
From: Wurfel, Brad (DEQ)
Sent: Thursday, October 01, 2015 4:34 PM
To: Lynch, James
Cc: Lasher, Geralyn (DHHS); Wurfel, Sara (GOV)
Subject: RE: Hey

Jim:

"State officials will be in Flint tomorrow to announce a plan to address public concerns about drinking water quality in Flint. We recognize there is widespread confusion and concern in the city, and we look forward to presenting a plan for action and addressing questions."

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From: Lynch, James [mailto:JLynch@detroitnews.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 01, 2015 3:19 PM
To: Wurfel, Brad (DEQ)
Subject: Hey

Looking for a comment out of your office regarding this call for the EPA to step in to the Flint situation.

For Immediate Release

Press Contact: Margie Kelly, mkelly@nrdc.org, 312-651-7935, Rana Elmir, ACLU of Michigan relmir@aclumich.org, 313-578-6816

GROUPS PETITION EPA FOR EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO FLINT, MI DRINKING WATER CONTAMINATION

City and state agencies have failed to fix the public health crisis that imperils children's health

CHICAGO (October 1, 2015) – In response to the ongoing drinking water crisis in Flint, Michigan, a coalition of local citizens and national groups petitioned the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) today to take emergency action to secure safe, lead-free water for the City's children and families.

Flint-based Coalition for Clean Water, the American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan, and the Natural Resources Defense Council joined the petition to trigger the EPA to launch a comprehensive federal response to the ongoing crisis. Under the Safe Drinking Water Act, the EPA is empowered to stop "imminent and substantial endangerment to human health" such as the elevated lead levels in Flint's drinking water.

The petition urges that EPA immediately order the City and Michigan DEQ to reconnect Flint's water system with water from the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department, and to provide Flint residents with an alternative, free source of safe drinking water that meets EPA standards, among other requests.

"Neither the City of Flint nor the State of Michigan is doing enough to fix the problem of lead in our drinking water. As evidenced by the ongoing poisoning of the children of Flint, it's time for the EPA to take immediate action to provide us

with a safe water source," said LeeAnne Walters, a concerned parent from Flint and member of the Water You Fighting For, one of the organizations petitioning the EPA. "The city and state need to test for lead and copper as intended by the federal lead and copper rule," Walters added.

Highly corrosive water in the Flint River, the source of the City's drinking water, has been flowing through lead service lines in Flint's water system for more than a year. A medical study has confirmed that the number of children living in Flint with health-threatening elevated blood lead levels has risen since the City switched its water source. One study of Flint children under age five found that the proportion of children living in Flint with elevated blood levels has *doubled* since the City changed its drinking water source. The statistics are worse for younger children; those under fifteen months old had lead levels elevated 2.5 times greater after the switch to Flint River water.

The City of Flint and the state Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) have been made aware of tap water monitoring results showing shockingly high lead levels in homes served by the City's drinking water system for months, but neither has taken the action necessary to meaningfully address the problem. There also appear to be serious issues with how the City was testing for lead in a way that appears to downplay the extent of the problem.

"Americans rightly believe that the water coming out of their taps should be safe, not exquisitely toxic. For more than a year, lead-contaminated drinking water has been flowing through Flint's pipes, faucets, and fountains. If the City and State will not address the issue, the EPA should step in to protect kids' health immediately," said Henry Henderson, Midwest Director for the Natural Resources Defense Council.

"Flint city officials, state-appointed emergency managers and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality have all failed monumentally in their duty to provide the people of Flint with clean, safe drinking water. Now that the truth is revealed, further action is imperative," said Kary L. Moss, ACLU of Michigan executive director. "The devastating revelations from independent researchers, as well as our own nearly year-long investigation, demand an immediate, effective and comprehensive response. The EPA, along with and city officials, must exercise their full authority to guarantee that the people of Flint are protected from the hazardous water now flowing into their homes. The first step should be to overturn the emergency manager order and remove the Flint River as the city's source of water."

There is no safe level of lead exposure. The toxic effects of lead on virtually every system in the body, and particularly on the developing brains of young children, are well documented. It can also contribute to high blood pressure and other health problems in adults. Even low levels of lead in the blood have been shown to affect IQ, ability to pay attention, and academic achievement, effects that are irreversible.

Until Flint restores a safe drinking water source that meets EPA standards, residents are advised to take the following steps:

- ? Flush faucets by running water for a minimum of five (5) minutes prior to consumption;
- ? Use only cold water from taps for drinking and cooking, as warm or hot water is more likely to contain higher levels of lead;
- ? Install and use water filters that are certified to remove lead by NSF International (labeled as meeting "NSF Standard 53" for lead removal), and regularly change the filter cartridges; and
- ? Use only filtered or bottled water to prepare baby formula and food. Children, pregnant or nursing women should also use filtered or bottled water for drinking and cooking.

In addition, residents should consider taking the following additional steps where possible:

- ? Remove and clean individual faucet aerators, as lead particles and sediment can collect in the aerator screen located at the faucets;
- ? Contact a licensed plumber to replace any household plumbing that may contain lead; and