from the City, but it includes additional chemical storage, modification to the disinfection system, electrical modifications, and pump modifications.

How is the DEQ involved in the project

The City is required to obtain construction permits from the DEQ Office of Drinking Water and Municipal Assistance prior to making modifications to its water system. The City has provided preliminary design information regarding the WTP improvements which we have commented on, but we have not received a formal permit application at this time.

(FYI they already held a groundbreaking which was reported)

http://www.mlive.com/news/flint/index.ssf/2014/03/flint_residents_should_be_drin.html

How long will a permit take?

For a permit of this complexity, we are normally able to respond to an applicant 30-45 days after receiving a permit application.

Does the DEQ have to inspect the system.

The DEQ conducts routine inspection visits of public water systems, we conduct at least 4 inspection visits with the City of Flint (its treatment and distribution systems) each year and a full inspection of the system is required once every 3 years. The last full inspection report was completed in 2013.

When the City operates its water treatment plant, they need to conduct daily monitoring and report those results to the DEQ. So we are constantly reviewing their treatment operations.

The City has set a date of April 17 to switchover, is that achievable?

I believe this is a tentative date based on a one year deadline set when the contract between Flint and DWSD was terminated. You would need to contact the City regarding their timeline for completing construction work upon obtaining a permit.

I indicated it would be good to contact the City about what residents should expect regarding water service when the change is made.

I tried to get a better idea from Mr. Adams about his article. He indicated he didn't feel the City was fully disclosing everything that is involved in completing this changeover.