

Drs. LOVE and MCELMURRY make some house-calls

The High Priests of Waterborne Disease. In late August, Flint residents were getting their first house-calls from Drs. Love and McElmurry on their NSF POU filter project. Dr. Edwards was in Flint, [conducting late night sampling events while sleeping on LeeAnne Walters sofa](#), when he received an urgent phone call from his distraught Flint friend Ms. Keri Webber.

[Love and McElmurry had come to her doorstep](#) and channeled their best [“Exorcist” entry](#), to break very “bad news” about her water bacteria-possessed home. Webber drove to meet Edwards, still shaking with fear and her voice cracking as she related the conversation, the gist of which was also posted on social media that evening:

“I really felt I needed to share this information with Flint residents using the tap filters for lead.....The scariest thing is that the amount of bacteria LEAVING our filter is astronomical. ..we all have to make our own decisions on rather to drink from the Filters or not. As most know we ARE NOT drinking from the filter....thank GOD! We continue to use only bottled water for everything!”

As the Webbers [recall their dining room conversation](#), Love and McElmurry stated that “they had never seen such high levels of bacteria” and ominously warned them to “never drink water coming from the filter, or bath in their water, without boiling it first.” Yikes!

In an apparent attempt to comfort Webber with humor, [McElmurry verbally suggested that “the State of Michigan should purchase their home for \\$250,000,”](#) because the horrible bacteria problems would make it an ideal laboratory for studying the Flint disaster aftermath. The Webbers’ home is lovely, but like many homes in Flint, it has a depressed market value of just \$10,000, making the imaginary offer 25X over the asking price very attractive—[especially considering the frightening news just delivered](#). This report is consistent with that of

another Flint resident visited by McElmurry in 2016, [who literally abandoned her home due to bacteria fears.](#)

Dr. Love [further opined](#) that Mr. Webber's horrible skin infections could be coming from the Staph bacteria they found in the water and that WSU/UM would report those results soon. **Over the next 7 months**, Ms. Webber repeatedly requested the Staph data. She was thrice promised the results by Dr. Love and thrice did not receive them. When she finally complained on social media around June 14, 2017, a FACHEP member eventually hand-delivered her a hard copy. The [FACHEP letter did not mention Staph, but only that there were undetectable levels of *Shigella*.](#)

At the time, Edwards attempted to explain to his Flint friend, that contrary to what she had been told, the levels of bacteria measured from her POU filters by Dr. Love were perfectly normal based on his decades of experience. He refrained from telling her that Love and McElmurry were so new to drinking water research, he had doubts they even knew what "normal" was for POU filters installed in tens of millions of U.S. homes. After all, Dr. Love did not even know POU filters were in such widespread use, until she revealed her [ignorance on that subject in a phone call with Edwards in January 2017 as mentioned in Part 4.](#)

Realizing that his worst fears about Dr. Love were once again coming true, Edwards delegated an impossible task of trying to reason with Love to his diplomatic colleague Dr. Amy Pruden. [Pruden is one of the foremost researchers in the world on building plumbing drinking water microbiology](#), published numerous papers on the topic, and was Principal Investigator on over a dozen major projects with Dr. Edwards researching waterborne pathogens in building plumbing and is also [co-PI of the FlintWaterStudy \(now, U.S. Water Study\) team.](#)

Pruden tried to gently inform Dr. Love and McElmurry that "*all water contains some normal level of bacteria and that there is no known health risk*" from the types of bacteria discovered in Webber's water. Moreover, that "*these are pretty typical levels <of bacteria>*" for building plumbing. Pruden further stated that it is "*important to keep in mind people use the point of use filters for drinking and cooking,*

*not for showering- so it's definitely not going to explain <Staph>
rashes...."*