
From: Murray, David (GOV)
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Subject: MLive guest column with DHHS edits
Attachments: 3 DM Mlive guest column 092015 (Autosaved).docx

This is the new version with DHHS edits. Thank you, everyone, for your help.

By Nick Lyon and Dan Wyant

People in Flint – and all of Michigan – need to know that that then they turn on the faucet, the water they drink and bathe their children with, is safe and clean.

Flint residents have been hearing concerning news about the municipal water supply for more than a year. We're working to help Flint leaders address and fix short- and long-term problems with the city's water infrastructure.

A recent announcement by local doctors that blood lead levels are rising in children residing in Flint's most at-risk ZIP codes added to the state's knowledge and sparked some additional precautionary measures.

The state takes lead seriously. Although continued analysis is being conducted, the MDHHS analysis is consistent with the local finding.

State agencies also are working in collaboration with the federal and Flint leaders to get residents accurate information to ease their fears.

Gov. Rick Snyder directed the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and the Department of Health and Human Services to work with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to create a comprehensive action plan to build our knowledge about lead in Flint, better protect the community and restore public confidence in the regulatory framework.

We're testing the water in all of our schools so we know that our children are safe.

We're testing residences at no charge and expanding health exposure testing so families can be confident about the water coming into their homes.

We're providing faucet filters to Flint homes. The state is investing \$1 million on this effort, building on the generosity and support of community groups and donors.

We're accelerating corrosion controls in the Flint drinking water system.

We're increasing the pace of water system improvements to address replacing lead service lines.

We're expediting the completion of the Karegnondi Water Authority pipeline.

We're expanding the Safe Drinking Water Technical Advisory Committee to ensure the best technology, practices and science are being followed by adding an expert from the U.S. EPA's Office of Research and Development.

The DHHS's chief medical executive, Dr. Eden Wells, has been designated Flint's drinking water public health adviser.

We're also boosting a comprehensive lead education program to make sure residents have detailed information about how to protect themselves and their homes.

That's key, because the lead in question does not come from the Flint River. The water leaving the drinking water plant is clean and safe. The water traveling through the distribution system also is free of lead.

The lead issues happen when the water reaches homes that have lead service lines or lead plumbing. This is important to know for two reasons: Contamination happens at the homeowner level, it is very difficult to track precisely.

And, the longer water sits in lead pipes, the more lead it takes on, so homes on the same block might have very different results from lead testing, based on what kind of plumbing they have and how homeowners use their water.

All of the measures in the action plan build on efforts that have been underway for the last year. State agencies have been working with the city on a variety of issues and approaches to correct Flint's water infrastructure challenges.

That's because the health and safety of Flint residents – and people across our state – is our first priority.

More information about the action plan and lead is available at Michigan.gov/FlintDrinkingWater. People interested in getting their homes tested for free should call (810) 787-653, then press 1.

Nick Lyon is the director of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and Dan Wyant is the director of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality.

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