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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 3, 2015

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MDHHS releases latest data outlining blood lead levels in Flint
Follow-up care, case management resources continue for families

LANSING, Mich. – Preliminary data indicates that 30 of 1,361 adults and children tested in Flint since October 1 had elevated blood lead levels, according to a report issued today by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

This marks the first summary report on lead testing called for in the state’s action plan related to health concerns about Flint’s water infrastructure.

“Our goal is to help families reduce their exposure to lead sources,” said Dr. Eden Wells, MDHHS chief medical executive. “We have made progress in testing and identifying those with elevated blood lead levels, and the department will continue to work closely with the Genesee County Health Department to reach these families. We will remain diligent in our ongoing outreach and education efforts.”

Information comes from tests administered citywide to 1,361 children and adults since October 1. Tests showed that 21 of 969 children age 17 or younger and 9 of 392 adults over the age 18 were identified with elevated blood lead levels.

The report covers test results reported to MDHHS since the state action plan was put in place Oct. 2. It includes the number of tests and number of elevated blood lead levels greater than 5 micrograms per deciliter, and captures both capillary and venous blood tests that have been reported to MDHHS since the beginning of October. People who have had multiple tests are counted only once. Five micrograms per deciliter is the level that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention considers elevated and triggers health care professional follow up with families.

The full report is posted online at www.michigan.gov/flintwater and will be updated as more data becomes available.

When reviewing historical trend data, the risk of lead exposure is highest during the third quarter of each year – July through September. Seasonal variation is the result of a number of factors including increased exposure to lead in dust and soil in the summer months.

In the third quarter of 2010, 8.3 percent of Flint children 6 and under showed elevated blood lead levels. The figure gradually decreased to 4.1 percent in the third quarter of 2013. During the same months in 2014, the figure increased to 7.5 percent and decreased to 6.4 percent in the third quarter of 2015.

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Last month, MDHHS collaborated with the county health department and local partners to distribute educational resources and informational letters to Flint parents regarding lead testing. The state is providing funding for GCHD nurses to work with families when an elevated blood lead level has been detected. During these follow-up visits, nurses coordinate with environmental health investigators to meet with families in their homes to identify lead exposures, address questions and provide water filters. People can be exposed to lead from paint, soil, plumbing and other sources.

MDHHS continues to provide free water filters and replacement cartridges to Flint residents at four locations, including the MDHHS Flint offices and the Genesee County Community Action Resource Department. For a full list of locations and hours of distribution, visit www.michigan.gov/flintwater.

To help residents properly install water filters, and to demonstrate how to replace the original when it expires, MDHHS has created an instructional video on its [YouTube channel](#). For updates, visit www.michigan.gov/flintwater.

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