

October 21, 2015

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Administrator
United States Environmental Protection Agency
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1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Mail Code 6106A
Washington, DC 20460

Susan Hedman
Regional Administrator
United States Environmental Protection Agency Region 5
Ralph Metcalfe Federal Building
77 West Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, IL 60604

Re: EPA Review Needed on Flint, Michigan Water Treatment

Administrator McCarthy and Regional Director Hedman,

Today Congressman Dan Kildee requested that the United States Environmental Protection Agency conduct an investigation into the water system in Flint, Michigan. I agree that such an investigation is vital to ensuring that the people responsible for Flint's dangerous water quality are held accountable. Similar to Congressman Kildee's request, I am requesting the EPA conduct a review of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality's (MDEQ) oversight of water treatment in Flint as provided for in the Lead and Copper Rule, 40 CFR Sec. 141.80.

After decades of relying on water from the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD), Flint began treating its own water from the Flint River in April 2014 at the behest of state-appointed Emergency Managers. DWSD had used — and continues to use — anti-corrosion treatments in its water to prevent lead leaching from an aging infrastructure into residents' drinking water. For a number of reasons, raw water from the Flint River is significantly more corrosive than the lake water that DWSD uses. Despite this, Flint chose not to treat the raw Flint River water by any method traditionally associated with preventing lead corrosion. Multiple consultants and the EPA advised the city to use additional corrosion control measures, but that advice went unheeded by the City of Flint and the MDEQ.

Foreseeably, lead has been seeping into Flint's drinking water for more than a year, causing an alarming rise in the number of children in Flint with elevated blood lead levels. Independent research conducted by Virginia Tech professor Marc Edwards indicated high lead levels in tap water, and a study led by Hurley Medical Center pediatrician Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha revealed that in high-risk areas of the city, the rate of lead overexposure among children more than doubled since switching water sources. State data have confirmed these results.

Additionally, several questions remain regarding how Flint and state officials conducted water sampling under the Lead and Copper Rule. Allegedly, officials did not target samples in high-risk Tier 1 locations or repeat locations in subsequent tests. Consumers were also instructed to pre-flush their taps prior to collecting samples, resulting in lower lead level results. It is unclear whether a sufficient number of samples were taken or why MDEQ excluded two high lead level samples from Flint's July 2015 water quality report.

The State of Michigan has pledged to help reconnect the City of Flint to DWS and take additional steps to help remediate the lead problem. However, these are stopgap measures that will never undo the damage already done.

Ultimately, the EPA retains the ability and responsibility to oversee the state's efforts to obtain and maintain safe drinking water for its residents. As such, I appreciate that the EPA has established the Flint Safe Drinking Water Task Force. However, it also is within the EPA's power to review the actions of MDEQ and the City of Flint as they pertain to lead testing and treatment under the Lead and Copper Rule. We want to ensure Flint remains compliant once it switches its permanent water source to the Karegnondi Water Authority.

I respectfully request that, under 40 CFR Sec. 142.19, Regional Administrator Hedman review MDEQ's determinations regarding corrosion control for lead in Flint, Michigan. Regardless of the findings, I am also requesting that Regional Administrator Hedman make public all evidence gathered during the course of that review. Michigan citizens deserve to know whether MDEQ is operating safely and effectively.

If you have any questions, please contact my office at senjananich@senate.mi.gov or (517) 373-0142. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Jim Ananich
Senate Democratic Leader
District 27

cc:

Governor Rick Snyder
U.S. Representative Dan Kildee
U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow
U.S. Senator Gary Peters
State Representative Sheldon Neeley, District 34
State Representative Phil Phelps, District 49
Mayor Dayne Walling, City of Flint
Howard Croft, City of Flint
Susan Hedman, EPA
Thomas Poy, EPA
Michael Schock, EPA-ORD
Darren Lytle, EPA-ORD
Denise Fortin, EPA
Dan Wyant, MDEQ
Liane Shekter-Smith, MDEQ
Pat Cook, MDEQ
Stephen Busch, MDEQ
Brad Wurfel, MDEQ
Marc Edwards, Virginia Tech