
From: Arthur Delaney <arthur@huffingtonpost.com>
Sent: Monday, November 16, 2015 3:07 PM
To: Wurfel, Sara (GOV)
Subject: Re: Residents of Flint, Michigan, to Sue City, State over Lead in Drinking Water

Thanks

On Monday, November 16, 2015, Wurfel, Sara (GOV) <Wurfels@michigan.gov> wrote:

Greetings, Arthur –

Sorry for the delay. It's been a bit more crazy busy than normal.

On this lawsuit, we haven't been served yet so can't comment on specific details. What would say is that we're focused on moving forward and ensuring public health and clean, safe drinking water. The governor has outlined a detailed multiple step action plan for both immediate, mid and long term. He has also appointed a task force doing a very important job of reviewing all past actions. They are a bipartisan group of people of the highest integrity, experts in their fields and widely respected who are going to do a very thorough, objective review.

Just let me know if anything more needed at all.

Thanks and best,

SW

Sara Wurfel, APR

Press Secretary | Executive Office of Governor Rick Snyder

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From: Arthur Delaney [mailto:arthur@huffingtonpost.com]

Sent: Monday, November 16, 2015 9:15 AM

To: Wurfel, Sara (GOV) <Wurfels@michigan.gov>

Subject: Fwd: Residents of Flint, Michigan, to Sue City, State over Lead in Drinking Water

Hi, I am filing a short story on this lawsuit -- please let me know if the governor's office would care to comment.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Margie Kelly <mkelly@nrdc.org>

Date: Mon, Nov 16, 2015 at 9:00 AM

Subject: Residents of Flint, Michigan, to Sue City, State over Lead in Drinking Water

To: jason.cherkis@huffingtonpost.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: Margie Kelly, NRDC, mkelly@nrdc.org, 312-651-7935; Darrell Dawsey, ACLU of Michigan, ddawsey@aclumich.org, 313-578-6831

Residents of Flint, Michigan, to Sue City, State over Lead in Drinking Water

Natural Resources Defense Council, ACLU of Michigan Start Legal Process to Stop Ongoing Violations of the Safe Drinking Water Act

CHICAGO (November 16, 2015) – Residents of Flint, Mich., together with the ACLU of Michigan and the Natural Resources Defense Council, today announced their intention to sue state and city officials for ongoing violations of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act amid the city's widespread lead-contamination crisis. A lawsuit would force officials to address repeated, systemic failures to follow federal rules designed to protect the public health from dangerous levels of lead exposure.

"The community of Flint is strong and united in our commitment to repair the harm lead exposure has inflicted on our children and families. We are taking a stand so that our community can heal the damage that has been done and work together so that justice can prevail," said Pastor Allen Overton, a leader of the Concerned Pastors for Social Action.

"This action is about holding the government accountable for failing to protect the public health of an entire community," said Anjali Waikar, an environmental justice staff attorney at the Natural Resources Defense Council. "This case also highlights a troubling trend in which the government is willing to cut costs at the expense of its most vulnerable citizens," Waikar said.

"In their short-sighted effort to save a buck, the leaders who were supposed to be protecting Flint's citizens instead left them exposed to dangerously high levels of lead contamination," said Michael Steinberg, legal director for the ACLU of Michigan. "Not only were the city and state's actions dangerous and misguided. They were illegal, too."

Dangerous amounts of lead leached out of the city's pipes and into the drinking water of Flint's homes and schools for more than a year following a decision by Flint officials to eschew Detroit's water supply in favor of using the Flint River as the City's primary drinking water source. Not long after the switch, residents began to complain about the smell and discoloration of the water and, later, physical ailments stemming from the tainted water.

Officials working on behalf of Flint insisted for several months that the water was safe. However, water tests conducted by experts from Virginia Tech proved those assurances to be wrong, and a study by a local pediatrician that showed that the proportion of Flint kids with elevated blood lead levels had doubled since the City switched water sources. After officials could no longer deny that the community's drinking water was contaminated, Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder finally conceded that Flint should stop using the river water and return to the Detroit water system.